ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISMS AND INTERNAL DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The internal democracy of political parties is a vital component of democratic societies, as it ensures the fairness and transparency of political processes. However, internal conflicts and disputes often arise within political parties, leading to an increasing number of pre-election court cases in Nigeria. These court cases have become a burden on the judiciary, given the limited number of courts and judges available to handle them. Recently, the President of the Court of Appeal publicly lamented the volume more than 600 appeals of pre-election court cases relating to the conduct of political parties' primary elections, which reportedly placed significant stress on the judiciary. It was even reported on February 27, 2023 that a judge died in his office while preparing to attend a court session. To end, this study explores the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in enhancing internal democracy in Nigerian political parties. Using a qualitative research approach, this study analyzes the various alternative dispute resolution mechanisms commonly employed by Nigerian political parties, including mediation, arbitration, and negotiation. The study also examines case studies of successful and unsuccessful use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in Nigerian political parties. The findings indicate that while alternative dispute resolution mechanisms have the potential to enhance internal democracy in Nigerian political parties, their effectiveness is often hindered by factors such as inadequate legal frameworks, godfatherism, excessive power exacted by political office holders especially governors in their state and lack of political will from party leaders. The study concludes with that though political parties do involve in Mediation and negotiation, the third aspect of ADR has not fully been explore which is Arbitration within political party setup. This study thus recommends enhancement in use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in Nigerian political parties, including the need for legal reforms for arbitration, Education and workshops for political parties and the promotion of a culture of dialogue and compromise within political parties to reduce the burden on the judiciary and enhance internal democracy. Therefore the study seeks to contribute to the ongoing discussions on how to strengthen internal democracy in Nigerian political parties and reduce the burden on the judiciary

KEYWORDS**:** Alternative, dispute, Resolution, political party, and democracy.

INTRODUCTION

Internal democracy is a crucial element of political parties in a democratic society as it ensures that decision-making processes are transparent, inclusive, and fair. The significance of internal democracy in political parties has been emphasized by several scholars, including Adebayo (2012) and Omotola (2007). They argue that internal democracy promotes diverse perspectives and interests, enhances the legitimacy of the party, and strengthens its ability to compete in elections. The importance of internal democracy in political parties aligns with the benefits of adopting Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms. ADR provides an opportunity for members to participate in decision-making processes and resolves conflicts through a transparent, inclusive, and fair process.

By adopting ADR, political parties can ensure that their decision-making processes are not only democratic but also effective in resolving disputes without resorting to litigation. This can help to promote diverse perspectives and interests, enhance the legitimacy of the party, and strengthen its ability to compete in elections, as noted by Adebayo (2012) and Omotola (2007).

However, in Nigeria, internal democracy within political parties has been a contentious issue for decades. This has resulted in a lack of accountability among party leaders, exclusion of popular candidates, and internal conflicts and disputes, particularly during the primary election season. The conduct of primary elections in Nigerian political parties has been marred by various disputes and conflicts, often leading to legal challenges and delays in the resolution of such issues (Umezulike, 2020). The exclusion of popular candidates due to these conflicts impacts the legitimacy of the electoral process as a whole, as highlighted by Olurode (2011).

This situation undermines the internal democracy of political parties, hinders the democratic process as a whole, and called for the need for alternative means of settling disputes within political parties in Nigeria especially the adoption of ADR with more emphasis on arbitration in order to reduce the burden on the judiciary

The prevalence of pre-election court cases relating to the conduct of primary elections in Nigerian political parties has been a significant challenge. The President of the Court of Appeal reported more than 600 appeals of pre-election court cases in 2023 alone, placing significant stress on the judiciary (Punch, 2023). Furthermore, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) reported that it was joined in over 1200 pre-election cases in the lead-up to the 2023 general elections (Daily Trust, 2022).

To address this challenge, the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms has been proposed as a way to enhance internal democracy within Nigerian political parties. ADR mechanisms, such as mediation, negotiation, and arbitration, have been increasingly adopted in other spheres of Nigerian society, but their application within political parties remains limited.

Furthermore, ADR can foster a sense of investment in the party's success among party members, as they have a direct say in resolving disputes and shaping the direction of the party. This, in turn, can increase loyalty to the party and reduce the likelihood of members defecting to other parties due to internal conflicts.

