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EFFECTS OF THE AMENDMENT OF 1957 CHIEFTAINCY DECLARATION OF IBADAN COUNCIL OF CHIEFS ON THE 2019 GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION IN OYO STATE

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Abstract

Ibadan Council of Chiefs became a center of conflict and political anger in the 2019 gubernatorial election due to the amendment of the 1957 chieftaincy declaration by the Abiola Ajimobi-led government in 2016. This degenerated into division among the members of the Ibadan Council of Chiefs. The paper uses qualitative methods such as information from newspapers, journals, and the Internet to address its theoretical and empirical concerns. Using modern elite theory, the paper argues that the amendment of the 1957 chieftaincy declaration of the Ibadan Council of Chiefs served as a political instrument of the government to elevate and install more loyal traditional rulers to their political party because of the rift between the then governor and the Olubadan of Ibadan. The paper also revealed that the amendment divided the Ibadan Council of Chiefs into two, and turned to intra - tribal conflict among the council members and inter-party affairs in the state. This eventually contributed to the loss of the ruling party (The All Progressive Congress (APC) of the 2019 gubernatorial election. The paper recommends that the elevation and installation of the Obas or chiefs should be insulated from political affairs but restricted to the affairs of the traditional council of Obas and chiefs in the state. There is a need for the state government to legislate and separate chieftaincy affairs from the ministry of local government to put a stop to the escalation of the chieftaincy tussle in the state because of the contribution and impact of the traditional rulers in government.

Keywords: Amendment, chieftaincy-declaration, Ibadan Council of Chiefs and Gubernatorial Election

Introduction

Traditional rulers and political officeholders are sin qua –non in Nigerian electioneering processes. For instance, politicians seek the adoption and support of traditional rulers on their political ambitions in terms of electoral sensitisation, citizenship education, and assurance of security of lives and property, as former governor Ajimibi sought the support of the Alaafin Adeyemi III in his 2011 governorship election (Bakare, 2024). This is because traditional rulers are capable of mobilizing, coordinating, and swaying the choices of the citizens during the election (Godwin, 2019). This gives room for them to influence election and electioneering processes in terms of who becomes political office holders that would respect the institution they occupy and support their agitation in their respective states and the nation at large. This influence has made every political contestant from various registered political parties in the state pay homage to or visit the traditional rulers during the electioneering campaign. As fathers to all, traditional rulers give royal blessings to all the aspirants who pay visits to their palaces because they all come from their domains, and whoever emerges also receives the support of the traditional rulers (Yelwa, 2011).

However, the above working relationship between the traditional rulers and political officeholders became a conflict in Oyo state from 1999 to 2019. This usually occurred between the governor and the traditional rulers who did not support the political ambition of the governor in power and his policy implementation. In this case, many governors made a series of policies to restrain, restrict, and downgrade traditional rulers who did not support the political ambition of the governor while the traditional rulers who survived the stringent policy of government mobilised and worked for a political party that would liberate him from his predicaments (Simon, 2017). For instance, Senator Abiola Ajimobi gained his second term ambition in 2015, with the support of many prominent traditional rulers in the state like the Alaafin of Oyo, Olugbon of Ile Igbon Aseyin of Iseyin, just to mention a few, while traditional rulers like the Olubadan of Ibadan and Soun of Ogbomosho did not give their support to him because he did not reinstate and recognize the Olubadan of Ibadan as the chairman of the council of Obas and chief, as amended by his predecessor (Chief Alao Akala in 2011). As a result of this, governor Ajimobi came out with the review of 1957 Ibadan Chieftaincy Declaration and other related matters that would give room for him to have more beaded crown Obas in Ibadan land by the present size and population of the city and pave way for socio-economic development of Ibadan land and Oyo State in general, which is one of the cardinal objectives of his administration (Simon, 2017 & daily Punch, 2017). In this case, the governor set up a seven-man Judicial Panel commission headed by a retired High Court judge, Justice Akintunde Boade. The commission was tasked to review the existing requirements and qualifications for ascendancy to the throne of Olubadan of Ibadan, as well as the selection and processes of Olubadan from the Otun to the Balogun lines (Simon, 2017).

In the same vein, on Sunday, August 27^{th,} 2017, governor Ajimobi elevated eleven (11) high chiefs in the Olubadan-in-Council and twenty-one (21) ancient Baales (lesser chiefs) to the beaded crown Obas. In other words, the elevation was criticized by the late Olubadan of Ibadan (Oba Saliu Adetunji), High Chief Rasidi Adewolu Oladoja (former governor of the state and one of the eleven members of Olubadan-in-Council), members of Central Council of Ibadan Indigenes (CCII), and leadership of opposition political parties such as Accord Party, ZL, PDP, and ADC. The Olubadan of Ibadan and High Chief Rasidi Oladoja challenged the governor's power and authority to elevate anybody to the beaded crown without consulting the Oyo State Council of Oba and Chiefs, by chief's law 2000, cap 28. which states that the Governor may from time to time after consultation with the council of Obas and chiefs of the state by order specify the chieftaincies the holder for the time being of which are entitled to wear beaded

crowns (Oyo state chief's Law). This was not followed because the state council of Obas and chiefs did not sit as a result of supremacy conflict among Obas and chiefs from 2011 to 2017 (Daily Punch, 2017).

