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Article

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THE ROLES OF POLITICAL PARTY FINANCE OF THE APC AND PDP ON ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE OF THE TWO PARTIES IN THE 2023 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN MALUMFASHI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KATSINA STATE-NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The study examined the sources and roles of political party finance of the APC and PDP on the electoral performance during the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government Area of Katsina state of Nigeria. The study employed a mixed research method, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. The study found that both APC and PDP sourced funds through membership dues, grants, donations, levies, and fundraising campaigns. However, APC had greater access to resources due to its position as the ruling party, benefiting from contributions by elected officials, contractors, and wealthy supporters. PDP relied more on individual donations and had limited access to institutional or government-linked funding during the 2023 general elections. The APC's financial resources enabled them to mobilize voters effectively across all polling units, outspending the PDP in terms of media airtime and material support. Their financial strength allowed them to distribute resources, such as food and materials, to garner voter support, thus contributing significantly to their electoral success. In contrast, the PDP struggled to match APC's financial capacity, which hindered their ability to mobilize voters and compete effectively. Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that to ensure credible elections, political party financing should be transparent and regulated, with parties required to disclose their sources and expenditures to prevent undue influence. Additionally, equal access to campaign resources, such as media airtime and voter mobilization tools, should be promoted to level the playing field, ensuring that all parties can compete fairly regardless of their financial strength.

Keywords: Political Party Finance, Electoral Performance, 2023 General Election.

Introduction

Political parties are one of the major institutions and critical components of liberal democracy and the democratization process globally. Like other essential actors in a democracy, political parties are expected to be responsive, accountable, and to play an intermediary role between the electorate and the government. Political parties also play a crucial role in the formation of governments, to the extent that it is impossible to speak of democratic government without political parties. They contribute to the stability and coherence of governments, especially when most members come from the same party and are bound by shared allegiances. They are essential for the organization of modern democratic polity and are fundamental in expressing political pluralism. At their core, political parties perform a variety of functions, each of which is central to the proper functioning of liberal democracy. Indeed, as Corduwener (2019) explained, political parties serve as a channel for integrating individuals and groups into the political system, mobilizing and socializing the public, particularly during elections. They are core vehicles for the articulation and aggregation of social interests. Political parties also play an essential role in recruiting political elites, nominating candidates, and selecting individuals for public offices. The primary goal of these organizations is the pursuit, conquest, and retention of political power as long as possible, with individuals united by policy, opinion, and a shared platform (Etzioni, 2021). However, the ability of political parties to fulfil these functions is highly dependent on financial resources. Political parties require funds for various activities, such as campaigns, candidate nominations, staff salaries, media airtime, and publicity for disseminating their ideas. Additionally, logistics and other administrative expenses are necessary for effective participation in the political process. Political parties mobilize people and organizations that share their beliefs, and these supporters contribute financially to sustain the party's operations. Political party financing, sometimes referred to as "political finance," involves the use of money and other resources for activities such as electioneering, member mobilization, secretariat maintenance, and organizing political meetings (Gallego & Wantchekon, 2017; Helmky & Levitsky, 2021).

Yet, political parties often face pressure to use illicit or ill-gotten money to finance their operations, both in developed and developing democracies. This pressure stems from a lack of legitimate funding sources and the need to fund anti-democratic activities such as vote-buying. In both types of systems (developed and developing democracies), electorates frequently develop the expectation that their vote will be bought. Etzioni (2021) identified two major links between corruption and political party finance. The first is the electorate's demand for payment for their votes in terms of public or private goods. The second link concerns campaign finance corruption, in which government actors divert state resources for their campaigns or sell political influence for private interests (Burgis, 2015). A notable example of such corruption is the Sambo Dasuki Arms deal, where an estimated \$2.1 billion was allegedly diverted to fund the People's Democratic Party (PDP) 2015 presidential campaign (Davies, 2016). However, the financial resources available to a political party directly impact its ability to mobilize voters, organize campaigns, and maintain internal democracy. As Mendilow (2018) observed, many countries have introduced regulations on campaign funding to protect democracy from the influence of money and to ensure that elections remain fair and transparent. These laws aim to prevent the misuse of public funds for political purposes, regulate donations from questionable sources, and prevent funds from being used to sway voters or election outcomes (Donovan & Karp, 2017). Despite these regulations, challenges remain in ensuring that political finance practices remain transparent

and free from corruption. Understanding how these parties secure and manage their funds not only helps explain their electoral strategies but also highlights the broader implications for democratic processes. Campaign finance laws and regulations are designed to ensure that elections remain fair and that the public's voice isn't drowned out by the influence of money. However, despite these safeguards, political parties often find themselves under pressure to resort to illicit or unethical means of fundraising, such as vote-buying or misuse of state resources, which ultimately undermines the democratic system.

