

## Ruling Party's Influences and The Re-Run Elections in Nigeria

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### Abstract

Little attention was given to re-run elections in the previous studies; therefore, this study examined how the ruling party influenced the re-run elections in Nigeria. Through mixed-methods, our study discovered that the national ruling party won 93.1% of the re-run elections unlike 53.9% in general elections. Through 3-created models, we found undue influences on election process, institution and enforcement and civil election monitoring. They indirectly appointed, controlled, and determined the postings of major electoral agencies that were directly organized the pre, during and post-elections processes. State's public facilities and workers were serving their interests and this created a strained relationship between the opposition parties and electoral agencies. Communities in opposition strongholds witnessed low voter-education, limited campaign time, poor registration of voters and inexperienced staff mainly to discourage full participation. Harmonizing the conduct of re-run elections with the general elections is necessary to limit the influence of the ruling party.

## INTRODUCTION

Drawing from the previous studies that established various electoral irregularities in general elections in sub-Saharan African countries (Kelly, 2008; Alli, 2015), this study examined the influences of ruling party in re-run elections in Nigeria. Although, the conduct of elections provides insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the electoral process, however, democratic processes in African countries have been marred by periods of election related conflicts (Nwolise, 2007; Ebirim, 2014). Elections have been associated with various electoral malpractices in Angola abortive 1992 elections, Mozambique in 1994, Kenya's re-run elections in 2007 and Zimbabwe Parliamentary Election in 2002, just to mention few. Since two decades ago, Elections Petition Tribunals in Nigeria have nullified the results of many general elections, declared cancellations and ordered for fresh elections to correct some specific electoral irregularities (Onwumenyi, 2011; Ndujihe and Kumolu, 2015). With this premise, we conceptualized the re-run elections to include some related elections such as bye-elections, inconclusive elections and runoff elections. All these elections are distinct elections conducted after the general elections were reportedly marred by malpractices and nullified by the Election Petition Tribunals in most cases (Abuh, 2011; Nwankwo, 2012). Some analysts (e.g. Fukuyama and Diamond, 2010; Iwara, 2014) have expressed concern over the influence of the ruling party on the

process and result of the re-run elections in sub-Saharan African countries.

Historically, the First and Second Republics' general elections were marred by violence (mass killings and destruction of properties) which erupted as a result of electoral malpractices (Awopeju, 2009; Ibeanu, 2018). Also, the Third Republic was aborted because of the massive protests that resulted from the annulment of the presidential election (Ojeme, 2009; Momoh, 2013). Since the beginning of the Fourth Republic in 1999, there have been various incidents of burning of properties, mass killings and violence as reactions to re-run election results being claimed to be manipulated and other malpractices by agents of the ruling party (Iwara, 2014). Besley and Kudamatsu (2007) argue that persistent election malpractices such as compilation of fictitious names on voters' registers, illegal compilation of a separate voters' list, illegal possession of ballot boxes, printing of voters' cards to abuse of the voter registration revision exercise were common during re-run elections than the general elections. There have been several nullifications of the results and records showed that between 2003 and 2019 in various re-run elections, about 8019 cases of electoral malpractices were recorded (Independence National Electoral Commission, 2020). According to Nigeria Human Rights' (2020) record, there were more than 36 cases of post-election violence and a total of 596 post-election cases across the country. Akhaine (2011) established the causes to vote-buying, impunity, intimidation and harassment by some top officials of the ruling party during election processes. Uwadiogwu (2015) argues that violent conflict occurred from these electoral agencies or institution's role in

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election irregularities, ranging from snatching of ballot boxes to violence, thuggery, intimidation of voters, maiming, and killing of the opponents especially by the ruling party. For instance, during the 2007 re-run elections, a serving Deputy Governor in a South-Western state was reported to have snatched a ballot box at a polling booth during the House of Assembly election without any resistance from either electoral officials or any security operatives (Adebayo and Omotola, 2007; Nigeria Police Service, 2020).