However, the Olubadan of Ibadan and his co-agitator headed to the Ibadan High Court to stop the panel from sitting and inauguration the commission. In the same vein, the leadership of opposition political parties maintained that the elevation was done to chase High Chief Rashidi Oladoja out of active politics to pave the way for Governor Ajimobi and his political party, the All-Progressives Congress (APC) to be re-elected in the 2019 gubernatorial election (Adeyemi, 2017). It was also a way to frustrate the plan of the leadership of opposition political parties to form a coalition between the Accord Party and other political parties like ZL, PDP, and ADC that would produce a formidable opposition to the APC in the 2019 elections. It is against this background that the paper seeks to examine the impact of the amendment of the 1957 Ibadan Chieftaincy declaration on the 2019 Gubernatorial Election in Oyo State.

Statement of the Problem

The Olubadan - council of Chiefs became in conflict as a result of the amendment of the 1957 chieftaincy declaration of the Ibadan Council of Chiefs which gave the governor Ajimobi to upgrade and elevate some Ibadan high chiefs to beaded crown Obas in 2017 as a result of the political ambition of his political party and 2019 gubernatorial election in the state. This degenerated into a division among high Chiefs in the Ibadan Council of Chiefs and members of the Central Council of Ibadan Indigenes (CCII) (for instance, the division between high chief Rashidi Oladija and high chief Lakan Balogun in 2017 on the above policy of government). This turned to intra-tribal conflict among the members of the above council and became political affairs in the state.

Methodology

The paper adopts a qualitative method to address the effects of the amendment of the 1957 chieftaincy declaration of the Ibadan Council of Chiefs, which consists of non–numerical data such as historical events gazette chief law of Oyo state council of Obas and chiefs and in-depth interview format. Major actors in the traditional institution and political officeholders were interviewed.

Theoretical Framework: Modern Elite Theory

The paper adopts modern elite theory to explain and analyze major issues on the amendment of the 1957 chieftaincy declaration of the Ibadan Council of Chiefs on the 2019 gubernatorial election in Oyo State. The proponents of this theory include Wright Mills (1950), Jeremy B, Michael Mann, Theda Skocpol, and many others (Adeosun, Ismail & Zaengeni, 2016). The central argument of the above theory is that, if disunities national elite, which is the most common type, produce a series of unstable regimes that tend to oscillate between authoritarian and democratic forms over varying intervals. This explains the position of the Olubadan of Ibadan, High Chief Rasidi Oladoja. members of the Central Council of Ibadan Indigenes (CCII) and the opposition party in the state against the power and authority of Governor Ajimobi to elevate anybody to the beaded crown without consulting the Oyo State Council of Oba and Chiefs. There is disunity among members of the Oyo State Council of Obas and chiefs, as a result of the supremacy struggle. This gave birth to the counter-reaction of the above agitators and pushed and pulled off the traditional elites and state government in the 2019 gubernatorial election. This is because the power to retain or reject the amendment resides on who wins the 2019 gubernatorial election.

It also argues that the elite is thus composed of those who hold the leading positions in the strategic hierarchies and the cohesiveness of the elites will be in large part determined by the closeness of the links between institutional hierarchies. and If these hierarchies are scatted and disjointed, then their respective elites tend to be scattered and disjoined; if they have many interconnections and points of coinciding interest, then their elites tend to form a coherent kind of grouping" (Mills in Duru, 2021) and politics is always a matter of struggle among groups for power and status (Duru, 2021). This also buttresses how the 2019 gubernatorial election in the state became a determinant to retain or reject those who were elevated and crowned as Obas by the amendment of the 1957 declaration of the Ibadan Council of Chiefs.

