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In this Issue

WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO ELECTION SECURITY MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA: CONCEPTUAL AND CONTEXTUAL REFLECTIONS

Onuoha, Freedom Chukwudi

Department of Political Science

University of Nigeria, Nsukka

&

Akogwu, Joseph Chukwunonso

Department of Political Science

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Abstract

Elections in Nigeria have been characterised by fraud and violence. These irregularities undermine the integrity and credibility of elections, compelling the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to increasingly adopt some technological innovations to enhance election administration and security. Given these developments, civil society groups have called for the adoption of a whole of government (WoG) approach to elections security management (ESM). This article, therefore, critically examines the concept and context of WoG approach to ESM in Nigeria. It contends that although the call for a WoG approach to election security is growing in recent times, elements of its practice have been in place in Nigeria since 2011. The article further argues that discourses on election security in Nigeria have largely focused on 'hard' threats, with little attention paid to evolving 'soft' threats perpetrated by criminals or hostile elements in the cyber domain. To this end, it reviews the strengths and weaknesses of Nigeria's nascent WoG approach to ESM while proffering some strategic recommendations that will contribute to strengthening the security of Nigeria's electoral process.

Keywords: Cyberattack, Election Security, Election Security Management, Electoral violence, Whole of Government.

Introduction

In modern democracies, elections are at the core of the democratic process, enabling citizens to exercise their right of choosing their leaders. However, elections in both advanced and emerging democracies can be derailed through numerous flaws, frauds, and failures that in some situations result in violence (Electoral Integrity Project, 2018). This has made election security an enduring challenge and a top priority consideration in any democracy. Most authorities therefore take deliberate steps to ensure that the electoral process is free from disruptions, fair to all participants, safe for all stakeholders, and credible in the eyes of observers.

Consequently, most advanced democracies are increasingly exploring and deploying information, communication and technology (ICT) tools to minimize the incidence of electoral malpractices and violence for enhanced election security. In the United States (U.S), for instance, election security is a top priority concern for the intelligence and security community. Cases of cybersecurity threats, political thuggery, the potential for voting irregularities and risk of post-election violence have made such concern a compelling preoccupation ahead of the November 2020 elections (Lohrmann, 2020; Keating 2020; Mathers 2020). As acknowledged by the US Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), "countering the complex and wide-ranging threats facing our elections is an obligation of the U.S. government that requires a whole-of-government (WoG) approach" (ODNI, nd, p. para. 2).

As with some developed democracies, the process of holding elections as a peaceful and orderly means of power transfer has been problematic in most emerging democracies. In Nigeria, in particular, such efforts have not always achieved the intended outcomes. As Gberie (2011) argued, elections should provide an historic opportunity for Nigeria to become a model for the rest of Africa and the world, especially for those citizens demanding democracy in their countries. But this seems farfetched in the country. Although possessing a vibrant civil society, youthful population and very vocal press, Nigeria has never been able to forge an acceptable political settlement that ensures open and transparent electoral competition free of violence (European Union Observation Final Report, 2011). Elections in

Nigeria since independence and most evidently since after the return to democratic rule in 1999, have been fraught with fraud and violence resulting in contested or discredited outcomes.

Some of the flaws that characterize elections in Nigeria include snatching of electoral materials, stuffing of ballot boxes with ballot papers, falsification of election results, illegal thumb-printing of ballot papers, under-age voting, inflation of votes, result falsification, militarization of elections, and vote buying, amongst others (Onuoha, et al 2020; Momah, 2015). Also, fraud that happens before and during elections has in the past resulted in litigations or at worst triggered post-election violence (Okoye, 2013). These irregularities have tended to undermine the integrity and credibility of elections, denying the emergent government the needed legitimacy to rule.

Consequently, Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has in recent times deployed some technological innovations such as the use of biometric registration and electronic card reader machines, among others, in a bid to enhance election administration and security. The INEC also plans for full introduction of electronic voting in major elections starting from 2021 (Olokor, 2020). Given these promising developments and the challenging nature of providing security during elections in Nigeria, civil society organizations have advocated for the adoption of a WoG approach to elections security management (ESM) in Nigeria (K. Okenyodo, personal communication, May, 23, 2019; Nigeria Policing Programme, 2019). Yet there is little or no systematic attempt to either articulate what is meant by WoG approach to ESM or to interrogate factors that underscore the need for such an approach. Meanwhile, elements of WoG approach to ESM is already in practice in Nigeria but not fully developed to optimise available resources for enhanced election security.

It is against this backdrop that this article critically reflects on the concept and context of WoG approach to ESM in Nigeria. Its aim is to stimulate further debate on the epistemic and practical utility of this approach as Nigeria heads into another general elections in few years from now. The specific objectives are to examine the factors underpinning the imperative of a WoG approach to election security, analyse the state of Nigeria's evolving

framework for WoG approach to election security, and proffer strategic recommendations on how to strengthen ESM in Nigeria. The rest of the paper is structured in line with these objectives. This paper draws extensively from desk research, complemented with interviews conducted with key informants who were selected purposively for the study.

Conceptual and Contextual Discourse

Concepts such as ESM and WoG approach are increasingly being used in discourse on security management in Nigeria. A clarification of their meaning is fundamental since most users of the concepts simply take the readers' understanding of them for granted, even when these concepts can mean different things to diverse users.

Election Security management

In order to gain a shared understanding of the meaning of ESM, it is logical that we begin with the meaning of election security. Due to its relevance, election security has attracted wide usage in media, academic, security and policy circles. Olurode (2005), for example, defined election security as the safety of electoral personnel, election materials and information, the electorate and a number of stakeholders involved in the electioneering process. But Moha and Yigit (2015, para 2) offer a more elaborate definition of election security as "all aspects of protecting electoral stakeholders such as voters, candidates, poll workers, media and observers; electoral information such as vote results and registration data; electoral property such as campaign materials, ballot papers, results sheets and indelible ink; electoral facilities such as polling stations and counting centres; and electoral events such as campaign rallies against disruption, damage or death". If seen in this way, election security encapsulates the preservation and protection of both physical and virtual entities, processes, materials, information, machines, platforms, structures and activities involved in the conduct of election. From the provision of basic security to voters at political

party rallies and campaigns to ensuring that result forms are protected, the whole electoral process is circumscribed by security considerations (Olurode, 2014).

Election security consists of two principal dimensions: the physical or 'hard' dimension and virtual (online) or 'soft' dimension. The physical dimension focuses on measures at ensuring that relevant tangible elements such as election materials, persons, and properties are protected. The online or soft dimension focuses on protecting and preserving the intangible electronic processes, networks and data pertaining to the electoral system. For too long, this aspect of election security has been neglected in emerging democracies due to limited application of ICT in the electoral processes. Yet, it is very critical especially with the growing embrace of electronic and online processes, facilities and platforms in election administration. Hence, data integrity and protection of online activities or processes are crucial elements of the soft dimension of election security. Given growing incidence of cybercrimes and electronic manipulations, the importance of the virtual or online aspect of election security cannot be overemphasized.

Unlike election security which has been variously defined, there are little or no available definitions among scholars on ESM. For the purposes of this article, therefore, ESM is defined as:

> all measures taken to deliver a credible election by anticipating, preventing and responding to developments that have the potential to compromise the integrity of assets, materials and processes deployed in the conduct of elections or that could undermine the safety and wellbeing of persons and entities lawfully taking part in an election in participatory, observatory, monitoring, supervisory, administrative, supportive and protective capacities (Onuoha, 2019, p.8).

As illustrated in figure 1, ESM revolves around ensuring the protection and preservation of three "Ps": persons, property and processes. In this wise. persons cover all living beings taking part in the election in different capacities or roles; property entails all tangible and intangible objects or structures,

moveable or immoveable, utilised for the purposes of the elections; and processes include series of activities and actions undertaken both in physical and online spaces for the purposes of conducting election.

Figure 1: The Constitutive Elements of Election Security Management
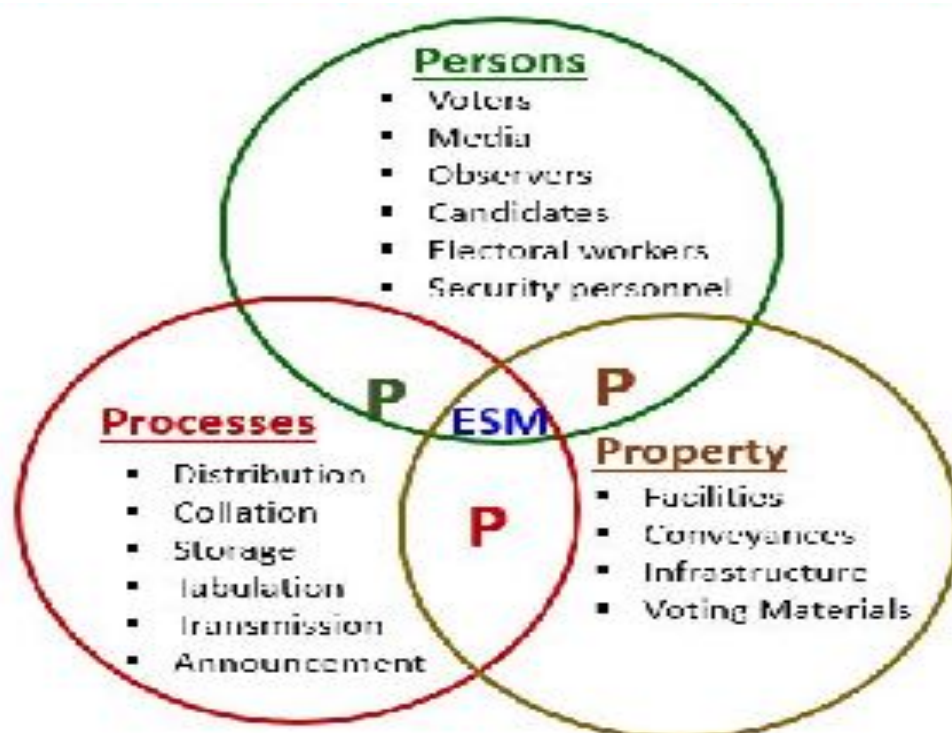
Source: Onuoha (2019).

It is pertinent to note that ESM is pre-emptive, reactive and responsive in nature. It is pre-emptive given that actors involved in the provision of elections security try to anticipate possible breaches that can undermine the electoral process, especially on election day. It is reactive to the extent that deployment of personnel and resources is oriented towards containing such threat or risk factors when they arise. Finally, it is responsive in the sense that counter measures are activated to the extent that the threat or risk factors have

implications for the integrity and credibility of elections. Thus, a robust ESM should adapt to the dynamics of the security or threat landscape.

Whole of Government Approach

In recent years, there has been a change in emphasis away from structural devolution, disaggregation, and single-purpose organizations towards a more integrated approach to public service delivery (United Nations, 2012). This has given rise to the growing usage and prominence of the concept of Whole-of-Government (WoG) in policy and official circles. Sometimes used interchangeably with "one-stop government," or "joined-up government," the movement from isolated silos in public administration to formal and informal networks is a global trend driven by various societal forces such as the growing complexity of problems that call for collaborative responses, the increased demand on the part of citizens for more accessible public services, and the opportunities presented by the Internet to transform the way the government works for the people (United Nations, 2012).

So, what does WoG mean? And, how does it apply to ESM? There is no single definition of the concept that is generally accepted. The term could mean different things in different contexts. According to Gockel (2008, p.6), the WoG approach has been defined as "a concept that brings a unified effort between inter-governmental agencies to maximize all available resources in a collaborative effort". The idea is to create a culture that facilitates and bolsters inter- and intra-agency coordination and cooperation, enabling the different actors to operate as one system rather than a collection of separate components.

The definition of WoG by Worzala, VanDevelde and Kuntz (2017, p.1) provides a good overview of the most common dimensions of the concept: "a comprehensive way to assemble resources and expertise from multiple agencies and groups to address problems with interrelated social, economic and political causes. The approach plays to comparative advantage and maximizes resources." This definition is suitable essentially because it clearly establishes and underlines the imperative of a unified effort between

government agencies to maximize all available resources – personnel, funding, equipment and supplies – in a collaborative fashion to achieve a common purpose.

A WoG approach to ESM would therefore entail an inclusive framework for optimising collaboration and synergy among election management bodies, security and intelligence actors, and relevant ministries, departments or agencies (MDAs) to provide the safe and secure space for the conduct of free, fair, peaceful and credible elections, including preserving the tangible and intangible elements used in such contest for future references or retrieval. Therefore, the huge logistics requirements, the complexity of materials and facilities deployed, and the centrality of its outcome for peace and stability demand that election is carried out in an environment that is devoid of real or potential threats to its credibility and integrity. Achieving this objective is a challenging task that cannot be done by one agency of government. This therefore calls for synergy of efforts to minimise friction and optimise available resource for efficient and effective security service delivery before, during and after elections.

Underlying Factors for a Whole-of-Government Approach to Election Security in Nigeria

Several factors inherent in the Nigerian polity have continued to pose serious challenges to INEC's capacity to plan and conduct peaceful and credible elections (Jimoh, 2018). Some of the longstanding and evolving challenges that underpin the imperative of WoG approach to ESM in Nigeria include, among others, the nature of Nigerian politics, culture of electoral violence, active low intensity conflicts, vast and difficult terrain, expanding electoral logistics requirements, and threat of cybercrimes or cyberattacks.

Violent nature of Nigerian politics

The nature of Nigerian politics is one key factor contributing to the environment of insecurity in Nigeria, especially during elections. The

character and crisis of the political economy of post-colonial Nigerian state is key to understanding the crude and violent nature of politics in the country (David, Asuelime & Onapajo, 2015). The post-colonial Nigerian state is characterised by excessive concentration of resources at the centre, with concomitant huge reliance on a single economic product – oil. Under the current political economy configuration, the federal government is the sole receiver, divider and dispenser of oil revenue based on a complex formula between itself and the 36 states. The 1999 Constitution, the Land Use Act and the Petroleum Act give complete ownership and control of the oil and gas sector to the state. The sector, managed by the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) through joint ventures with foreign firms, is the mainstay of the economy. It accounts for more than 50% of government revenue, placing considerable resources at the state's disposal (Kwarkye, 2019).

The inevitable consequence is the excessive premium placed on politics as the medium of accessing state resources, leading to fierce competition for political power. The ferocious struggle for power is driven by the assurance-anxiety complex among politicians. The stake in Nigerian politics is incredibly high given the enormous benefits that go with occupying elective and appointive offices (assurance) as well as the deprivations that follow the loss of state power (anxiety). It emanates from the calculation that access to resources come from having access to the state or connections to state managers, usually, but not exclusively, through politics. Given this situation, so much premium is placed on primitive accumulation of power (Utomi, 2020). Thus, the political economy consequences of gaining or losing access to state power breed a brand of politics (electoral and political contests) that leaves no room for fair competition.

As Ake (2003) has rightly noted, political competition in post-colonial state is dialectically linked to the process of primitive accumulation. This approach hardly encourages moderation and compromise because it is deeply driven by the calculus of power. For everyone in the political arena, 'security' lies in the accumulation of power. In the post-colonial Nigerian state, the government at the centre is structured to wield a disproportionate amount of power and resources in ways that make politics a do-or-die affair (Awopeju,

2020). As such, winning an election at all costs becomes the primary consideration and calculation of all politicians given the premium placed on state power. The ferocity and intensity of political competition, in turn, underpins insecurity in the larger society.

The danger inherent in this form of do-or-die struggle for power is the politicisation of security and the insecurity of politics. The logic is simple: most politicians seeking to gain or retain access to political power recruit and arm 'specialists of violence' – cultists, gangs and thugs –, and use them to conduct assassinations, kidnappings, and intimidation against voters, election officials and opponents. Over the years, many violent criminal gangs owed their origins to political campaign organisations. In some cases, these 'specialists' are compensated with sensitive elective and appointive offices (Onuoha, 2010). In other times, they are abandoned altogether. In turn, these elements so 'empowered' through funding and arming by politicians subsequently engage in criminal activities that challenge the ability of governments (local, state or federal) to provide security within their area of jurisdiction. The result is an intricate nexus between "do-or-die" politics and organised crime in Nigeria (Ajala, 2018; Thisday, 2016).

The nexus between politics and insecurity in Nigeria was aptly captured in the assertions of Senator Shehu Sani during a parliamentary debate on the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) and violence in Nigeria:

> It is not possible for our security agencies to bring an end to the violence, killings, bloodshed, and proliferation of arms in this country as long as the political class includes violence as part of their political strategy to retain political power or to assume political power. We are becoming an AK-47 nation. People are killed every day and our country is becoming a failed state (cited in Iroanusi, 2018, para.9).

This claim goes further to corroborate the logic and attendant consequences of Nigeria's brand of politics: fierce political competition begets

SALWs proliferation, which in turn begets blood spilling in politics. Thus, politics in Nigeria takes a violent nature and this has over the years posed significant threat to election security. According to a report by SBM Intelligence (2019), some 626 people were killed during the 2019 election cycle, starting with campaigns in November 2018 and conduct of elections in March 2019. Overcoming this brand of politics that implicates insecurity and electoral violence will require a WoG approach to ESM to be successful.

Entrenched culture of electoral violence

Consequent upon the nature of politics in Nigeria, elections are usually characterised by violence and political tensions. Most times, political parties and candidates resort to all manner of unseemly behaviour, especially the mobilisation of violence for electoral advantage. As a result, violence has become an enduring feature of Nigerian politics and only get worse during election periods (Nwankwo, 2018). Prevalent forms of electoral violence include assassinations, arson, violent campaigns, thuggery, election-related ethno-religious crisis, and snatching of ballot boxes, among others (Musser, 2019).

Indeed, the conduct of elections in Nigeria since independence has largely been characterised by violence. During the 2019 elections, no fewer than 58 people were reportedly killed during the election day, with Rivers State accounting for 30 of this alarming number (Nwokeoma, 2019). The 2015 general elections had several election causalities. Rivers State recorded the highest number of incidents of violence with 16 out of the 66 incidents documented by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) across the country. In 2011, election violence claimed nearly 1,000 lives mostly in northern states following the defeat of Muhammadu Buhari by former President Goodluck Jonathan. As shown in figure 2, Kaduna State had the highest death toll with 827 persons killed. Some 300 people were killed in election-related violence in 2007 compared to about 100 people in 2003 (Onuoha, 2019).

Figure 2: *Casualties of the 2011 Post-Election Violence in Nigeria*
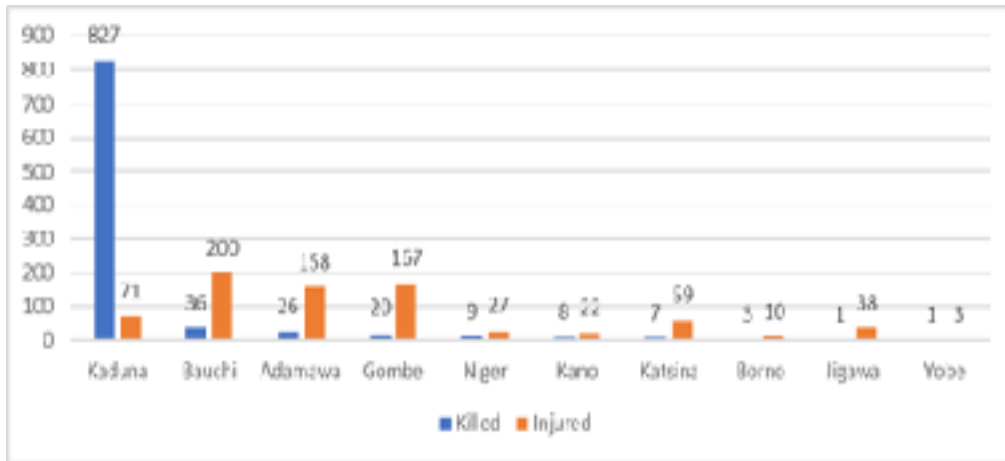
Source: Adapted from Lemu Panel Report (2011).

Of growing concern however with the recent spate and scale of electoral violence is the complicity of state security force. As Odinkalu and Nwachukwu (2019) perceptively noted, 'the unique contribution of the 2019 election cycle to Nigeria's pathology of violent elections is that many of these killings are attributable to the security services. Meanwhile, a large number of those that engage in electoral violence and fraud get away with it and this has become a motivation for politicians to freely engage in electoral violence of all kinds (Adeyemi, 2011). Beyond the death of citizens, the incident of electoral fraud and violence in turn lead to contested outcome. This is very much evident with the number of litigations as shown in table 1. Situations where courts or tribunals have decided on the winner of such exercises have contributed to the rising number of off-cycle elections in Nigeria.

Table 1: Caseload of Electoral Litigations in Nigeria, 2007-2019

Year	Number of Elective Office Contests	Number that ended up in election petition tribunals	Percentage
2007	1496	1299	86.5%
2011	1496	769	51.4%
2015	1496	<748	<50%
2019	1487	766	51.5%

Source: The Election Network (2020, p.5).

Active low intensity conflicts

Violent conflicts have plagued Nigeria since independence. Most of these conflicts are not only recurrent, but increasingly lethal. The emergence and proliferation of violent non-state armed groups (NSAGs) are particularly behind the scale and spread of active low intensity conflicts in Nigeria. A report in 2016 revealed that a total of 18 new armed groups sprang up in Nigeria in less than two years, making her the territory with the fastest-growing number of new armed dissident groups in Africa. The number of NSAGs that took up arms against the Nigerian state increased from just two in May 2015 to as high as 20 in August 2016 (Mayah, 2016). Activities of terrorist organisations, ethnic militias, separatist groups, and other criminal gangs define the landscape of low intensity conflicts with negative implications for election security.

Since July 2009, insurgency by Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad (Boko Haram) and its splinter faction, the Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP) as well as military efforts to dislodge them has led to over 37,000 deaths and displacement of more than 2.3 million people in Nigeria's Northeast region. The insurgency continues to pose significant threat to peace, security and stability as well as the prospect of peaceful elections in

Nigeria. This is hardly surprising given that its philosophy abhors western education and institutions. Consistent with this ideology, Boko Haram's operational ambition and target selection have focused on destroying and disrupting structures and processes that also support the practice of democracy (M.B. Hadiza, personal communication, December 6, 2018).