This paper complements other studies on the democratic and electoral processes and party system (Awopeju, 2009; Umoru, 2009; Edoh, 2018); though the study departed from the large body of studies that has established the causes of election malpractices by examining the influence of the national ruling party on re-run elections in Nigeria between 2003 and 2019. In order to investigate the ruling party's influence on the re-run elections, we classified the ruling party's influence into three-model based on the existing literatures by Ibeanu (2015). The first is Electoral Process Influences, (EPI), which involves the various arrangements towards the preparations, conduct and post-election processes. The second is Institution and Enforcement Influences, (IEI); this comprises all the electoral and government institutions including the electoral agencies and officials with constitution and legal responsibilities to be actively involved in the pre-election and post-election processes. The third model is Civil Monitoring Influences, (CMI); which includes the civil society and other organization bodies that are responsible for election monitoring.

### Ruling party and institutional theory

Nigeria, like most sub-Saharan African countries, is arguably having a strong executive arm of government with excess power over appointment of many commissions and organizations as stipulated by various constitutions and acts (Oladoyinbo *et al.*, 2011; Akanbi, 2012; Chinwo, 2016). Brosche and Rothbart (2013) argued that though many African countries have embraced the democratic system of government, some democratic institutions were constraint with constitution and legal enactment that limited their independence and performances. According to Idike (2014), these principles and rules limited the electoral institutions and agencies to function effectively without recourse to the executive arms of government that is directly responsible for their appointment and finances. A great deal of research has attributed the fraud in electoral processes in sub-Saharan African countries to the weak institutions and the low security enforcement under the control of the ruling party to suppress the opponents (Egbewole & Etudaiye, 2010; Diamond & Gunther, 2011). The notion of impartiality, justice, neutrality, alertness, and commitment to maintaining free, fair and credible election processes through various legal and constitutional frameworks were mostly ignored to pave ways for the ruling party (Akanbi, 2012). Abe (2008) explained that electoral malpractices in re-run elections are perpetrated by, and involve the collaboration of the political leaders and electoral institutions in Nigeria. Tosanwumi (2009) complained that the judiciary is not independent because the courts mostly serve the interests of ruling party and some powerful political leaders. Reports from many

states have shown that the security agents have been accused of providing security cover for political thugs who destroy election results especially where the opposition is likely to win (INEC, 2020). Officials of election agencies have been reported to be partisan in politics since they were mostly appointed by the national ruling party and confirmed by the National Assembly with dominated majority members of the ruling party (Adepegba, 2015). Right from the appointments of Inspector-General of Police Force, chairman, residents and commissioners of the Independence National Electoral Commission, Chief justice of the Nigeria Supreme Courts, and Minister of Justice and Attorney-General were major responsibility of the executive arms of government within the ruling government party (Sections 154, 215, 231 of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria).

The paper adopts Institutional Theory (Barkan, 1995; Lehoucq, 2003) to analysis the influence of a ruling party on re-run elections in Nigeria. The scope of the institutions in this study covers all the electoral and political institutions, including political leaders, political followers, security agents, the electoral commissions, the courts and electoral tribunals. In a democratic system, Monger (1999) argues that people's behaviors are enveloped within the institutions' normative standards. These expected standards of behavior in a democratic process often come into reality as a result of one or more institutions that function effectively (Ojeme, 2009). The premises are based on the fact that institutions are arrangements of rules, where the formal organizations are guided with the constitution and various acts (Tosanwumi, 2009), and all the members of the institutions are likely to respond to the basic components of these institutional structures (Besley and Kudamatsu, 2007). Hall and Rosemary (1996) argue that there are only four dimensions through which the level of institutionalization of any structure can be observed: autonomy, adaptability, complexity and coherence. The four dimensions are interrelated since all the electoral and political institutions must provide one avenue for understanding the transformation that all democratic structures need to undergo in order to survive, and conduct free and fair electoral processes. We further considered the principles of institutional dysfunction since the democratic processes and institutions are performing negatively because of the extreme control by the ruling party on the one hand, and deficiency in the constitutions and acts that put more controlling responsibility in the hands of the executive arms on the other hand. These institutions are failing to perform their legal responsibilities; thus, they are unable to function as a basic system unit to achieve impartiality, justice and neutrality towards free and fair election processes (Abuh, 2011). This paper complements this theory on a wide array of issues, which include constitutional structures, political partisanship, the role of political parties and leaders, and the entire electoral institutions and agencies that are involved in the electoral process in the re-run elections in Nigeria.