The Root of the 1957 Ibadan Chieftaincy Declaration

The composition of the Ibadan chieftaincy institution explains the cosmopolitan nature of its population which comprises Oyo, Egba, Ijebu, Ife peoples, and groups from other areas in Yorubaland (Ogunmola 2010). Location with different ethnicities, cultures, and ideas. As well as trade, migration, and historical connections of Ibadan in Yoruba land describe its cosmopolitan character because it borders forest and grassland (Adebayo, 2003). With this, Ibadan developed as a commercial center and received goods from the coast, the Yoruba interior, and other areas in northern Yorubaland. Traders from Ijebuland, Egbaland, Oyo, Ogbomosho, Ijaye, Hausa land, and Nupe land all converged at Ibadan to exchange their products. This location was one of the factors that attracted a few Brazilians who had been freed from slavery across the Atlantic and had subsequently settled in Sierra Leone and found their way to Ibadan, later in the century. The above factors described Ibadan as a war camp before it became a metropolis, this is because its people were farmers, craftsmen, and warriors (Adebayo, 2003). It was based on the above that established the Ibadan government which is described as a" military republic" because the Ibadan society was made up of Yoruba warriors such as Bashorun Oluyole, Bashorun Ogunmola, Aare Latosa just to mention a few. As a result of the rapid development of the town in terms of population and expansion of its territory in the nineteenth century, the military leader created the office of civilian leaders of the state (known as Baale), to have an all-encompassing and stable government, though the incumbents were always retired war veterans and not just any civilian (Falola 1989). This composition gave birth to two distinct chieftaincy lines that could succeed in the Battleship. One was the Balogun (military) line, while the other was the Baale (civil) line (Adebayo, 2003). In the same vein, the Seriki line which comprised some war chiefs was an adjunct to the Balogun line. Therefore, the military and civil lines succeeded alternately while promotion was from the lower titles to the higher ones. An aspirant to the chieftaincy structure joined the hierarchy at the bottom and proceeded into the next rung of the ladder via promotions occasioned by the creation of any vacancy in the upper rungs. This system ensured that there were few succession disputes in Ibadan; it also meant that only the very old became Baale. The Iyalode line was made up of female chiefs who could not succeed in the Baaleship but saw to women's affairs in the city (Falola 1989).

However, the first alteration to the above governmental structure was in 1895 when Balogun Akintola declined the office of Baale because they did not want to promote his junior in the Balogun line above him, an Otun Baale Osuntoki was chosen, and this was the first time when the Otun had the opportunity to become Baale. Hitherto, the post of Otun represented the apex of the career of the Baales line of chiefs. Another amendment was made in 1902 when Balogun Kongi wanted to become the Baale, but he **was** denied the opportunity to occupy the post because he against the colonial rulers (Falola 1989).

1904 constitutional amendment was also part of the attraction of the Ibadan chieftaincy structure which stated that only the Otun Baale could become the Baale and Balogun Apampa had to become an Otun Baale to become eligible for the Baaleship. This degenerated into a

power rivalry between the Balogun Apampa and Baale Dada Opadare who was forced to live only for a short period on the throne (1904-1907).

In the same vein, from 1895 to 1914, the Baale line (civil leader) and Balogun line (Military leaders) **were** at longerhead over the automatic promotion of Balogun chiefs to Baaleship in Ibadan land (Tomoria 2003). For instance, the Olubadan of Ibadan led by Abass Alesinloye, with the support of Iyalode Rukayat Ajisomo Arogubodi (1851-1951) protested against the move of Chief Alesinloye Okunola Abass to promote Bello Okunola Abass, (the President of Egbe Omo Ibile Ibadan (Ibadan Descendants Union) to become his successor in 1950. The rivalry between the two Ibadan chieftaincy lines led to a declaration of Native Law and Custom of Ibadan chieftaincy by the Ibadan Native Authority in August 1946. This declaration was based on the appointment of a new ruler of the town and Balogun eventually ceased to be the only successor to the Baale. Therefore, part of the Declaration of 1946 read thus:

> The holder of any title in either the Olubadan line or the Balogun line in the rank of senior Chief shall be eligible for the post of Olubadan, but the two lines shall succeed in turn. In the event of a vacancy occurring, Chiefs in the line from which the late holder was promoted shall not be eligible (Punch 2017).

In this case, the above chieftaincy declaration was incorporated into the Chiefs Law of 1957 section 4 (3) and it went further to treat the eleven members of Olubadan. In order words, the Western Region government decided that the chieftaincy declaration should be registered with the government and registered in 1957 chief's law of the region.

In the same vein, on 8th August 1959 the Chieftaincy Committee of Ibadan District Council, designated by a Western Region Legal Notice as the competent Council made another Declaration. This declaration superseded that of 1946 and its 1950 chief's law as amended because it was signed by the chairman and secretaries of the committees, such as I.B. Akinyele and William A. Warren respectively (Tomoria 2003).

The declaration was subsequently approved by the Minister of Local Government under the leadership of Chief D.S Adegbenro on 7th October 1959 and Registered by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government on 28th October 1959. In this case, the declaration remained in force since then, despite the attempt made to subvert it in 1983 by many high chiefs of Ibadan like High Chief Oloyede Asanike, and the declaration was eventually upheld. That Is;

(1) Succession to the stool of Olubadan shall be in strict rotation between "the Olubadan line "and "the Balogun Line ".