In the northeast zone where the insurgency is most devastating, the group's activities directly undermine election security. For instance, a day before the 2011 presidential election, suspected members of the terrorist group attacked some residents of Gwange suburb in Maiduguri, killing two civilians and two soldiers (Ojo, 2011). Also, on election day, bombs exploded in two separate places in Maiduguri, killing two and leaving no fewer than 10 persons injured. Another bomb explosion that took place minutes before completion of the accreditation of voters, left no fewer than ten victims critically injured. A female police officer was among the injured, and one of the presiding officers lost his eyes to the explosion. About five hours later, another explosion occurred at Abaganaram collation centre where electoral officials were collating election materials after the poll. The blast killed Ahmad Maira Abihud, an ad hoc staff of the INEC (Ojo, 2011). On election day on 28 March 2015, Boko Haram extremists killed 41 people, including a legislator, to discourage hundreds from voting (Musser, 2019).

The frequency and intensity of violent confrontations between herdsmen and their host communities add to low intensity conflicts that continue to compromise election security. There have been 389 clashes involving herdsmen and farming communities between 1997 and 2015 in Nigeria, with an estimated loss of about $14 billion annually to these clashes (Amaza, 2016). Herdsmen-farmers clashes is particularly recurrent in the Middle Belt, but has overtime spread to Southern Nigeria. The escalation of herder-farmer violence in the first half of 2018 heightened ethnic and religious tensions in much of the Middle Belt. The frequency and devastation of the attacks have been particularly acute in Benue, Plateau and Taraba states. It is estimated that between January 2016 and October 2018, herdsmen-farmers clashes claimed 726 lives in Benue state alone (Amnesty International, 2018). Furthermore, over 300 people were killed and 38,000 others displaced by

Fulani herdsmen attacks on communities in Barkin-Ladi and Riyom, in Plateau State, between June and September 2018.

Findings of a fieldwork conducted in June 2019 by the first author indicate that herdsmen-farmers violence was a leading source of tension in Benue and Plateau states before the 2019 election. Although it is generally believed that clashes between herdsmen and farmers are not overtly political, there is growing suspicion among local communities that such conflicts may have been instigated by politicians to cause population displacement and voter suppression. As noted by one interviewee:

> The politicians now think ahead. If they see for example that the opponents can be displaced through farmer-herder conflict, they will create that conflict to displace the people and reduce the voting power in those areas and take an advantage over it. So it played out as we saw quite a lot of those conflicts close to the election period particularly within the Birom axis, especially in Bassa, Riyom, Barkin Ladi and Bokkos LGAs (A. Bala, personal communication, June, 26, 2019).

They further noted that some of the displaced persons from communities in Birom did not vote during the 2019 general elections because they could not relocate to their communities before the election, while a few others did not see their names in the polling units created by INEC in the internally displaced persons' (IDP) camps. To this extent, the dislocation and disenfranchisement of the affected population is one obvious consequence of herdsmen violence for election security.

Activities of separatist groups in Nigeria's southeast zone complicates the landscape of election security, especially since 2012. Agitation for a separate state of Biafra in Nigeria's southeast has further intensified since President Buhari came to office in 2015 (Hassan, 2018a). These separatists consist of groups like Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Biafra Zionist Movement (BZM), MASSOB International, Biafran Zionist Front (BZF), Biafra Independent Movement (BIM), Biafra Youth Congress (BYC), Biafran Liberation Council (BLC) and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) (now proscribed by the Federal

Government), among others. They have leveraged the opportunities provided by the return to civil rule in 1999 to openly express their hitherto suppressed grievances against the Nigerian state (Nwangwu, *et al*., 2020).

The most radical group amongst them is the IPOB, which has consistently called on its supporters to boycott and disrupt elections unless the government calls a referendum on independence. Their tactics included using hate speech, rumours and threat messages. For instance, during the November 2017 gubernatorial election in Anambra State, the IPOB, used online platforms like YouTube, WhatsApp and Facebook to spread threatening messages to people to discourage them from voting (I. Yekini, personal communication, November, 17, 2017). They texted people with slogans such "If you vote you will die. Don't go out, stay in your house" (Onyeji, 2017, para.4). They equally used such medium to spread propaganda that allege that security agents planted explosives in many parts of the state on the election day (Ndujihe, 2017).

In 2015 and 2019 general elections in Nigeria, online platforms were used by IPOB to threaten and discourage people not to participate in the elections. Although IPOB has not demonstrated the intent and capability to use physical violence to disrupt elections, the dissemination of threat messages online dissuaded some voters from exercising their franchise during recent elections in the southeast. An effective online counter-measure against such cyber stalking by separatist elements is imperative for organising credible elections.

As with the threat of separatist groups in the Southeast zone, the activities of violent criminal gangs particularly cult groups pose significant threat to election security in Nigeria, especially in the South-South zone. At every election cycle in Nigeria, there is often a role for thugs, hoodlums and cultists. The nexus between cultists and political actors is becoming stronger in Nigeria. Since 1999, political actors in the region have either employed cult groups as informal security or used them to intimidate or kill their opponents, especially during elections (Hassan, 2018b; Onuoha, 2010; Human Rights Watch, 2007). As politicians increasingly support cult groups in pursuit of their political interests, cultists are, in turn, demanding all kinds of favours

from politicians, including access, resources, contracts and political or security service positions (formal or informal). This underpins the emergence of politico-criminal interdependency that is being euphemistically described as the 'system' in the Niger Delta region. Figure 3 shows that while Rivers State maintains the highest rate of cult related incidents, high numbers of cult-related incidents and deaths are now recorded every year in each of the nine Niger Delta states.

Figure 3: Cult related incidents in the Niger Delta Q1 2016-Q2 2020
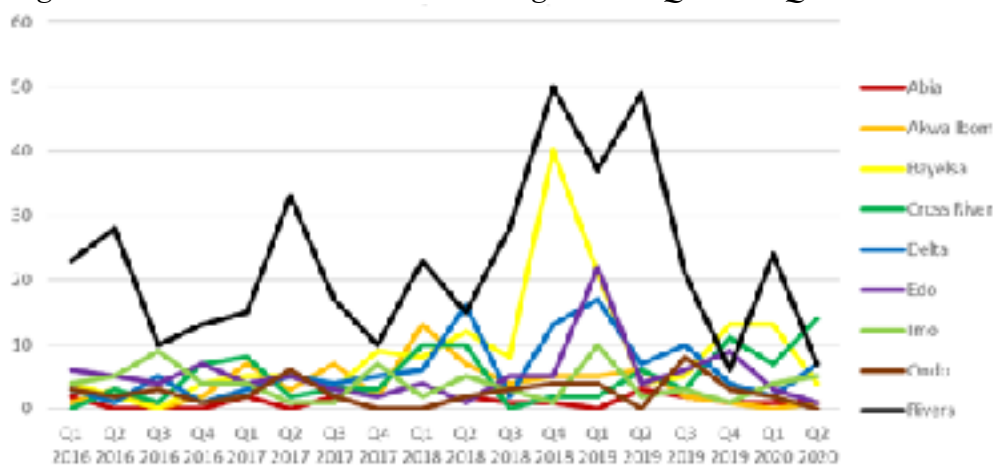
Source: Stakeholder Democracy Network (2020).

Many of these groups have been co-opted by politicians to intimidate citizens and rig votes, particularly in the South-South zone. The governorship elections in Bayelsa State in 2015 and Rivers State in 2019, were declared inconclusive due to violence by thugs and cultists (Hassan, 2018a; Onuoha, *et al,* 2020). Despite the deployment of soldiers, the elections were marred by ballot box snatching, hostage-taking of electoral officials, and other forms of violence.

Challenging geo-topographic terrain

The vast and difficult terrain of Nigeria is another factor that makes the adoption of WoG approach to ESM compelling. Nigeria covers an area of 923,768 kilometres, making her the 10th largest country in Africa in terms of landmass. With an estimated population of over 200 million citizens, Nigeria is Africa's most populous country, and is one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse societies in the world with over 230 ethnic groups and approximately 400 hundred languages and dialects.

The country is divided administratively into the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja) and 36 states and 774 local government areas (LGAs). In addition, it has diverse, and in some areas difficult, topographic terrain spread across five major geographic regions: a low coastal zone along the Gulf of Guinea; hills and low plateaus north of the coastal zone; the Niger-Benue river valley; a broad stepped plateau stretching to the northern border with elevations exceeding 1,200 metres; and a mountainous zone along the eastern border.

Of particular concern is the challenge of transporting electoral materials and officials to polling unites in remote communities located in creeks, riverine and mountainous areas. For instance, about 2,370 square kilometres of the Niger Delta area consist of rivers, creeks and estuaries, while stagnant swamp covers about 8600 square kilometres. Many communities are located in these riverine areas and creeks, and many of them are infamous for sea robbers and kidnappers. It could take as much as three hours by speedboats to access some of these remote communities, making the transportation of election materials and officials usually difficult and insecure (P. Tokpo, personal communication, June, 9, 2019). Thus, the provision of security by the Nigerian military, especially the Navy, becomes inevitable for successful conduct of elections in such areas.

There is equally the challenge of conveying election materials and officials to remote communities in mountainous areas using the terribly bad Nigerian roads. Nigeria has a national road network of about 200,000km. Of this total, federal roads make up 18 per cent (about 35,000km), State roads 15 per cent (about 17,000km), and local government roads 67 per cent (about 150,000km), with most local government roads being unpaved. As at 2012, an

estimated 40 per cent of the federal road network is in poor condition (in need of rehabilitation); 30 per cent in fair condition (requiring periodic maintenance); and 27 per cent in good condition (requiring only routine maintenance). The remaining 3 per cent consists of unpaved trunk roads that need to be paved. In the case of state roads, 78 per cent is in poor condition, with 87 per cent of local government roads also considered to be in poor condition (National Planning Commission, 2015).

Although many federal roads are now under some form of construction and rehabilitation, they are crumbling faster than they can be fixed. The federal roads like the Lagos-Ibadan expressway, Ibadan-Ife highway, Lokoja-Abuja highway, Enugu-Port Harcourt highway, Enugu-Onitsha highway, Kano-Maiduguri highway, and Ilorin-Jebba road and others, have become death traps. Beside the annual loss of ₦450 billions, the deterioration of Nigeria's network of roads now poses grave danger to election security. The dilapidated state of the roads heightens breakdown of vehicles transporting election materials, exposure of electoral officials to possible abduction, and hijack of vehicles carrying election materials by hoodlums.

Growing election logistics requirements

The conduct of elections in Nigeria is increasingly becoming costly, complex and challenging. This is not unconnected to population explosion (massive eligible voters), increase in the number of constituencies, and proliferation of political parties. According to the INEC, it spent ₦112.9 billion for the 2011 elections (for 73.5 million voters) and ₦108.8 billion in the 2015 elections (for 68.8 million voters). The cost has risen to ₦242 billion (for 84 million voters), as approved in the budget for the 2019 elections (Baje, 2019). These humongous amounts exclude the costs that the candidates of various political parties spend.

Since the return to democracy in 1999, successive elections – 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019 – have witnessed massive proliferations of political parties and contestants further stretching the logistics and security outlay of elections. The 1999 elections saw only two contestants for the seat of

the president. However, in the 2019 presidential elections, 73 candidates contested for the same position (Musser, 2019). Data in table 2 show the proliferation of parties and contestants in relation to presidential elections held since 1999 and associated violence.

Table 2: Proliferation of Political Parties and Associated Violence during Presidential Elections in Nigeria, 1999-2019

S/N	Year	Political Parties that Contested	No. of Political Parties	Some forms of violence reported
1.	1999	PDP, AD	2	Use of thugs on opponents and non-supporters, rigging, disenfranchising supporters of opponents, snatching of ballot boxes, alteration of election results, announcement of results different from those collated from polling units.
2.	2003	PDP, ANPP, APGA, UNPP, NPC, PAC, NDP, JP, PRP, PMP, APLP, NNPP, MDJ, ARP, DA, NAP, BNPP, NAC, LDPN, MMN	20	Massive rigging, kidnapping, assassinations, thuggery, intimidation of opponents' supporters, snatching of ballot boxes, bribing and compromising INEC officials.
3.	2007	PDP, ANPP, AC, PPA, DPP, APGA, AD, FP, ADC, NPC, HDP, PMP, ALP, APS, NDP, NNPP, CPP, RPN, BNPP, NCP, NAC, NMDP, ND, NUP, MMN	25	Killings, riots, kidnappings, use of thugs, snatching of ballot boxes, intimidation of INEC officials, falsification of results.
4.	2011	PDP, CPC, CAN, ANPP, PDC, PMP, PPP, ADC, BNPP, FP, NCP, NMDP, APS, UNPD, NTP, MPPP, ARP, HDP, SDMP, LDPN	20	Killings and protests mainly in the North, assassinations, thuggery, snatching of ballot boxes

| 5. | 2015 | PPN, HOPE, APA, UPP, KOWA, ACPN, UDP, PDP, ADC, NCP, APC, AD, CPP, AA | 14 | Kidnapping, Intimidation and harassment of INEC officials, attacks by Boko Haram insurgents, hate speech, threats of sponsoring violence in case of election lose |
| 6. | 2019 | APC, PDP, PCP, ADC, APGA, ADP, GDNP, APA, SDP, AAC, SNC, APDA, APM, YPY, PPA, AP, ANN, MMN, DPP, AA, ACD, NPC, PPC, AAP, ACPN, NRM, NNPP, NUP, DPC, LP, GPN, AGA, PPN, ABP, FDP, ANRP, FJP, ND, SNP, NCP, ANP, APP, UDP, ANDP, AGAP, RDP, DA, MPN, MAJA, PT, YES, RPN, CC, NAC, NIP, ASD, KP, CNP, JMPP, ID, RNP, HDP, BNPP, UPN, NDLP, UP, NEPP, LM, NCMP, NDLP, AUN, CAP, WTPN | 73 | Attacks by factions of Boko Haram in the northeast, increased communal violence between nomadic herdsmen and farmers, upthick in banditry, kidnapping, killing in Kaduna, Zamfara and Katsina. |

Source: Authors' Compilation

In view of the proliferation of political parties, the INEC is faced with massive logistic challenges in conducting elections. Logistics involves staffing, ballot paper, ballot boxes, card readers, result sheets, campaign materials, indelible ink, information flow, security agents, vehicles, polling booths, counting centres, registered voters, political parties, domestic and international observer groups, etc that help INEC in effective planning and delivery of elections (Laseinde, 2015). Data in table 3 present an insight into various elements of logistic outlay of the 2019 general elections.

Table 3: Logistic Elements in the 2019 Election

S/No	Item	Number
1	Number of Political Parties	91

2	Number of Local Government Areas	774
3	Number of Electoral Constituencies	1,558
4	Number of Registration Areas/Ward	8, 809
5	Number of Voting Points Nationwide	57, 023
6	Number of Observers	85, 000
7	Number of Polling Unites	119, 973
8	Number of Registered Voters	84, 004, 084

Source: Adapted from Orji (2019)

As noted by Momah (2015, p.9) "INEC's responsibilities are enormous, from organization, conduct, supervision of elections to monitoring the organisation and operation of the political parties, including their finances, etcetera." Thus, the task of providing security for persons, processes and properties deployed for the conduct of elections in Nigeria continues to expand with each successive election. The high cost is inextricably linked to the character of Nigerian politics and exacerbated by widespread incidence of corruption.

Cybersecurity threats

In the last few years, African countries seem to be major targets of cyberattacks. Studies have shown that organisations in Nigeria suffer more cyberattacks than any other country in Africa, but these attacks go unreported despite a mandatory regulation for disclosure (ADF Staff, 2019). Data in figure 4 reveal the most common types of cyberattacks on Africa and the associated costs. A July 2020 survey by a British security company revealed that 86% of Nigerian companies fell prey to cyberattacks within the past year. The second highest percentage recorded globally after India and much higher than in South Africa with 64% (Sophos Group, 2020).

Figure 4: Common Types of Cyber Attacks and Cost (Millions of US Dollars) in Africa
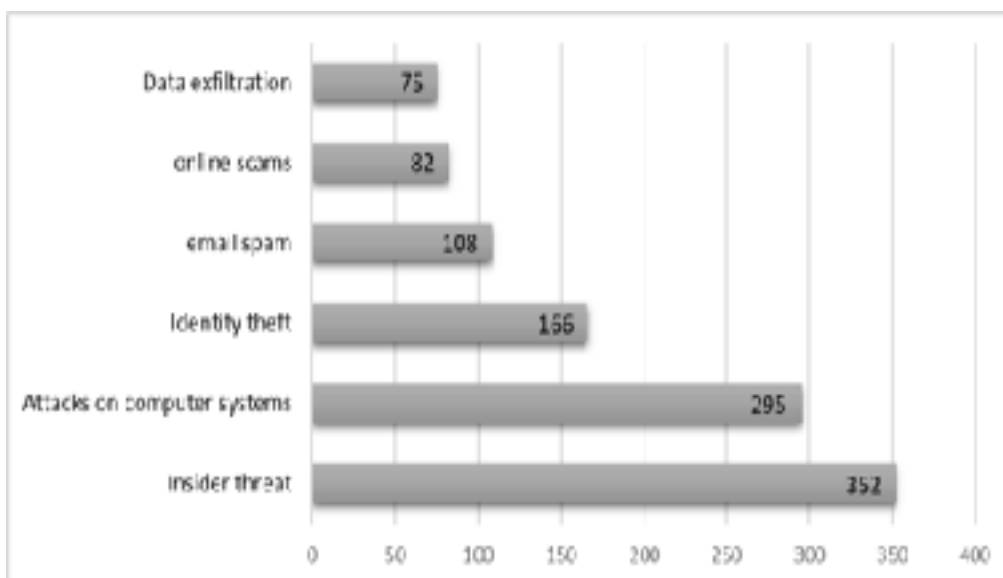
Source: ADF Staff (2019, p.11).

Yet discourses on election security in Nigeria have largely focused on the 'hard' threats, with little attention paid to the evolving challenge posed by 'soft' threats perpetrated or facilitated by criminal or hostile elements in the form of cyberattacks. Such threats to election system could manifest in the form of cybercrime (online manipulation of votes and results), foreign states' interference in future elections through misinformation or wilful criminal attacks on electronic networks and storage facilities. The need to pay greater attention to this potential threat will grow in the near future given that as INEC and other agencies of government embrace digital solutions for the improvement of Nigeria's electoral process, their exposure to cyberattacks will increase.

In fact, the nation's critical election infrastructure like INEC's website and electronic data are already vulnerable to attacks by cybercriminals. For example, INEC's website was hacked in March 2015 by a group that claimed to be Nigerian Cyber Army (Akinloye, 2015). In October 2020, Anonymous, an online network known for launching cyber-attacks against government institutions, hacked websites of several Nigerian government agencies, including INEC's (Akinkuotu, 2020). Although government officials are quick to claim that these attacks did not compromise security and integrity of the database of the website, the incidents clearly reveal the vulnerability of the nation's facilities to attacks by both state and non-state criminal elements who may wish to compromise Nigeria's digital election infrastructure and security.

Inwalomhe (2019) has presciently warned of the dangers: "although it is difficult to manually rig elections across 119,973 polling units in the country, hackers could successfully accomplish this seemingly daunting task electronically in less than one hour. What this means is that it is by far easier to rig an election via e-voting". When elections are rigged or manipulated through such cyber operations, it could underpin the outbreak of violence if contestants mobilise their supporters to reject such results. Thus, assuring defence against this form of election security breaches cannot be attained by deploying boots on the ground but by building a crop of cyber defence forces that can proactively prepare for, and swiftly respond to, such unconventional threats to elections now and in the foreseeable future. This underscores the enormity of threat posed to election security by evolving cyberattacks and the need to rejig Nigeria's nascent ESM framework.

Situational Analysis of Nigeria's Emergent Election Security Management Framework

Nigeria has an evolving WoG approach to ESM that is enabled by relevant constitutional, legal, institutional and regulatory mechanisms. From a constitutional point of view, Nigeria has several statutory institutions that are central to security provisioning. Indeed, the nation's expansive national security architecture is a complex of seven pillar elements to wit: security

guidance documents, security decision-making bodies, security advisory councils, security coordinating organ, statutory security apparatuses, security oversight institutions, and non-statutory security outfits. The constitutive elements and relations of the complex system is roughly depicted in figure 5. Space constraint will only permit a less than generous elaboration of the nature of the complex architecture. Of particular relevance here is the statutory security apparatuses. They comprise agencies in the defence, intelligence, security, policing, safety, and law enforcement community.

Figure 5: A Schematic Mapping of National Security Architecture of Nigeria

*Full meaning of relevant abbreviations and acronyms are provided in the discussion

Source: Onuoha, 2020

    The armed forces consisting of the Army, Navy and Airforce are primarily charged with providing defence for the country (external security) while a motley of agencies or authorities provide internal security. The lead agency for the conduct of internal security is the Nigeria Police Force (NPF).

The primary function of the Department of State Service (DSS) is intelligence gathering within the country and protecting senior government officials such as the President and state governors. While the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) has the responsibility of obtaining military intelligence for the Armed Forces/Ministry of Defence, the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) is charged with gathering external intelligence on civil matters only. The Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) is primarily saddled with providing measures against threat and any form of attack or disaster against the nation and its citizenry. The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) ensures that Nigeria is secured by preventing prohibited goods from being smuggled into the country or taken out of Nigeria, while the Nigerian Immigration Services (NIS) prevents foreigners from illegally entering Nigeria or staying in the country unlawfully. The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) is tasked with controlling illicit drugs in the country. The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) is responsible for co-ordinating and enforcing all other laws on trafficking in persons and related offences. The Nigerian Prisons Service (NPS) is charged with, among others, taking custody of those legally detained in accordance with laid down laws and procedures (Onuoha, 2020).

There are other 'soft security and safety' agencies that arguably are part of the national security architecture, such as the Federal Fire Service (FFS), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) and National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). These soft organs work alongside with the other hard-core security outfits to ensure public security and safety (Yoroms, 2005). Although the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) has no powers of a law enforcement agency, it is another crucial hub of Nigeria's national security architecture. The ONSA is charged with the coordination and management functions of the intelligence community. Overall, several of the hard-core and 'soft' security agencies have roles to play in ensuring a safe environment for the conduct of election.

