

## POLITICAL PARTIES AND GOVERNANCE OF SOUTHEAST STATES NIGERIA: THE EMERGENCE OF FOUR POLITICAL PARTIES IN 2023

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### **Abstract**

*Political parties are thought to be the key component of democratic governance across the globe. The emergence of four political parties in the governance of Southeast states Nigeria after the 2023 general elections has shown significant change in the governance of the geopolitical zone. Despite the staggered governorship elections, clearly speaking they will be four political parties that will be governing five of the states from 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2023 viz for the first time: All Progressive Grand Alliance (Anambra), Labour Party (Abia), All Progressive Congress (Ebonyi and Imo) and Peoples Democratic Party (Enugu). This is a unique characteristic that only the South East Zone will showcase in Nigeria from May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023 onwards and therefore needs to be interrogated and assessed in terms of its developmental potentials. However, research on the emergence of four political parties in Southeast Nigeria's 2023 government is currently lacking. This study relies on the documentary approach for data collecting and the group theory as its analytical framework. The study posits that political parties are built through their manifestoes and personal attributes of the governors also influences the direction of development that will necessarily follow in these states. The study found that the spirit of competition among the political parties in Southeast states if properly managed will enhance development in the zone as already shown in the building of Airports in Anambra and Ebonyi States as well as the construction of Flyover bridges in major roads in the zone. The study concludes that if not properly manage the multiple political parties can divide the region rather than building integrated Southeast, Nigeria. Therefore, the paper renews call for political leaders to partner together in the nature of Igboness for the integration and development of Southeast.*

**Keywords:** Political Parties, Governance, Democracy, Political Development, Emergence

### **Introduction**

One of Nigeria's least stable geopolitical regions is the Southeast, which is home to five states of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo. The River Niger on the West, the riverine Niger Delta on the South, the level North-Central to the North and Cross River on the East define the boundaries of the zone. It is separated between the Guinea forest-savanna mosaic in the drier north and the cross-Niger transition forests eco-regions.

Culturally, the Southeast is located in Igboland with the Igbo people as the largest ethnic group in the region accounting for over 90% of the population. Despite being the smallest geopolitical zone, the Southeast is very important to Nigeria's economy because of its enormous natural gas and oil deposits as well as its rapidly developing industrial sector. Over 22 million people live in the region, which is about the national average.

Since the establishment of fourth Republic in 1999, these states have experienced and still experiencing governance from different political parties spanning seven National Electoral cycles. Of these five states, two, namely Anambra and Imo are presently off-cycle National elections, whereas Anambra had an election to elect the current governor in 2021, Imo will be having its own in November, 2023. Therefore, rise of four political parties in the leadership and control of Southeast states in the 2023 general elections in Nigeria has marked a crucial change in the governance of the geopolitical zone. This development has sparked considerable interest and speculation about the implications it holds for the

region's governance and political dynamics. According to Ogundiya (2011), the nature, character, rivalry, structure, composition and institutionalization of political parties and party's politics have a significant impact on how well a democratic system functions.

Importantly, political party is the *prima factor* that work hand in hand for democratic governance. Shively (2005, p.248), posits that political party is such a versatile tool of modern politics as a structure, tying together a large group of officials, citizens and provide an avenue that facilitate government-citizen interaction, expression of the sense of community and aid in political recruitment. According to Nwanegbo (2014), without political parties modern states are rarely classified as democratic. Political parties do not only perform their functions in democratic development and propagation, they also organize the activities of other democratic institution to smoothen the democratic landscape in any political system.

In 1999, Nigeria's political system was restored to democracy, and the PDP seized power in the Southeast after winning the five states. Currently, it looks that the party is losing the region to other political parties. Njoku (2023) claims that the PDP has only so far succeeded in winning Enugu State; the other four states have gone to other political parties. Imo and Ebonyi States are governed by APC; Anambra State is under the control of APGA while Abia State is under the leadership of the Labor Party. From the foregoing, it is evident that four political parties have emerged in the governance of Southeast and as a result the ground is set for battle, competition, domination and developmental gains among political groups.