(2) There are eleven (11) kingmakers as under:

Otun Olubadan	The Balogun
Osi Olubadan	Otun Balogun
Asipa Olubadan	Osi Balogun
Ekerin Olubadan	Asipa Balogun
The Iyalode	Ekerin Balogun
	Seriki (Premium Time (2017)

(3) The field of selection for the foregoing provision shall not exceed beyond the Ekerin Olubadan on the Olubadan line and the Ekerin Balogun on the Balogun line.

(4) Any Chief from any of these embraced in provision (a) above found guilty by a meeting of the Chiefs who are traditional members of the Council (at which the nominated candidate shall not be present) of disregard of or disrespect to the patron of or disrespect to the position of authority of the Olubadan, or of a senior chief under Native Law and Custom may not be eligible for nomination (Tomoria 2003)

In this declaration, every chief on the civil line has to climb 22 steps and every chief on the military line has to climb 23 steps to become Olubadan. This usually takes decades to groom

an Olubadan for the stool through the stages of chieftaincy promotion, which is an average of 35 to 40 years. For instance, it took immediate past Olubadan, Oba Saliu Adetunji Aje Ogungunniso I, 40 years to occupy the stool, having been installed as Mogaji in 1976 and Jagun in 1978. He was installed as the 41st Olubadan on March 4, 2016. Jagun is the first step on the Olubadan line. His predecessor Oba Samuel Odulana Odugade I, waited for 35 years before he became Olubadan. He was promoted to Jagun in 1976 and crowned as Olubadan of Ibadan on August 17, 2007, at the age of 93. His reign lasted nine years (Punch, 2017).

His predecessor, Oba Yinusa Ogundipe Arapasowu I, who was born in 1912, was crowned the 39th Olubadan at the age of 79 on May 7, 1999. He had waited for 39 years to occupy the stool, and he reigned for eight years before he joined his ancestors in 2007 at the age of 87. He was appointed Mogaji of his compound at Oranyan in 1960 and was promoted to Jagun Balogun in 1964.

Oba Emmanuel Adeyemo Operinde I, his predecessor, spent 41 years between the time he was appointed the Mogaji of his family at Isale Ijebu in 1953 and January 14, 1994, when he was crowned as the 38th Olubadan. He reigned for five years. The 37th Olubadan, Oba Yesufu Oloyede Asanike I, was also in his 80s when he became king in 1983 and his reign lasted 10 years, just to mention a few (Tomoria 2003).

The Position of the Oyo State Chiefs Law on the Installation and Upgrading of Oba and Chiefs in Ibadan Chieftaincy Institution

The chieftaincy institution in Ibadan is one of the recognized institutions in South Western Nigeria with a unique traditional structure of ascension of Oba and chiefs. The uniqueness of this institution is a result of its historical formation and its location in southwestern Nigeria. For instance, Ibadan is constituted by different Yoruba sub-ethnic groups after the collapse of the old Oyo empire. The Yoruba entities include, Oyo, Egba, Ijebu, Ife, and Ogbomosho and they influence the chieftaincy system of Ibadan land. (Johnson 2019). This makes the Ibadan chieftaincy structure an oligarchy, aristocracy and military republican in nature. (that is the leadership structure of Ibadan is made up of few people in both military houses which is called Ballogun and aristocracy in nature). This makes Ibadan not a typical 'traditional Yoruba community because it is a product of the nineteenth-century Yoruba civil war and served as a war camp for Yoruba warriors (Falola, 1989).

Before the contemporary political system, the Ibadan chieftaincy institution was recognized as Baaleship, that is, the occupant of the institution was called Baale (lesser Oba) which described the entire Ibadan as a village or rural area to major Yoruba towns like Oyo, Ife, Egba etc. The reform of 1934 under the leadership of Resident Ward-Price, the headquarters of Oyo province was transferred to Ibadan from Oyo where it remained until 1938 as headquarters of the Chief Commissioner, Western Provinces. The title of Ibadan chieftaincy changed from Baale to Olubadan, in 1936 but the occupant remained Baale without a beaded crown (Falola,1989, Johnson 2009, & Atanda 1974).

In 1934, the Ibadan Chiefs requested for the occupant of the Olubadan to be a beaded crown Oba, not a village head. This is because the Baale title had become a derogatory one for the status of their ruler and too common because it was borne by the heads of tiny villages, palm wine sellers, and farmers' guilds. They also indicated a preference for the Olubadan and alluded to other related issues to obtain the consent of the government. (Falola 1989). This request was given recognition in October and gazetted on the 29th of the same month in 1936 by the Colonial Government in Lagos. This gazette was opposed by the Alaafin Ladigbolu 1, and he claimed that the change was a mere cosmetic, that is, the title of "Olubadan" does not confer upon the holder the right to wear a beaded crown, and it is hoped that no holder of it either in the future shall have such aspiration (Punch 2017).