In view of the above, Section 29(3) of the Electoral Act 2010 as amended empowers the INEC to request the deployment of relevant security personnel necessary for securing elections or registration of voters, and for the employment of the Nigerian armed forces only for the purposes of securing the distribution and delivery of election materials and protection of elections officials. To this end, Section 51 of the INEC Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of Elections 2019 provides for the role of security agents during elections, including providing security at the polling units, stations and collation centres; taking necessary measures to prevent violence or any activity that can threaten to disrupt the elections; ensuring the safety and security of all election personnel and materials by escorting and guarding the materials at all levels as appropriate; and complying with any lawful directive(s) issued by or under the authority of INEC, among others. In this regard, the Police is the lead agency for election security in Nigeria especially regarding operations on election day (B. Olugbuo, personal communication, September 16, 2020).

Consistent with enabling constitutional, legal and regulatory frameworks in Nigeria, INEC constituted the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in late 2010 to work out plans for successful and safe conduct of the 2011 general elections (Onuoha, 2019). Thus, the ICCES provides the institutional anchorage for Nigeria's ESM. It is chaired by the INEC chairman and co-chaired by a representative of the National Security Adviser (NSA). The ICCES is the 'platform responsible for the coordination of security matters and polling of scarce resources, particularly personnel in dealing with common security challenges in the electoral process (Jega, 2013, p. xxii). Table 4 contains the membership of the ICCES at the federal level. Some of these agencies have statutory responsibility to adopt policies, programs, and activities to ensure the safety and security of electoral materials (both physical and virtual), processes, persons and entities relating to the conduct of election. The ICCES holds regular quarterly meetings where core security issues are discussed and responsibilities assigned to agencies and their representatives (O. Ibeanu, personal communication, January 31, 2018).

Table 4: Membership of the ICCES

S/N	Officer/Agency	S/N	Officer/Agency
1	The Hon. Chairman and National Commissioners (INEC)	12	The Chief of Army Staff (Army)
2	The Secretary, INEC	13	The Chief Defence Intelligence Agency (CDI)
3	Inspector-General of Police	14	The Commandant General, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corp
4	The Deputy Commissioner of Police	15	The Comptroller General, Nigeria Customs Services (NCS)
5	The Comptroller General, Federal Fire Service	16	The Corps Marshal, Federal Road Safety Corp (FRSC)
6	The Director General, National Youth Service Corp	17	The Comptroller General, Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS)
7	The Director General, State Security Services	18	The Comptroller General, Nigeria Prisons Services (NPS)
8	The Chairman/Chief Executive, NDLEA	19	The Director-General, Nigerian Intelligence Agency (NIA)
9	The Hon Minister, Federal Ministry of Interior	20	Minister of Police Affairs
10	The Chief of Naval Staff (Navy)	21	The Chairman, Police Service Commission
11	The Chief of Air Staff (Airforce)		

Source: Adapted from INEC (2019), https://www.inecnigeria.org/voter-education/faqs/

The ICCES has played active roles in the conduct of elections since April 2011. Its main objectives, among others, are to coordinate the design of an election security management for INEC and develop locally focused plans for providing security before, during and after elections. This arrangement at the federal level is replicated at the state and local government levels. The

result is that representatives of these officers and agencies at the various levels get actively involved in ESM. Space constraint does not allow for a generous elaboration of the specific tasks of these agencies but suffice it is to note that each agency is assigned with specific tasks to ensure safe and secure environment for successful conduct of elections. Given this approach, the military for instance has assisted the with logistics capabilities, especially naval and air assets, to facilitate the movement of electoral materials and officials across the country.

As data in table 5 reveal, the relevant agencies of government are also expected to collaborate and synergise efforts at rendering complementary services crucial for election security. These kinds of strategic partnership between and among critical agencies demonstrates the workings of a WoG approach to ESM in Nigeria. Ahead of the 2019 general elections, for instance, the INEC introduced a tracking device to monitor movement of all vehicles carrying sensitive materials to locations real time from departure, enroute and arrival. To this end, it elicited the support of the FRSC as a partner in the ICCES to screen particulars of the vehicles to be deployed for electoral operations, in order to guarantee their road-worthiness and capacity to carry out the required services (Oyekanmi, 2019).

Table 5: Examples of Coordination in Delivering Aspects of Election Security

S/N	key issues in election	WoG Approach
1	Transportation and conveyance of electoral officials and materials	Military (Air Force, Navy, Military) Police, and NSCDC
2	Protection of electoral materials and personnel	Police, NIA and NSCDC and Military
3	Tracking of electoral materials and vehicle	INEC, FRSC, Police
4	Storage of electoral materials	INEC, CBN, LGA Headquarters

5	Prevention of voting by immigrants	INEC, Police, NIS

Source: Onuoha, F.C. (2019)

This approach has enabled the adoption and updating of standard operating procedures (SOPs), Code of Conduct (CoC) and rules of engagement (RoEs) to help shape the conducts of military, security and law enforcement officials on the frontline of election duties; improvement of inter-agency communication and coordination, enhancement of capacity building and training of security agents for election duties; and facilitation of robust interface between the ICCESS and civil society organisations (CSOs) involved in election observation. However, the extant framework has not been able to guarantee effective protection of lives and property during recent elections. There is equally the challenge of partisan rather than strategic deployment of security forces for election duties, leading to overt militarisation and complicity of security forces in electoral fraud and violence (Onuoha, *et al,* 2020; Onuoha and Ojo, 2018). The non-inclusion of other relevant Ministries or Agencies of government critical to election security, such as the Ministry of Science and Technology, in the ICCESS is equally a serious defect.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The integrity and credibility of elections are often a function of the quality of the safe and secure environment provided for citizens to exercise their franchise. Therefore, security is an important and necessary element at all stages of the electoral process – before, during and after elections. Events that can undermine election security can occur both online and offline. To this end, the roles of security forces and other agencies of government are very important in ESM. This study on the Nigerian experience clearly buttresses this reality. It has shown that there are diverse threats to election security in Nigeria, however discourses and policy responses have largely focused on threats manifest in the physical spaces while only tangentially recognising evolving threats in the virtual or cyber domain.

Therefore, it is through a WoG approach to ESM that the physical and virtual components of the electoral process can be adequately secured and protected from both hard and soft threats. The imperative of strengthening the evolving WoG approach to ESM in the country will continue to grow with the dynamics of Nigeria's security, demographic and technological environments. To this end, this study puts forward a series of strategic recommendations that if implemented alongside other relevant measures will contribute to strengthening the security of Nigeria's electoral process.

❖ *Expansion of the ICCES*: The INEC should work with the relevant agencies to review the composition of the ICCES towards expanding it to include critical agencies in the Ministry of Science and Technology, especially the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) and the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC).

❖ *Strategic security deployment*: There is the need for a paradigm shift from partisan deployment of security personnel to a strategic deployment approach. The deployment of security personnel in all future elections should be tied to specific locations and activities, and informed by detailed crime-mapping of the area.

❖ *Cyber working group on election security*: The ONSA should partner with the INEC to create a multi-agency cyber working group on election security (MCWGES). This MCWGES will be tasked to, among other responsibility, evolve robust counter-measures against cyberattacks targeted at compromising election security and conduct comprehensive routine vulnerability and risk assessment of facilities, networks, system and operations to proactively respond to exploitable loopholes towards ensuring overall security hygiene in the country's election cyber ecosystem.

❖ *Increased investment on STEM*: The Presidency, through the Ministries of Education and Science and Technology, should prioritise funding of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to produce a generation of scientists with the skillset to meet current and future cyber security demands of the nation. These individuals will serve as critical enablers and force multipliers for ESM.

❖ *Political reform*: There is a need for radical restructuring of the Nigerian state to make politics less attractive from a monetary point of view. Effective steps would be reducing the size of government,

drastically cutting down on the high emoluments of political and public officials, adopting electronic voting system, and making the job of legislators a part-time engagement.

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REVIEWING NIGERIA'S STAKE AND THE STRATEGIC IMPLICATION OF MOROCCO'S PROPOSED MEMBERSHIP OF THE ECOWAS

Ibrahim O. Salawu
Department of Politics and Governance
Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria

Abstract

International relations remain one of the surviving platforms for negotiation, consent, exploitation and domination of nations by nation. Cooperation and integration are two of the mechanisms used in the articulation of regional arrangements. The Kingdom of Morocco, a Maghreb nation in North Africa's bid for ECOWAS membership has attracted recurrent intellectual engagements by the ECOWAS member states and the academia. This study relies on qualitative research methods of data collection and analysis. The respondents were purposively selected based on their cognate experience and practice of the international relation and regional organizations. The Critical theory was used to gird the study, this allows the researcher to critically examine data collected from publications and triangulation which resulted in the discovery of the following: Regionalism is a complex phenomenon that may not be easily captured in one international relations theory; Regional arrangement of ECOWAS is threatened by external 'interests' like that of Morocco-ECOWAS membership. That given the antecedent of Morocco in the Maghreb Union, her interests in ECOWAS might be beyond economic alliance and there is still much to know about Morocco's intentions. Therefore, the study recommended among others that Nigeria and other West African states should go back to the drawing board to re-examine their position on Morocco's ECOWAS membership. Furthermore, ECOWAS members, especially Nigeria should guide her strategic position in ECOWAS by diplomatically weighing the short term and the long-term benefits of allowing Morocco to become ECOWAS member.

Introduction

Founded in 1975 in Nigeria, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a regional economic union of fifteen countries in West Africa. Nigeria and other members have both cultural and geopolitical

ties via common economic interests. One of the criteria for the membership of ECOWAS is the existence within the geographical area defined as West Africa. Therefore, the request by the Kingdom of Morocco on the 24thof February 2017 for membership consideration raised a lot of dusts yet unsettled.

The Kingdom of Morocco is in the Maghreb region of North Africa. The natives speak Arabic and Berber while French Language is also widely spoken among the inhabitants. As a member of the Arab League and the Union for the Mediterranean, Morocco was just readmitted into the African Union (AU) in 2017 after a 33-year absence when it withdrew from the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

Understandably, countries have in the past been granted membership of organisations, either fully or as observer status outside laid down criteria. For instance, the African Development Bank has 27 non regional members while the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has many non-Asian countries as members. In this sense, Morocco's proposed membership of ECOWAS might not be considered weird. However, the intent and purpose have spiked some level of suspicion and seeming apprehension especially amongst traditional power blocs in the sub region. It is against this backdrop that academic analyses geared towards unravelling the strategic import of the responsibility placed before the Heads of State and Governments of ECOWAS to reject or accept Morocco's intent, might not be out of place.

Statement of the Problem

Unravelling the myth around argument of the proponents of Morocco's membership of ECOWAS which centres on Morocco's potential wealth and acceleration of investment and trade is not unfounded. Currently, Morocco occupies the fifth position in the economic ranking of African nations with substantial investments in many West African countries. Despite this relatively impressive profile, trade between Morocco and ECOWAS members is not as encouraging. The trade volume is less than USD 1 billion a year, less than 4 per cent of Morocco's exports and less than 2 per cent of its global trade (OBG: 2017).

On the other hand, the anti- Morocco's move has cited erosion of the influence of the leading power blocs in the sub region and its attendant security implications for the stability of West Africa in the long run as cogent reasons to reject such move. They also imputed that increased investments and

trade are not sufficient consideration. According to them, the sub region can be said to a larger extent been commercially and culturally integrated without 'North African' wealth.

This study seeks to explore the implications of Morocco's membership of ECOWAS on the regional peace of West Africa in order to provide a critical framework for the discourse of such delicate international engagement. In doing this, the study explores the current disposition of ECOWAS to sub-regional cooperation and integration, critically examines the Morocco-ECOWAS membership struggle and establishes a balanced framework as guide to further discourses and engagement in this direction.

Morocco's intention for the membership of ECOWAS also recently became a major locus of intellectual discourses in international relations and development. This is with the premise that most international relationships are overtly or covertly shaped by ideological leanings and articulated through negotiation. Such ideologies and motifs are usually not at once discernible. It is usually unearthed through critical evaluation of the characteristics and contextual analysis of the actors that some of these hidden 'agenda' may begin to be discovered. An overview of the cultural politics of regionalism via likely accruable benefits of Morocco's membership vis-à-vis new power relations among the West African nations is important not only to advance the course of economic interventionism but also that of the security of states in the sub region. The study will majorly focus on the Morocco-ECOWAS membership discourse. The critical examination will remain in the attempt to establish the strategic implication of Morocco's desire to become a strong player with other power blocs like Nigeria in the concentric international system. This is without losing focus of the Anglo versus Francophone interests in ECOWAS and how Morocco's membership is likely to tilt the power equation.

Literature Review and Framework of Analysis

This study leans heavily on the critical theory. Critical theory is an approach that studies society in a dialectical manner through in-depth analysis of political economy, domination, exploitation, and ideologies (Fuchs: 2016). Critical theory is normative, and is based on the reasoning that domination is a problem. Therefore, its major value proposition is a dominion-free society. Critical theory is understood as a critique of society. Scholars in the Marxian inspired tradition employed the term "critical" to stress that not all science is critical, but that a lot of it has a more administrative character that takes power

structures for granted, do not question them, or helps to legitimize them. The question of what it means to be critical is of high importance for political communication and the debate for Morocco-ECOWAS membership.

Realism, Liberalism and International Organizations
Realism

Realism is a <u>school of thought</u> in <u>international relations theory</u> with a perception of the world in a real sense based on the management of the pursuit, possession, and application of power. Its variants could be seen in classical, neorealist and neoclassical senses. Within these, the basic believes are that the main actors on the world stage are sovereign states. Sovereignty connotes absence of a superior authority or actor above the state that can compel it to act in specific ways (Baylis etal: 2017).Thus, no overarching authority to enforce rules over states. It is basically a self-help system. Because the realists believe that human beings are by nature selfish and will do anything to protect their own interest and ego and that the state is a collection of human beings; states will do anything to protect its national interest and survival. To do this, a state will acquire military power to bolster its security (Goodin:2010). Such act became replicated in other states within the international system leading to international power struggles. Indirectly, this action engendered the security dilemma whereby a state's security becomes another's insecurity.

It could be deduced that realism is mainly statism, anarchy, power, security, national interest and self-help. As such, realist believes that morality and rational behaviour weakens the practice of international affairs due to the inherent conflict between states' interests and moral provisions.   Using 'America's diplomacy' as an example, Kennan in Russell(2000) opined that moralism without regard to the realities of power and the national interest is self-defeating and will lead to the erosion of power, to America's detriment. (Baylis etal :2017) alluded to this position when he opined that the drive for power and the will to dominate are two edged fundamental aspects of human nature. This among other factors have been used to validate the campaign for the rejection of Morroco's aspiration to ECOWAS membership. It is natural for states to be weary of potential threats to national interest and possible dominion by an apparently stronger nation.

Liberalism

Prescriptions and assumptions of realism are being rejected by the ideals of liberalism which emphasizes cooperation. Though the liberals also believe in the anarchic nature of the international system, they however do not believe that conflict is inevitable between states. They believe in the inherent goodness and axiom of rationality that drives mankind despite its selfish nature. It is assumed if rationality and inherent goodness of mankind is transposed to the state level, chances of conflict can be reduced through cooperation. This was exploited by world leaders in their quest for the formation of international organisations to promote cooperation. Thus liberalism with its different strands, such as neo-liberalism, commercial liberalism and democratic peace liberals, all have the same common underpinning assumption of prosperity and security through cooperation.

The major challenge of liberalism is that it infringes on the sovereignty of states. States are required to submit a part of their sovereignty to a higher organisation for the general interest of all. This was reinforced by Baylis et al (2017), he inferred that in certain instances, the liberty of the state must be compromised by the need for collective action, hence the priority that is attached to the coordinating role of international organisations Recently however, states, citing the nebulous national interest are beginning to challenge this assertion. This obviously bring the international rule based normative system is under threat. The attendant dilemma here is that; should member states of ECOWAS activate liberalism and accept the membership of Morocco even though it might be detrimental to their national interests or should they maintain the status quo by protecting their national interests? The questions that should be answered is that; how sure are the stakeholders that Morocco will not capitalise on the liberal world order to selfishly enhance its national interest at the detriment of her ECOWAS membership.

Realism vs Liberalism

According to Hoffman (1987:396), "The essence of liberalism is self-restraint, moderation, compromise and peace whereas the essence of international politics is exactly the opposite: troubled peace, at best, or the state of war". The question is can the realities of international politics coincide with the ideals of liberalism? This is very unlikely and has played out in recent times with states pursuing their national interest within liberal organisations or even pulling out of international agreements to defend their national interests. For instance, the United States which has been at the fore front of the

normative liberal world order has taken a turn towards the realist approach to international relations. It has defied the United Nations on occasions to carry out unilateral actions. An example was the invasion of Iraq. It recently also cancelled international agreements which it had entered into in the last G8 Summit in which Canada and France raised concerns over the tax regime imposed by President Donald Trump on iron and steel from the United States. The USA had also cancelled the Iran Nuclear Deal, the Trans Pacific Partnership and the Paris Accord. Meanwhile other nations are beginning to follow suit in placing national interest over international liberalist cooperation. China for instance has defied all rulings by the Hague Tribunal on the South China Sea, Syria has continued the use of chemical weapons despite an international ban, North Korea is continuing with the production of nuclear arsenals despite the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty to mention just a few. All these obviously points to a shift from liberalism to realism especially with the emergence of other powerful nations to challenge the policing of the liberal world which the United States had undertaken since the end of the Cold War.
It is in this light Morocco's proposed membership of ECOWAS be viewed. The realities of national interest, however polemic shows points to the fact that commitment to liberal ideals that are in consonance with national interest will likely determine whether Morocco will be granted membership or not.

International Organization

Archer (2001:33) defines international organisations as "Formal, continuous structures established by agreement between members, from two or more sovereign states with the aim of pursuing the common interest of membership". Worthy of note in Archer's definition is the minimum number of states that must be involved and the underlying emphasis on 'agreement' and 'common interest'. It follows therefore that international organisations are established based on the principle of cooperation among states which is in tandem with the teachings of liberalism. International organisations were born during the era of US President, Woodrow Wilson. He conceived international organisations to promote peace and wellbeing in line with liberal thinking. As such, the League of Nations came on board immediately after the end of the First World War even though it could not prevent the Second World War. Nevertheless, another attempt was made after the end of the Second World War with the formation of the United Nations and other Bretton Wood

institutions. These institutions have endured till today and have mid-wifed the formation of many international organizations including ECOWAS.

However, recent developments have ignited a rethink of the role of international organisations in promoting cooperation. National interest and unilateralism have overthrown multilateralism. According to Meierhenrich (2012:33) "scholars of international relations have largely failed to take seriously the study of International Organisations dysfunction". The dysfunction is born out of the bureaucratic nature in the operation of some of these organisations. For instance, the United Nations which is expected to provide mechanism for governments to find areas of agreement and solve security and other development challenges has so many other internal contentions to resolve. The UN Security Council could be said to have been rendered comatose to the extent that power of veto is used for political interest rather than organic decision making in the quest to better humanity. The Council is divided within itself into what can be described as the sovereigntist and liberalist groups, with each working at cross purposes, on important developmental and security issues which ordinarily requires unity and consensus. The resultant effect of these can be gleaned from the cataclysmic record of disappointments and failure, with just pockets of successes in the management of world power contention and exploitations notably in Syria, Yemen, Libya and South Sudan amongst others are pointers to this ugly situation. The International Monetary Fund and World Bank interventions in the economy of developing nations have equally yielded negative outcomes. In the mid-eighties, they provided loans and technical advice to many struggling African countries in what was termed 'Structural Adjustment Programme'. This intervention failed woefully and further impoverished many of these countries. These accounts for the seeming loss of faith in the instrumentalities of the IMF.

Apart from bureaucratic issues, member states of some of these organisations also express dissatisfaction at the hegemonic powers of some member states. For instance the permanent seat allocation on the Security Council have been a point of agitation for expansion. Member states like India and Nigeria have been demanding inclusion to no avail. Likewise, in the IMF and World Bank, financial decisions are expected to reflect the relative positions of its member countries in the global economy. This obviously places the poorer countries at disadvantage both in having a strong voice in the institution and the borrowing threshold. Mearsheimer (2012) further captures

this succinctly when he posited that institutions are based on the self-interested calculations of the great powers, they have no independent effect on state behaviour and they are therefore not an important cause of peace. This obviously explains the perception of many developing states that these organisations are imperialist and merely designed for the benefit of the developed countries. China's quest as an emerging power to have more voice in the institution have met serious challenges and partly explains her spear heading the establishment the Asia Infrastructure Development Bank.

From the foregoing, it could be deduced that the international organisations face numerous operational and ideological challenges today. They may not be absolute with their results but have seriously impacted on their ability to deliver on some of their founding objectives. With this in mind, one will need to further interrogate Morocco's motivation to seek for membership of a West African economic regional bloc. Could it be because ECOWAS has not been affected by the aforementioned challenges and as such is still a beacon for liberalism?

Cultural Politics of Region And Regional And Integration
Social scientists have long recognized the descriptive status of 'regions'. However, there is a vacuum in their analysis. Regions are recognized as sub units within existing sovereign nation states. They are considered 'left over' of territories that could have gained sovereignty but did not and have not. In this space, the inhabitants continue to contest, sometimes, violently. Regions can acquire the status of actors when they manage to secede or are granted some role (subordinate) within a federal or decentralized polity. In the latter case, they are considered especially useful for comparative purposes – precisely because they have already been integrated, i.e., share a common political culture, legal system, constitutional status and, often, party system, and therefore can be expected to vary in performance only due to exogenous shocks and diverse socio-economic conditions (Hoffmann and Vleuten: 2007).