Examining the financial underpinnings of the APC and PDP within Malumfashi in the 2023 elections allows for a closer look at how party finance impacts their electoral outcomes and internal governance. How these parties raise, manage, and spend their funds could reveal much about the health of democracy at the local level. Moreover, it offers insights into the challenges political parties face in balancing the need for financial resources with the responsibility to adhere to ethical practices. This exploration is vital for understanding the role of money in local elections, shedding light on potential gaps in the existing regulatory framework, and suggesting ways to improve transparency and accountability in future electoral cycles. Candidates backed by powerful sponsors often have greater chances of securing party tickets and winning elections, contributing to unequal political competition and undermining internal democracy. Despite existing campaign finance laws, the influence of money remains unchecked, and studies such as those by Corduwener (2019) and Aiyede (2022) have not fully explored this issue at the grassroots level. Against this background, the study explores how the sources and role of political party finance impacted the performance of the APC and PDP during the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi, shedding light on the financial factors shaping local political outcomes. In line with foregoing, the paper seeks to address the following questions: What were the key sources of political party finance of the APC and PDP in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections? And what role did political party finance play in determining the electoral performance of the APC and PDP in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections?

The Literature Review

Indeed, political parties are vital to liberal democracies, serving as intermediaries between the electorate and the government, mobilizing voters, and influencing policy through the recruitment of political elites. However, their effectiveness largely depends on access to financial resources, which are essential for running campaigns, organizing party structures, and maintaining visibility (Corduwener, 2019; Etzioni, 2021). In Nigeria, especially since independence, politics has often been dominated by wealthy political entrepreneurs and former military figures that fund parties and candidates in exchange for political favours, turning political party financing into a transactional affair (Baidoo, Dankwa & Eshun, 2018). This trend is particularly evident at the local government level, including Malumfashi in Katsina State, where access to campaign funds plays a significant role in determining electoral outcomes. More so, political parties in liberal democracies simplify electoral choices and facilitating participation and governance. Scholars like Corduwener (2019), Aiyede (2022), and Mendilow (2018) emphasized the fundamental roles political parties play in modern democracies, making them indispensable for the effective functioning of democratic systems. Political party finance is defined by Etzioni (2021) as the funding needed not only for election campaigns but also for maintaining party infrastructure, conducting policy research, and engaging in political education. Political party finance, or "political finance," includes all resources used by parties and candidates in both electoral

and non-electoral periods, covering a wide range of activities essential for their operation (Cassas-Zamora, 2008). Adequate financing is crucial for political parties to remain relevant and active in both developed and developing democracies. For instance, countries like Spain and Portugal traditionally favouring public funding (Biezen, 2000). The increasing importance of political party finance, as noted by Sule (2017), calls for transparency and accountability to prevent corruption and ensure a fair democratic process, as the integrity of political party funding directly impacts the health of democratic systems.

Finance is a fundamental pillar for the establishment, growth, and consolidation of democracy, as most democratic processes require financial resources to function effectively. In Nigeria, however, political party financing is often opaque and marred by corruption, with funds frequently sourced through illicit means. Sule and Kwarah (2018) described it as one of the most scandalous aspects of electoral politics, where money is exchanged for political favours, contracts, and influence, deeply affecting the relationship between parties, politicians, party members, and the electorates. Political party finance in Nigeria is not only used to support party activities but also manifests in practices like vote buying and god-fatherism, which distort the democratic process. This includes the involvement of wealthy sponsors, security manipulation, and the misuse of state power to influence outcomes. From 1999 to 2023, vote buying has been a recurring feature of Nigeria's elections, thus eroding public trust in the system (Nkechi & Innocent, 2014; Omilusi, 2016; Sule & Mohammed, 2021). The failure of institutions like Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to enforce campaign finance laws has allowed illegal financing to flourish, reinforcing a system where political corruption thrives. As noted by Kura (2014) and Olarinmoye (2018), the lack of transparency in party financing has made it difficult to trace the origins and use of campaign funds. Sule (2018) argued that money politics not only undermines democracy and good governance but also weakens representation, increases corruption, and distorts the electoral process. The growing influence of money in Nigerian politics has made financial power, rather than merit or public service, the key determinant of political success.