### METHOD

This study used the records from INEC (2020) to select the study states (Ekiti, Osun, Kogi, Bayelsa, Anambra, Ondo, Adamawa and Edo) in Nigeria; states that have the

Governor's re-run elections from 2003 to 2019 were purposively selected. Our study was limited to data in all the re-run national elections and excluded the local government elections. We utilised the use of triangulation and multiple methods of data collection, mainly to get a clearer picture of the theme of the research. Two major opposition political parties were selected in each ruling state, we utilised convenience sampling through 18 trained research assistants to recruit our participants. First, administration of 30-minute baseline questionnaires to differentiate the required characteristics and variables needed were adopted, only participants who met up with the following criteria were served with questionnaire— i) the distribution of the questionnaire must be in the premises of the 2 selected parties between 8am and 11pm from Monday to Saturday between May 2022 and August 2022; ii) participants must be a card carry member of selected opposition parties; iii) a precondition of minimum age requirement of 18 years and must have witnessed at-least 2 re-run elections. Only participants who met the preliminary conditions were given a questionnaire and asked to complete it. This criterion was important to ease the problem of generalisation, though we decided to adopt this sampling method due to its simplicity and cost effectiveness, yet, the study was complemented by in-depth interviews.

We selected 950 participants in each state, totalling 5700 participants; out of this number, only 3824 (67.1%) participants returned their questionnaires. We complemented this method with in-depth interviews; and 14 key respondents (Police Force: 2, the INEC: 2, the Court officials: 2, the ruling party leaders: 4, opposition parties leaders: 4) were interviewed, and secondary sources such as records, archival documents, journals and newspapers were sought.

### Independent variable

In order to establish the extent of the ruling party's influence on the re-run election in Nigeria, we set a single question: In what ways does the ruling party influence the re-run election in Nigeria? Here, we linked the question to the 3-models (EPI, IEI and CMI) and its sub-variables.

### Dependent Variables

To estimate the depth of the influence in the relationship between the ruling party and re-run elections, we identified various sub-variables and annexed them to the 3 questions that centered on dependent variables to form these 3-null hypothesis— Is there any association between ruling party's influence and electoral institutions in Nigeria? The second hypothesis focuses on— how does the ruling party influence the civil monitoring organisations during the re-run elections in Nigeria? The third hypothesis established the extent to which the electoral processes have been influenced by the ruling party. Many sub-variables were generally annexed to the 3-models such as— what party is in government in the neighbouring states? What crops of party leaders are in the re-run election state? And which state does the election petition tribunal's judges come from?