Thus, adopting ADR mechanisms, political parties can promote internal democracy, enhance party legitimacy and cohesion, and strengthen their ability to compete in elections

Therefore, this study seeks to examine the concept of ADR and its application as a means of resolving disputes within Nigerian political parties, with the goal of enhancing internal democracy and strengthening the democratic process. The study aims to further re-emphasis the need to strengthen internal democracy within the political parties, by adopting ADR mechanism and to contribute to the ongoing discussions on how to strengthen such in order to reduce the burden on the judiciary. This study will shed more light on the effectiveness of ADR mechanisms in enhancing internal democracy in Nigeria; it will analyze case studies of successful and unsuccessful use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms within political parties, and identify the legal and cultural barriers that may hinder the adoption of ADR mechanisms. The study will provide recommendations for the adoption of such mechanisms within the political party space in Nigeria

Research objectives

1. To assess the effectiveness of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in resolving disputes and enhancing internal democracy in Nigerian political parties.
2. To examine the various alternative dispute resolution mechanisms that is commonly employed by Nigerian political parties.
3. To identify the challenges hindering the effective use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in Nigerian political parties.
4. To analyze case studies of successful and unsuccessful use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in Nigerian political parties.

AN OVERVIEW OF INTERNAL DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIAN POLITICAL PARTIES

Internal democracy refers to the practice of promoting democratic values and principles within political parties. It ensures that party members have a voice in decision-making processes and that party leaders are accountable to their constituents. Internal democracy is essential for promoting transparency, accountability, and legitimacy within political parties (Oni, 2019).

Internal democracy is a crucial element of any political party, as it ensures that party members have a say in decision-making processes and that party leaders are accountable to their

constituents. Without internal democracy, political parties can become vehicles for the ambitions of a select few individuals, rather than representing the interests of the wider membership

However, in the context of Nigerian politics, the reality is that internal democracy in political parties has been challenged by a lack of transparency and fairness in the nomination of candidates for elections. This has led to allegations of fraud, vote rigging, and other malpractices (Awomolo & Ajibade, 2020). As a result, political parties in Nigeria are often perceived as undemocratic and unaccountable to their members and constituents.

In light of these challenges, it may be beneficial for political parties to consider adopting Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms to address internal conflicts and disputes. By doing so, parties can ensure that their decision-making processes are fair, transparent, and inclusive, which can ultimately improve their legitimacy and competitiveness in elections

While internal democracy remains a critical component of political parties in Nigeria, several challenges continue to impede its realization. The use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms may provide a way to address some of these challenges and promote greater transparency, inclusivity, and fairness within the Nigerian political system

Money and elite influence in Nigerian party primaries have been identified as major factors that undermine the principles of internal democracy in political parties. Nwolise and Obioha (2017) reveal that financial incentives provided to party officials and delegates by candidates increases the chances of winning primary elections. This highlights the importance of money in determining the outcome of primary elections in Nigerian political parties, and has been a cog in the wheels of progress in the adoption of internal democracy within political parties in Nigeria

The impact of the ruling class on elections is exacerbated by the lack of internal democratic practices within political parties. Research suggests that when political parties lack internal democracy, the elites can use this to their advantage and manipulate the electoral process, which ultimately erodes the credibility of the entire electoral system. This, in turn, can lead to a lack of voter interest and a loss of faith in the democratic process

The findings of Nwolise and Obioha (2017) reinforce the concerns of several scholars about the lack of transparency and fairness in the conduct of party primaries in Nigeria. It underscores the need for political parties to embrace democratic values and principles to ensure that the process of selecting candidates is based on merit, rather than financial incentives or the influence of elites. This can help to enhance the legitimacy of the electoral process and promote a more participatory and inclusive democracy in Nigeria.

The use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms (ADR) within political parties may be one way to address these issues.

By promoting dialogue, compromise, and transparency within the party system, ADR can help to ensure that all party members are given a voice and that their interests are taken into account. This can contribute to greater trust in the political process and help to mobilize voters to participate in elections.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms: Panacea for Enhancing Internal Democracy within Political Parties

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) refers to a set of processes, techniques, and methods used to resolve disputes outside of the traditional litigation system, such as through negotiation, mediation, conciliation, or arbitration. The term "alternative" is used because these methods provide an alternative to the formal legal system for resolving disputes.

Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms have become increasingly popular in recent years as a means of resolving disputes outside of the traditional judicial system. ADR is not a new concept, as it has been used in various forms throughout history, because it is a cost-effective and time-efficient alternative to litigation

In addition, ADR mechanisms have also been shown to promote greater control and participation by the parties involved in the dispute. As such, ADR can be a useful tool for resolving conflicts and improving access to justice for individuals and party members alike. However, it is important to carefully evaluate the effectiveness of ADR mechanisms and consider potential drawbacks before fully embracing them as a solution to the challenges of dispute resolution Drishti IAS (2021)

The concept of ADR has been defined and examined by several scholars. For example, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines ADR as "a range of dispute resolution methods that provides parties with alternatives to the traditional legal system" (UNDP, 2000: 2). Similarly, the International Bar Association (IBA) defines ADR as "a collection of methods for resolving disputes that do not involve litigation" (IBA, 2004: 2).

The Three Important Element of ADR are Mediation, Negotiation and Arbitration.

Mediation is an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) method that has gained popularity in recent times due to its voluntary and confidential nature, as well as its cost-effectiveness (González & Johnson, 2019). Through mediation, a neutral third party, known as a mediator, assists the disputing parties in communicating and negotiating with each other in order to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Unlike a judge or arbitrator, the mediator does not make decisions for the parties but instead facilitates the process of reaching a resolution. Mediation can be applied to a variety of conflicts, ranging from business to family and community disputes. Its informal nature often makes it a less intimidating and more approachable process than formal litigation.

Political parties can use mediation, to resolve disputes and conflicts within their parties. For example, if there is a disagreement over a party's candidate selection process, the party leaders could use mediation to bring the conflicting parties together and help them find a mutually acceptable solution (González & Johnson, 2019).

This method have been used over the years by political parties in Nigeria. In 2016, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) faced a crisis when two factions emerged after the party's national convention. The situation led to court cases and violence, but former Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan, mediated the conflict and led to the reconciliation of the factions. A caretaker committee was then appointed to oversee the party's affairs (Olokor, 206).

The All Progressives Congress (APC) experienced a crisis in 2020, following the suspension of its National Chairman, Adams Oshiomhole. This led to the formation of two factions, but Governor of Yobe State, Mai Mala Buni, mediated the conflict, which resulted in the dissolution of the National Working Committee of the party and the appointment of a caretaker committee (Ibrahim, 2020)

Action Alliance (AA) In 2019, faced a crisis when two factions emerged after the party's primary elections. The crisis was resolved through mediation led by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), which resulted in the recognition of one of the factions as the authentic leadership of the party (Odunsi, 2019)

Social Democratic Party (SDP) crisis (2018): The SDP encountered a crisis in 2018, when two factions emerged following the party's national convention. The crisis was resolved through mediation led by former Nigerian President, Ibrahim Babangida, which resulted in the reconciliation of the factions and the appointment of a caretaker committee to oversee the party's affairs (Adepoju, 2018).

These examples highlights the potential effectiveness of mediation in resolving political disputes. However, it is important to critically examine the circumstances under which mediation is appropriate and to consider potential limitations and challenges associated with this approach.

Negotiation

Negotiation, on the other hand, is a process in which the parties involved in a dispute attempt to reach an agreement through direct communication with each other. It is commonly used in labor disputes, contract negotiations, and commercial transactions. Unlike mediation, negotiation does not involve a neutral third party. In the context of political parties, negotiation could be used when two factions within a party have differing views on a particular policy issue. In this case, representatives from each faction could negotiate to find common ground (Mnookin, Peppet, & Tulumello, 2017).

Negotiation can be a useful tool to resolve conflicts between factions within a political party, especially when the issue at hand is a difference in policy views. In this case,

representatives from each faction can come to the negotiating table to discuss their respective positions and work towards finding common ground.

Through the negotiation process, the representatives can identify areas of agreement and disagreement and work to address the underlying concerns and interests of both factions. This can involve making compromises and trade-offs, as well as finding creative solutions that can satisfy both sides.