Based on the contribution of the Ibadan leaders to the history of Yoruba land in terms of diplomatic and military prowess, during the nineteenth-century Yoruba civil war, the Alaafin Adeyemi III moved a motion in the chamber of the Oyo State Council of Obas and Chiefs, in 7th December 1976 to grant the Olubadan of Ibadan, Oba Gbadamosi Adebimpe and Soun of Ogbomosho Oba Jimoh Oladele Oladunni Ajagungbagbe III and their successors-in-title the perpetual right to wear beaded crown.

The Alaafin Adeyemi III states that:

> We have every cause to praise the patience, maturity, and the contributions of Ibadan people in the past and present scheme of Yoruba political hegemony; and that they should have to wait so long to ask constitutionally our inescapable duty as members of this great body to grant them. Chairman, based on the aforementioned reasons, I therefore, as the Alaafin of Oyo, move passionately that Oba Gbadamosi Adebimpe and all other subsequent Olubadans be accorded recognition in the matter of wearing beaded crowns and other paraphernalia of office (Ogunmola 2010)

In the same vein, the mover of this motion referred to the address of the Ooni of Ife at the conference of Obas and Chiefs of the old Western region held on the 7th of May 1957:

> Don't let us deceive ourselves it is not the hood that makes the monk; it is not the beaded crown that made the Oba. For instance, you have in the hierarchy of Chiefs rulers such as the Olubadan of Ibadan …… the fact is that non-wearing of the beaded crown by them does not detract a jot from the importance and dignity attached to their titles and their personalities (Punch, 2017)

It is on this note that the chairman of the council of Obas, the Ooni of Ife, and other prominent traditional rulers in the council such as the Owa Obookun of Ilesha, the Orangun of Ila. embraced and supported the motion and the request was granted with effect from 1st December 1976. In this case, the Oba Gbadamosi Akanbi Adebimpe (1976—77) was the first Olubadan of Ibadan to wear a beaded crown, and the successive governments in 1976 attempted to review the chieftaincy structure of Ibadan but none of their attempts able to conclude and have it in a gazette as a result of politics (Taiwo, 2017).

The above attempt is one of the reasons the chief's law of Oyo State Nigeria 2000 Cap 28 spells out the power of the governor about the appointment of recognized chieftaincies in the state. The laws state that it is the statutory duty of the governor to give approval or set aside any appointment made into any recognized Part II Chieftaincies, but the governor will not do this until the expiration of 21 days after he must have been notified of such appointment by the secretary of the competent council, that is, the local government concerned by Section 19 of the Chiefs Law. The period of 21 days is meant to allow an aggrieved candidate or aggrieved ruling house to make representations, that is, protest over the way and manner the appointment was done (Chief Law, 2000).

The law states that any person to be appointed as recognized chief, must not have been disqualified under any of the following grounds as contained in Section 14 (2) of the Chief Laws, that is, he must not be suffering from any serious physical infirmity; he must not be a lunatic and he must not be an ex-convict. Sections 14 (1) and (2) talk about the qualifications and disqualifications of any person to be appointed into recognized chieftaincy. It states that any person to be appointed into recognized chieftaincy shall be qualified if he is unanimously selected by his ruling house, though two or three candidates may be selected by his ruling

house, while the kingmakers have the power to appoint one. But the governor must approve the appointment.

The law further states that where a person is installed without prior approval of the governor, Section 21 of the Chief Law may be activated, which says: "Where a vacancy has occurred in a recognized chieftaincy and no person has been approved as successor thereto by the governor by this part, any person who installs or purports to install a person as such chief or any person who permits himself to be installed as such chief shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for two years (Chief's law2000). Suffice to state here that Section 26(1), (2), (3), (4) and (5) Cap. 28, Vol. 1, Laws of Oyo State empowers the governor to approve or review Chieftaincy Declaration of any chieftaincy.

Interplay between the Review of Ibadan Chief's Law of 1957 and the 2019 Gubernatorial Election in Oyo state.