However, the political dynamics in the Southeast have been marked by inter-party rivalries, factionalism and occasional conflicts. Other factors that have also sharpened the nature of political mobilization, involvement and participation of the people from the Southeast includes socioeconomic development, educational level, cultural background, political ideology, party policies and personal interests. It is on this premise that this study engages the rise of four political parties in the governance of Southeast states Nigeria after the 2023 general elections. Therefore, this paper examined the development of four political parties in the governance of Southeast states Nigeria in 2023 and how it can contribute to building an integrated Igboland.

### **Political Parties, Governance, Democracy and Political Development: A Conceptual Explanation**

Political party is different from other political group and pressure group. Political parties, according to Huckshorn (1984), are independent groups of citizens with the aim of nominating candidates and running in elections with the intention of capturing governmental power through the appropriation of public positions and the structuring of the government. To Burke (1960), a political party is a group of men who are committed to working together to advance the national interest based on a single shared ideal. Political parties are only relevant to the point that they facilitate national interest (Nwankwo, 2008).

Therefore, the common good of the society of men is dependent on the basic principle on which the membership agreed to call political beliefs or ideology. Nwankwo (2008, p.239) argued that principle does not only help leaders to understand national interest, it guides the actions of leaders which includes determining the pathway to be followed in the pursuit and realization of those national interests. In modern democratic state it is usually on the basis of ideology that parties mobilizes voters to vote them into power. Therefore, without principle, without ideology a party cannot be goal-oriented and cannot adopt election manifesto.

Political parties are an association of individuals brought together principally by the desire or determination to conquer and manage power, to control the choice of governmental personnel and policies. According to the wide description provided by Downs (1957), it is a coalition of men attempting to take legal control of the ruling apparatus. A coalition in this context refers to a group of people who

work together to further a common goal. Governing apparatus is the term used to describe the physical, legal and institutional tools that the government uses to carry out its specific function within the division of labour. Nwanegbo (2014) notes that for any organization to qualify to be called political party, it must possess the following attributes: membership, leadership, organization, goals, and objectives, ideology, manifesto, constitution and resources. The Southeast geopolitical zone is made up of five states. The outcome of 2023 governorship election in Nigeria has led to the emergency of four political parties in the governance of Southeast. These political parties are Labour Party in Abia State, People Democratic Party (PDP) in Enugu State, All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) in Anambra State and All Progressive Congress (APC) in Imo and Ebonyi States respectively.

Governance is the process and structure through which decisions are made and implemented in a group, organization or society. It involves the establishment of rules, policies and procedures to guide the actions of individuals and institutions as well as mechanisms for accountability, decision-making and conflict resolution. Governance can take many forms and operate at different levels, including local, national and international. It encompasses both formal systems of government such as democracies as well as informal systems of authority and influence. Transparency, accountability, involvement and the rule of law define effective government. It involves participation of diverse stakeholders and the protection of human rights, ensuring that decisions are made in the best interests of the people and the common good.

Therefore, effective governance is essential for promoting stability, social cohesion, human security, economic development and the protection of individual and the collective rights. It plays a crucial role in shaping the policies and decision that affect people's lives and ensuring that power is exercised responsibly and in the public interest. With the emergent of four political parties in the Southeast, the spirit of competition among the states will enhance development in the zone as already shown in the building of Airports in Anambra and Ebonyi States as well as the construction of Flyover bridges in major roads in the zone.

According to Okafor, Odigbo and Okeke (2022), democracy can ensure the interests of the people regardless of how engaged they are in politics. Democracy is a form of government in which the people themselves chose their representative. This means that democracy give them a voice and say in how government is run. Democracy provides for the expression of all opinions, but it also allows for the implementation of the will of the majority, according to Obiora (2008, p.233). Therefore, democracy provides the platform in which decisions are made by obtaining the consent of the majority. Democracy, according Appadorai (2004), is a form of government in which the people exercise their authority either directly or through representatives who are recurrently elected by the people.