### Data analysis

The survey consisted of 3 model components (EPI, IEI, CMI), and series of sub-variables tested on a Likert-type scale, ranging from completely disagree= 1 to completely agree= 7. The data were analyzed on the basis of estimation of the relationship between the various perceptions of the participants within the models' context. We adopted positively identified variables at a Mean of 16.9, the Standard deviation of 5.1 and Chi-Square  $\chi^2$  of 7.3;  $p < 0.05$  on the appropriateness percent to meet a reasonable consideration within unit degree of freedom. Within the model components, we considered 22 items, and the sub-variables that met up the appropriateness consideration were analyzed to determine the reliability of the question set and measure the association with the ruling party's influences. The reliability for each factor was assessed using the same Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha \geq .871$ ) as modified by Day et al. (2007) for consideration in the hypothesis testing, though some factors or items were merged together for a reasonable consideration. Based on the reliability and ranking analysis, the question sets measuring each factor were converted into scale of measurement by calculating the mean for all the questions retained or combined. This rendered measurements, where higher ranking values were then used effectively for principal component for easy analysis. All sub-variables within the model were tested to establish the variance between the ruling party's influence in both the models and the hypothesis. These hypotheses provided for dependent variables and created a regression analysis, mainly to differentiate between the participants' perception, principles of democratic system and the 3 models components. All the variables were tested through independent variables t-tests for each of the models. Descriptive statistics was used to present and analyse the data; the Chi-square was tested for the significance and relationship of the variables, while multivariate modelling greatly determined the general effect of the relationship between the 3-model and the ruling party's influences. Data from the in-depth interviews were transcribed and analysed using content analysis and ethnographic summaries.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Records of re-run elections between 2003 and 2019 on various national elections in Nigeria

Table 1 showed several national election positions that have been annulled by the various election tribunals in the six geo-political zones and FCT, Abuja between 2003 and 2019 general elections. Out of the 507 annulled elections and re-run elections, about 93.1% were won by the ruling party while only 7.9% were won by the opposition parties. This result contradicted with the INEC's (2020) records that indicated about 53.9% of the general elections were won by the ruling party while other opposition parties only won about 46.1%. The qualitative data established that this occurred as a result of undue influence and domination of the ruling party on the electoral institutions, especially where the opposition party has a strong support.

**Table 1.** Results of re-run elections between 2003 and 2019 in Nigeria

Zone	Party category	Rep (167)	Senate (76)	Governor (22)	Assembly (242)	Total (507)
South-West	Ruling	21	10	06	36	73
	Opposition	02	01	-	01	04
South-South	Ruling	32	12	04	45	93
	Opposition	02	02	-	02	06
South-East	Ruling	25	11	04	41	89
	Opposition	01	02	-	02	05
North-West	Ruling	19	09	-	35	63
	Opposition	01	01	-	02	04
North-East	Ruling	24	09	03	28	64
	Opposition	01	02	01	02	06
North-Central	Ruling	34	14	04	43	95
	Opposition	02	01	-	02	05
FCT, Abuja	Ruling	03	02	Not applicable	02	07
	Opposition	-	-	Not applicable	01	01

Source: Independence National Electoral Commission, 2020

**Influence of ruling party on the election processes in re-run elections in Nigeria***Electoral process influences*

Within the 3-model components, the survey data analysis revealed a significant relationship between the ruling party's influence and the re-run elections in Nigeria. We examined the 22-sub-variables to establish the extent

of ruling party's influence on the re-run elections. The survey data analysis showed that most communities where the opposition parties had a strong and major support encountered unfair delimitation of constituencies, hoarding of voters' registration materials, lack of competent INEC or ad-hoc staff, low awareness and voter's education, and they were always faced with different delaying challenges in accreditation period, mainly to discourage them from voting exercises. The qualitative data showed that the electoral of-