The entity known today as Oyo State has undergone complicated and sophisticated gubernatorial elections since the creation of the state in 1976. This is because the state had the privilege of being the head of politics and administration in the pre-colonial period (the Alaafin of Oyo) and political headquarters of the southwestern region (the Ibadan) and the presence of age-long traditional rulers like the Ooni of Ife, the Alaafin of Oyo, Owa of Ilesha, Ila of Orungun, Ataoja of Oshogbo, Olubadan of Ibadan, Soun of Ogbomosho just to mention a few before the creation of Osun state. The presence of these two institutions has been shaping and contributing to the nature of recruiting political leaders in the state from 1976 to 2019. For instance, the presence of the Alaafin of Oyo in Oyo state gives room for traditional institutions to be influential and a determinant for political leadership recruitment, this is because the empire he headed was politically, economically, and militarily powerful than other kingdoms in Yorubaland (Atanda, 1980). Not only that the province he administered in the colonial period (the Oyo province), was the most populous and consisted of major Yoruba towns such as Ibadan, Oyo, Ile-Ife, Ilesa, Iseyin, Iwo, Ede, Ogbomosho, Ejigbo, Osogbo, Ikirun, Eruwa, Ikire, and Okeho-Iganna. while other Obas had immense contributions to the political development of the state like the Ooni of Ife, and the Olubadan of Ibadan. For instance, Egu, (2011) stressed that the present and the past of the position of the Ooni of Ife had huge contributions to the political status of the Oyo state from 1976 to 1991 (before the creation of Osun state). This is because the Ooni of Ife of Ife occupies the oldest Yoruba city which is also known as the place of dispersion of all Yoruba Obas. Therefore, all Yoruba Obas traced their origin to Ile Ife because the Oduduwa was the first divine king of the Yoruba people and the father of the institutions they occupied till today, this gave respect and honour to the state. Ile Ife also known as the place of people's traditional setting where artistic production began and added value to political power and wealth shifted to neighbouring kingdoms such as Benin and Oyo, the Ife artists created bronze, stone, and terracotta sculptures, some of which are found today in museums in Nigeria, Europe, and North America (Egu, 2011).

Ibadan maintains its uniqueness in terms of population and chieftaincy structure which is described as Oligarchy' military aristocracy leadership succession that produces rancor-free chieftaincy dispute, based on the guidelines and several chieftaincy declarations 1895 -1914, 1950-1957-59 as the case it may be. It is also the second largest city in Nigeria and the most populous indigenous city in West Africa which evolved as a military state in the nineteenth century. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Ibadan military political structure continued to evolve, as successive military leaders frequently modified it. It was not until the twentieth century that it eventually attained some degree of stability (Adeboye 2007).

Despite military government, from 1976 to 2019, traditional rulers and political functionaries maintained a symbiotic relationship, that is, they respected the principles that surrounded the two institutions. This is because disagreement either among traditional rulers or between traditional institutions and political office holders, poses challenges to political arrangement in the state. This has made the state disallow the power of incumbency in gaining political power of the state because of the diverse interests and influence between the traditional rulers and political functionaries in the state elections from 1979 to 2019, even after the creation of Osun state.

For instance, the supremacy battle between the Alaafin of Oyo and the Ooni of Ife was one of the factors that contributed to the loss of the reelection of Chief Bola to Omololu Olunloyo in 1983, who was the governor of Oyo state between 1979 – 1983. After the creation of Osun State, Oyo State maintained the above pattern from 1991 to 2015. For instance, Chief Kolapo Isola was the governor 2nd January 1992 to 17 November 1993, he did not complete his years as a result of military intervention in 1993. In the same vein, Alhaji Lamidi Adesina from 1999 to 2003. His reelection failed as a result of a supremacy conflict between the Alaafin of Oyo, Olubadan of Ibadan, and Soun of Ogbomosho, in which his resolution did not favor the Alaafin of **Oyo**. This also affected Senator Rashidi Ladoja from 2003 to 2007, not only that Chief Alao Akala from 2006 to 5 May 2011 was not spared from the above issue (Bakare, 2015).

However, second-term ambition became imperative for the administration of Senator Abiola Ajimobi immediately after he became the governor of the state in 2011 after several attempts. He discovered that supremacy conflict among traditional rulers in the state was one of the major challenges to the reelection of his predecessors which affected the power of incumbency in the state that many seating governors in Nigeria used to return to state power.

Governor Ajimobi took the bull by the horns, he switched into action over the controversial amendment of the chief's law of the state by his predecessor that amended the Permanent Chairmanship of the state council of Obas and chiefs to a rotational system between the Alaafin of Oyo and the Olubadan of Ibadan on one hand, and the Soun of Ogbomosho and the Alaafin of Oyo on the other. The amendment gave chairmanship of the council to the Olubadan of Ibadan and Soun of Ogbomosho on a rotational basis. The bill reads thus:

> According to the newly amended bill, section 3(3) provided that "the Chairmanship of the Council shall be rotated among the Alaafin of Oyo, the Olubadan of Ibadanland and the Soun of Ogbomoso, every two years and in the order specified in Schedule II whilst the Deputy Chairmanship shall be rotated every two years among members listed in Schedule II A and in the order specified therein". Schedule all is amended by deleting the said Schedule and inserting a new Schedule to read thus: The Olubadan of Ibadanland, the Soun of Ogbomoso, and the Alaafin of Oyo. They insert a new Schedule IIA to read thus: Olugbon of Orile Igbon; Eleruwa of Eruwa; Okere of Saki and Aseyin of Iseyin. (Oyo State Gazette No7, Vol36 of 5th May, 2011).