Karl Marx in his analysis of trans-boundary relations drew an important distinction between what he called a class in itself and a class for itself. This distinction hinges on the degree to which people who share a common relationship to the means of production (a class in itself), develop a class consciousness and class identity which recognizes their commonly

exploited situation and interests. Such class consciousness, under certain historical conditions, promotes the organized social and political action of a class for itself – the region. In this way, region refers not only a common thought to economic or monetary relations, it is central also to the analysis of culture and cultural relations. Culture becomes the terrain in which regional relations are made meaningful, and through which dominant and subordinate classes contest hegemony. A great deal of the recent work in international relations, communication and cultural studies can be seen as sharing a common concern with the interrelationships between classes, culture and regional relationship. Much of this work seeks to analyse how underlying material or economic conflicts and inequalities between and within a region are expressed and reproduced in cultural relations and economic interaction (Jakopovich: 2014)

Regional organisations are not a new occurrence in international relations. One of the first were the Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine in 1868 and the Organisation of American States in 1890. They still exist with some expansion and their cooperative activities; they are not close to the trans-regional arrangement that the Morocco-ECOWAS relationship could give birth to Regional organisations have increased rapidly in number over the past decades with their influence covering most part of the Globe. Today, there is, perhaps, no sovereign state that does not "belong" to at least one regional organisation while there are some with multiple membership. It is almost difficult to explain why this is so.The idea of a public sphere as an arena of collective self-determination does not sit well with approaches that would appeal to an outsider's perspective to delimit regional proper boundaries. This is so probably due to unconscious articulation of material and non-material culture, deliberate imitation of the success of other regions, self-defense against external predators, calculated imposition by imperial hegemons, and some "cloning" from one to another.

The European experience since the early 1950s of voluntarily integrating previously sovereign national states is by far the most significant in this case. This feature has attracted huge scholarly attention than those of any known regional integration. It is therefore logical to espouse here that the European Economic Community (EEC), the European Community (EC) and, most recently, the European Union (EU), are collectively the most likely organizations to provide some functional, territorial and descriptive values for Africa especially with the intention of the Kingdom of Morocco to join

ECOWAS. However, care should be taken in relying on such "historico-inductive" strategy for theory-building and case-comparison around the Morocco-ECOWAS phenomena. Partly because many students of European integration have quite self-consciously defined it as a unique case and described it as such, or they have denied its status as a potential platform of such complex academic exercise. Moreover, to identify this structure in Europe within its generic "integrative properties" may disagree with what is about to happen or could happen in the process of the Morocco-ECOWAS fusion. African scholars and practitioners should not find the replication of the European integration in the intended Morocco-ECOWAS 'mating'.

It will be out of place to ignore the disappointing history of 'regional integration' in Africa in the discourse of this nature. In the 1960s, there was a flowery of activity amongst Third World countries, Latin America, the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa to produce regional organisations for a variety of reasons, ranging from economic, political, and culture. Accordingly, Jakopovich (2014) opined that subsequent generation of trans-national regional organisations seem more modest in their initial objectives – most were created as little more than free trade areas or Inter-governmental 'Talk Shops'. They continue to live beyond their forerunners. One capacity they have developed is the mandate to intervene when one of their members transmutes into autocratic regime.

Regional Integration and Morocco's Membership of ECOWAS in Context

The purpose of a theory of regionalism would be to explain why certain arrangements in the international system remain 'cooperative' cells, while a few manage to morph into one or another in the 'integrative' space. The key to such effort rests purely on the conferential box of shared characteristics. It becomes imperative in this regard to understand the initial motivations for regional cooperation and the symbolic achievements recorded. This will be in addition to discerning the levers of success in building consensus along moderately beneficial confederation and greater participation of actors. It is within this context that Morocco-ECOWAS ECOWAS fusion and consensual arrangement towards increasing the salience of benefits and/or the authority of decision-making for regional integration that may transform the current nature of sovereign nation-states West Africa be viewed.

If most of the literature on regional integration concerning Morocco and ECOWAS begins with a label - "intergovernmental" by disagreeing on

whether regional arrangement like ECOWAS could be transformed into something more "supra-national"- With the inclusion of a North African sovereign, then we will likely have a hydra of heads in one body but controlled by different souls. This novelty seems to defy existing and well known paradigms as there is yet to be a strong theory to capture the greater part of this Morocco-ECOWAS fusion. Though theories are instruments of discerning challenges, a single one or a collection of contextually defined theories is needed in the integration struggle in Africa. For the rest of the world's regions, the initial inertia point has been considerably conquered. Therefore, most theories and descriptions of European integration seemed irrelevant to what is happening in ECOWAS now.

To this end Schmitter (2007)suggested the following in addition to the fact that regionalism should not be fostered on liberal insights but largely on consenting paradigms and well understood by all participating nations:

1. All regional organisations regardless of initial position will tend toward entropy, i.e. they will attempt to encapsulate themselves in order to protect whatever capacities they are given at their foundation. Only exceptional "external" events or "internal" conditions will provide the momentum for them to escape from this status.

2. Member states, under normal conditions, will prefer regional arrangements from which it will be easier to withdraw and in which decisions will be made by unanimity. Only exceptional circumstances will move them from such original positions and, then, it will be the weakest member-states that will favour increasing the scope and authority of regional organisations.

3. Therefore, much of the movement toward more binding and consequential regional organisations will be the product of unintended or partially intended outcomes of the cooperative/integrative process itself. Member states will discover that "cheap talk" can become expensive, and that increases in mutual exchanges will produce outcomes whose benefits are not distributed as expected.

4. Although the ideology of regionalism stresses the 'peculiar' cultural and historical conditions shared by members, these will be largely irrelevant for predicting further progress in either cooperation or integration. In other words, regionalism – wherever it occurs – engages

similar processes and is affected by similar conditions. Are there any peculiar historical conditions for the Morocco-ECOWAS marriage?

5. "Regions" are constructs produced by negotiation among sovereign nation states and their outcome will depend more on emergent properties and exogenous shocks than upon initial shared conditions. It will be, therefore, the task of a unified theory of transnational regionalism whether cooperative or integrative – to examine critically and comparatively these hypothesized "laws," as well as to build upon them when apposite. What are the exogenous shocks and emergent properties that should be critically examined in this Morocco-ECOWAS integration?

Determining what constitutes a region could be tricky going by the above template. This was why Buzan (1998:68) remarked that "the concept of region is widely used but seldom very clearly defined". Some authors define a region in terms of geographical delineation while others look at it as an economic construct based on economic interdependence. If we go by economic interdependence, then, there could be some strength in the argument for Morocco-ECOWAS integration. Flemes (2010:2) supported this when he stated that "new ideas about regional boundaries may not be the reflection of novel identities, but instrumental to political power calculations". Hemmer and Katzenstein (2002:575) further buttressed this when they argued that "[although] often described in geographical terms, regions are political creations and not fixed by geography". Looking at both submissions, one could argue that Morocco has genuine right to aspire to membership of ECOWAS irrespective of its geographical location. However, regional proximity influenced by historical affiliations sometimes determines how interests are synchronized.

Interests such as bringing regional development at par with global developments and accelerating economic growth through social and cultural developments are the major reasons why regional and sub-regional international organisations are formed. This single but complex ideology may be the most difficult nut to crack in the Morocco-ECOWAS relations.

Morocco Membership of ECOWAS: Socio-Economic and Strategic Implications

The limited availability of documented aggregate data on ECOWAS as an entity was a major challenge in this particular analysis. There is no doubt that ECOWAS is one of the most regionally successful economic blocs even though total integration is still elusive. The ECOWAS has made meaningful progress in its stated objectives enumerated elsewhere. These are in the areas of free movement of person and goods; human development regarding education, humanitarian and social affairs; agricultural development and food security through the implementation of the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP); and on peace, security and democracy. Examining regional organisations show that many international organisations face mild challenges, these challenges sometimes threaten the liberalist views of cooperation.

Morocco has always leveraged on the seeming inability of regional organisations like the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) to make an in-road into the EU, to search for regional relevance. Expert opinion in the course of this study revealed that some diplomatic manoeuvrings championed by Morocco is partly responsible for the inability of the AMU to hold any summit since 2008. This "destabilization tendency "according to the respondent must not be allowed to reoccurring case Morocco-ECOWAS membership sails through. A corollary to this line of thought could be gleaned from the opinion expressed by a member of the Nigerian House of Representatives at a public hearing on Morocco's proposed membership of ECOWAS. Another respondent who is an international relations expert also echoed the same concern about the difficulty in deciphering the altruistic motives behind Morocco-ECOWAS membership move. The common denominator amongst these respondents revolves around distrust and the belief that Morocco is merely shopping for new frontiers having worked in no small measures to emasculate AMU.

These experts and lawmaker fear that Morocco's move could be an attempt to invade and retard the progress of an organisation that is already on its way to success. The seeming the tardiness that pervaded AMU cannot be easily discountenanced.

Without prejudice to Morocco's intention, many of these analysts are of the opinion that rather than exert diplomatic energy on becoming a member of a body that is not territorially contiguous, especially with the withdrawal of Mauritania, Morocco's interests will be better served by channeling resources into the revival of the moribund AMU.

Another respondent who is a top official of ECOWAS from one of the Anglophone member state sheds more light on the implication of the proposal.

He opined that; preparatory to Morocco-ECOWAS membership, issues relating to the free movement of persons and goods, rights of residence and establishment, single currency, ECOWAS Common External Tariff as well other technical objectives of ECOWAS in which considerable successes are being recorded must be well addressed before granting Morocco's request. Without the proper harmonization of these economic development indicators, all the progress made can witness a reversal of fortunes. It must be acknowledged that ECOWAS has gone far in her integration objectives to the extent that Morocco's planned membership would require a considerably longer transitional period for her to adjust national policies towards complying with the integration goal of the ECOWAS. He also expressed doubts on any likely advantages accruing to ECOWAS by granting Morocco membership. This aptly sets the tone for the discourse on the advantages or otherwise inherent in Morroco-ECOWAS membership.

Socio-Political Implication

From the political, peace and security standpoint, Morocco's military capacity and equipment would be an advantage to ECOWAS in its efforts to achieve peace, security and stability in the sub-region. This according to a respondent will complement Nigeria's effort in this direction. No doubt, Nigeria has made tremendous contributions to ECOWAS as the largest and most equipped military in the region in the areas of peacekeeping operations, fight against terrorism and violent crimes, maritime security and conflict mediation. It will be contradictory for Nigeria to support the quest to admit Morocco who according to Alonso and Rey (2007), has been increasingly identified as one of the largest producers of terrorists and insurgents in Afghanistan, Iraq, and throughout Europe; notwithstanding the factors that have contributed to this ugly development, including the influence of global jihad on potential Moroccan jihadists; the growing Islamization of the country; and deteriorating socio-economic conditions.

The debilitating effect of terrorism on West Africa especially in countries like Mali, Niger, Chad and Nigeria, makes Morocco's admission into ECOWAS an unlikely strategic dose capable of dousing the menace of terrorism in the sub-region. In fact, it is argued that such a move is likely to exacerbate and pose serious challenge to the current regional effort in counter

terrorism especially with the free movement of humans as articulated in Article 3 of the revised ECOWAS treaty.

Many of the respondents also argued that admission of Morocco into ECOWAS would open up the corridor between North and West Africa to further proliferate small arms and light weapons, human trafficking by other non-state actors from failed and ungoverned spaces in North Africa currently dominated by Islamist extremists. According to this exposition, one of the most viable strategies of combating terrorism is to narrow and restrict the movement of potential terrorists to defined geographical location and bring the full might of the state to bear on them. Syria has recorded tremendous achievement using this approach. Nigeria is also currently implementing similar strategy under the auspices of the Multinational Joint Task Force in West Africa. Succinctly, to allow potential terrorists freedom of movement by leveraging on Article 3 of the ECOWAS Treaty is to increase the space and probability for crime and criminality in the West African sub-region. This is definitely not going to be in tandem with the security interest of ECOWAS Member States no matter the equipment holding or size of the Moroccan Armed Forces. The required strategy of containment would be highly jeopardised.

In addition, Morocco's membership of ECOWAS with the attendant free movement of persons will create more migration problems for Europe. Morocco's geographical proximity to Europe will definitely make it an attractive route for illegal migration to Europe as against the current route through Libya and the free movement of persons enshrined in the ECOWAS treaty would make this easier for West Africans. Africa is losing many of its productive workforce to illegal migration with predicate crime rates from illegal migration cartels.

Some interviewed experts were of the opinion that Morocco might strategically seek for an exemption on the clause in ECOWAS Treaty relating to the free movement of persons. Granting this will further divide the already seemingly fragile unity in the organisation as some ECOWAS members who all the while had complied with the provisions of the Treaty even at the behest of their national interest will raise serious objection. Failure to adhere to the provisions of the Treaty in its entirety cannot be an option should Morocco be granted membership of the organisation.

Furthermore, Morocco prides herself as a working constitutional monarchy; it cannot be called a liberal democratic or constitutional monarchy

in the classical sense of the term. This is against the provision of Objective (d) Paragraph (iii) and Principle (j) of the ECOWAS Treaty amended in 1993. Fundamental decisions concerning political directions are taken by the king. He has the right to appoint the prime minister. He can also appoint and remove from office any member of the cabinet. He can dissolve parliament, arrange new elections and rule by decree (El- Maroof etal 2016). This system of government is totally different from what obtains in all Member States of ECOWAS for whom liberal democratic ethos and deepening of democratic values are paramount. Non-committal to these values could be recipe for conflict in future relations.

Economic Implications

Economically, the Kingdom of Morocco already has trade relations with West Africa although these are concentrated in a handful of countries and sectors. Nevertheless, it is believed that Moroccan economy could boost macro-economic stability of the future bloc and therefore promote convergence within ECOWAS. An analysis of the country's macro-economic data between 2012 and 2017 revealed that it met and bettered the convergence criteria laid down by ECOWAS. Morocco's debt/GDP ratio is 63%, budget deficit/GDP is 3.4% and inflation rate has averaged 1.46% in the last ten years. This commitment to macro-economic stability is a potential lever for the single currency that is advocated within ECOWAS. Moreover, the banking and insurance sectors in Morocco already play an active role in West Africa and as such the country's membership of ECOWAS could further enhance access to financing and insurance coverage in the region.

Though Morocco was recently re-admitted into the African Union (AU) shehas been able to boost its economic appeal in sub- Saharan Africa dramatically over the last few years. Morocco's economy has consistently grown in the last five years with the projection to grow at an average of 4.8% in the coming years. This obviously triggers the need to source for new markets and investment hubs.

It is not surprising that Morocco, like other international investors is gravitating towards sub-Saharan Africa and more importantly, West Africa. Also not minding her track record of a long time trading relations with European market, Moroccan companies now direct 40% of their investments towards other African countries. It must be stated that Morocco's move to join ECOWAS can be said to be part of an overall move to take Africa by storm,

starting with making more impact at the level of the AU. This is because, as at 2016, Morocco's total capital investment in Africa became the third largest with only China and the United Arab Emirates coming ahead of it.

The counter narrative to this convincing analysis is what a senior member of the ECOWAS Commission described as "looking for short term gains at the expense of perpetual economic slavery [of others]". This respondent reiterated that; "ECOWAS has been struggling with the challenge of economic domination by the West and might just be at the threshold of emancipating itself". However, according to him, it is puzzling, considering a move that would take away the gains recorded by admitting into the fray, a country whose interest is better served 'elsewhere'- North Africa.For instance, the Moroccan tariff structure is more detailed (17,785 tariff lines) than that of ECOWAS (5,899). This definitely places ECOWAS countries at a disadvantage. To negotiate an almost equal tariff regime will require painstaking preparations and negotiations akin to what is happening with Britain's exit from the European Union. Considering the current level of economic development of ECOWAS Member States compared to Morocco, it is doubtful if an agreement could be reached that would be favourable to both. Assuming that the tariff structure problem is sorted out, Morocco's membership of ECOWAS would occasion a decline in the custom duties collected by ECOWAS Member States not only as a result of Moroccan goods coming into ECOWAS market but also because of European goods finding their way into West Africa through Morocco. As such, ECOWAS states are likely to lose huge revenues which will indirectly affect the well-being of citizens and household income as a result of decreased government revenue to draw a strong budget.

Strategic Implication For Nigeria

Many stakeholders in Nigeria have opposed Morocco's membership of ECOWAS. At a public hearing organised by the Nigerian House of Representatives, the lower house of the Nigerian parliament, stakeholders such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Association of Retired Career Ambassadors of Nigeria (ARCAN), Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), the Manufacturer's Association of Nigeria (MAN), think tanks and other influential foreign policy analysts made incisive contributions at the hearing. All the participants, except that of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs objected to Morocco's membership of ECOWAS. The Ministry of Foreign

Affairs' position informs the further discussion below under diplomatic, military and economy indicators.

Diplomatic

Nigeria's leadership role in ECOWAS is splattered in many literatures on international relations not just as a 'founding father'. Diplomacy is one of the levers of national power used by Nigeria to further her national interest either on a bilateral or multilateral basis. This is done by joining international organisations, such as ECOWAS. Nigeria over the years has deployed its diplomatic resources in various ways within the ECOWAS not minding the palpable threat to her influence mainly from the Francophone bloc of ECOWAS.

Nigeria's opposition to Morocco-ECOWAS membership should be in Nigeria's national interest, at least to sustain her strategic position in ECOWAS. Surprisingly, that has not been the case as Nigeria along with Ivory Coast, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone, and Senegal openly expressed their support for the Morocco-ECOWAS full membership. Collectively, these countries cited several reasons ranging from economic to cultural and political rejuvenation. Meanwhile, other members have urged caution on the issue. Interestingly, the Anglophone – Francophone divide is not rearing its ugly head here. Though the Francophone countries are the major beneficiaries of Morocco's investment drive in the sub-region and Morocco's membership would increase the Francophone members by one. Ironically, only two out of the eight Francophone countries have supported the Morocco-ECOWAS bid considering their coalition power against the Anglophone in ECOWAS. Ghana's rejection of the bid could be a strategic reflection of what would happen if Morocco is admitted into ECOWAS. With emerging diminishing interest of France in the Francophone countries of the sub-region, France could have deployed 'soft threat' to her former colonies influencing the cautionary tone by the majority of the Francophone countries.

Unfortunately, Nigeria's position seems not to sufficiently project it against any long term implications of the convivial posturing to Morocco. Some respondents believed that Nigeria merely took her current position from the perspective of immediate economic gains. Akinyemi (2017) out rightly admonished Nigeria to withdraw its membership of ECOWAS if Morocco gets the nod of other members. His position is predicated on the negative effect such move will have on Nigeria's influence in ECOWAS. He called Nigeria's

temporary consent 'a bad faith' while also stating that, "ECOWAS could not unilaterally expand the boundary of West Africa to the Mediterranean". Such a move, he expatiated is not logical, legal, moral or historical and is against acceptable international norms because elective and appointive posts and resources of international organisations/institutions are shared on regional basis. Technically, admitting Morocco into ECOWAS meant that it would benefit from the Arab League quota as well as the West African quota. According to him, granting ECOWAS membership quota to Morocco would have meant that other countries within the Arab League like Palestine, Libya, Tunisia and Egypt would be qualified for membership too.

A corollary to the above argument is from some of the respondents who opined that Morocco targets is to further whittle down Nigeria's influence in ECOWAS by discreetly stepping into Nigeria's shoes in its "big brother" role in the continent and more importantly, in West Africa. Morocco's comparative economic and financial capability in this direction is not in doubt, not minding Nigeria's enormous financial, human and material resource deployments in sustaining the organisation since its formation. The diplomatic effect of of allowing Morocco's membership of ECOWAS would spell doom and would be most humiliating for Nigeria's foreign policy dynamics. According to one of the respondents, Nigeria could lose huge influence on key allies that can be advantageous in bigger international fora and platforms.

Military

One of the purpose for having a military is not only to defend a nation's territorial integrity but also to enhance it status in the committee of nations. This is achieved through participation in operations to ensure peace, security and stability of the world. The Nigerian military has played this role well to the admiration of the international community under the aegis of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).

The Nigerian Army led one of the most successful sub-regional forces, (ECOMOG) to end the Liberian Civil War, Revolutionary United Front rebellion in Sierra Leone and the civil war in Guinea Bissau. In all these interventions, fourteen out of the fifteen field commanders that prosecuted the field operations were Nigerians. Also, recently, Nigeria led an intervention force to restore democracy in the Gambia after an election dispute over the country's presidency. All these testify to the role Nigeria has played militarily

in securing and ensuring stability in the region. Nigeria has participated in all these operations because insecurity in the region will have a direct consequence on it because of the contiguous nature of ECOWAS countries to it. Morocco too has a large and well trained military but it is doubtful if it will be willing to sacrifice to maintain peace in a region that is far from it. Even if the Moroccan monarch orders it, domestic support may not likely favour it. Moreover, it will not be in Nigeria's interest to let go of or share this important lever of national power which has given it voice and recognition in the international community. Morocco's membership of ECOWAS will definitely jeopardise this.

Conclusion

The study concludes that proactive move by Nigeria and some other West African countries to create and nurture ECOWAS to its present status cannot be over emphasised. This is because of the wonderful role ECOWAS have come to play in fostering closer ties across the Francophone and Anglophone divides of West Africa. It could be argued that Nigeria's leading role in the formation of ECOWAS was merely in furtherance of the principles guiding her foreign policy aspirations. It has however, served as a formidable front for articulating common interest of members within Africa and global affairs.

It is the opinion of this study that provision of the ambience for the actualisation of these lofty objectives must be rewarded, especially when such initiatives are backed by Nigeria's heavy financial commitment. The study therefore submits that bending backwards to grant an equally comparatively strong nation like Morocco membership, despite obvious geographical "bottleneck", will have a negative multiplier effect on Nigeria's towering influence in ECOWAS.

Putting all these strands together, it could be seen that Morocco's membership of ECOWAS will be seriously prejudicial to the long term strategic interest of Nigeria diplomatically, militarily and economically despite the seemingly glaring short term gain. Even though Article 79 and 83 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty allows the organisation to enter into co-operation agreement with other countries, Nigeria should withdraw its initial support for such a move being extended to Morocco and even go further to use all necessary means to resist it at all cost.

Recommendations

Pursuant to the conclusion reached by the study that Morocco's membership of the ECOWAS should not enjoy the support of Nigeria for socio-economic and political reasons.

On the political front, the study recommends that Nigeria should not adopt the radical approach and disposition suggested by renowned scholars and diplomats who have called for the immediate withdrawal from ECOWAS. Instead, Nigeria should step up her diplomatic machinery and resources to thwart such request as currently being reviewed through other allies that might not necessarily be members of ECOWAS. A radical approach as suggested could spell doom for Nigeria-Morocco economic relations that is presently gaining momentum and has elicited recent friendly exchanges and diplomatic visits by the heads of states of the two countries.