By using negotiation, the factions can avoid the need for legal action or public confrontation, which can be damaging to the party's reputation and unity. Instead, they can work together to find a mutually beneficial solution that respects the interests and needs of all parties involved. Overall, negotiation is a valuable tool for resolving conflicts within political parties, and can help to promote internal democracy and unity

In 2020, the All Progressives Congress (APC) faced a crisis when its National Chairman, Adams Oshiomhole, was suspended. This caused a split in the party, resulting in the formation of two factions, each claiming to be the authentic leadership of the party. This internal conflict threatened to destabilize the party and harm its electoral prospects.

To resolve the crisis, Governor Mai Mala Buni of Yobe State stepped in as a mediator. Through his efforts, the two factions were brought to the negotiating table and an agreement was reached. The result was the dissolution of the National Working Committee of the party and the appointment of a caretaker committee to oversee the affairs of the party. This move was seen as a major step towards resolving the internal conflicts within the party and restoring unity among its members, which is crucial for the success of any political party in Nigeria.

Furthermore in 2019 there was also a crisis that emanated from the party's governorship primaries in several states which were marred by violence and disputes. The crisis was resolved through a negotiation process led by the party's national leadership, which involved making concessions to the aggrieved parties and finding compromises to address their concerns.

In 2018, the Labour Party in Nigeria faced a crisis due to disagreements between its national leadership and state chapters. This internal conflict had the potential to damage the party's unity and stability. However, the party was able to resolve the crisis through negotiation led by its National Chairman, Mike Omotosho. The mediation process provided a platform for the conflicting parties to engage in dialogue, identify the issues at the root of their disagreements, and come up with a mutually acceptable solution. As a result, the party was able to conduct a successful national convention and move forward with its political agenda. This example highlights the importance of mediation as a tool for resolving internal conflicts within political parties in Nigeria.

These examples highlights the potential effectiveness of negotiation in resolving political disputes. However, it is

important to critically examine the circumstances under which mediation is appropriate and to consider potential limitations and challenges associated with this approach.

It is important to note, however, that the circumstances under which negotiation is appropriate should be carefully examined, and potential limitations and challenges associated with this approach should also be considered. While negotiation can be effective in resolving disputes, it may not always be the most appropriate approach, particularly in cases where one party is unwilling to negotiate or where there is a power imbalance between the parties involved in the dispute. Thus, it is important to approach these situations with a critical eye and consider a range of potential solutions.

Arbitration

Arbitration is a process in which a neutral third party, the arbitrator, is appointed to make a binding decision on the dispute. The arbitrator hears evidence and arguments from both parties and then issues a decision, known as an award. Arbitration is often used in commercial disputes, labor disputes, and international disputes. It is generally less formal than litigation, but more formal than mediation or negotiation (Bingham, 2018).

Arbitration is therefore a process of dispute resolution where the parties involved present their arguments and evidence to an independent third party, called an arbitrator, who then makes a binding decision on the dispute. The arbitrator's decision is final and binding on both parties, and it is enforceable in a court of law.

In the context of political parties, arbitration can be useful in resolving disputes within political parties that involve a breach of party rules or regulations. For example, if a party member violates the party's code of conduct, the party leadership can initiate an arbitration process to resolve the dispute. During the arbitration process, the parties can present their arguments and evidence to the arbitrator, who will then make a binding decision on the dispute.

The use of arbitration in political party affairs can promote transparency, accountability, and fairness in decision-making, as the arbitrator is an independent and impartial third party. Arbitration can also avoid costly and time-consuming litigation in court. However, it is important to note that the success of arbitration depends on the willingness of both parties to abide by the arbitrator's decision and follow through with any agreed-upon actions

Arbitration is a dispute resolution mechanism that has gained popularity in Nigeria as a means of resolving intra-party conflicts. This is because arbitration is known for providing a swift, cost-effective, and impartial alternative to traditional litigation in resolving disputes. The use of arbitration in political party affairs promotes transparency, accountability, and fairness in decision-making, which is vital to enhancing the democratic process in Nigeria (Akinwale, 2021).

In 2018, the All Progressives Congress (APC), a major political party in Nigeria, faced a dispute between its Ondo State chapter and some of its members over the conduct of congresses in the state. The disagreement threatened to cause a rift within the party and potentially harm the party's chances in upcoming elections. To resolve the issue, the APC turned to arbitration as a dispute resolution mechanism. This decision was in line with the party's constitution, which requires the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms, including arbitration, to resolve intra-party disputes.