**Table 2.** Participants' perception of ruling party's influences on re-run elections in Nigeria

Ruling party Influences	Sub-variables	Respondents		Means	SD	Chi-square
		Freq.	%			
Electoral process influences 1586(41.5)	Delimitation of constituencies	148	3.9	19.6	8.7	$\chi^2=13.4$ ; p<0.05
	Hoarding of voters' registration materials	157	4.1			
	Restrict the opposition from using public places	171	4.5			
	Posting of incompetence staff to opposing areas	140	3.7			
	Little voter's education	164	4.3			
	Negative relation of electoral agencies to opposition parties	156	4.1			
	Restraining campaign activities	161	4.2			
	Delaying in accreditation process	165	4.3			
	Un-accessed to electoral materials	154	4.0			
	Favoring verdict	170	4.4			
Institution and enforcement influences 1452(38.0)	Appointment of key electoral agencies	178	4.7	18.8	8.3	$\chi^2=11.7$ ; p<0.05
	Involving in posting of staff to strategic areas	221	5.8			
	Submission of ad-hoc staff list	171	4.5			
	Underneath involving in set up of election petition tribunal	186	4.9			
	Redeployment of police and security official	149	3.9			
	Neighboring state influence	172	4.5			
	Power of incumbent Governor	155	4.1			
	Control of public media facility	220	5.8			
Civic monitoring influence 786(20.5)	Register non-existence civil organization	118	3.1	17.5	7.9	$\chi^2=9.1$ ; p<0.05
	Finance the monitor bills	190	5.0			
	Pay for logistic bills	177	4.6			
	Prepare posting of election monitoring group	156	4.0			
	Register weaker candidates in weakest parties	145	3.8			
Total		3.824	100	16.9	5.1	7.3



ficials intentionally delayed the registration exercise where the opposition parties' members were mostly residing and limited nearby polling booths were available. Many prospective voters need to walk for more than a kilometer from their residential houses. An interviewee, an opposition party member, buttressed this view:

I noticed in the last registration of voters, a little (sic) registration centres were established where we have large supporters; thus, our community residents found it difficult to register their names due to overcrowding. Meanwhile, many unused registration centers were situated where the ruling party had many supporters. In this situation, my community residents need to walk about a kilometer away from their homes before they can find where to register, and once there is a restriction of vehicles on the election days according to Electoral Acts, most registered voters have to stay indoors where we have larger stronghold.

The finding further revealed a strained relationship between various electoral agencies and the opposing parties, and most daily scheduled routine for campaign and rally were disturbed and cancelled in favor of the ruling party. The IDIs data showed that opposing parties were restrained from using public halls or stadium for awareness programme for their members or campaign and rally to sensitize their supporters.

An interviewee, of the INEC official said that:

you need to notify INEC officials of the venue of your party's primary elections within a stipulated time for monitoring, and the State or the Federal government owns all the public places like stadiums, town halls and amusement parks. These locations were controlled by the existing ruling party. The opposition parties will pay to use the place at a specific time, and prior to its use, you find out that the place has been allocated to another user.

### *Institution and enforcement influences*

In this model, 8-variables were tested to establish the relationship between the institution and enforcement influences by the ruling party and the re-run elections processes. The survey data analysis confirmed that major appointments of the heads of all the electoral agencies were done by the President, who is the leader of the ruling party. The finding revealed the appointment of electoral body (INEC's Chairman, State Resident Electoral Officers and Zonal Commissioners), the heads of all security agencies (Nigeria Police Force, the State Security Service, the Civil Defence Corps), the Judges (justices from the Election Petition Tribunals to the Supreme Courts of Nigeria) were biased and political motivated. The survey data analysis revealed that in re-run elections, many police and other security agents were posted away from their various state commands to the election venues in another state on request by the ruling party. The qualitative data showed that the compositions of Judges for Election Petition Tribunals were seconded to re-run election states from other states with the same ruling party.

One of the opposition party members confirmed that two prominent opposition leaders prior to the Election Day were arrested; the police acted on anonymous petitions that were maliciously conceived against them. Whereas,

some ruling party leaders were found in acts of malpractice, yet, they were not prosecuted in order to serve as a deterrent to other perpetrators; thus, this indirectly increased the pace of the electoral malpractices in the post-election processes in the re-run elections. This result was corroborated by Awopeju (2009) that there have been instances where courts overturned the victories of many candidates, who were declared as winners by INEC, because of their established relationship with the ruling party. The qualitative data showed that the Electoral Body posted poorly trained electoral personnel and ad-hoc electoral staff to some opposing communities where the opposition had majority supports to create confusion on the electoral day. Blaydes (2006) also identified a weak judiciary as the gravest reason for electoral malpractices in the re-runs elections since courts gave different conflicting judgements and injunctions to frustrate the opposition parties.