The formation and functioning of democratic governments and their institutions require substantial financial resources, and political parties, as key actors in democratic systems, are no exception. Their wide range of activities including candidate selection, campaigns, media outreach, logistics, political education, and voter mobilization demands consistent and significant funding. The All Progressives Congress (APC), like many political parties, outlines various lawful sources of funding in its 2022 Constitution (as amended), including membership dues, subscriptions, levies, investments, donations, fundraisers, gifts, grants, and approved borrowings (APC, 2022, Art. 22, Section A, i–vii). Furthermore, the party mandates that its National Working Committee determine the annual distribution formula for these funds across different party levels, subject to the approval of the National Executive Committee (APC, 2022, Art. 22, Section B), ensuring a structured financial management system to support its operations. Political party finance plays a crucial role in determining electoral performance by enabling parties to effectively carry out essential activities such as candidate selection, campaigning, media outreach, logistics, and voter mobilization—all of which are vital for gaining public support and winning elections (APC, 2022). Without adequate funding, political parties struggle to compete, especially in dysfunctional democracies like Nigeria's where money politics is deeply entrenched. As Sule and Kwarah (2018) note, the excessive and often illicit use of funds influences not only party operations but also relationships between politicians, members, and voters, often through mechanisms like vote buying and god-fatherism. These practices distort electoral

competition, giving an unfair advantage to better-funded candidates regardless of merit or public interest. Moreover, the lack of transparency in political finance and poor enforcement by oversight bodies like INEC has allowed corruption to flourish which further weakened voter confidence and skewing electoral outcomes (Sule & Mohammed, 2021; Kura, 2014; Olarinmoye, 2018). Thus, the availability, management, and source of political party finance significantly impact the credibility and outcome of elections.

Methodology

The study adopted a mixed research method, combining both quantitative and qualitative sources of data collection. The target population consisted of 351 APC officials and 222 PDP officials, five (5) elected and appointed public officials from the APC, three (3) PDP candidates who contested during the elections, and two (2) staff members from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). For the quantitative aspect, a disproportionate stratified random sampling technique was employed, selecting a total of thirty-nine (39) officials from both the APC and PDP. In contrast, a census sampling technique was applied to include all five (5) elected and appointed APC public officials, all three (3) PDP candidates during the elections, and the two (2) INEC staff members. Data collection instruments included a closed-ended questionnaire and an interview schedule, both of which were validated by subject matter experts, statisticians, and language professionals. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a result of 0.798. For the interview schedule, reliability was ensured through an audit inquiry using the dependability procedure. The quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including simple frequency tables and percentages, while the qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis.

Findings

Key Sources of Political Party Finance of the APC and PDP in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 General Elections: Understanding how the two major political parties APC and PDP sourced funds during the 2023 general elections is crucial in addressing the core issue under investigation. While both quantitative and qualitative findings on party financing will be presented and analysed under this sub-theme, it is important to highlight that respondents from the two methods offered differing perspectives on the nature and sources of political finance. The quantitative data provides one angle of insight, which will first be discussed, followed by complementary insights drawn from the qualitative findings, offering a fuller picture of the political party financing landscape in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the elections.

Table 1: Respondents' opinion on the statement: All members of my party in Malumfashi Local Government Area pay for their membership dues annually.

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| Strongly disagree | 11 | 14.1 | 14.1 |
| Disagree | 18 | 23.1 | 23.1 |
| Undecided | 16 | 20.5 | 20.5 |
| Agree | 26 | 33.3 | 33.3 |
| Strongly agree | 7 | 9.0 | 9.0 |
| Total | 78 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

(Field Survey, 2024).