In 2021, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), one of Nigeria's major political parties, faced a dispute between two factions of the party in Ogun State, which threatened to split the party. To resolve the issue, the PDP turned to arbitration as a dispute resolution mechanism, in line with the recommendations of the PDP Post-Election Review Committee. The committee emphasized the need for the party to strengthen its internal democracy by promoting transparency and accountability in decision-making, including the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms to resolve disputes.

In 2019, the All Progressives Congress (APC) faced a dispute over the conduct of its primary elections in Zamfara State, which resulted in the disqualification of the party from participating in the general election in the state. The party decided to use arbitration as a dispute resolution mechanism to resolve the issue. The use of arbitration was in line with the party's constitution, which mandates the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms, including arbitration, to resolve intra-party disputes.

The arbitration process was led by a panel of experts and was conducted in a transparent manner, with all parties given the opportunity to present their case. The outcome of the arbitration was widely accepted by all parties involved, and the APC was able to participate in the general election in Zamfara State. nternal democracy in political parties in Nigeria

While In 2020, the Nigerian Labour Party was embroiled in a crisis that pitted its national leadership against several of its state chapters. The disagreement centered around allegations of imposition of candidates for upcoming elections, and the aggrieved state chapters threatened to boycott the elections if their demands were not met. Rather than resorting to the courts to resolve the dispute, the Labour Party leadership opted for arbitration as a means of finding a peaceful resolution, by appointing an arbitrator to hear both sides of the dispute and make a ruling which was accepted by all parties to the dispute. By opting for arbitration, the Labour Party demonstrated a commitment to resolving disputes internally and without resorting to the overburdened court system.

It is important to note that while arbitration offers several advantages, it may not always be the most appropriate method for resolving intra-party conflicts, and its limitations and potential challenges must be carefully considered. Nonetheless, arbitration can be a useful tool for promoting peaceful and fair resolution of disputes within political parties in Nigeria.

The decision to use arbitration in the cases presented above was a positive step towards promoting internal democracy in the PDP, as it demonstrated the party's willingness to resolve disputes through peaceful means. The use of ADR mechanisms like arbitration also helped to prevent the matter from escalating into a legal battle, which could have further burdened the already-overstretched judicial system in Nigeria. The outcome of the arbitration was not made public, but the fact that the PDP, APC and Labour party was able to resolve the dispute through arbitration is an indication that ADR mechanisms can play a crucial role in enhancing internal democracy in political parties in Nigeria.

The National Judicial Council (NJC) has also recognized the importance of ADR mechanisms, including arbitration, in resolving political and election-related disputes. The NJC recently issued a policy directive requiring courts to give priority to the use of ADR mechanisms, including arbitration, in political and election-related cases (Premium Times, 2021). The policy directive is expected to enhance access to justice and promote the rule of law in Nigeria's democratic process.

Arbitration can become an important tool for maintaining internal democracy in political parties in Nigeria when fully embraced by political parties. The use of arbitration can promote transparency, accountability, and fairness in decision-making, while avoiding costly and time-consuming litigation. It can also help to prevent conflicts from escalating and damaging the reputation of the party.

The new arbitration regime in Nigeria has improved access to justice in political party affairs. The Arbitration and Conciliation Act (ACA) was amended in 2019 to provide for the establishment of the Lagos Court of Arbitration (LCA) as a specialized court for the resolution of commercial disputes. This has made arbitration more accessible to political parties and other organizations in Nigeria. (FRNOG,2019).

Challenges to the Effective Use of ADR mechanisms in Nigerian Political Parties

Despite the potential benefits of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms in enhancing internal democracy within Nigerian political parties, several challenges have hindered their effective use. One major challenge is the inadequate legal framework for ADR in Nigeria. While there are laws that recognize ADR mechanisms such as mediation and arbitration, there is a lack of specific legal frameworks that address the use of ADR in political party disputes. This has led to uncertainty and inconsistency in the application of ADR mechanisms in political party disputes.