Political development refers to the process through which a society evolves politically, progressing towards more inclusive, participatory and responsive political systems. It involves the establishment and strengthening of democratic institutions, the expansion of political rights and freedoms and the deepening of civic engagement and political awareness among citizens. The concept political development encompasses various aspects, including: democratization, institutional development, rule of law, citizen participation, political culture and international support. Political development is a complex and ongoing process that can take place at different levels, from local communities to national governments and international institutions. It is influenced by historical, cultural, economic and social factors and its pace and outcomes can vary across different countries and regions. The emergence of four political parties in the Southeast provides insight into the region's political development.

### **Theoretical Framework-Group Theory**

The study is anchored on group theory. The development of group theory lie in doctrine of pluralism as developed by a number of 20<sup>th</sup> century English writers. The proponents include: Arthur F. Bentley (1908), John Figgis, F.W. Maitland and Cole (Varma, 1975). Group theory owes its origin to Arthur F. Bentley. The study is anchored on group theory. The proponents include: Arthur F. Bentley (1908), John Figgis, F.W. Maitland and Cole (Varma, 1975). Group theory owes its origin to Arthur F. Bentley. Bentley emphasized the significant of group theory in politics and proposed that dynamic processes rather than particular institutions or substantive substance make up society. He maintained that each group of individuals cuts across many others to form society, country and the government. According to Bentley, there is no such thing as an effective individual interest, every group has its own interests and these interests inevitably lead to group action. Additionally, there is no single group interest that encompasses everyone in society.

The underlying assumption of group theory is that the state is made up of institutional and non-institutional players who are products of their historical, socio-economic, political and several other contexts. This implies that different groups have conflicting interests and that the state serves as a tool for maintaining control. Thus, there is no group without its interest. This implies that group and interests are inseparable. According to Dappa *et al.* (2021), the origin of group theory is the idea that mankind cannot survive alone and so want to live in groups. These groups are constantly interacting with one another.

The theory assumes that every group of people has a goal or an interest that cannot be separated from the group and thus, men combine to influence decision makers. It is the interest that leads the group. Every civilization, according this theory's proponents, contains a variety of groups that are constantly at odds with one another for dominance and power. Also, no group in society has the monopoly of power. The proponents believe that power is divided among interest groups that are in competition with one another for control. Therefore, the majority of calls for and arguments in favour of policy are made by formalized groups.

The explanation for the use of the group theory in this paper hinges on the fact that group and interest cannot be separated. In fact, interest drive group into action. Political parties are one example of a vast number of groupings that are still engaged in an ongoing conflict for dominance and power. Prior to 2023 general elections in Nigeria, People Democratic Party (PDP) governs two states in Southeast (Abia and Enugu States). PDP lost Abia state due to bad governance to Labour Party. This depicts the extent of competition among different political groups in Southeast. In 1999, People Democratic Party (PDP) governs the whole five states in Southeast but owing to struggle and competition for power among political parties, it is steadily losing control in Southeast. Currently, the Southeast is home to four political parties: APC controls two states, LP one state, PDP one state and APGA one state. This is due to the outcome of 2023 general elections. The establishment of four political parties in the administration of the Southeast states will intensify struggle, competition and battle for dominance among these political groups.

### **General Overview of Political Development in the Southeast Nigeria**

The political development of South-East geopolitical zone is rapidly evolving. Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi and Imo are the states in Southeast Nigeria. Therefore, political landscape in the region is diverse and has been influenced by various factors, including the historical, cultural and economic dynamics of the zone. The Igbo ethnic group's quest for greater political representation and a sense of fairness in national politics explains for one important political development in Southeast Nigeria. This sentiment stems partly from the region's perception that it has not received an equitable share of political power and infrastructural development compared to other regions of Nigeria. This has prompted the

establishment of socio-cultural and informal organizations fighting for the rights and interests of the Igbo people.

