**CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION**

* 1. **BACKGROUND**

Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States of America, defined democracy as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. Basically, it is a form of government where by people in a community, state or country have equal right and opportunity to govern or be a member of the government. The rules are to be selected by the ruled. The term “people” generally does not mean all categories of men are allowed to participate in the affairs of the government. In Nigeria and US for instance, only citizens who are 18 years and above are eligible to participate [1].

Elections make a rudimentary contribution to effectively practice direct democracy. Elections are very paramount to democracy because they essentially express citizens’ participation in the democratic process. During elections, people vote for the candidates they believe is the best fit for the position which in turn can impact the entire society. Voting is among our fundamental domestic responsibilities and important civic responsibilities. Without free and open elections, democracy would not exist [1].

An electoral system or a voting system defines the rules by which the choices or preferences of voters are collected, tallied, aggregated and collectively interpreted to obtain the results of an election [2]. There are several types of electoral systems practiced in different countries in the world. A voter can be allowed to vote for one candidate or predefined list of preferred candidates. Consequently, collation may involve basic count of the number of votes or a more complex procedure of multiple rounds of counting where by single or multiple winners are being declared winner. In a **first-past-the-post (FPTP)** system, each voter can vote for one candidate and the single candidate with the highest percentage of votes win. It is also known as **simple plurality**. This is used in Nigeria [4], India [6], and Canada [5] amongst other countries. In **approval voting system**, people are allowed to vote for more than one candidates and the candidate with the highest number of votes win.

[1] T. File, “Who Votes? Congressional Elections and the American Electorate: 1978–2014,” p. 15.

[2] M. Gallagher and P. Mitchell, editors. “The Politics of Electoral Systems”.  
*Oxford University Press, 2005*.

[3] S. F. Shahandashti, “Electoral Systems Used around the World,” p. 25.