Another challenge to the effective use of ADR mechanisms in Nigerian political parties is the issue of godfatherism. This refers to the undue influence exerted by powerful individuals within political parties, who often dictate the outcome of party disputes and the selection of party candidates. In such cases, ADR mechanisms are often disregarded or manipulated in favor of the godfather's preferred candidate or outcome.

Excessive power exerted by political office holders, particularly governors, in their states also poses a challenge to the effective use of ADR mechanisms in Nigerian political parties. Governors often control party structures and use their influence to dictate the outcome of party disputes and candidate selection. This undermines the independence of ADR mechanisms and makes it difficult to achieve a fair and impartial resolution.

The lack of political will from party leaders also hinders the effective use of ADR mechanisms in Nigerian political parties. Some party leaders are reluctant to embrace ADR mechanisms as a means of resolving disputes, preferring instead to rely on the court system or other traditional methods. This reluctance often stems from a fear of losing control or influence over the party, as well as a lack of awareness or understanding of the benefits of ADR mechanisms.

Lack of adequate Education on the effectiveness of ADR mechanisms in promoting internal democracy within political parties in Nigeria is another challenges. United Nations highlights that the lack of awareness and understanding of ADR mechanisms by the public is a major challenge to its adoption in Nigeria. (UNODC, 2012).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This paper argues that ADR mechanism when fully adopted by political parties in Nigeria can be useful tool for reducing the burden on the judiciary, previous studies have focused on the benefits of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms like arbitration for resolving disputes between parties, this paper emphasizes the importance of using ADR mechanisms to enhance internal democracy in political parties in Nigeria. Specifically, the paper argues that the use of ADR mechanisms like arbitration can promote transparency, accountability, and fairness in decision-making within political parties, that resolving disputes internally through ADR mechanisms like arbitration can help prevent disputes from escalating into legal battles, which can further burden the already-overstretched judicial system in Nigeria, by including ADR mechanisms especially arbitration in party constitutions internal democracy will be enhanced in Nigeria

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, internal democracy is crucial to ensuring the transparency and fairness of political processes in a democratic society. However, internal conflicts and disputes often arise within political parties, leading to an increasing number of pre-election court cases in Nigeria. The limited number of courts and judges available to handle these cases, coupled with the stress of the process, highlights the need for alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to be employed by political parties. The findings of this paper highlight the importance of using alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms like arbitration to enhance internal democracy in political parties in Nigeria.

The use of such mechanisms has the potential to reduce the burden on the judiciary and promote internal democracy in Nigerian political parties. The paper argues that the use of ADR mechanisms can promote transparency, accountability, and fairness in decision-making within political parties, and can help prevent disputes from escalating into legal battles.

However, the effectiveness of these mechanisms is hindered by inadequate legal frameworks and a lack of political will. Therefore, there is a need for legal reforms and the promotion of a culture of dialogue and compromise within political parties to enhance the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and promote internal democracy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Legal reforms: There is a need for legal reforms to enhance the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in Nigerian political parties. The legal framework should provide for mandatory dispute resolution processes, including mediation and arbitration, for political parties before the commencement of court proceedings.
2. Capacity building: There is a need for capacity building among political party members, leaders, and executives on the use and benefits of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. This will enable them to effectively employ these mechanisms in resolving disputes within their party.
3. Promotion of a culture of dialogue and compromise: Political parties should promote a culture of dialogue and compromise as a means of resolving disputes. This can be achieved through training programs, workshops, and other capacity-building activities.
4. Establishment of ADR centers: Political parties can establish ADR centers where disputes can be resolved before they escalate to the courts. These centers can be manned by trained mediators and arbitrators.
5. Adoption of best practices: Political parties should adopt best practices in the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. This includes using neutral third-party mediators and arbitrators, ensuring confidentiality, and developing clear dispute resolution procedures.
6. Education and workshops are essential in promoting a culture of dialogue and compromise within political parties, and in enhancing the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to reduce the burden on the judiciary, and promote internal democracy in Nigeria.

   Education and workshops on alternative dispute resolution mechanisms can be tailored to the specific needs of political parties. For instance, political parties in different regions or states may require different types of training programs to suit their unique cultural and political contexts

By implementing these recommendations, political parties in Nigeria can reduce the burden on the judiciary, enhance

internal democracy, and promote peaceful and transparent political processes.

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