Table 1 presents data on whether members of the respondents' political parties in the study area pay their annual membership dues. The results show that 9% (7 respondents) strongly agreed, 33.3% (26 respondents) agreed, 20.5% (16 respondents) were undecided, while 23.1% (18 respondents) disagreed, and 14.1% (11 respondents) strongly disagreed. From this data, it is clear that not all party members, across APC and PDP, consistently pay their dues annually. This raises deeper questions about why compliance with this financial obligation is low. Membership dues are a significant source of party funding and, ideally, reflect party strength especially in mass-based parties where more members should translate to higher revenue (Etzioni, 2021). However, qualitative insights from key informants provide further clarity. Informant B1 noted that party leaders often prioritize expanding membership numbers for electoral advantage rather than enforcing dues payment. In many cases, wealthy party members or candidates cover the dues for others without their knowledge. Similarly, Informant A3 added that people often join parties based on personal interests or due to persuasion by influential figures, not ideology. As a result, they lack commitment and may leave at any time, making dues collection ineffective. Wealthy members, therefore, frequently pay dues or sponsor entire registration drives, such as when Alhaji Atiku Abubakar reportedly financed membership registration upon joining the APC in 2013. These findings highlight a key difference between the survey responses and interview insights pointing to a party culture shaped more by elite sponsorship and catch-all strategies than grassroots financial accountability.

Table 2: Respondents' opinions on the statement: During the conduct of the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government my party received grants from its friends, supporters and other well-wishers.

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| Disagree | 7 | 9.0 | 9.0 |
| Undecided | 2 | 2.6 | 2.6 |
| Agree | 33 | 42.3 | 42.3 |
| Strongly agree | 35 | 44.9 | 44.9 |
| Total | 78 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

(Field Survey, 2024)

Table 2 presents data on whether the respondents' political parties received grants from friends, supporters, and other well-wishers during the 2023 general elections in the study area. The results show that 44.9% (35 respondents) strongly agreed, 42.3% (33 respondents) agreed, 2.6% (2 respondents) were undecided, 9% (7 respondents) disagreed, and 1.3% (1 respondent) strongly disagreed. These findings suggest that a significant majority of party officials acknowledged receiving grants as a key source of funding during the elections. This aligns with the general understanding that political parties rely heavily on financial support from well-wishers to fund their electoral activities. The small number of respondents who disagreed or were uncertain may reflect the centralized nature of party financing, where such grants are often managed at the local government or state level, making it less visible to grassroots members. Hence, the overall result is valid and credible within the context of party funding practices in the area.

Table 3: Respondents' opinions on the statement: During the conduct of the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government my party received financial donations from supporters and other well-wishers.

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|----------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| Disagree | 1 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| Agree | 36 | 46.2 | 46.2 |
| Strongly agree | 41 | 52.6 | 52.6 |
| Total | 78 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

(Field Survey, 2024)

Table 3 presents data on respondents' opinions regarding whether their political parties received financial donations from supporters and other well-wishers during the 2023 general elections in the study area. The results show that 52.6% (41 respondents) strongly agreed, 46.2% (36 respondents) agreed, and 1.3% (1 respondent) disagreed with the statement. These findings suggest that a substantial majority of respondents believe that both the APC and PDP in the study area relied on financial donations from supporters and well-wishers to fund their electoral activities. This highlights the importance of external financial support in enabling political parties to carry out their campaigns and other related activities during the elections in Malumfashi Local Government Area.

Table 4: Respondents' opinion on the statement: My party organized a well-planned fund-raising campaign in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the conduct of the 2023 general elections in order to get more funds from friends and supporters of the party to fund its electoral activities in the 12 wards of the Local Government Area.

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| Disagree | 3 | 3.8 | 3.8 |
| Undecided | 1 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| Agree | 30 | 38.5 | 38.5 |
| Strongly agree | 43 | 55.1 | 55.1 |
| Total | 78 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

(Field Survey, 2024)

Table 4 presents data on respondents' opinions regarding whether their political parties organized well-planned fund-raising campaigns during the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government Area to secure additional funding from friends and supporters across its twelve wards. The findings reveal that 55.1% (43 respondents) strongly agreed, 38.1% (30 respondents) agreed, 1.3% (1 respondent) was undecided, 3.8% (3 respondents) disagreed, and 1.3% (1 respondent) strongly disagreed. These results clearly indicate that both APC and PDP were able to organize structured fund-raising campaigns to support their electoral activities. This is consistent with common political financing practices, where parties use fund-raising events to generate resources for campaigns. As Katsina (2022) observed, fund-raising dinners and similar events have become a significant source of political financing in both developed and developing democracies, making these findings both valid and relevant within the broader context of election funding strategies.

