

PARTY DEFECTIONS AND SURVIVAL OF DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The issue of party defection is becoming a serious threat to Nigeria's democratic stability with special reference to the frequency in the fourth republic. This paper traces the historical antecedents of defection or cross carpeting from Nigeria's first and second republics; it notes that though, parties of those republics had strong ideological base, particularly the first republic than political parties of the nascent fourth republic democracy which lack clear ideological focus and divides, while the politicians lack principles. It relied on the review of extant literature and content analysis to expound the circumstance under review. The study argues that party defections in Nigeria should not only be blamed on lack of strong party ideology and manifestoes but on the self-centeredness of the average Nigerian politician in place of service to the people and the country. It maintains that the strength of character of politicians reflects the strength and effectiveness of Political Parties which invariably is directly proportional to the degree of resilience democracy enjoys. This unreliable and egoistic nature of the politicians and parties reflect to the fluidity of Nigeria's political party system that is threatening our democratic consolidation and good governance. It concludes by proposing some antidotes to this aberration.

KEYWORDS: Defection, Democracy, Good governance, Nigeria, Political Party