The survey data analysis revealed that the recruitment and posting of major electoral agencies, ad-hoc staff of INEC, the police and security officials and the Election Petition Tribunal that heard some post-election matters were strategically done in conjunction with the political leaders in the ruling party. The IDIs showed that the INEC flouted some court orders and initiated new cases, all for the sake of advancing the electoral fortune of the ruling party, and delaying justice for the opposition parties. One of the interviewees, a court official, corroborated these findings and said that:

There are long and unnecessary delays in election cases and proceedings. Imagine a re-run election petition case lasting for three years and five months when the tenure for the position itself is four years.

The findings further showed that electoral and voting papers or materials were given to the ruling party secretly to thumbprint in their various homes before election days. The survey data analysis further revealed a strong correlation between the incumbent Governor or President, a member of the ruling party and the rerun elections process. Variables examined include different immunity clauses in the constitution, the Chief security role of a state, and bureaucratic power to control the state's apparatus. The qualitative data showed that all the state's facilities and machineries were used towards their party interests during the re-run elections including the state public media and the vehicles. In most cases, one of the interviewees, an opposition member claimed that a State that embarks on a re-run election may seek for mass movement of voters and political thugs without security challenges in neighboring state within the same ruling party.

### *Civil monitoring influences*

Election observers are an essential and fundamental ingredient in a democratic process because they are the watchdogs who assess whether the results of an election truly reflect the will of the people (Akhaine, 2011). The survey data analysis revealed that the non-governmental organizations and international observers are an instrument of legitimacy for the ruling party. The international observers were biased about their reports to the public, media and international community. In order to establish the relationship between the ruling party influences on the civil

or group monitoring and the re-run elections, the survey data analysis considered 5 sub-variables. The survey data showed that the ruling party registered some non-existent civil group, or organization with the primary aim to supervise and monitor the re-run elections. Not only this, weaker candidates or even members of the ruling party were sponsored to contest a re-run election in some weaker parties mainly to collaborate with them to fight against the main opposition party. The survey data analysis revealed that all the logistic and monitoring bills of the civil society or monitoring organizations were financed by the ruling party, and in most cases, they prepared their posting to major urban areas where the election is fairly free in the re-run elections. The qualitative data showed that their movements and routines were guided and paid for by the ruling government. We discovered that the international observers only visited the urban areas where there were elements of sanity and presence of security agents in the mid-election processes. It was further revealed that rural communities or opposition majority communities were neglected by the observers on the instruction of the ruling party which organized their movement. We found out that the incumbent government provided all the logistics and finances including the transportation and accommodation of both the local and international observers.

### The connection between ruling party and 3-electoral models and democratic principles

Table 3 showed the relationship between the ruling party's influence and the re-run elections in Nigeria. Factors were compressed to meet up with the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha \geq 0.871$ ) out of tested sub-variables in order to establish a high reliability and correlation with the undue influence of the ruling party in the re-run elections in Table 2. The results revealed a significant correlation between the 3 Models' components and sub-variables on the ruling party's influence and the re-run elections in Nigeria. Only 7 components met up with Cronbach's alpha and revealed strong ranking factors that were used by the ruling party to unduly influence the re-run elections. The three hypotheses were formulated in line with the 3 models, and the test of binary logistic regression showed high relationship between the ruling party's influences and the re-run elections. The logistic regression showed strong influences of the ruling party in electoral processes (Exp (P) =1.221) with extent R-value 0.523 level of correlation within 3 tested sub-variables, that is, the opposition party was hindered to have equal access in the pre-election processes, voting and election were mani-

pulated on the Election Day in favor of the ruling party, and strained relations were established between electoral agencies and the opposition parties. The logistic regression analysis revealed a strong correlation between the ruling party's influences on institutional processes (Exp (P) =1.21), with correlation coefficient of R-value 0.617 and re-run election within the two ranking factors, that is, the appointment and posting of major electoral agencies, and abuse use of state machineries and media by the ruling party. The third model established a significant relationship between the ruling party's influences on the civil monitoring of election process (Exp (P) =1.01), with correlation coefficient of R-value 0.812 and the re-run election. Civil or group monitoring organizations were controlled; logistics and monitoring bills were paid by the incumbent ruling government.