Among the political parties operating in the region include the PDP, APC, APGA, LP and other smaller parties. Historically, the PDP has had a strong foothold in Southeast, producing several governors and political leaders in the geopolitical zone. However, APC and other parties like APGA and LP have made inroads in recent years, gaining more support and winning some key elections.

**Table 1: Political Parties Performances in the South East States from 1999-2023**

Election Cycle	States					Percentages			
	Abia	Anambra	Ebonyi	Enugu	Imo	APC	APGA	LP	PDP
1999-2003	PDP	PDP	PDP	PDP	PDP	-	-	-	100
2003-2007	PDP	PDP/APG A	PDP	PDP	PDP	-	10	-	90
2007-2011	PDP	APGA	PDP	PDP	PDP	-	20	-	80
2011-2015	PDP	APGA	PDP	PDP	APGA/ APC	10	30	-	60
2015-2019	PDP	APGA	PDP	PDP	APC	20	20	-	60
2019-2023	PDP	APGA	PDP/ APC	PDP	APC	20	20	-	50
2023-Date	LP	APGA	APC	PDP	APC	40	40	20	20

**Compiled by the authors**

**KEYS:**

APC = All Progress Congress

APGA: All Progressive Grand Alliance

LP:= Labour Party

PDP:= Peoples Democratic Party

From the table above; it can be deciphered that only Enugu has remained a PDP State to date while other states have shifted to other political parties. At one electoral cycle or another either through decamping as happened in Imo in 2013 when Governor Rochas Okorocha decamped from APGA to APC and in 2021 when Governor of Ebonyi State left the PDP for APC. Again, through judicial pronouncements Governor Peter Obi of Anambra State came to power under APGA in 2006 while Senator Hope Uzodinma became Governor of Imo State in 2020 under, the auspice of APC, by replacing Dr. Chris Nwabueze of PDP and Emeka Ihedioha of PDP, respectively.

These developments have made the South-East Zone presently in terms of political party representation, one which has wrought and will still bring healthy competitions in the affairs of the region, drawn from the ideology, manifestoes, of the political parties, personality traits of the governors and other extant environmental milieus.

The emergence of four different political groups in Southeast governance has played significant roles in shaping the region's political development. Each state has its own governor who oversees its affairs and these governors often influence local and national politics and development. Their actions and policies can impact the overall political climate and public sentiment in the region. PDP won the five

Southeast states in 1999, when democracy was restored in Nigeria. The PDP is now losing ground to rival political parties in the Southeast geopolitical region. Evidently, the PDP's demise began in Anambra State when Chris Uba, acting through party structure, rejected Chinwoke Mbadinuju's bid for second term as governor. This occasion can be attributed to Dr. Chris Ngige's selection as a candidate for governor in the contentious 2003 election (Njoku, 2023).

Peter Obi challenged INEC's pronouncement that Dr. Chris Ngige won the governorship election before the election tribunal. Njoku (2023) argued that Peter Obi was given justice in court and quickly sworn in as the state's governor on the APGA platform. According to Ajisebiyawo(2015), the absence of internal democracy has led to widely reported crises within political parties, where acrimonious disputes have arisen over the imposition of candidates for elections and as a result of the charitable avarice of the political godfathers. For instance, the victory of Dr. Chris Ngige and PDP in the 2003 governorship election was based on political bargaining with his godfather, Chief Chris Uba ended in an ugly drama. Governor Ngige while still serving as the Governor was abducted on July 10 2003, by the forces believed to be working in the interest of the godfather for reneging on some of the agreements the Governor reached with the godfather before being imposed on the party and rigged to office (Ajisebiyawo, 2015).