Economic fundamentals on the side of Morocco have shown steady growth and have been projected to steadily grow at an average of 4.8% in the coming years. This implies that Moroccan entrepreneurs will be in search of new market frontiers for uninterrupted investment opportunities. Beaming their search light on West Africa is a liberal option. Therefore, it is incumbent on Nigeria and other member states to rally round each other to avoid becoming the dumping grounds for Moroccan products and more importantly, European products including material and non- material cultures.

Lastly, ECOWAS nations should not be swayed by the impression publicly peddled by Morocco in her bid to become a member of ECOWAS as being ready to adhere to the ECOWAS protocols on free movement. Migrants to Morocco often experience racism, discrimination and xenophobia. This reinforces the belief that relations between states are in fact often very different from relations between citizens. This negative track record shows that Morocco might find it difficult to adhere to the protocols of ECOWAS that is targeted at cooperation and ultimately integration of states in the sub region.

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ORGANIZED CRIME AND MIGRATION CRISIS: A VICIOUS CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND UNGOVERNED SPACES IN NIGERIA

Idris Saminu
Department of Political Science and International Studies
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Abstract

Organized crime and migration are among the many challenges bedeviling Nigeria. This has being made so complicated seemingly by government inability to control and exercise authority over its entire territory in terms of land, waters and on the cyber space. Today, virtually in all the six geopolitical zones, there are areas marked as ungoverned and have therefore been taken over by bandits, insurgents, militants, armed robbers, and other criminal gangs without being checked effectively by the authority. The aim of this paper is to show how proliferation of such areas marked 'ungoverned' provide safe haven for the criminals. Being a qualitative research, the study relies on relevant secondary materials including government publications, and reports of the NGOs. Predicated on the ungoverned space model, this paper argues that the availability of more unreachable and uncontrollable territories across Nigeria is the major reason behind the proliferation and increase in the number of highly sophisticated criminal gangs, and it escalates migration and the IDP crisis across the country. It is also the belief of this paper that, increase in the number and capacity of security personnel, creation of more security divisions, changing the patterns of rural settlements, and the extend of governance structure to the ungoverned territories will go a long way in changing the system.

Keywords: Terrorism, Crime, Migration, Violence, and Ungoverned space

Introduction

The name Nigeria has now almost become synonymous with crisis and conflict. Many security challenges expressed in form of kidnapping, armed robbery, cattle rustling, Cannabis and Heroin cultivation, banditry, and gangsterism are now the major challenges of the country. These have been caused by many factors that are seemingly internal and external to Nigeria. In the writings of many researchers and policy makers' statements, poverty,

extremism, unemployment, et cettera, have been pointed as the major amongst other factors. However,there are also some salient factors and agents that have made the situation what it is today and, have not been given the required attention to its end.

In reality, no matter what the causes are, what gives the fertile ground more strengths is the availability of areas where government is either partly present, or, almost non-existent. These areas have been tagged key threats to national and international security and are increasingly becoming sanctuaries for terrorist, drugs gangs, dens for kidnappers, and safe havens for armed robbers in Nigeria. Therefore, against this concern, this paper intends addressing the role of ungoverned space in exacerbating organized crime and consolidation of migration crisis in Nigeria.

Organized crime

The need to understand what exactly is an organized crime, and the activities it covers is however enormous today. Because, considering its nature, there seemed to be more confusion as regards finding the universally accepted definition of organized crime. this challenge has for long being acknowledged by many writers including Hagan (2006) who states that despite decades of efforts, the search for a universal definition of organized crime has eluded both academics, criminal justice agencies, as well as international crime management bodies. An exploration of the many available definitions by Hagan (1983) only revealed that, many scholars have failed to supply explicit definitions of organized crime, though, some consensus were apparently reached.

In addition, according to Dirks and Snyman (2010), organized crime is a highly diversified, patterned and structured activity that poses new global threats and challenges that require innovative, transnational responses. While typically regarded as a law and order problem restricted to specific groups, it is also related to certain areas or specific crimes. In its examination of global crimes, the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (2010) has categorized a range of key crimes, including human trafficking, migrants smuggling, the illicit heroin and cocaine trades, cybercrime, maritime piracy and trafficking in environmental resources, firearms and counterfeit goods activities of organized criminal gangs as forms of organized crimes. The report also examined a number of cases where transnational organized crime and

instability amplify each other to create vicious circles in which countries or even sub-regions may become locked.

Again, Kleemans (2011) argues that organized crime was framed in terms of 'Mafia's type' organizations and infiltration in local governments, geographical areas, and economic sectors in the previous decades. However, the primary business of organized crime is more fittingly described as transit crime, as opposed to the control of economic sectors or regions. On the contrary, criminal groups should be viewed as criminal networks instead of as pyramidal structures. The misconception of the nature of organized crime puts criminal investigation strategies on the wrong track, but the changing view of organized crime is mirrored by a change in criminal investigation strategies.

One very strategic point we must all consider in defining organized crime is that which is contained in Skaperdas (2006), that organized crime emerges out of the power vacuum that is created by the absence of state enforcement, and which can have many sources; geographic, social, and ethnic distance, prohibition, or simply collapse of state institutions. Mafias and gangs are hierarchically organized and can be thought of as providing primitive state functions, with economic costs that are typically much higher than those associated with modern governance. Kalyvas (2015) believes that, large-scale organized crime occupies a gray zone between ordinary crime and political violence. The unprecedented scale of drug-related crime in Mexico has led to its description as an insurgency or even a civil war, and a conceptual move that draws on recent studies that have associated civil war with large-scale criminality.

We can today say that the universe of organized criminal activities and, the individuals, groups and networks involved appears to be virtually infinite. Organized criminal operations range from illegal protection and extortion rackets to the trafficking and/or smuggling of illicit drugs, humans, firearms and wildlife, cybercrime, oil theft, money laundering, counterfeiting and maritime piracy (Costa, 2010 &UNODC, 2010). The people who plan, steer and implement these operations varyingly include mafia bosses, drug kingpins, paramilitary and insurgent commanders, warlords and gang leaders.

Yet, while real enough, organized crime as an analytical concept and social phenomenon remains somewhat elusive. Despite significant efforts by scholars from a variety of social sciences background (criminology, economics, sociology, political science and anthropology) to explain its motives, structures and impacts on society, the truth is that, the 'study of

organized crime is still in its infant stages' (Von Lampe, 2016) and has not yet yielded a cohesive and cumulative body of knowledge (Schultze-Kraft, 2016).

Theories of Organized Crime

In his analysis of criminal behaviour, Dambazau (2012) pointed out some of the school of thoughts in the field of criminology and other studies in criminal justice. He mentioned thus; the classical school, neoclassical school, positivist school, sociological school, psychological school, and radical school. Other set of theories include; the Illegitimate Opportunity Theory/ Differential Opportunity theory developed by Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin; and theory of failed states and Vulnerability threat. Many of these theories have different areas of concern as regard the origin, vulnerability and dangers organized crimes pose. In a most dramatic consideration, both sociological and psychological theories are more relevant in terms of appropriating better explanation on the emergence of organized criminal gangs.

Organized crime and migration crisis.

There is evidently a connection between organized crime and migration in the world. Many cases have happened and lot more literature are still been documented on this issue. At domestic level, organized criminal gangs create domestic security challenges worse enough to create internally displaced persons' challenge; while, at international level, organized criminal gangs engage in an illegal migration and trafficking activities.

However, in today's situation, organized criminal gangs are gradually becoming syndicate organizations for transnational criminal economic and antisocial-businesses like illegal migration and trafficking in humans and drugs. In line with this, predicated on the Clausewitzian standpoint, organized crime epitomizes a continuation of economic activities using illicit means in form of transnational organized crime groups with illegal ones through the use of violence, corruption, intimidation, and blackmail.

The migration-crime aided by the activities of organized criminal gangs has in many parts of the world created and skyrocketed immigration crime rates. Today in the world, Italy has been the major target and destination for nearly all trafficked persons since this country has been characterized by a tumultuous migratory flow, concerning however mainly the Central & Northern regions. Väyrynen (2016) argues that, the illegal

immigration, human smuggling, and human trafficking are all illegal movements of people across borders. Human smuggling and trafficking have become a world-wide industry that employs every year millions of people and leads to the annual turnover of billions of dollars. Many of the routes and enclaves used by the smugglers have become institutionalized; for instance, from Mexico and Central America to the United States, from West Asia through Greece and Turkey to Western Europe, and within East and Southeast Asia.

In addition, Schloenhardt (2001) states that, the trafficking in migrants or people smuggling - the criminal offence of transporting migrants across international borders. Schloenhardt (1999) The trafficking of migrants around the world has become a multi-billion-dollar business for criminal organizations. Over the years, thousands of migrants have been moved illegally across international borders with the assistance of professional trafficking organizations. The increasing number of people forced or willing to move abroad as well as the restrictions placed on legitimate migration systems have translated into organized crime.

The role of an Ungoverned Space

According to Beare (2017), history had taught us that criminals crossed borders to commit crimes, traffic in illicit goods, and provide illegal services. More recently, however, opportunities for transnational organized crime have increased dramatically in particular, because of the growing level of mobility, the opening of borders, the advent of the Internet, and the appropriation of many areas where states are unable to exercise her authority. These areas are indeed marked as ungoverned spaces. Ungoverned spaces, according to Hoisington (2014), are strictly defined as spaces not 'effectively' being governed by the state. These areas exist all over the world, presenting difficulties to the public, sovereignty and state control. Examples of such spaces include cyberspaces, south-central Somalia and, the federally administered tribal areas along the Afghan-Pakistan border.

These spaces destabilize not only domestic environments, but the international system in many ways. Many of the terrorism plots we presently experience emanated from 'safe havens' afforded by ungoverned spaces. The lack of governance over certain spaces also raises concerns over development, including the health, education, human rights and economic welfare of affected populations. Furthermore, Bøås (2015) has provided examples of the

marked ungoverned spaces. While some areas are clearly marked for criminal gangs, other areas have only been presented as points of competitive equilibrium like the Mali-Sahel periphery and they equally pose greater challenge, even more. These areas are not ungoverned spaces captured and preyed on by the agents of transnational global crime but are areas identified for overlapping and competing networks of informal governance. The Mali-Sahel periphery undoubtedly consists of relatively weak states and is a much-used route of passage for weapons and drugs as well as people trying to get out of Africa. Such hubs include the northern Malian towns of Gao and Kidal, Tamanrasset and Djanet in Algeria, Agadez in Niger, and Ghat, Awbari, and Sabha in Libya.

The role of cyber-space

On the cyber space issue, Bequai (2002) shows how organized crime is manipulating the cyber-space revolution. Due to the fact that most criminal gangs, particularly in europe have always been engaging in deals worth billions of dollars, they have the necessary funds and recruits for the businesses. Computers are deployed and used in almost all illicit activities like gambling, prostitution, pornography, drug transactions, money laundering, loan shark operations and data theft using prison computers, pilfering of computer equipments and counterfeiting of chips.

In addition, Ibikunle, and Eweniyi (2013) examines this concept of cyber-space, cyber security, and cyber-crime. They argue however, that cyber-space refers to the boundless space known as the internet. Also, cyber-security is the body of rules put in place for the protection of the cyber space. Cyber-crime refers to the series of organized crime attacking both cyber space and cyber security. The Internet is one of the fastest growing areas of technical infrastructure development. Over the past decades, the growth of the internet and its use afforded everyone this opportunity. Cyberspace is a world that contains anything one is searching for the advancement in information accessibility.

Internet technology in one major factor that connects the criminal gangs with other organizations in both urban and the rural areas. Tropina (2018) states that, life in the modern society today has changed radically over the past few decades. In particular, through the strong use of information technology, many activities have moved from the real world to the digital world that has given more ease to many processes. In addition, it has given

also to the criminals the possibility to move into cybernetic space and, as a consequence, to exploit all the technological advantages available for carrying out their activities.

Ungoverned spaces and the displacement of nationals

Raleigh and Dowd (2013) argues that the Sahel belt is large for criminal hideouts. in this belt, many underpopulated states are new hotbeds of terrorism, regional disorder, destabilization. The assumption is that as significant parts of the Sahelian states are ungoverned, unencumbered by control from states, violent groups flourish, train, generate support and engage in conflict with local, nationals, and even international 'enemies'. The most active area here comprises part of the northern Nigeria, which is made the natural home for Boko Haram being the most active terrorist group; and a number of violent communal and ethnic militias. Other groups aside Boko Haram are the Union of Forces for democracy and Development (UFDD) in Chad, National Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad (MNLA)in Mali, and the Movement for Democracy and Justice (MDJT) in Chad, and the Nigerien Movement for Justisce (MNJ).

However, activities of dreaded organizations living within ungoverned areas have been causing serious challenges in particularly Africa, most specifically in Nigeria. Among the challenges it causes is the displacement of people living within these marked vast landed areas that provide safe haven for their operations. Akuto (2017) notes that this displacement results from communal violence, internal armed conflicts and natural disaster. This complicates the living conditions of people leading to huge humanitarian crisis across the region. Also, Mohammed (2017) argues that forced migration and internal displacement in Nigeria in the last 50 years have been triggered by violent conflicts. In its report of June 2018, Displacement Tracking Matrix reported that there are about 1,918,508 IDPs across states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe in the northeastern Nigeria only which are majorly as a result of the activities of Boko Haram housed by the Sambisa forest. In northwest Nigeria where the number of IDPs in both Kaduna and Zamfara states is on the increase.

Conclusion

The preceding discussion suggests the need to examine the relative importance of leaving these areas unchecked by states governments. Policymakers need to realize not only that so-called ungoverned spaces have actually been taken over by alternative authorities-criminal gangs and terrorists.   Also why authorities allow this problem persist still remains unanswered, but is often suggested as an issue of political economy of bringing them closer to government. That government would not benefit from that single decision.

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ELECTORAL PROCESS AND SECURITY THREATS IN NIGERIA: LESSONS FROM 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS

Nwosu, Ikechukwu Jude Donald (Ph.D.)
Department of Political Science,
Imo State University, Owerri

Abstract

Electoral processes are crucial components of any democratic state. As such, Nigeria's return to democratic rule and engagement with the democratic process led to the conduct of its general elections in 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019. All these elections conducted so far are well known for their notorious and widespread nefarious acts with attendant loss of lives and properties. The number of lives lost and properties destroyed during the 2019 general elections cannot be quantified. It is therefore premise upon these facts that the paper examined electoral process and security threats in Nigeria: lessons from 2019 general elections. Nigerian environment is always characterized as a theatre for war during electoral periods. Amongst the security threats predominant during the just concluded 2019 general elections are riots, party clashes, political demonstration with violence, vote buying, arson, political assassination and the likes. The study further buttressed why security threats are so prevalent in Nigerian politics by justifying its assertions with the frustration aggression theory. The paper observed that security threats undermined the conduct of a violent-free election in 2019 with the antecedent attacks by the Boko Haram sects in some parts of Northern Nigeria. The study therefore suggested among others that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should strengthen the use of electronic voting and ensures that the system is protected from hackers.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Democracy, Election, INEC, and Security.

Introduction

In a true democratic setting, election serves as a platform whereby electorates periodically choose the people that will represent their varying interests. Every four years in Nigeria, elections are conducted in three areas namely: National Assembly Elections (federal legislature), Presidential Elections (federal executive), as well as Gubernatorial and State Assembly

Elections (state executive and legislature respectively). The processes in these elections demand that eligible electorates are free to vote for whomever they decide and each person's vote counts as the same, irrespective of his or her ethnic or religious affiliations. Also, the candidates vying for positions as well as their political parties have equal access to the media.

These electoral processes are on the purview of the independent electoral body known as Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Nigeria. INEC was established within the legal framework of the Constitution as a permanent institutional body whose task is to oversee the Nigerian electoral system. INEC is headed by a chairperson and twelve national commissioners, supported by Resident Electoral Commissioners (RECs) in the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. INEC (2006) enumerates different phases of the electoral process as follows: Delimitation of electoral constituencies; Registration of voters; Notice of elections; Nomination of candidates; Election campaigns; Elections, announcement of results and completing tribunal sittings; Participation of other organizations; and Resolution of electoral conflicts from the participation and other organizations or groups.

From the foregoing, it can be said that the complexity nature of electoral process is such that encompasses the good intentions and undesirable outcomes of election administration, particularly in emerging democracies where general elections are often marred by culturally hued electoral security threats. Paradoxically, instead of Nigeria's elections to be peaceful, it is always characterized by security threats which have resulted to loss of live and properties of ample numbers of Nigerians. In a true democratic system, electoral process requires that adequate security be put in place, from the movement of electoral materials to the deployment of staff, the manning of the polling booths to the movement of cast ballots to the collation centres, including the protection of voters at the polling booths, the safety of the candidates, the party agents and even the media that cover the election. Similarly, Jega (2012) portends that adequate security enhances the free movement of staff, voters, candidates, observers and other stakeholders thus ensuring the credibility of the process. Reverse has been the case in Nigeria's election as all the elections conducted so far are well known for their notorious and widespread nefarious acts with attendant loss of lives and properties. The just concluded 2019 general elections is no exception as the number of lives

lost and properties destroyed during the 2019 general elections cannot be quantified.

The security threats during the 2019 general elections took several dimensions ranging from sporadic shootings in elections to resurgence of armed gangs, carting away of ballot boxes, buying of votes, political assassinations and arson. According to Akpan (2017), some of the most critical challenges of electoral insecurity include the killing of people, snuffling of ballot boxes, and the nearly routine threat of kidnappings and other security breaches. The security threats faced by the umpire during elections were well articulated by Igini (2013) who argued that lack of internal democracy by participating political parties in the nomination of candidates contributes to the various conflicts that characterize elections in Nigeria. Continuing, the absence of a redress mechanism for aggrieved candidates has resulted in self-help for those who feel cheated. The tendency to resort to self-help is often due to the perception of compromise of the process by the voters and the feeling of corruption to benefit some candidates. Today, many Nigerians' faith in the integrity of the electoral process has been dashed out due to the incessant insecurity threats. The number of registered voters is always significantly more than the actual votes cast and these numbers have significantly dwindled in the past years. This is so because electorates are unwilling to participate in the elections primarily because of fear of been maimed by electoral thugs and the resultant effect recorded low voters' turnout in the last 2019 general elections in Nigeria.

The 2019 general elections in Nigeria were characterized by intense security threats because it led to the death of not less than 39 Nigerians within 48 hours of the elections. In Lagos State, there were reports of disruption of voting by suspected political thugs who shot in the air in some places and set ballot boxes and paper on fire in others. In the Okota, Isolo and Oshodi suburbs of Lagos, there were reports of violence, some caused by non-arrival of INEC officials and materials. According to reports by CLEEN Foundation (2019), there was multi-agency deployment of security personnel, noting 39% of polling units had three or more security personnel. Reports were also received that 27% of the polling units were under-policed. Reports also largely showed that security personnel conducted themselves professionally, however there are cases of police overreach in Imo, Abia and Rivers States where an INEC official was shot by security agents. CLEEN Foundation documents that 12% of the polling units observed security officers were somewhat partisan.

Despite the Police's stated preparedness with deployment and adequacy of security, there were shortfalls and gaps, with attendant implications for election security. However, with the security threats prevalent during electoral periods in Nigeria, it becomes pertinent for this study to investigate electoral process and security threats in Nigeria: lessons from 2019 general elections. Therefore, in order to achieve the aim of this study, the following sub-headings were considered: theoretical underpinning, concept of election and electoral security, issues on electoral security threats in Nigeria, factors that fuelled security threats during the 2019 general elections, consequences of security threats during 2019 general elections, conclusion and suggestions.

Theoretical Framework

Frustration Aggression Theory

Frustration aggression theory was theorized by Dollard in 1939. The assumption of this theory states that aggression is always the consequence of frustration. The occurrence of aggressive actions always presumes the existence of frustration, also the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression. Frustration aggression reflects the reasons for electoral security threats because men who want to live beyond their social means do not accept defeat which results into engaging in nefarious acts as the last resort in order to live beyond their social means. Frustration aggression theory addresses the pre-election and post-election security threats.

In cases of pre-election security threats, frustration and aggression comes into play when a certain aspirant is power hungry and possibly realizes the indications that he/she may possibly lose to the rival, thereby adopting vehemence for their own personal gains. In post-election security threats, persons who feel cheated on election outcomes, isolated or disadvantaged by the injustice of the electoral practice are likely out of frustration, transfer aggression on other individuals through violent acts. Political actors resort to security threats as means to achieving their aims and exercising power, out of feelings of frustration that leads to aggression, especially when the results of the election would not favour them. This theory helps in understanding the psychological behaviour of persons in the use of security threats to achieve selfish interest.

The relevance of the frustration aggression theory to the present study shows that the issues surrounding electoral security threats in the 2019 general elections in Nigeria are as a result of fear of defeat exhibited by electoral candidates, which triggers frustration and then transfer of aggression, through

the employment of human mercenaries in perpetrating security threats during and after elections. Therefore, to achieve free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria, the theory specifies the need for enlightenment on the importance of citizens coming out to vote in their masses in support of a transparent election, making their votes count and as well provisions for well-equipped security personnel that would safeguard life and properties of voters during elections.

Conceptual Framework
Concept of Election

Election is the method of choosing a person or persons by vote for a public office position in which state authority is legally and constitutionally exercised. Osumah and Aghemelo (2010) see election as a process through which the people choose their leaders and indicate their policies and programme preference and consequently invest a government with authority to rule. Omotola (2007) view election as a method of selecting persons to fill certain public offices through choices made by the electorate; those citizens who are qualified to vote under the laws and procedures of the electoral system. Afolabi (2018) posits that election is the process whereby the adult citizens choose their representative to govern them. In this sense, emphasis is laid on formal elections that serve as the conduit to choose those who exercise the powers of the State. "Since everyone cannot govern at the same time, election is a way through which individual representatives are chosen by the electorate, that is, the voting population" (Afolabi 2018:292).