Table 5: Respondents' opinions on the statement: My party was able to initiate a well-organized campaign to generate considerable amount of money as levies during the conduct of the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government Area.

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| Strongly disagree | 3 | 3.8 | 3.8 |
| Disagree | 4 | 5.1 | 5.1 |
| Undecided | 4 | 5.1 | 5.1 |
| Agree | 43 | 55.1 | 55.1 |
| Strongly agree | 24 | 30.8 | 30.8 |
| Total | 78 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

(Field Survey, 2024)

Table 5 presents data on respondents' opinions regarding whether their political parties initiated a well-organized campaign to generate substantial funds through levies during the 2023 general elections in the study area. According to the findings, 30.8% (24 respondents) strongly agreed, 55.1% (43 respondents) agreed, 5.1% (4 respondents) were undecided, 5.1% (4 respondents) disagreed, and 3.8% (3 respondents) strongly disagreed. These results indicate that a significant majority believe that both the APC and PDP successfully launched levy-based fundraising campaigns during the election period. The few dissenting or uncertain responses may reflect limited awareness at the grassroots level, as such initiatives are often coordinated by party leadership at the local government or state level. Overall, the data supports the assertion that levy collection was a notable part of the political financing strategy used by the parties in Malumfashi during the 2023 elections. The analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data highlights the critical role that various forms of political party financing played during the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government Area. Quantitative findings revealed that the two major parties, APC and PDP, received significant financial support through grants, donations, levies, fundraising campaigns, and non-monetary contributions such as campaign materials from friends, supporters, and well-wishers. However, deeper insight from qualitative interviews provides a more nuanced understanding. Informants explained that APC, being the ruling party, had broader access to resources by leveraging the financial contributions of its elected and appointed officials, as well as support from contractors and wealthy allies. In contrast, the PDP had comparatively limited access to such funding avenues. Informants also emphasized that party finances were drawn from traditional sources like membership dues, donor grants, and contributions from affluent members, which were crucial for campaign mobilization, advertisements, office rentals, and political messaging. Overall, it was clear that the financial strength and access to diverse funding sources significantly influenced each party's electoral performance, with APC having the upper hand due to its broader resource base and access to incumbency advantages.

Roles of Political Party Finance in the Electoral Performance of the APC and PDP in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 General Elections

Table 6: Respondents' opinions on the statement: APC raised and spent more money than PDP in buying media airtime in order to communicate and mobilized electorates in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the conduct of the 2023 general elections.

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Strongly disagree | 3 | 3.8 | 3.8 |

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|
| Disagree | 13 | 16.7 | 16.7 |
| Undecided | 5 | 6.4 | 6.4 |
| Agree | 30 | 38.5 | 38.5 |
| Strongly agree | 27 | 34.6 | 34.6 |
| Total | 78 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

(Field Survey, 2024)

The findings from both quantitative and qualitative data clearly demonstrate that political party finance played a significant role in determining the electoral performance of the APC and PDP in Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections. A majority of respondents (73.1%) agreed or strongly agreed that the APC raised and spent more money than the PDP in buying media airtime to communicate and mobilize electorates.

This was further validated by key informants who emphasized that the APC, as the ruling party, had access to more financial resources which were strategically used for radio campaigns, voter mobilization, and broader outreach efforts. These financial advantages allowed APC to have a more visible and persuasive presence in the media space, which significantly contributed to its superior performance in the election compared to PDP (Key Informant Interviews with Informants A3 and B2).

Table 7: Respondents' opinions on the statement: APC performed better than PDP in terms of electoral mobilization in reaching widely in all the 12 wards of Malumfashi Local Government Area during the conduct of the 2023 general elections.

