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Electoral Crisis, Governance and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT It is a visible fact that ten years into the Fourth Republic, governance at all levels in the Nigerian polity has woefully failed to deliver the much expected socio-economic and political dividends of democracy. This persistent phenomenon of ineffective governance has also engendered a disillusioned citizenry, which has inevitably put a big question in the sustainability of democracy in Nigeria. Several factors have been identified as been responsible for the low output of governance. The paper, however, in its attempt to explicate the crisis of governance and comatose democracy in Nigeria, focuses on the nation's inability to conduct credible, acceptable, and fair elections. It tries to establish a nexus between election, good governance and democracy by arguing that democracy is inconceivable outside the context of rule-based, fair and credible election as election supplies the essential platform and vitality for the building of democracy. The paper, therefore, posited that until Nigeria is able to put in place a robust, transparent and credible electoral process, the country will continue to experience governance devoid of all the fundamental trappings of a sustainable democracy.