Election is generally conceived as the process through which public office holders are selected periodically by a fraction of a country's population otherwise referred to as the electorate from 18 years and above. It is a selection process which elevates a group of persons to positions of authority with the power to direct the affairs of the state. According to Dunne (2014), election is a process through which people choose their leaders and indicate their policies and programmed preferences and consequently invest a government with authority to rule. Elections are a universally acceptable process of legitimizing a government. In developed democracies, there is usually less tension in the polity than in developing democracies. Abdullahi (2015) sees election periods as a time to reward representatives who have served in function and in office in equal measure to their performances. This therefore creates an opportunity to check and balance both the political parties and the candidates vying for political offices. Nnoli (2003) further expresses

that elections are so valued such that they are seen as one of the major indicators of the presence of representative government. Once they are not held regularly as stipulated by the constitution it shows absence of democratic government.

Election has become the most acceptable means of changing leadership in any given political system. In democratic system of government, the concept of election and voting exercises remains a strong feature that carries a deep meaning unlike other systems of government. Akpan and Adagba (2018) emphasize that free, fair and credible elections are essential to democratic practice and provide vital means of empowering citizens to make leaders responsible. Despite the importance attached to elections, they do not on their own represent real democracy but remains deep-seated, not only for instating democracy, but as essential precondition for democratic consolidation. Conclusively, Election is the systematic way of allowing the public or citizens to choose leaders into public office, through the use of electoral process which is guided, organized, conducted and monitored by the authorized electoral body. It is also an act of choosing or selecting candidate who will represent the people of country in a parliament or other government positions.

Concept of Electoral Security

Electoral Security is defined as "the process of protecting electoral stakeholders and materials such as voters, candidates, poll workers, media, and observers, electoral information and campaign materials, polling stations and counting centre etc. Fischer (2010) defines electoral security as "the process of protecting electoral stakeholders, information, facilities or events. According to Afolabi (2018), election security involves the protection afforded all those engaged in the electoral process, including INEC staff, facilities and events. Continuing, electoral security provides safety to men and resources involved in the electoral process while preventing attacks on them. Thus, election security denotes protection for every individual involved in the electoral process and includes INEC and its officials, INEC ad-hoc staff, party representatives, the electorate (voters), election monitors and observers, media agents, security officials and other individuals/groups incidental to the smooth running of the elections.

From the foregoing, electoral security can be said to imply protection or safety from any form of hitch or impediment that can distort the conduct of credible election within the context of acceptable democratic tradition and

culture. Albert (2007) aptly notes that the bodies expected to perform this task include security agencies, political parties, INEC, judicial officials, the media, electoral observers and the academia, among others. This implies that electoral security has both coercive and non-coercive dimensions, spanning across the three stages of election process, namely; pre-election period, Election Day and post-election period. As a sensitive element of the democratic process, the peaceful conduct of election becomes very paramount. Thus, electoral security is all about securing the holistic integrity of the electoral process, especially now that elections are increasingly seen as a key component of peace-building process and a cornerstone of dynamic social interaction. In conclusion, electoral security helps to ensure that there is maximum level of protection from the physical, psychological and structural threats against the electorate and the citizens at large, without undue consideration for party affiliation, ethnic sentiment, historical antecedent, religious divide, or any other form of social differences.

Issues on Electoral Security Threats in the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria

It is commonsensical to state that right from independence, it has been a herculean task in Nigeria's democratic experiments to conduct a free, fair and credible election. Nigerian environment is always characterized as a theatre for war during electoral periods. The general elections conducted in 2019 were marred by excessive riots, party clashes, political demonstration with violence, vote buying, arson, political assassination and the likes. Meanwhile, leaders that emerge in the midst of electoral security threats are often "elected" by the minority because the majority who have fear for their lives do not go near the electoral process. More so, the demise of the victims of electoral insecurity in Nigeria, who are often bread winners of their respective families, makes for more social and economic hardships on the lives of average Nigerians. According to Alibaba (2013), there is therefore the possibility that the more the electorate react to election related issues such as rigging, manipulation of election result, imposition of leadership and the like, the better the chances for the actualization of democratic stability in Nigeria because it will empower the tendency of impacting pressure on the political

elites to redefine their approach on leadership, democracy and democratization.

Continued security threats in the electoral process are capable of stunting the growth of democratic values, attitudes and institutions in the country. It can also result to continued intolerance in Nigeria's political and electoral process. The Nigeria general elections in 2019 that brought President reinstated Muhammadu Buhari back into office for a second term were excessively married by persistent attacks by factions of the insurgent group Boko Haram in the Northeast; increased communal violence between the Fulani herdsmen and farmers spreading Southward from North-Central states; and a dramatic uptick in banditry, kidnapping, and killings in the North Western states of Kaduna, Katsina, and Zamfara. It is therefore evident that security forces have failed to respond effectively towards the threats to people's lives and security before, during and after the 2019 general elections in Nigeria.

The national and state elections in February, March, and April 2019 contributed to the general insecurity across the country. The politically related violence reported in many states was in contrast to the relatively peaceful 2015 elections that brought Buhari into his first term in office. According to a report by SBM Intelligence which monitors socio-political and economic developments in Nigeria, 626 people were killed during the 2019 election cycle, starting with campaigns in 2018. Kano state, in North Western Nigeria, has the highest number of registered voters in the country. Rivers state, in the Niger Delta, receives the largest share of crude-oil-based national revenue, representing significant electoral value to any political party. The history of elections in both states is replete with violence by state security agencies and criminal elements. Human Rights Watch focused its research on both states in view of projections and reports of violence during the 2019 elections. According to Human Rights Watch (2019), despite police claims of increased security measures to ensure peaceful voting, there seems to have been little or no police response to reports of threats and acts of insecurity by hired political thugs and soldiers against voters and election officials.

Conclusively, it can be stressed that the spates of insurgency and other forms of nefarious acts constituted a major threat to peaceful conduct of the 2019 general elections in Nigeria. It is pertinent to point out that the afore-mentioned security threats were orchestrated by men and not spirits. They are, in all cases, actions conceived, planned and executed by humans for specific

devious and ulterior ends that are inimical to national interest. Nigeria as a country must survive for there to be an election. Politicians and the security agencies owe Nigerians that duty to give them the chance, the peace they seek to contribute not just their quota in the electoral process but also in national development as a whole. Thus, a free, fair and credible election is germane to sustained and sustainable development. This is so because when elections are conducted in a non-violent environment, leaders with vision and good track records that can provide and implement workable economic policies for the overall interest of the populace are elected.

Factors that Fuelled Security Threats during the 2019 General Elections

As earlier said that security threats are not made by spirits but men, it is also not out of place to state that there are some factors that fuelled electoral insecurity during the 2019 general elections. These factors include: lack of internal party democracy, ethnicity and communal tensions, economic crunch, lack of confidence in electoral tribunal, social media inflammatory information.

Lack of Internal Party Democracy:

Lack of internal party democracy in Nigerian political parties generally undermines the credibility of the entire electoral process thereby making the entire process undemocratic. Political parties that are meant to consolidate democracy now involve in tension and violence. When there are no level playing ground or internal democracy within and among political parties, especially when the party leaders are not carrying out their responsibilities and duties during elections, aggrieved political contestants uses this platform as a way of orchestrating violence by sponsoring thugs and hooligans who end up disrupting the peaceful conduct of a particular election. This was observed between the two major parties in the just concluded 2019 general elections (People's Democratic Party and the All Progressive Congress) as a result of level playing ground with political parties. According to Ogheneakoke (2014), lack of internal democracy, irregularities in registration and technical challenges during elections are responsible for electoral insecurity.

Ethnicity and Communal Tensions:

In Nigeria's political arena, it is difficult to draw a line indicating where communal tensions end and where political conflicts begin. Prebendal

politics has made it difficult to separate communal tension and political conflict. The system of prebendal politics spurs individuals, groups, communities and constituencies to capture state power in order to control state resources. The control of state power, the incumbents try to retain it by all means, including use of violence, at the same time, those aspiring to take over power sometimes pursue their goal by employing extreme measures such as violence. In the context for power, individuals employ ethnic, communal and religious symbols and sentiments in order to outwit their rivals. This drags an entire ethnic, regional or religious community into political competition which is squarely between political parties. Each time candidates and political parties are identified in a particular ethnic, regional or religious group, victory or defeat in the electoral contest is defined in communal terms. Thus, electoral security threats are triggered by individuals and political groups to use all available means, like the use of violence to defend their communal honour.

Economic Crunch:

Nigeria has recorded high rate of illiteracy, unemployment and poverty, which are indices of backwardness or underdevelopment. In Nigeria, a large section of the people lack access to opportunities and resources to actualize their potentials. This situation breeds a class of economic marginalized people (mostly youths) who are used to perpetrate nefarious acts during elections by greedy politicians. These unemployed youths are enticed by the wealthy violent entrepreneurs who sponsor most of the violent political encounters. According to Shankyula (2011) widespread poverty and unemployment deliberately unattended to by successive governments is responsible for the spate of youth violence during elections. Continuing, it is common knowledge that the youth who readily submit themselves to perpetrate these acts of thuggery are unemployed and wallowing in poverty. This implies that the electoral security threats witnessed during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria are mostly perpetuated by gangs whose members are recruited, financed, and sometimes, armed by state and party officials or their agents. These gangs are mostly illiterate, unemployed and poor young men, who are mobilized to attack their sponsors' rivals, intimidate members of the public, rig elections, and protect their patrons from similar attacks.

Lack of Confidence in Electoral Tribunal:

The electoral tribunal is a legal system that involves the prosecution of offences and the resolution of petitions against election results. Nwagboso (2011) asserts that electoral tribunal is a mechanism fashioned to address the seemingly perceived deformities of the Nigeria's chequered electoral process. It is strategic in the quest to strengthening the country's democracy. How to achieve this important objective has continued to attract comments and criticisms from political observers and analysts in Nigeria. In Nigeria, the judiciary, which is central to electoral dispute resolution, enjoys a considerable degree of credibility at the federal level due to some landmark judgments it has given in the past. Politicians in Nigeria have lost fate in the judgments of tribunal as a result of the previous tribunals that adjudicated electoral cases of 1979, 1999, 2003, 2007, and 2015 which contributed immensely to the decay of the country's democracy. The members of those tribunals were not only corrupt, but unfit to correct the perceived anomalies witnessed in the Nigeria's electoral process. However, the credibility of Nigeria's judiciary becomes in doubt as many politicians find it more rewarding to seek redress through violence rather than the judicial process.

Social Media Inflammatory Information:

The social media have worsened the tensions created by religious and ethnic campaign by supporters of candidates who contested for elections in the 2019 general elections. All over the world, social media provides platforms for politicians to disseminate information in their bid to recruit supporters and donors. Social media has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantage of social media for politicians lies in the opportunity of direct communication with supporters by sidetracking regulated mainstream media such as radio, television, newspapers and magazines as well as press conferences. For instance, during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria, there were text messages and video clips that stir up anger and acrimony among various political parties and candidates. Also, hate speeches have become the order of the day and since there are no regulations guiding the use of social media to disseminate information, such speeches when transmitted provokes stories during election and incite supporters of violence.

Consequences of Security Threats during 2019 General Elections

The aftermath of security threats during elections are very grave and capable of truncating the dreams of millions of the citizens of Nigeria. The

consequences of security threats witnessed during the 2019 general elections are voter's apathy, loss of lives and destruction of properties, inaugurating visionless leadership, and disintegration of the country.

Voter's Apathy:

Voter's apathy has been a major contending issue in Nigeria's nascent democracy. Many people become upset and angry with the government leaders and policies while some are concerned seriously about major social and political problems but show nonchalant attitudes toward democratic voting to oppose these prevailing problems. Electoral security threats have discouraged a large number of qualified citizens from participating in any election. Osinakachukwu (2011) observes that this is because participation is meaningful when the votes of the participants count but not when their votes are subverted for the interest of the few. The spate of security threats witnessed in the 2019 Presidential election in Nigeria encouraged voter's apathy in the preceding election (Gubernatorial election) and this has thwarted Nigeria's hope for a sustainable democracy. Electoral insecurity forces people to stay away from exercising their franchise as they prefer to stay indoors than falling into the deadly hands of the political thugs. These acts are unhealthy to the credibility of the 2019 elections.

Loss of Lives and Destruction of Properties:

Electoral security threats are destructive to both men and women, although the women are the most vulnerable. Women can be victim of rape, and sometimes when their husbands are killed, the women then begin to suffer in order to cater for the welfare of the family. According to Aver, Nnorom, and Targba (2013), the mass rape of the female population in the areas engulfs by violence fuels the spread of HIV/AIDS which is already a high prevalence and regarded as a grave consequence of electoral security threats. However, based on the above assertion some questions remain unanswered during the previous elections conducted so far: with the lingering electoral security threats and the inability of the security apparatus of the government to guarantee safety during election can there be security? Is security of lives and properties achievable? Before the commencement of the 2019 general elections, there were speculations of total breakdown of the country because of the dreadful groups like Boko Haram and Fulani Herdsmen who have continued to threat the lives of Nigerians and destroy their properties. Thus, the maiming of lives

before, during and after the 2019 general elections in Nigeria cannot be quantified and this has threatened the consolidation of Nigeria's democracy.

Inaugurating Visionless Leadership:

Politicians who are greedy and self-centered resort to the use of thugs, buying of votes as well as engage in other acts to win elections. The aftermath of these acts lead to installing wrong leaders who have no vision or clue about governance. There is no doubt that electoral security threats in the 2019 general elections would lead to electing of the wrong persons which would be dangerous to the entire polity. Okafor (2015) portends that election of the wrong people into political offices in Nigeria is a launching pad to poor leadership that cannot drive home the vision of the country especially; at the critical situation the country finds herself. Visionless leaders contribute to underdevelopment of a country because they are baseless and do not have clear cut ideologies on how to govern a nation like Nigeria.

Disintegration of the Country:

Electoral security threats have launched the country into a state of chaos and anarchy. There are agitations from various groups as a result of who gets what, when and how and with the dimensions of insecurity witnessed during the 2019 general elections, these groups are threatening to divide the country. The decision of disintegrating the country is also borne out of the excessive killings of lives and destruction of properties. If one could recall the extent of the pre and post-election attacks in the 2019 general elections, one wonders the extent the next general elections in 2023 would go if these anomalies are not curbed through credible elections. Before, during and after election security threats are capable of entrenching the nation into uncontrollable situation that could lead into more maiming, deaths, destruction of private and public properties.

Conclusion

Electoral security threats have been a grave issue to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria since the return to democracy in 1999. The 2019 general elections were riddled with conflicts and killings as discussed in this paper. Against the background of the discourse in this study, there has been a deeper understanding of the conceptual issues raised on election and security as well as the factors associated to electoral security

threats and its consequences. Nigeria has been known to be a volatile and conflict prone nation. Part of the electoral security threats in the country has been an attribute of resurgence of post amnesty militancy culminating into youth restiveness in the region as the youths were recruited by the political elites to unleash electoral terror and violence against opposition parties. The adoption of such violence was drawing from the assumptions of frustration aggression which states that political elites resort to security threats as means to achieving their aims and exercising power, out of feelings of frustration that leads to aggression, especially when the results of the election would not favour them. It was also evident that political elite's resort to the use of violent acts by unemployed youths could be attributed to lack of confidence in electoral tribunal and economic crunch. Hence, it can be concluded that insecurity as a serious threat to a sustainable violence-free election especially in the face of rising societal insecurity has led to voter's apathy, agitations towards disintegrating the nation, inauguration of visionless leaders, as well as loss of lives and destruction of both private and public properties.

Suggestions

Based on the observed findings, the following suggestions are made:

1.   **Use of Electronic Voting System:** Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should strengthen the use of electronic voting and ensures that the system is protected from hackers. This way voting and transmission of electoral results will be done electronically as this will drastically reduce the dimensions of security threats prevalent in general elections in Nigeria.

2.   **Injection of Rule of Law:** Rule of law must be upheld concerning electoral matters. Pre-election grievances such as lack of internal party democracy, party financing and campaign process should be sorted out within a short period.

3.   **Regulation of Social Media:** Post-election utterances that are capable of inciting the public much be checked through legislation. This will help to reduce hate speeches and others materials that incite electoral candidates to perpetuate or resort to violence during elections in the country.

4.   **High Level of Commitment by INEC:** INEC and other stakeholders in electoral process in Nigeria must show high level of commitment towards free, fair, credible and transparent elections in Nigeria. INEC should be

overhauled and strengthened so as to be in a better position to perform their constitutionally assigned functions without fear or favour.

5.   **Punishment to Offenders:** No individual or youth irrespective of his connection or background arrested in connection with any election related security threat should be let off the hook; the law should take its rightful course. Therefore, these individuals or youths when caught should be severely punished as this will serve as deterrent to other individuals or youths who intend to be used as tools for causing violence before, during, and after elections in the country.

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MAPPING DOMINANT ISSUES IN RESTRUCTURING DEBATE IN NIGERIA

Nachana'a Alahira David
Department of Political Science and Defence Studies,
Nigerian Defence Academy Kaduna, Nigeria.

Abstract

Restructuring has in recent times become a topic issue for debate in Nigeria's political space. The agitation and persistent clamour for restructuring have since the return to civil rule in 1999 taken different forms and numerous dimensions. What are dominant issues in the current clamour for restructuring? What the challenges for restructuring in Nigeria? What is the alternative or way forward for Nigeria? This paper provides answers to the forgoing questions and it examines critically the political, economic, ethno-religious and cultural dimensions of the restructuring fever in Nigeria's political environment. It argues that politically Nigeria should be restructured in line with the principles of a federating system of government with less centralization of power and resources at the centre. The current six geopolitical zones could be retained and each could establish regional headquarter strategically located based on consensus. The resource of each geopolitical zone should be harness for its development and each zone should focus on competitive advantage in terms of economic and social production on the basis of their endowment. The constitutional power of the federal government in terms of resource control should be limited.

Keywords: restructuring, federalism, political and economic restructuring.

Introduction

Restructuring has now become a phenomenon in Nigeria's political environment and different social groups use it to buttress their views with regard to their socio-political identity, economic status or class in the realm of political, economic, religious, ethnic and other sphere of social existence. To ensure the peaceful coexistence of Nigerian multi-ethnic nationalities as one peaceful entity called Nigeria and effecting of rapid and competitive development of the different regions of the country among other factors necessitate the need for restructuring. Basically, the dominant issues in the

restructuring saga and debate revolve around the following: (i) political (ii) economic (iii) security. Inclusive to these are elite interest, ethnic dominations and control of resources, social identity and human security and these constitute the basis for the adoption of federal system of government as enshrined in our constitution to ensure that the component units in Nigeria and their social development and security are not compromised. Nigeria is a sovereign state with over 350 ethnic or ethno-tribal groups, a correlation vast territory, large population estimated as over 194 million and enormous land mass hosting six geopolitical zones. Each of the geopolitical zones within Nigeria's political space is endowed with either one mineral, vegetative or other natural resources and/or a correspondence of resident human resources (population). The adoption of the federalist political structure was aimed at ensuring efficient and effective administration of both the vast territories of Nigeria and its ethno-tribal heterogeneous population. However, the political and economic development which relatedly translate into social and human security the federal system was assumed could provide has been but a myth. Literature attribute the current dilemma in Nigerian's political structure to the 1946 Sir Arthur Richard's constitution and that, right from its inception till now has shown symptoms of administratively sick system of government resulting from such issues as resource control, outcry of marginalization, issue of ethno-tribal and regional discrimination, and issue of ensuring that every citizen irrespective of age, sex, religion, ethnic, linguistic, regional or tribal affiliation is given a sense of belonging in the country. Particularly, issue of resource control and political restructuring has become a contentious issue in Nigeria (see Dickson and Asua, 2016; Fage and Alabi, 2016; Patrick, 2019; Anugwom, 2005).

Irrespective of the consistent demand for restructuring as a result of the discriminative and one-sided nature of the country's political structure, Nigeria has over the years maintained and persisted in its practice and have often resolved to the use of punitive measures in the dysfunctional issues that has characterised the nature of the federalist political structure operating in Nigeria. These measures manifest in form of the different reforms, structural policies, intergovernmental relations, unification programmes etc which had been adopted since independence by different civilian administrations and military regimes. And despite, the practice of imbuing the Nigerian political structure with corrective and curative measures, many individuals and groups from the academia to the political class as well as professional bodies and

other interested parties have joined their voices over the years to continue their clamour for the restructuring of the federalist political nature of the country. Emphasis in this regard has been placed on issues of intergovernmental relations between the federal and sub-national governments, of resource control and allocation, of revenue allocation, efficiency and functionality of the constitution, inequality of states and local governments in geopolitical zones, security and marginalization and so on. However, a critical analysis of the real reason for this call brings to the fore the conflict of interest which has undermined the intention of the proponents. Apart from the genuine reason of using political restructuring as a veritable tool to better Nigeria, some people especially elite sees it as an abstract instrument to gain favour and achieve set political ambitions and economic interest (Farayibi, 2017). These have been manifested in the various political parties and their flag bearers in the 2019 electoral process and campaign. Similar methods were equally applied during the 2015 elections campaign and in this regard there is no clear distinction between the change slogan machinery of 2015 general elections and the restructuring fever of the 2019 general elections campaign. This paper therefore examined the restructuring slogan and debate by mapping out the dominant issues. The paper is in six sections and each of the sections focused on germane issues as captured in the various sub-headings of interrogation.

Conceptual and Methodological Issues and Theoretical Underpinning.
    The paper examines under this section some of the concepts and particularly it focused on the scholarly view on restructuring, federalism, political and economic restructuring and then a working definition of these terms. The methodology used and then the theoretical framework adopted and applied for a comprehensive understanding of the debate on restructuring on the basis of the dominant issues identified necessitating the agitation.

Restructuring: A Conceptual Review
    Restructuring has been a major challenge in Nigeria's political space due to its centrality in political and socio-economic activities. The complexity and dynamic nature of our social engagement requires that states modify the process of governance and its structure to reflect the changing nature of social relations and institutions. Patrick (2019) notes when there is agitation because of long standing unresolved differences among the heterogeneous citizens of a

state like Nigeria, it constitutes a cog in its wheel of progress. In this regard the state needs to re-examine the structure and its operations to resolve the differences. Restructuring is therefore seen as drastic changes in an organization or system in order to improve its activities. In addition, it implies, re-engineering, redesign, realignment, transformation, reconfiguration, reshuffle, reshaping, reschedule, reform, revamp, reconversion, adjustment and so forth (Patrick, 2019, p.24; Kamal & Kamal, 2017, p.196). Restructuring is also seen as the alteration and reorganization of an existing system or a company (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 9th edition). Okonkwo (2018) is of the opinion that to restructure means to change an existing status quo in order to make it more functional. We could argue deductively on the basis of this scholar's assertion that restructuring is a purpose-driven activity that hinges on replacement of an existing structure or nature of a system with a new or a modified one. In view of this, restructuring is operationally seen in this paper as a significant alteration, re-organization, reformation and re-arrangement of an existing structuring, form or status quo in a revolutionary or evolutionary manner, with the aim of making it more improved, effective, efficient and functional in addressing the interests the various groups that constitute the Nigerian political space.

