

Examining the Relevance of Electoral Commission in Fostering Democratic Governance in Nigeria

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Abstract : This paper attempts to examine the relevance of an Electoral Commission in the democratic process of governance in Nigeria. However, democratic system and governance present a clear indication of responsive and responsible governments. The idea of a government being responsive and responsible is based on the premise of conventional principles of democracy such as freedom of political, economic and social rights of and individual. More so, upholding of the Rule of Law based on the ground of constitutionalism is a clear manifestation of the democratic governance. The burdens of ascertaining theses democratic ethos rely solely on the constituted election management body known as Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for the case of Nigeria. This body is however, saddled with the responsibility of organizing and conducting periodic regular credible election known as free and fair election. The body also, is expected to be neutral, and independent to ensure fair treatment to all. It is on the basis of this fair treatment that credible leaders emerged. To this end, the paper examines the powers, functions and features of Independent National Electoral Commission. More so, the concepts of election and democracy have been operationalized. It is obvious that electoral process in Nigeria is marred with series of problems of which the paper identified and solutions were proffered towards credible, free and fair elections for sustainable democratic governance. In order to succinctly discuss and analyze the issues at stake, Structural Functional Analysis theory is adopted as a theoretical frame work for the paper.

Keywords : election, electoral commission, democracy, governance

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