The above amendment was an attempt by his predecessor to kill the age-long permanent chairmanship of the Alaafin of Oyo; As a result of this, the Alaafin of Oyo headed to the court for redress on the nature and manner of the amendment took place. This began a struggle where the Alaafin had against the reelection of the Ajimobi's predecessor and paved the way for him to become governor of the state (Bakare, 2015).

One of the mechanisms the administration of Ajimobi put in place for his re-election in 2015 as a result of the above challenges, was the suspension of the council of Obas and Chiefs

meeting from 2011 to 2015 over the amendment of the Oyo state chief law. This generated reaction and counter-reaction among the traditional rulers and political functionaries. It also degenerated into a conflict between Governor Ajimobi and the Olubadan of Ibadan because the Olubadan of Ibadan claimed to be the current chairman of the state council of Obas and chiefs based on the amendment of the chief's law while the governor claimed the suspension of the council meeting relied on the case in Court filed by Alaafin of Oyo before the Council meeting was convened by the Olubadan of Ibadan. It would thus be an affront to the authority of the Court to allow the meeting to be held while the State Government was aware of the Court process, as earlier reported (Bakare 2015). This goes with common jurisprudent knowledge that, no party to a case shall take any action during the pendency of a case as this may prejudice judgment. This means that, as a government that swore to uphold the integrity of the judiciary, Governor Ajimobi had no option but to abide by the law. We are not a lawless government," the Governor said (Vanguard 2011 & Daily Nation 2012). The governor also claimed that the suspension of the council meeting was born out of the crisis that erupted during the first meeting of the Olubadan of Ibadan (claimed to be the chairman of the council between the pro-amendment of the chief's law which supported the Olubadan of Ibadan and anti-chief law which also supported the permeant chairmanship of the Alaafin of Oyo. this posed challenges to the peace and security of the state.

In other words, the People's Democratic Party, (PDP), in Oyo State accused Governor Abiola Ajimobi of violating the Chiefs Laws of the state by allegedly asking the Olubadan of Ibadan, to stop parading himself as the chairman of the council and convening the meeting of the crisis-ridden State Traditional Council of Obas and chiefs (Ajayi, 2011). The party also alerted Ibadan people that what Alao-Akala an Ogbomoso man did to respond to the long-term demand of the people of Ibadan; Ajimobi an Ibadan man had upturned it for alleged political exigencies. Therefore, the people and leaders of Ibadan land should know who their friend is. The Central Council of Ibadan Indigenes (CCII) supported the above claim of PDP. Ibadan people need to understand that the Governor has deceived them to get power, he has more recognition to the Alaafin of Oyo than the Olubadan of Ibadan where he comes from. In the reaction of ACN, the defunct APC political party described the PDP allegation as an inflammatory, divisive, and Machiavellian politics which was aimed at pitching the Ibadan people against themselves and making their foes of yesterday their "emergency friends because what Ajimobi's government did over the contentious traditional ruler's institution in the state is to follow the rule of law and allow the courts to decide where the pendulum will tilt towards (Ajayi, 2011). It is on the above claim and counterclaim that the suspension turned into inter-party affairs and intra-ethnic battles.

In addition, Governor Ajimobi reversed the installation of the Baale Ago-Oja in Oyo Township as a crowned to Oba that was done without the consent of the Alaafin Adeyemi III by the administration of Chief Alao Akala as a result of second term governorship ambition battle between Governor Akala and the Alaafin Adeyemi III. This dosed the tension and division in Oyo town under the territory of the Alaafin of Oyo (Bakare 2015).

Not only that, Governor Ajimobi recognized the Alaafin of Oyo as the Permanent Chairman of the State Council of Obas and Chiefs, contrary to the existing Chieftaincy Law as amended in 2011 in Cap 37 Laws of Oyo State, 2000, which makes the Chairmanship title rotational between the Alaafin, the Olubadan and the Soun of Ogbomoso every two years (Vanguard 07/03/2014). The visit by President Goodluck Jonathan in 2014 to traditional rulers in southwestern Nigeria supported the plan of the governor that the president visited the Alaafin of Oyo in Oyo State, the Ooni of Ife in Osun State, and the Oba of Lagos but the Olubadan of Ibadan was excluded. This explains that the governor used the above recognition to gain his

reflection, having identified the implication of the conflict among traditional rulers in the reelection of his predecessors The governor did not allow the regular payment of the allowances of the traditional rulers in the state to become an issue in his reelection bid in 2015 and they were consulted separately.