Political and Economic Restructuring

Political and economic restructuring has in cent time generated heated debate and discourse and has had different meanings and varying perspectives. Ebizien and Onyemere (2018) see political restructuring as the act of re-organising the legal, ownership, operational or other structure for the purpose of making it more manageable or better organised. And for Folajoba (2017), it connotes the existence of a constitution that will support good governance, respect for citizens, equity and equality. Still other scholars are of the view that it is a deliberate and planned change; a systematic intervention aimed at improving the structure, operations system and procedures of social cohesion and socio-economic development (Denhah&Denhart, 2002; Nkwede, 2013). For Ahmed, Norafidahand Knocks (2017) it entails both political re-configuration of the country and devolution of powers to the constituent units as practiced by countries with a federating units. In this regard United States of America stands out as a typical example.

Najakku (2016) sees it as re-organization and re-arrangement of the nature of resource control by the various governments and regions to foster

unity and development. Furthermore, it entails the systemic reform and re-organization of the existing political structure in the nature of practice and in the way it relates to the social and economic dimensions of the polity be it in governance and resource control or otherwise. Political and economic restructuring therefore has subjective meaning and perspective. To the poor it connote equitable distribution of wealth; it is fair representation in appointment of key positions to politically disadvantaged groups; it is the provision of amenities to rural populace; it is state creation or break-up to politically excluded ethnic group or region; it is mind-set re-engineering or value re-orientation to others and so forth. (Kabir, 2018, p.8 & Patrick, 2019, p.24). Agitation for restructuring is associated with structure of government as well as the distribution of resources among the component units that make up the federation.

Federalism

Federalism just like any other social science concept has several definitions. As such it has been conceptualised as a type of political system in which power of government are divided between self- governing parts operating within national/central government. Each of the parts however operate within its jurisdiction specifically defined in or laid down in by a constitution; the distribution of power between the inclusive government and the federating units or parts (Mazi, 2007, p.198 & 2001, p.127). To Okoli (2004), federalism is a system of shared powers between units of government. It is a system of government that involves organizing a nation in such a way that two or more levels of government have formal authority over the same area and people (Ugwu, 1999).

Ebizien and Onyemere (2018) see federalism as a political structure and/or system of government in which there is constitutional division and devolution of power to two or more levels of government which are often independent and co-ordinate in rank within a state (country). These levels of government are usually created along ethno-linguistic line to ensure active and efficient representation of all ethno-tribal and linguistic groups in governance. For this paper our definition of federalism is anchored on the following scholarly views: a philosophy, methodology, principle or theory that describes how a plural state is governed, governmental power shared, and intergovernmental relationships among sovereign states are maintained; federalism can be deduce as a distinct principle of governing a state that has

within it different governing style and administration; a system of government that describes a method of arranging territorial government, and accommodating different territorial interests that at one and the same time, avoids perceived over-centralisation of government powers at the centre. Related to this is the conception of federalism as the approach to governance that seeks to combine unity or shared rule with diversity or self-rule, and as division of powers between the central and federating units; a mainstay of constitutional government (Joseph, Kazeem and Olarinwaju, 2018; Kapur, 2006 & Friedrich, 1968).

The forgoing views no doubt informed the adoption of federal system of government in Nigeria. As federalism is a system of government in which governmental powers that exist in a country is shared between a central government and other component units –state and local government. A federal character basically protests the minorities within a polity and its inappropriate application in Nigeria's political space has created the observed inequality, tribal/ethnic dominance, corruption and lack of transparency among others. Hence the prevalence of inter-ethnic rivalry among the diverse social groups. This has led to the unending agitation from different sets of people and social groups from the geopolitical zones or regions for power and so on.

Theoretical Framework

The agitation for restructuring is an issue that challenges the current federalist political structure in Nigeria and is an indication that the existing political structure is not effective and efficient, thus transforming it into a new and improved structure that will accommodate the dominant issues of agitations is a noble and imperative exercise. To this end it becomes mandatory or imperative to situate and underpin this paper mapping out dominant issues in the restructuring agitations in Nigeria with a theoretical framework for better understanding. This paper adopts the group theory as it framework. The group theory sees society and indeed the political process the entire political process as a gigantic network of interacting social groups. The advocates or exponents of this theory argue that every society has within it larger number of groups which are in constant struggle for power and domination over each other. For the promoters of this theory politics as a social process could be understood only in terms of interactions between various groups. As such they see group rather than the individual or society as the basic unit of analysis in the study of politics. The first explicit and

systematic development of the group theory as it relates to analysis of political system according to Varma (2004), Sunday and Ekpu (2011) was provided by Bentley (1908) Process of Government. This theory was revived in the fifties and sixties by Daniel Truman (1951) Government Process, the Analytical Impact Group Theory and host of others like Robert Dahl, Grant McConnell; Theodora J. Lewi and so forth.

Bentley the advocate of the group theory was against the formalization and static quality of the institutional approach to political analysis and in this regard emphasized on dynamics and processes as characteristics of the activity of the state. Society he argued comprises of dynamic processes that is actions rather than specific institutions meaning structures or substantive contents (values). Therefore ideas, feelings, thoughts, laws, proceedings of constitutional conventions, essays and so forth are important only when related to action. There is no ideas he maintained that is not a reflection of social activity. The scientific study of politics to him is possible when cognizance is taken of the significant measurable in action. Ideas cannot be measured except we relate it to activity. Action is always and invariably a group process never found in one man, neither can it be stated by adding men to men. It must be taken as it comes by in many men together, by men in groups. As such society, nation, government-legislation, politics, administration-all are comprised of group of men, each group cutting across many others. These groups are in a state of perpetual interaction with each other, and politics consisted in the shunting by some men of other men's conduct along changed lines, the getting of forces to overcome resistance to such alterations or the dispersal of one grouping of forces by another grouping. A group in this regard represents a pattern of process rather than a static form and thus emerges only when the interactions among its individual's members were relatively frequent and sufficiently patterned to produce directional activity. The fact that one individual can belong to different groups goes to show that the activity specific to that group holds more importance than the composition of the group. Interest therefore is the determining fact in action and is central to the understanding of politics. It is interest which leads to the organization of groups. The society therefore is nothing other than the complex of groups that compose it, or a sort of mosaic group (Truman, 1952). It is through the social system that the various groups seek to realize or maximize their interest, the society being, and for Latham (1952) a single universe of groups which combine, break, federate, and form coalitions and

constellations of power in a flux of restless alterations, and is kept going by push and resistance between groups (Varma, 2004; Ojo, 1989; Sunday &Ekpu, 2011).

In applying the forgoing views by the exponents of the group theory to the current agitation for restructuring based on the various and dominant issues or political and economic restructuring, resource control and fiscal federalism, we   argue that these agitations are but the push and resistance between groups for a change in the structure of a political system or the retaining of the status quo being exemplified with regards to groups interest in the political process and space called Nigerian political environment.   The social groups within Nigeria cut across the geopolitical zones and each zone contest for specific interests either resource control or otherwise, fiscal federalism, political restructuring, security and so forth.

The group theory from the various postulations tend to factor Nigeria's current scenario and   cognizance of the various institutions within the federalist political structure of the country and the systematic and procedural way through which the issue of over centralisation of power and resources at the centre,   resource control, force equalisation, insecurity, policy, conflicts, problem solving and so on are tackled by the federating units or institutions (our political setting to be the government -federal, state and local), the ethnic groups and regional groups since Nigeria is a federal country having its federalism cutting across ethno-regional line. The cooperative interactions of these actors lead to the actualization of the objective of the Nigerian state. However, these actors have their various different interests within the political setting and when these interests are not covered and/or when it becomes conflictual with one another, the resultant effect is the various complain of marginalization and call for political restructuring so that the interest of all could be met.

The call for restructuring and cry of marginalization is assumed by the theory to be issues that could easily be solved through real federalism and constitution needs to be reviewed and altered to reflect this is imperative to avoid what Latham called restless alteration in accordance with the true principles or tenet of federalism instead of the unitary form of federalism operating in Nigeria. For instance power is concentrated at the centre, and the state government subordinate the local governments in Nigeria. The state governments handles their electoral process, audits their accounts, approves their borrowing, handles their statutory allocation through their joint account

and even determine their operation (Batcheson, Ebeziem& Obi, 2012). The forgoing observations and many more are empirical evidence that justifies the relevance of the group theory to this interrogation.

With regard to the methodology, this paper relied on both primary and secondary sources of data. Scholarly works were review through content analysis which comprises of published and unpublished materials, and in addition purposively sampled individuals were interviewed.

The Restructuring Phenomenon in Nigeria's Polity: An Overview

Restructuring is an old phenomenon in Nigeria's political history and scholarly view shows that it is an age-long practice that has bred conflicts and formation of conflict groups within the Nigerian society. Yaqub (2016) is of the opinion that it has divided our political environment into north and south over the issue of restructuring. The northern part is seen as antagonists to it, while the southern part is perceived as the protagonists. Essential to the protagonists (southerners) argument is that the south by virtue of their contribution to the general revenue of the federation purse, the principles of justice and equity demand that they should be the ones to manage as well as control the resources within their geopolitical space and on the premise that oil exploration and the impact affect them socially and economically. The antagonists group (northerners) on other hand hold that oil exploration in the oil producing geopolitical zones of Nigeria's political space were funded from the agricultural proceed derived from among other social endeavours groundnut, cotton, hides and skin, and cocoa gotten from the north and south west (see Ahmed, Norafidah& Knocks, 2017).

Another view suggest that conflicts in Nigerian polity arising from restructuring is not limited to the northern-southern divide rather there are others manifesting in the nature of conflictual intergovernmental relationships. They include the Movement for the Actualisation of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and Nigerian government from 2005 to date. The Nigerian government accused MASSOB of violence and in that regard arrested the leader Ralph Uwazurike in 2005 and detained him on charges of treason. Ralph was released two years later in 2007 and in 2009, MASSOB launched theBiafran International Passport in responses to persistent demand by Biatrans in the Diaspora. Several confrontation between government and MASSOB have been reported such as the arrest of the leader severally, alleged secret execution of members in detention centres and other killings between

2008 and 2015 by government security operatives. In addition is the killing of Biafran protesters between 2015 and 2016 by the Nigerian army across the south-eastern part of the country. Similarly the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) from 2014 to date have been having series of confrontation with government   and alleged killings by security operatives in Onistha December 2015, and in Aba February 2016. The government have denied these killing. In addition to the above has been the conflictual encounter noted between the Lagos state government and Federal Government in 2006/2007. The Niger-delta militants and Niger-Delta Avengers and Government conflict of 2003/2004 till date, the Boko-Haram and Government and so forth. These are just a few of the issues in the restructuring saga as have been pronounced in these conflicts and unending complaints against the federalist political structure emanating from the north and south.

It is imperative to note that there are several political office holders, elder-statesmen, legal practitioners, the academia civil society groups and so forth that have contributed differently to restructuring debate. For example, TankoYakassai, an elder-statesman 91 years from the north gives his perspectives on the agitation for restructuring with a historical narrative and he maintained that the Southwest has fanned the clamour supposedly to its advantage. His argument clearly shows that he falls among the category of those who are oppose restructuring and sees the southwest as advocating restructuring for their political and economic domination of the north. Furthermore, the elder statesman is noted to have pointed that the north has a reservation for restructuring because it aimed to deny the North revenue and representation. And that " the idea behind the agitation for restructuring is to demolish those two advantages that are naturally due to the north in terms of representation and revenue sharing" (*The Sun*, May 26, 2017).

Other advocates of restructuring are the former Vice President and the Presidential candidate of the People Democratic Party (PDP) in the 2019 general elections Alhaji Atiku Abubakar. According to him restructuring is not just about the devolution of power to the states, it is about transforming the respective role of the federal, state and local governments to perform more efficiently in matters of territorial as well as economic governance (Atiku, 2018)

Efforts at Restructuring the Political Structure in Nigeria

Restructuring in Nigeria's political space predate the contemporary demand or agitations. For instance the emergence of Nigeria as a polity unit is the result of restructuring and reorganization of the various social groups that today are known as Nigerians. The processes through which the Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba the major ethnic groups emerged even though imposed were the first steps and it is the basis for the current agitation for restructuring. Initially the process of restructuring started with three   constituent units the small Lagos colony, the southern Nigeria Protectorate and the Northern Protectorate each administered separately (indirect rule in the northern protectorate). By 1906, the British merged the Lagos colony with the southern Nigeria protectorate and it became Colony of Southern Nigeria. In 1914 the colony of southern Nigeria and the Northern Protectorate were merged to form the Colony and   Protectorate of Nigeria. Between 1914 and 1922 Nigerians protested against certain rules of the British colonial government in for of agitation against the manner in which water rates and head taxes were collected and also requested for more political representation. Consequently, the Nigerian Legislative Council was established in 1914 but with a limited jurisdiction, and by 1922 it was replaced by a larger one that included elected members from Lagos and Calabar, though its powers were limited as well and the Northern Province remained outside its control (Reuben, Ade, Falola and Anthony, 2019). These are agitations and the subsequent responses are issues that borders on economic and political reforms and is termed restructuring for us in this paper. The Willinks Commission of the colonial government (1954) was established to take cognizance of minority groups in Nigeria's polity.

Mallam Nasir Ahamed el-Rufai (Governor of Kaduna State, and the chairperson of the All Progressive Congress's committee on restructuring) pointed out the obvious fact concerning Nigeria as being founded by British fiat in 1914. It brought together the diverse peoples and cultures of vast land under one polity. And as the winds of change unleashed by the outcome of the world war II and also the independence of India a British colony spurred agitations for self-government, and Nigerians debated this issue under British tutelage the nature or structure of a future free Nigeria. Nigerians who wanted federalism he stressed won the argument over those who wanted a unitary structure (Jerome, 2017). Furthermore, it has been stressed that emergence of the three regions (Northern, Eastern and Western) in the 1950s with limited powers before independence as the reflection of the federal structure the Nigerians opted for. And in the pre-independence debates, the western and

northern regions were insistent on a loose federation with strong regions. This Nasir el Rufai stressed prevailed at independence in 1960 and the northern and eastern regions produced the governing coalition and were equally reaffirmed in the 1963 republican constitution. In a related development, the mid-west region was carved out of the western region and this became the fourth region and each region had its own written constitution, emblem and an official representation in London. Similarly each of the regions had significant powers and was authorized to raise the revenue needed to fund their respective development and to contribute to the Centre. This implies that the current agitation for resource control is in line with the federal structure of governance bequeathed at independence and sustained under the 1963 constitution. But did this development put an end to call for restructuring in the first few years of our independence as a polity and with four regions.

It is imperative to note that even after independence this forms of agitations persisted and in this regard the 1966 military intervention in the Nigerian political system is the byproduct of dissatisfaction of the political class with the structure and operation of government in the regions and their relation to the centre. According to Nasir el-Rufai, the 1966 crisis resulted in the assassination of virtually all elected political leader from two of the regions that is northern and western regions. This development brought into our political environment a unitarist tendency and by May of 1966, a unification decree was enacted and tis unified the public service across the country. The centralized military structure no doubt kept remnants of unitarism in our political system till date. The military have equally relied on state creation as a strategy for appeasing discontent.

State creation has therefore been central to agitations against marginalization and exclusion. As such state creation became the strategy adopted by government in response to cries of marginalization or neglect by different social groups. According to Sunday and Ekpu (2011) the measure that seems to be very critical and popular with different military governments in the country aimed at appeasing the neglected section of the country has been the state creation. It is stressed that Nigeria progressively moved from its original four region structure of pre-1966 to the current figure of 36. Former head of state Yakubu Gowon started the state creation exercise in 1967 when in the heat of the crisis the regions were split into 12 states. The aim was to encourage national integration and reconciliation and this strategy took away the support that the Biafra Republic could have had (Sunday and Ekpu, 20111;

Ihonvbere, 2004). The late General Murtala regime added 7 more to the 12 and it became 19 states and during Babangida's regime the number of states in Nigeria increased to 30.   Late General SaniAbacha regime added 6 more states to make it 36. However, from all indications the creation of states has not in any way eliminated agitation for restructuring or cry of marginalization rather these issues have been on the increase and these have been accompanied by violent actions and agitation. These have been exemplified by the various movements since the return to democracy in May 1999 in the form of Niger Delta militia activities, MASSOB, Boko Haram and so on. As such the current structure seems to be ineffective on the basis for which the country opted for a federal system. Sunday and Ekpu (2011) reflecting on the view expressed by Dudley (1982) in his book party politics in Northern Nigeria drew attention to some critical facts in the work considered as being responsible for the adoption of the federal system of government in Nigeria. (i) The North-south conflict on question of independence (ii)the expectation of rapid economic mobilization through autonomy (iii) the regional nature of the major political parties (iv) the fear of ethnic domination by one group over the other.

The fundamental feature of federalism is supremacy of the constitution. The constitution of a federation must be supreme and binding on citizens, authorities and governments, and to ensure that all stake holders in the federation operate within the limits of their jurisdiction and not encroach on the powers of others or regions, and also equality of power between levels of government. Furthermore, federal principle holds that the constituent units/ states that form a federation should relate to the federal authority on equal basis. Similarly, equal representation of all tribes, ethnic groups, and regions in governance so as to ensure that no tribe ethno-regional nationality is marginalized is a true reflection of federalism and where such is not the case then the system cannot be labelled as federal system.

Dominant Issues in Contemporary Agitation and Clamour for Restructuring in Nigeria

The current agitation for restructuring the federal structure in Nigeria has been the result of a national journey of dysfunction as noted by Nasir el-Rufai (Jerome, 2017), which started with three regions to four and then 12 states to 19 and 21, then 30 and current 36 states, and a federal capital as well as 774 local government areas. 59 years of independence has been

characterised by political instability, and over centralisation of power at the centre and operating a unitary form of governance under a federal constitution and structure, lack of regional or states autonomy, underdevelopment, corruption, increasing unemployment, marginalisation, general insecurity and so forth. In cognisance of these, the current APC government under a committee chaired by el- Rufai, the Governor of Kaduna state outline among others issues like creation of or merger of states, derivation principle, devolution of power, federating units, fiscal federalism, form of government and so forth. There is need to map out the dominant issues to reflect these observed ones. However, mapping out the dominant issues in the restructuring debate is not only necessary but imperative and some these are as examine below.

(a) The Nigerian Constitution and the Federal Structure (Centralisation of Power at the Centre-Federal)

The 1999 Constitution wielded more power to the federal government and this makes it to more superior to the other levels of governance and capable of controlling as well as dictating their affairs (Ideobodo, Okolo&Eze, 2018). And Wheare (1953) cautioned that concentrating too much power and resources on a particular level of government is capable of intoxicating it and making it to dictate the affairs of other levels of government coexisting with it. For example the exclusive list having 68 items according to Obidimma and Obidimma (2015) is solely left for the federal government; the concurrent list is within the jurisdiction of the federal government and the state government with the federal government prevailing in case of any conflict. The same federal government is vested with the power to legislate in respect to any matter incidental or supplementary mentioned elsewhere in the legislative list. The local government is but an appendage of the state government as it is constitutionally created under section 7(1) and handed over to the control of the state government under section 7(2) of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, giving state the mandate to have the power to dictate the existence of local governments within their territory and to interfere/meddle with their finance. Even though the Nigerian federalism constitutionally has three levels of government – federal, state and local government, in practical terms, we could say it has just two levels of government since the local government have been progressively submerged and is an appendage of the state government.

The Nigerian constitution (written) which is the fundamental law and legal frame through which the Nigerian state is governed clearly stipulates and specified the structure and system of government also stated the manner in which power and responsibility is shared or decentralized among the three levels of government. However, it has been observed with dismay according to Ideobodo, Okolo and Eze (2018) that the constitution in unitarily inclined as it was imposed on the citizens without proper consultation, referendum or involvement of the citizens in its enactment process. This perhaps explain the over dominance of power at the centre as well as local governments being appendages to state governments. For true federalism to operate in Nigeria, the constitution needs to be altered to reflect the devolution of power among federating units. Scholars have stressed that being cognizant of the lapses in the current federalist political structure and democracy of Nigeria stated that "the country should not become victim to magic of legal constitutional frame. Rather it must seek ways of re-strengthening and deepening the spirit, the political culture of democracy and federalism, as mechanisms for managing diversity in Nigeria and pursuing the public interest (Adele, 2017; Ideobodo, Okolo&Eze. 2018).