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| Disagree | 4 | 5.1 | 5.1 |
| Undecided | 3 | 3.8 | 3.8 |
| Agree | 30 | 38.5 | 38.5 |
| Strongly agree | 40 | 51.3 | 51.3 |
| Total | 78 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

(Field Survey, 2024)

Table 7 presents data on respondents' opinions regarding the APC's performance compared to the PDP in electoral mobilization across the 12 wards of Malumfashi Local Government Area during the 2023 general elections. The majority of respondents (89.8%) either strongly agreed (51.3%) or agreed (38.5%) that the APC performed better than the PDP in reaching widely in all the wards. To deepen the understanding of these results, qualitative data revealed that APC, being the ruling party, had superior resources, including greater security support and logistical advantages, which allowed them to campaign extensively across all wards. Informant A4 emphasized that the APC's mobilization efforts were unparalleled, pointing out their ability to reach every ward, which the PDP could not match due to fewer resources and less security support (Key Informant Interview with Informant A4, conducted on 27th June, 2024). Furthermore, Informant A1 highlighted how APC's success was bolstered by an effective reconciliation committee that resolved internal conflicts, contrasting it with the PDP, where unresolved internal disputes led to factionalism that hindered their mobilization (Key Informant Interview with Informant A1, conducted on 25th June, 2024). Both the quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that the APC outperformed the PDP in electoral mobilization during the 2023 elections in Malumfashi Local Government Area.

Table 8: Respondents' opinions on the statement: APC was able to use its resources, human and materials in reaching all the Polling Units through its Wards and Polling Units Voters mobilization Committee while PDP did not.

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| Strongly disagree | 3 | 3.8 | 3.8 |
| Disagree | 6 | 7.7 | 7.7 |
| Undecided | 5 | 6.4 | 6.4 |
| Agree | 41 | 52.6 | 52.6 |
| Strongly agree | 23 | 29.5 | 29.5 |
| Total | 78 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

(Field Survey, 2024)

Table 8 presents data on respondents' opinions regarding whether the APC was able to use its resources, human, and material support to reach all polling units across the study area through its Wards and Polling Units Voter Mobilization Committee, while the People's Democratic Party (PDP) did not. The data shows that the majority of respondents (82.1%) either strongly agreed (29.5%) or agreed (52.6%) with the statement that the APC effectively used its resources to reach every polling unit, while the PDP did not. To gain further insight into this, qualitative data was gathered, revealing that the APC's extensive mobilization efforts were facilitated by both material resources (such as rice, spaghetti, and textiles) and human resources. Informant B2 explained that APC's use of resources to reach voters was visible across the local government, with items such as rice and textiles distributed to electorates, even though they were framed as palliatives rather than direct vote-buying (Key Informant Interview with Informant B2, conducted on 26th June, 2024). Additionally, documents from the APC local government secretariat corroborate this, indicating that the APC spent ₦130,000 and distributed items such as five 50kg bags of locally processed rice and forty pieces of textiles (Rapa) across polling units during the 2023 Presidential and National Assembly elections. These findings support the conclusion that the APC, through effective mobilization and resource allocation, was able to secure a more widespread electoral presence compared to the PDP.

Conclusion

The study can be concluded by emphasizing that the sources of party finance and their role in electoral performance were crucial in determining the outcomes of the 2023 general elections in Malumfashi Local Government Area. The APC, with its superior financial resources from grants, donations, and contributions from wealthy members, effectively utilized these funds for extensive voter mobilization, media campaigns, and material distribution across polling units, which played a significant role in their electoral success. In contrast, the PDP, with limited financial backing, struggled to match the APC's campaign efforts, which ultimately affected its performance. This highlights the critical role that financial resources play in enabling political parties to execute successful electoral strategies.

Recommendations

The study offered the following recommendations:

- Enhancing Transparency and Regulation of Party Financing:** To ensure credible elections, there should be stronger oversight and regulation of party financing. This includes enforcing transparency in the sources and spending of campaign funds by all political parties. Political parties should be mandated to publicly disclose their sources of

funds, and an independent electoral body should monitor the use of these funds to prevent undue influence and ensure fairness in the electoral process. This would prevent a situation where wealthier parties gain an unfair advantage over others, as was observed in the case of APC's greater financial resources in Malumfashi.

ii. **Promoting Equal Access to Campaign Resources for All Parties:** To level the playing field and ensure credible elections, efforts should be made to provide equitable access to campaign resources, including media airtime and voter mobilization tools. The government and independent electoral bodies should facilitate equal access for all political parties, regardless of their financial capabilities, through public funding or subsidies for election-related activities. This would help to mitigate the influence of wealth on election outcomes, allowing all parties to compete more fairly and effectively.

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