### Discussion

Our study focussed on the influence of the ruling party on re-run elections in Nigeria. This was done through an examination of three models (EPI, IEI and CMI), drawing from previous studies (Oladoyinbo *et al.*, 2011; Chinwo, 2016; Brosche & Rothbart, 2013) which focused on the election process, institutional and enforcement, and civil monitoring influences. This study was limited to the 4th Republic, only the re-run elections were considered within the context of this three created models. With triangulation of sampling methods and multiple methods, we distributed questionnaire to 5700 participants, only 3824 (67.1%) questionnaires were returned, and 14 key interviewees were interviewed.

There have been several nullifications of the results and different court cases in contest of election results between 2003 and 2019 in various re-run elections, about 8019 cases of electoral malpractices were recorded (Independence National Electoral Commission, 2020). According to Nigeria Human Rights' (2020) record, there were more than 36 cases of re-run election's violence and a total of 596 re-run election cases across the country. With this premise, the study tried to examine the ruling party's influences in the re-run elections. From 2003 to 2019 general elections, the secondary sources showed that most of the elections in the re-run elections were won by the ruling party using various undue influences. Significant correlations were established between the ruling party's different influence instruments and re-run elections on the electoral process, institution and enforcement, and civic monitoring.

Within a Mean of 16.9, the Standard deviation of 5.1

**Table 3.** Analysis of binary logistic regression on the influence of ruling party on re-run elections

Influence	Models' components	Mean	Sig	R-value	Anova	S.E	Exp.
Electoral process	Pre-election hindrance	21.2	0.000	0.523	476.21	0.024	1.221
	Election day manipulation						
	Strain relationship during post-elections						
Institutional processes	Appointment of key electoral agencies	19.0	0.002	0.617	326.17	0.014	1.21
	Abuse use of public facilities						
Civil monitoring influence	Control election monitoring group	17.4	0.000	0.812	321.9	0.0112	1.01
	Finance monitoring bills						
	Constant	16.9	0.000	0.410	321.1	0.001	0.021

Df =.521; beta; t=11.33; critical r=.288; critical f=2.78; degree of freedom=7; Binary logistic regression on influence of the ruling party on the re-run elections.

and Chi-Square  $\chi^2$  of 7.3; on the appropriateness percent to meet a reasonable consideration in these 3-principal models. First, the results showed that major electoral processes were influenced by the ruling party through different electoral agencies who participated in the conduct of pre, during and post-election processes. Communities where the main opposition party has majority supporters and high strongholds were not accurately delimited into smaller constituencies or polling booth for easy registration and voting on the election days. Materials for registration of voters reached their community lately and in most cases, materials were hoarded, and eventually little numbers of prospective voters were able to register during the scheduled registration time-lag. Many untrained ad-hoc staff were posted to the opposition community base in order to cause confusion on the Election Day, and voting exercises were always delayed. The results claimed further that the government's awareness programme and voters education were not well articulated and spread across some communities tagged to be opposition base. All the state owned public places like town hall, stadium and other physical structures were used by the ruling party for campaign and rally while the opposition parties were restricted through bureaucracy's red tapism. Election results were easily manipulated and rigged in favor of the ruling party because of high level of collaboration between the electoral agencies and the ruling party that occurred during the pre-election processes.