With the above mechanisms, Mr., Ajimobi contested for a second term in an election that took place on 11 April 2015 under the All-Progressive Congress re-election and he defeated former governors Rasheed Ladoja of Accord Party and Alao Akala of the Labour Party; as well as a former senate leader, Teslim Folarin, of Peoples Democratic Party and the Social Democratic Party's Seyi Makinde. The APC polled 327,310, Accord- 254,520, LP – 184,111, PDP – 79,019 and SDP- 54,740. This election made him the first Oyo State governor to be re-elected for a second term in the state which was difficult for his predecessor to achieve from 1976 till 2011, as a result of the internal conflicts in the state like supremacy conflict among traditional rulers in the state. In this regard, Mr. Ajimobi sustained his policy and mechanism of managing the conflict among traditional rulers in the state for the 2019 gubernatorial election but he reviewed the 1959 Chieftaincy Declaration of the Ibadan Council of Chiefs which allowed him to elevate all the eleven High Chiefs that constitute the Olubadan-in-council and ten locality chiefs or Baales, to be crowned as monarchs, on 27 August 2017 (Bakare, 2015). The elevation of some chiefs and Baales in Ibadan land by **Governor**, Abiola Ajimobi was criticized by both traditional rulers who were against his policy of resolving the conflict among them and politicians in opposition parties who have ambition to become governor of the state.

In the first place, the elevation became a political rivalry between Governor Ajimobi and former governor Rashidi Ladoja in the preparations for the 2019 elections (Adeyemi, 2017). The latter described the elevation as retiring him (who is one of the High Chiefs and Osi Olubadan, the fourth in succession line to the throne) from active politics to pave the way for the former and his political party, the All Progressives Congress (APC) in 2019 elections and the political battle ahead (Adeyemi, 2017). This is because if he accepted to be crowned as an Oba, it would automatically deprive his benefit to re-contest for the governorship office in 2019 and in forming Accord party structure with other political parties like ZL, PDP ACD that will produce a formidable opposition to the APC in the 2019 elections. He also stressed that the elevation would also cripple his strength to put a stop to Ajimobi's political leadership in the state by ensuring that he did not anoint a successor (Adeyemi, 2017). Therefore, he rejected the new order, and Senator Ajimobi ten out of eleven members of Olubadan-in-council, Ibadan elders, members of Central Council of Ibadan Indigenes (CCII), and other political elites in Ibadan while high chief Adewolu Oladoja has the support of the Olubadan, Oba Saliu Adetunji and some Mogajis (family heads) (Adeyemi, 2017). As a result of this, Chief Oladoja challenged the amendment of the Ibadan chieftaincy declaration as well as the installation of the chiefs in the Ibadan High Court. He argued that the state government had no power to review the 1959 Ibadan Chieftaincy declaration, which he noted was different from that of the 1957 Chieftaincy laws that regulate the relationship between and among Obas in the state. in the long run, the governor amended the declaration and elevated the high chiefs, but his political party could not win the 2019 gubernatorial election based on a review of the Ibadan chieftaincy declaration. He also lost his senatorial ambition to the opposition party

Conclusion

The paper concludes that the amendment of the 1957 Ibadan chieftaincy declaration was a matter of necessity because it is more of the socio-political-economic advancement of the state than partisan politics. This is based on the motive of having traditional rulers that would merit the growing population of the Ibadan zone, to facilitate the development, modernisation, and

effectiveness of the traditional chieftaincy system in the ancient city and across the state. For meaningful contribution to the policy implementation in the state. Despite this, the paper also discovered that the amendment by the Ajimobi administration was a political instrument to elevate and install more traditional rulers who would be loyal and work for his political party in the 2019 gubernatorial election. This is because there was a conflict between him and the incumbent Olubadan of Ibadan over the chairmanship tussle of the Oyo State Council of Obas and Chiefs from 2011 to 2019. It was also discovered that the procedure and processes of amending the declaration degenerated into division among the members of the Ibadan Council of Chiefs and it turned to intra- tribal conflict and inter-party affairs in the state. this made the incumbent political party lose the gubernatorial election (All Progressive Congress. APC) led by Senator Abiola Ajimobi to the opposition political party in the state (People Democratic Party (PDP). The following Recommendations are hereby given:

1. The chieftaincy law of the state should be followed strictly in any affairs of the council of Obas and chiefs in Oyo state.
2. Elevation and installation of the Obas or chiefs should not be a political affair. It should be restricted to the affair of the traditional council of Obas and chiefs in the state
3. There is a need for state government should legislate and separate chieftaincy affairs from the ministry of local government to put a stop to the escalation of the chieftaincy tussle in the state because of the contribution and impact of the traditional rulers in government

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