The era of manipulation of the leadership and structures of political parties by political gladiators at various levels, especially the political executives is reinforced, in astute disregard for intra-party democratic norms of mutual inclusion, respect for party's constitution as well as asserting party discipline. Political party rules and procedures are jettisoned for political calculations and gains by intensified by few cabals across the party lines. Provocation and violent attacks at political party meetings, campaign rallies, party congress and primaries now prevail on daily basis. Political actors in Nigeria under the aegis of political parties perpetuate assassination of perceived opponents, arson and destruction in their desperate bid to control party machineries ahead of the general elections (Ajisebiyawo, 2015).

Njoku (2023) claimed that PDP was unable to retake Anambra State after losing to APGA and it has continued to lose seats in both the State House of Assembly and National Legislature. For instance, in the general elections of 2023, PDP was able to gain two seats in the State House of Assembly and National Assembly but was unsuccessful in winning any seats in the National Assembly. One could claim that the lack of internal democracy and the intra-party conflict have harmed PDP's chances of winning in the state. Several party members have been compelled by this to look for political fulfillment in other political parties.

After the 2007 general elections, Ikedi Ohakim of the Peoples Progressives Alliance (PPA) became the governor of Imo State as a result of internal crisis in the PDP. In the meantime, Rochas Okorochoa of the APGA won the governorship election in the 2011 general elections. Unfortunately, Rochas Okorochoa headed the group of APGA that formed APC prior to the 2015 general elections. This explains the rise of APC in Southeast. Emeka Ihedioha won the 2019 governorship election due to the organization of the PDP in the state, which was made possible by the lessons learned from past elections. However, the PDP's success was short-lived because the Supreme Court declared Hope Uzodinna of the APC as the legitimate victor (Njoku, 2023). At the National Assembly, PDP won three House of Representatives seats but APC and LP control the Senate seats respectively after the 2023 general elections.

In 2020, all members of the State House of Assembly including the immediate past Governor Dave Umahi, joined the APC. The APC retained the state in the general elections of 2023, winning the governorship while PDP was able to capture two of the 24 seats in the State House of Assembly. Furthermore, the PDP lost every seat in the National Assembly. According to some party members, the PDP's dismal showing in the elections especially in Ebonyi State is the result of internal strife inside the

party.

The political developments in Abia State indicate that the PDP and other parties were defeated by LP in the 2023 governorship election. The PDP lost the three senatorial seats to APC, APGA and LP. PDP gained one seat and lost seven to other in the battle for the House of Representative. Also, PDP was able to win 11 of the available 24 seats in the State House of Assembly. It is clear from the preceding that the PDP's defeat in Southeast may be attributed to internal party strife from irate party members, the imposition of candidates, and lack of internal democracy, a failure to comply with the zoning structure, corruption and unsatisfactory governance in the Southeast states.

The PDP was fortunate to win the governorship election in 2023 for Enugu State, but it does not appear that PDP's troubles are over as other opposition parties are currently contesting INEC's announcement that the PDP candidate won. Six seats in the House of Representatives and two of the senatorial seats have been lost by the PDP for first time since 1999. PDP was able to win 10 seats in the House of Assembly but lost 14 to LP. According to Mbah (2011), power is no longer a thing held in trust in Nigeria; it has become a fraud which every politician clamours to benefit from. Similarly, the goal of political participation in Nigeria is to seize control of the government for personal gain (Godwin, 2015). Internal crisis in Nigerian political parties often arises from power struggles, ideological differences, lack of internal democracy, and issues related to party leadership. These conflicts can have consequences on party unity, public perception, ultimately the stability of the political system. They also provide opportunities for party realignments; result in the establishment of new parties.

### **Why the Emergence of Four Political Parties in the Governance of Southeast Nigeria?**

The western world sees political party as a functional group than in structural terms. According to Jinadu (2011), political parties serve as a platform for carrying out government functions and aid in structuring electoral decision-making. Furthermore, political parties are important for democratic states because they provide voters a selection of candidates and platforms to choose from in an environment of competitive party and electoral politics. By doing this, they assist in determining which political parties should hold office for a set period of time (Jinadu, 2011; Mbah & Nwangwu, 2014).