Second, the survey data analysis revealed a correlation between the use of undue influences by the ruling party on the institution and enforcement agencies, and the re-run elections. Different electoral agencies that participated as either heads or principal co-agencies in the conduct of pre-election, during and post electoral processes were appointed by the ruling government. This includes the appointment of electoral body such as the INEC's Chairman, State Resident Electoral Officers and Zonal Commissioners; the heads of all security agencies in the Nigeria Police Force, the State Security Service, the Civil Defence Corps, and the heads of different courts that become Judges in various Election Petition Tribunals. The finding further revealed that some ad-hoc staff were recruited from the list of applicants submitted by the ruling party leaders, and the posting of major electoral agencies, even police and security were redeployed from one state to re-run election state on request to some strategic areas to favor the ruling party or against the opposition's community areas. Aside from this, the incumbent Governor or the President had some immunity clauses in the constitution, that they cannot be prosecuted for any criminal offence committed even during the election processes (Sections), however, some of the political thugs used to truncate some electoral processes were easily freed and pardoned through legal instruments such as prerogative of mercy, amnesty and *nolle prosequi* (sections). The Governor or the President, as the Chief Security of the State, all the law enforcement agencies considered his or her opinion first on any security matter or conflict that arose from the electoral process. The sitting ruling party also controlled the State's public facilities, and workers especially protected their interests than the opposition party in any electoral matter.

Third, our finding established a strong relationship

in the ruling party's influence on the civil monitoring group during the re-run elections' election processes in Nigeria. Both the foreign and the local monitoring groups' activities were in favor of the ruling party. The monitoring group focused on the urban areas than the far rural areas, and once the ruling government provided finances and logistics, it is easier to decide the areas to be covered and monitored by them.

Within the reliability and ranking order on the level of ruling party's influence in the re-run elections, we compressed 22 sub-variables through the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha \geq .871$ ) into 7 component variables. Major influencing factors used by ruling party against the opposition party in re-run elections were restriction of opponent to effectively participate in the pre-election, election manipulation and rigging on the Election Day, and establishment of strained relationship between opposition party members and the electoral agencies during the post-elections. Other findings include the appointment and posting of key electoral agencies, which were indirectly done on ruling party's request, and abuse of public facilities, and full control of election monitoring group's activities through provision of finance and monitoring bills by the ruling government.

## CONCLUSION

Re-run elections are declared due to the observed malpractices and flaws in the general elections in most sub-Saharan African countries. Most re-run elections are influenced by the ruling party from the pre-election, mid-election to post-elections stages. This was attributed to the undue influence of the ruling party in the electoral processes, institutions and enforcement and civil monitoring. The results revealed that the ruling party won almost 93.1% of rerun elections between 2003 and 2019 general elections unlike average of 53.9% in the general elections. This occurred because the consent of the ruling party was sought in the appointment, recruitment and posting of the major electoral institutions and agencies such as INEC staff, the Police and other security agencies and the composition of various Election Petition Tribunal. The power of incumbency exercised by the ruling party and immunity to the sitting Governor as the Chief Security of State, and exercise of various prerogative of mercy, pardon and amnesty to their used political thugs led to increased insanity and unfair treatment towards the opposition party in the re-run election. The State's public media, property and workers were used in campaign by the sitting ruling government at the expense of the opposition party. Communities where the opposition party got higher strongholds encountered low numbers of delimitation of constituency, wards and polling booth, hoarding of electoral registration materials, delaying of accreditation process and the intentional posting of untrained staff and sycophants to their areas. Opposition party's restriction to effectively participate in the pre-election process, election's manipulation and rigging on the Election Day, and strained relationship were created by the ruling government among opposition party members and the electoral agencies. Since the incumbent government provides for the logistics and finances of the international and local observers, they limited their movement to urban



centers, where they observed the election process within a short time. There is a need, after the initial re-run election, to carefully harmonize the conduct of these re-run elections with the general elections, in order to limit the influence of the ruling party.

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