In order to function effectively, political parties must form local affiliates, solicit popular support in elections, engage in political recruitment and be devoted to obtaining or retaining power (La Palombara & Wemer, 1966). Importantly, they engage in the competition for elective positions. Scholars like Mbah & Nwangwu (2014) and Ball and Guy Peters (2000) have share similar views that changes in political process accounts for why political parties present candidates and leaders to the electorate and seek to mobilize support of the electorate by manifesto, propaganda, ideology, organized activities and highlighting contrasts in programs with rival political parties under a party system that is competitive.

Therefore, political dynamics, competition and governance in Southeast Nigeria play a significance role in shaping the region's socio-economic development and overall progress. The political dynamic and competition in the Southeast is typically intense with various political parties vying for power and influence. PDP has dominated the political space in Southeast since 1999 however, with present political dynamics; other political parties have also had a significance presence and participated in the political competition. After 24 years of consistent support for PDP and the time the Southeast expected the party to reward the geopolitical zone with the presidential ticket the party isolated the region. PDP neglected the region and the people of Southeast revolted for taking them for granted. The Southeast has been a major support base for the PDP.

Giving the political dynamics and competitiveness in the Southeast before and during the 2023

elections, this shows that people are no longer ready for the underperformance of the PDP in the Southeast. The people rally around Peter Obi and Labor Party. The emergence of four political parties in the governance of Southeast is an indication of redefinition of democracy that is built on people's support. It is a democratic revolution that took place through political dynamism and competitiveness arising from different political groups. Also, this shows the republican nature of the South-East States.

A house divided against itself, according to Ezeani Emmanuel in an interview with Ayantoye (2023), cannot stand. Therefore, internal strife played a significant role in the PDP's downfall. Ezeani further contended that the obedient movements were made up of individuals who had supported the PDP in previous elections. Similarly, Makodi Nnabugwu in an interview with Ayantoye (2023) stated that the establishment of four political parties in the region was due to the representation of a capable character that is challenging to discredit. For over 24 years, Southeasterners have historically trusted and supported PDP. However, due to the PDP government's weak leadership and the lack of a reward system in the region, Southeasterners decided to support LP and other opposition parties instead of the PDP.

The reality is that the restiveness among the South-Easterners is very obvious and palpable, because they are hungry, insecure, angry (exclusiveness) and desire a change in governance (Ucheagu, 2022). Statistics shows that youth make up 60 per cent of Nigeria's population and 60 per cent of this number is unemployed and underemployed on equal basis. This is an indication that the battered and beaten youths seized an opportunity provided by police brutality to take to the streets for revolutionary mass protests (Ucheagu, 2022).

According to Akinola (2011) and Shanum (2013), governance is important for development. Security and other socio-economic objectives cannot be achieved without strong without excellent administration (Akinola, 2011). According to Shanum (2013), no country can experience permanent peace if its population continues to live in abject poverty, especially if that country is thought to be naturally endowed with a number of resources that can ensure growth. Sadly, Nigeria is a wealthy nation with bad administration, unstable security and poverty. According to Yagboyaju & Akinola (2019), Nigeria is one of the world's 19 poorest, unhappiest, unhealthiest and most dangerous countries. They attributed this to Nigeria's bad administration.

The emergence of Labor Party has given the Igbo people the opportunity to choose who should govern them, instead of selfish Igbo elites who owe allegiance to the North in order to maintain their political dominance. Thus, the creation of the IPOB group as the representative of the Igbo has resulted from the dearth of patriotic Igbo leaders who are not dedicated to the cause of the Igbo ethnic group. The Igbo people are in desperate need of political leaders who can uphold Southeast interests and promote regional development without relying entirely on the national government. The Igbo coalesce around Peter Obi and the Labor Party in their hunt for a leader who they feel can look inward.

### **Political Parties and Governance of Southeast Nigeria**

The People's Democratic Party (PDP) historically, has dominated the governance of Southeast Nigeria however political landscape in Southeast has some changes in recent time with the rise of four competitive political parties challenging PDP's dominance. The All Progressive Congress (APC) is one noble party that has gained traction in Southeast. When Muhammadu Buhari, the party's presidential candidate, won the election in 2015 the All Progressive Congress (APC), a national party rose to prominence. Since then, the APC has made efforts to expand its influence across the country including the Southeast.

This marked a departure from the traditional dominance of the PDP in Southeast Nigeria. The APC was successful to gain two states (Imo and Ebonyi) from the region. Apart from the APC other parties like APGA and LP have emerged as competitive forces in the Southeast. APGA has traditionally been strong

in the region, particularly in Anambra State where it has produced three governors. The emergence of competitive political parties in the governance of Southeast Nigeria reflects a growing trend of political pluralism and a desire for alternative political options among the electorate. The rise of parties like APC, APGA and LP has introduced a more competitive and dynamic political environment. This competition can potentially lead to increased accountability and responsiveness among political actors, as they strive to win the support of the electorate. The political parties and the number of states in each geopolitical zone are displayed in the table below.

**Table 1: Political Parties and the Number of States in each Geopolitical Zone after 2023 General Elections**

<b>Political Parties</b>	<b>South-East</b>	<b>South-South</b>	<b>South-West</b>	<b>North-Central</b>	<b>North-East</b>	<b>North-West</b>
PDP	1	5	1	1	3	1
APC	2	1	5	5	3	5
APGA	1	-	-	-	-	-
LP	1	-	-	-	-	-
NNPP	-	-	-	-	-	1

Compiled by the Authors

Form the table one can argue that in Southeast Nigeria there are four political parties. This is a unique characteristic that only the South East Zone will showcase in Nigeria from May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023 onwards and therefore needs to be interrogated and assessed in terms of its developmental potentials. Political Parties are built through their manifestoes and personal attributes of the governors also influences the direction of development that will necessarily follow in these states. Again, the spirit of competition among the states will enhance development in the zone as already shown in the building of Airports in Anambra and Ebonyi States as well as the construction of Flyover bridges in major roads in the zone.

In terms of development and governance, the political parties in Southeast Nigeria have different approaches towards policies adoption and implementation. The actual implementation and success of these policies can vary based on the effectiveness and commitment of seating governors in Southeast. Any political party that wants to have a greater chance at winning in the future must therefore create policies that deal with the region's socio-economic issues, infrastructure issues and other forms of insecurity. Also, this can present the governors of the region with the opportunity to attract the presence of national development in Southeast articulating a clear development agenda that addresses the specific needs and aspirations of the region. The agenda can prioritize areas like security, infrastructure, agriculture, job creation, investment promotion and others.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

In conclusion, the governance of Southeast states in Nigeria has been influenced by the emergence of multiple parties. These four parties would likely engage in political competition, vying for power and influence within the Southeast states. The emergence of multiple parties could lead to a more diverse political landscape, offering voters a wider range of options and fostering healthy democratic debate. Also, it is important to note that if not properly manage the multiple political parties can divide the region rather than building integrated Southeast, Nigeria when it comes to representation and inclusion at the national government.

However, based on the assessment provided, here are some recommendations regarding the development of multiple parties in the governance of Southeast Nigeria.

- ❖ Multiple Political parties in Southeast Nigeria can attract the presence of national development by adopting a multi-faceted approach. This involves formulating a comprehensive development agenda, promoting inclusive governance, engaging with grassroots communities, investing in human capital development (Southeast Youth Development Policy), promoting economic diversification, prioritizing infrastructure development (such as rail lines, seaports construction, roads construction linking Igboland to other zones and among others), fostering regional integration and cooperation, restoring our values in Igboland and reorienting our youths, embracing technology and innovation.
- ❖ By implementing these strategies political parties can contribute to the overall development of Southeast Nigeria through looking inwards and ensuring that the region's interests are effectively represented at the national level in line with the Federal Republic of Nigeria's 1999 constitution, as amended as well as any other current laws and regulations.

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