Atiku (2018) also argued that the federal structure is so complex with a strong centre that has succeeded in accumulating many responsibilities, and along with it huge resources, which belong to the other levels of government. The former vice president and Presidential Candidate of the PDP 2019 general elections emphasised further that current arrangement does not respond to the needs of the people at the local level. This needs we argue in line with the group theorist views is nothing other than the people or group interest. Atiku is of the opinion that the restructuring of Nigeria will foster the spirit of cooperation and consensus in a nation of diverse ethnic group, cultures, and religions. The former Head of State Major General (rtd) Ibrahim, B, Babangida have equally advocated for the devolution of power and for more power to be given to the states. Even though he agrees that restructuring and devolution of powers will certainly not provide answers to our challenges, but at the same time sees the need for it. He stressed that the talk to have the country restructured means Nigerians are agreed on our unity and diversity (Ebiziem and Onyemere, 2018; Babangida, 2017). While Kia, and Abeki, (2018) suggested that the Nigerian constitution should be abolished and re-enacted following a democratic process to lay foundation for true federalism in practice, with sufficient citizenry consultation and referendum. And that the

contents of all the legislative lists should be re-shared and made to reflect the coordinate nature of alllevels of government. Femi Falana (SAN) in reaction to some of agitators and countering responses between the former Vice President (VP) and the current VP that is AlhajiAtiku and Professor YemiOsinbajo respectively for restructuring argued that no meaningful restructuring that would ensure unity and political stability could be achieved without first addressing issues like power decentralisation and wealth redistribution (Abiodun, 2018)

Extant literature shows that the Nigerian constitution is the product and influence of three principal actors. These are the influence of colonialism under British occupation, Nigeria's political elites and the military. The 1999 constitution in particular was hastily enacted or drafted under a short period and imposed by the military to facilitate the transition process after 15 years of military regimes. As such the constitution does not have an iota of involvement of the citizens and does not reflect the basis of Nigeria's social existence, her ethno-regional heterogeneity neither were citizens or the social groups brought together under a platform to negotiate and for the drafting and adoption of a constitution that best suit the administrative structure for the entities or component units. Ideobodo, Okolo and Ezel (2018) argued in that regard by stressing that true federalism requires the ethno-regional governments have their own various constitutions and cited the case of USA, Australia and Canada as examples. In addition is the observation that a federation run by one single federal constitution without constitutions in the constituent units is one that is unitary in disguise. Similarly scholars have drawn attention to the fact federal system and the constitution suggest that the federating units do not hand over all their laws to the federal government for the formation of a federal constitution, rather; they surrender some parts of their laws to the central government while retaining others in their individual constitutions (Abah& Nwokwu, 2017). This position has been substantiated by Obidimma&Obidimma (2015) in their submission that a federal system is an arrangement between separate autonomous governments, it therefore follows that there should be separate national and regional governments which imply separate constitution for each government. Ideobodo et al (2019) argued that is not so in Nigeria as only one federal constitution has been adopted and being used to run the affairs of the entire country with no ethno-regional or state constitution. Nasir el-Rufai has argued that the federal government needs to devolve more powers to the states, and the states to local governments

(Jerome, 2017). Similarly the revenue sharing formula since 2000 shows that the federal government gets 52.68%, states 26.72% and local governments 20.60% (Ali &Sani, 2018)

(b)   Political Issues and Restructuring Phenomenon: Unequal Land Mass and States in Geopolitical Zones

Recently the call for political restructuring of Nigeria has generated concern and debate as millions of Nigerians seem dissatisfied and are outraged by the present structure of the federation which has increasingly become a recipe for uncertainty, insecurity and instability (Ibeobodo, Okolo and Eze, 2018). According to Rufai (2017) the Nigerian federation has be dysfunctional and more unitary than federal and not delivering public goods to the generality of our people. The state of dissatisfaction for a variety of reasons and motives has led to strident calls from virtually all segments of Nigeria's political environment for political constitutional and fiscal form using various terms, words, concepts and phrases (restructuring, true federalism, devolution, resource control, regionalist, self –determination, marginalisation and so forth.)

Social groups cutting across the various geopolitical zones have been agitating for political restructuring or alteration of the federal structure in Nigeria's political space.   Such social groups or ethno-regional bodies are among others: the Pan-Yoruba socio-cultural group of the western Nigeria, and also   the Afenifere of the west (all within the south-west geopolitical zone); the Pan-Igbo umbrella body of the east, the OhanezeNdi Igbo of the east, Indigenous (IPOB), Movement for Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Biafra Zionist Movement (BZM) all from the Southeast geopolitical zone; the Arewa Youth Movement of the north, the MOSOP of the south-south, the Niger-delta militants and Niger-delta avengers etc.

The reasons advanced for restructuring of the Nigerian political structure or federal character is diverse. For instance the southeast geopolitical zone which has the Igbo ethnic group and in this regard, the IPOB, MASSOB, BZM and so on is that they have been marginalised. And in this regard their position as presented by the former Deputy Senate President of the 8th Assembly, Senator Ike Ekweremadu during a World Igbo Conference (WIC) which took place at Enugu is that the minimum Ndigbo demand of Nigeria is a structure of the federation so that every component part of it can substantially

harness its resources, cut it coat according to its cloth and develop at its own speed or pace (*SunNewsonline*, 2018; Ideobodo, Okolo and Eze, 2018).

Scholarly focus has been on unequal distribution of states in the geopolitical zones. As such instances are in the number of states within the different geopolitical zones in Nigeria, where the north-west has 7 states, the south-east has 5 states, the south-south has 6 states, north-east has 6 states, north- central 6 states and south-west has 6 states; there is a clear marginalization of south east and preference on the north-west. Viewing it from a regional perspective, the northern region has 19 states while the southern region has 17 states. This is also applicable in terms of local governments in the divided. In addition to this, the federalist political structure of Nigeria partitioned the country in such a way that the northern region has an estimated number of 75% of the country's land mass, with over 60% of its population despite the fact that landmass and population are part of the criteria for revenue allocation and sharing of national cake. This arrangement is clearly unequal and has in totality given the northern part or region an undue advantage to maintain absolute dominance in the government of the federation as the region has capacity to dictate actions and policies to be pursued (Abah& Nwokwu, 2015). In addition northern Nigeria's negative posture towards restructuring means that both the constitution and the federal structure cannot be altered without the active participation and consent of the north. For example, the laudable report of the 2014 national conference which the northerners believe does not reflect their own best interest has suffered implementation setback till date despite attempts made jointly by all southern states to bring it into operation or effect.

Scholars have argued and posed questions with regard to number of states within each geopolitical zone if Nigeria is operating constitutionally a federal structure. For instance Ideobodo, Okolo and Eze (2018) have observed that the south – east region five (5) states, the north – west have seven (7) and all other regions have six (6) each. The implication these scholars maintained is that in a representative sense of democracy, south – east have 15 senators, north – west 21 senators, and other regions 18 senators each. These they argued further does not reflect notion of equity and balance. Similar analyses have been made with regard to the 774local government areas. It shows that amidst the 774 constitutionally approved LGAs, there are 95 in the south east region or zone, and north – west has 186, the north – east zone has 113, the

south south geopolitical zone has 125, the south – west 137 and north central 112.

The obvious imbalances no doubt put the south at a disadvantage position in the political structure and the south each in particular as being marginalised in the politics of revenue allocation and development planning since population principle is the yardstick. It is not surprising that multifarious agitations against marginalization is more prominent and coming more louder from the south-east region which has often times resulted to conflicts, taking up of arms and consequently bloodshed as has been demonstrated and document since 2006 to date. Others have called for the implementation of the recommendation of the national conference of 2014 to address issues of imbalances. However, Ebizie and Onyemere (2018) have drawn attention to this fact and argued that the conference recommended additional 18 states to the existing 36, and in this regard increasing the number states in Nigeria's political structure to 54. These scholars argued that can Nigeria realistically 54 federating units and also Abuja and then make them work. To them this arrangement will not work and even reverting to three or four regions will not work as well. The further stressed that we have worked with zones in recent times and the six operational geopolitical zones should be maintained as serve as the federating units. This we quite agree with but in addition we are of the view that the states under the six geopolitical zones should serve as local councils. The zonal office each to be determined based on consensus of the councils. These arrangement according Professor UA Tar (Northeast Zone) Professor MEU Tedheke and Professor Egwaikhide IC (South South Zone); and Professor IO Mbachu (South east Zone) will reduce cost of governance and create healthy competition and foster development for each zones as they will be force to source for revenue internally and not from federal government.

In addition to the forgoing issues have been the agitation for further amendment of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) to remove the Immunity Clause, Appropriate Role of Tradition Rulers and Recognition of Indigenous People. Particularly section 308 (1-3) provides that no criminal or civil proceedings shall be instituted or continued against a person holding the office of the President or Vice-President, Governor or Deputy Governor while in office. Advocates of restructuring from scholarly analysis have calling for the removal or review of this section as it provides such office holders the legal basis to abuse entrusted power. The general concern is that, this immunity

clause enables holders of the key executive offices with the power act with impunity, abuse legal process and disregard to rule of law of the land, lack of accountability to the electorate or the people and so forth (Ali &Sani, 2018). Similarly there are individuals and groups advocating for constitutional recognition of traditional rulers in Nigeria with clearly defined responsibilities instead of the current advisory roles in local decision making through Emirates and kingdoms (Fatile&Adejuwon, 2009). Furthermore, there is an agitation from a group Original Inhabitants Development Association (OIDA) representing the indigenous people of the Federal Capital Territory who are calling for the amendment of the constitution as well to reflect the cosmopolitan nature of Abuja. The demand is for the establishment of an elective office of a governor instead of the appointive position of a minister (Ali &Sani, 2018; Daily Trust, 2017).

(c) Resource Control

Resource control has in recent time generated debate from the north and from the southern part of the country; while the south is agitation for resource control the north has been critical of this agitation. In other word, there have been numerous cases of conflict over resource control in the south – south region of Nigeria. The south has constantly complained that the resources found within their jurisdiction and sphere of governance or territorial environment have always been exploited by the federal government while they are side-lined from the process government.

Ethnically, the Niger – Deltans consisting of a conglomeration of ethnic groups cutting across the south-south geopolitical zones or what is known as the oil producing states of the federation -Kalabari, Ikwere, Etchie, Ijaw, Itshekiri and others, have consistently since 1966 complained of marginalisation and neglect or cried out severally against marginalization and federalist ignorance even when they harbor the source of the country's economic power. Ideobodo, Okolo and Eze (2018) argued that the state governments of the country should have ultimate right to exploit and utilize the resources within their territorial domain and remit taxes to the federal government. The dominant argument in Niger-Delta region for resource control is that, the abandonment of true federalism in Nigeria has led to the neglect and marginalization of the region and its people. This Niger Delta group have maintained that since the bulk of Nigeria's oil wealth is explored from this region, the rate of unemployment, poverty, environmental

degradation and poor infrastructural development cant not be justified and as such unacceptable. Furthermore they have called for the increase of the ratio to 50 per cent from the current 13 per cent. The Niger Delta group according to (Kia 2018) and Ideobodo, Okolo and Eze (2018) since the retrun to democratic government resorted to the use of arms to defend their God – given resources since despite their ownership of the resources, the government tend to exploit them and use the revenue gotten from their land to enrich and develop other areas of the federation while they languish in abject poverty, poor infrastructures and lack of good water supply; since their water bodies have been polluted through the extraction of their mineral resources (oil). The consequences of their taking arm is the bombing of oil pipelines, kidnap of oil extractors and stopping of oil extraction process which had caused Nigeria fortunes in the international market.

The position of the various group with regard to resource control based on observations made by Ideobodo et al (2018) is that   northern Nigeria rejected the idea of abrogation of laws that empower Central government to control financial resources derived from resources exploited anywhere in Nigeria. The South East, South South and South West on the other hand are in support that such laws should be abrogated. And with regard to state management and control of resources found within its territories, and with absolute control over greater percentage of the revenue generated therein from the minerals resources and so on, the north did not support this either. But overwhelming support of this form of arrangement came from the general southern part of Nigeria and emphasised that the funding should be through regional commission.

The APC committee on restructuring have among others identified resource control, derivation principles and revenue allocation formula as issues that are germane to the restructuring debate by various groups. And according to the chairperson of the committee are issues which the current government of APC should address as well as review of the key issues captured in the 2005 and 2014 national conferences (see Jerome, 2017).

Scholars have argued that over the years numerous committees and commissions were set up (pre-colonial and post-independence era) to work out meaningful and an acceptable revenue sharing formula in Nigeria. Some of these bodies are the Chicks Commission, 1946; Hick-Phillipson Commission, 1950; Chicks Commission, 1954; Raisman Commission, 1957; Binns Commission, 1964; Dina Commission, 1969; Aboyade Technical Committee,

1977; Okigbo Commission, 1979. In addition to these are the decrees of the military regimes (see Ali and Sani, 2018; Ewetan, 2012; Elekwa et al, 2011). The outcome of these committees, commissions and decrees have been the establishment of the National Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (NRMAFC) of 1988. It has been emphasized that from colonial to post- colonial and contemporary Nigeria, the agitation for resource control has remained the most 7 contentious issue in Nigeria's fiscal relations. Central to this crisis and conflict of interest is the politics of oil in Nigeria. Oil is the object of the struggles between classes, factions of classes acting either through state structures or ethnic groups. Evidently, oil is   power, and power is oil in the context of Nigeria's political environment and economy, the struggle for oil power becomes a primary object of politics, and the inequitable distribution of oil highlights existing inequalities, competing claims, grievances, and even conflicts, these have threaten the Federal foundations of the Nigerian State (Ali and Sani, 2018; Madubuike, 2017; Babalola,2016; Dickson &Asua, 2016; Chukwuemeka&Amobi, 2011).

(d) Security and Restructuring Debate in Nigeria.
The increasing spates of social conflicts and general insecurity in Nigeria has not only questioned the effectiveness of the existing structure but have also spurred calls for the creation of state police. There is no geopolitical zone that is not experiencing two or more forms of security challenges. For instance kidnapping, banditry, herdsmen and farmers clashes have become security issues in North -Central and North- West geopolitical zones. While the North-East is still battling with the security challenge from Boko Haram insurgents and in addition to this is the herdsmen and farmers clashes recorded in Adamawa and Taraba states in this zone. The South -West, South- South and South- East have their share of insecurity of which kidnapping, cultism, militia activities (Niger Delta Avengers and other groups), the secession and State of Biafra agenda of the South-East that has been conflictual between government and the Igbo ethnic group and so on. Political and elections violence and human rights abuses are issues that have generated debate and the call for decentralisation of the security agencies and operatives. It has been debated that state should be given the mandate to have state police to handle matter of state security while the federal government oversee the affairs and issues bordering on national security and the protection of the territorial space and our foreign policy engagement. In other word the Nigerian armed forces

should focus on their constitutional mandate and to stay off internal security issues for the states to handle. Ahamed Nasir el-Rufai for instance said he does not believe that a single, centralised police force can deliver on the necessity to visible project state power and enforce the law in this vast country of ours with nearly 200 million people (Jerome, 2017).

Conclusion and way forward

The persistent call and agitations for restructuring from the social groups in the various geopolitical zones have been informed by the inefficiency and ineffective structure of government in operation in Nigeria. Literatures have shown that though constitutionally the structure of government is a federal system, but in practice a unitary system is in operation as the structure of governance. The over centralisation of power at the centre or federal level of governance by the constitution as well as the subordination of the local government areas under the 36states of the federation attest to this facts. Federal government dominance in the political and economic activities of the country has rendered the state and the local government levels powerless and ineffective in service delivery on the basis of their constitutional responsibilities. And has made them dependent on the centre even for every developmental project since revenue is control and shared by the federal government. The inefficiency has brought into our polity the high rate of unemployment, spates of social conflicts and lack of development and the general insecurity that is now the characteristics features of Nigerian political space. We conclude that this structural arrangement which has not resulted in providing the collective goods for the people after 59 years of political independent should be reviewed. In doing that germane issues like constitution provision, the federal structure, devolution of power and resource control as well as security for all within the geopolitical zones be considered. And as a way forward all social groups should be involved in the review process so that all interest will be address and to have an effective and efficient federal structure of government based on consensus.

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Interviews (4 KII)

Professor UA Tar (NE)

Professor MEU Tedheke (SS)

Professor Egwaikhide IC (SS)

Professor IO Mbachu (SE)

INTERNAL DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIAN POLITICAL PARTIES AND THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS

Robert O. Dode
Department of Political Science and Public Administration
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Oyo
&
Ogedi Jacob
Department of Political Science
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Federal University Otuoke

Abstract

Internal party democracy is very necessary in a representative democracy. It promotes democratic principles like accountability, transparency, inclusivity, participation and representation. It presents a bottom-up approach in the building of party structures and organisations in a manner that promotes internal distribution of power and dispersion of authorities and power at different levels. In the buildup to the 2019 general elections in Nigeria, the media has reported cases of party defections, litigations, rancour and acrimony amongst party members due to alleged disagreement on sundry matters such as the selection of candidates for the general elections. This study therefore interrogated internal democracy in Nigerian political parties and the 2019 general elections. The objective was to identify the nature of internal party democracy in Nigeria and its impact on the 2019 general elections. The research design was historical-descriptive design and the data were obtained through secondary sources. The framework of analysis was the theory of prebendalism which guided us in the study. The study recommended among other things that political parties in Nigeria should be made to develop along ideological line to reduce the spate of party defection.

Introduction

The relationship between political parties and representative democracy is very obvious in modern society. Literatures drawn from the discourse on party politics highlight the centrality of political parties in a well-functioning democracy. Carothers (2006) argued that political parties perform essential functions including aggregating citizen's interests, forming

government, developing and promoting policy positions and programmes, grooming and selecting political leadership. It has also been said that political parties in emerging democracies are caught in the dilemma of performing simultaneously the standard functions of political recruitment, mobilization of electoral support and setting of political agendas on the one hand, and in another establishing themselves as viable partisan organisations (Gunther and Diamond, 2003). Schaltschneider (1942) opined that modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of political parties while Muller (2000) in support of that assertion emphasized that political parties are endemic to democracy. In contrary, the dysfunctionality of political parties can spell doom for representative democracy. There is a growing literature on the connection between a malfunctioning political party system and democratic crisis (Berger, 1979).

The imperative of political parties in a democratic society is manifest when political parties enjoy internal or intra- party democracy. This is mainly noticeable when political parties are not privatized or hijacked by person(s) or group of persons. Internal democracy refers to the extent to which the conduct of internal party affairs embodies the principles of electivity, accountability, transparency, inclusivity, participation and representation (Mimpen, 2006). It suggests a bottom-up approach in the building of the party structures and organisation in a manner that ensures internal distribution of power and dispersion of authorities and power at different levels rather than concentration of such powers in one organ (Cular, 2004). The import of internal democracy in political parties is to ensure that party structures and organisations are participatory and inclusive in order to become vehicles for democratic leadership and values (Salih, 2006).

This paper therefore interrogates internal democracy in Nigerian political parties and the 2019 general elections. In so doing, the study is divided into five sections. Following this introduction, the second section presents the statement of the problem and the third section focuses on the theoretical framework. The fourth interrogates the exposition of thesis: Internal democracy in Nigerian political parties and the 2019 general elections. Finally the last section features the concluding remarks and recommendations.

Statement of the Problem

The disaster associated to internal democracy in Nigerian political parties especially as noticed in the 2019 general elections presents a worrisome dimension of the paradox of the party system in the building of representative democracy in Nigeria. This worrisome trend has been a major concern since the return of democracy in 1999 in Nigeria. The dominant trend is that political parties hold primary elections, but then proceed to select their nominees for offices without regard for those primaries. The statement by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the countdown to the 2007 elections that winning primaries did not guarantee the party's nomination is a poignant index of this reality. In states such as Taraba, Niger, Rivers, Imo, Kano, Sokoto, those who contested the 2007 gubernatorial elections and won on the PDP ticket did not take part in the primaries (Egwu, 2014).

In the build up to the just concluded 2019 general elections, the media reported cases of party defections, litigations, rancour and acrimony amongst party members due to alleged disagreement on sundry matters such as the selection of candidates for the general elections. During the 2019 elections, the All Progressive Congress (APC) did not present any candidate in Rivers State due to squabbles arising from crisis of internal democracy. Also, in Zamfara State where the APC candidates contested and won all elective positions in the 2019 general elections, their victories were nullified by the Supreme Court and candidates of PDP who came second in the election results were returned elected due to irregularities that characterized the Zamfara State APC primaries.

It suffice to state that a strong culture of internal democracy in political parties is fundamental to the search for a sustainable electoral democracy in many ways. Political parties help to promote the participation and involvement of broad segments of the population by providing the platform to present candidates for election, articulate a vision of society and canvass for power through competitive elections. Once the internal democratic instrument for making decisions including choice of candidates are eroded or privatized, the very essence of party politics vanishes. It leads to the creation of a regime of uncertainty for the electoral management bodies as disputes arising from candidates' selection processes are never fully resolved on time. It drags the judiciary into the murky waters of deciding candidates for elections. Also, it weakens the internal coherence and solidarity in the political parties and reduces their overall capacity to survive in the long-run.

It is therefore on the basis of the identified problematique of this study, that we write to interrogate the internal democracy in Nigerian political parties and the 2019 general elections.

The Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the theory of prebendalism. The term prebendalism was devised by Richard Joseph specifically to describe Nigerian politics in the Second Republic and it has remained the dominant system in Nigeria (Joseph, 1987 cited in Egwu, 2014 p. 197). Prebendalism means the distribution of public positions to elite in order for them to gain wealth from the operation of the office (Van de Walle, 2007 cited in Egwu, 2014 p. 197). So, prebendalism is an elite bargain in which the benefits are narrowly distributed. Prebendalism dismantles the state, transforming it into personal fiefdoms and subverts the rule of law.

The theory of prebendalism described Nigerian political system as being characterized by "patterns of political behaviour… rest on the justifying principle that…offices should be competed for and then utilized for the personal benefits of office holders as well as their reference or support group (Joseph, 1996 p.81).

In analyzing the rise and fall of Nigerian second republic, Joseph argued that Nigerians support political democracy just like they would support the military because… it is the best way for elite to continue their ethnically and regionally based competition for the spoils of office (Joseph, 1996).

Adams Oshiomhole rightly argued that the perception of the public about politics in Nigeria is not different. He stated thus:

> Politics under both civilian and military government is largely a matter of "who gets what, when and how? For the public, government by politicians (Yoruba; Ijoba Oselu) succeeded government by whites, (Ijoba Oyinbo) and alternates with government by the soldiers (Ijoba Ologun). Government by the people doesn't enter into it. Nigerians generally may have had little love for Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, but they certainly appreciate, and act on his advice to "seek ye first the political Kingdom" (Ohiomole cited in Nwokocha, 2007 p.72).

Applying this theory to this study, Nigerian political entrepreneurs deliver votes but without necessarily recruiting and mobilizing voters.   In

developed clime, political parties are the vehicles through which visible leaders try to distribute real benefits to their constituents.   In contrary, in Nigeria much power seems to be behind the scenes, with the visible leaders simply assuring continuing prebendal access to state resources for the invisible wealthy men who purchase thugs to carry out the work of delivering the elections (sometimes by preventing people from voting and stuffing ballot boxes on their behalf). Thus, these political parties are driven by the prebends of office – the need by elite for continued access to them and the finance for them to purchase the election (Egwu, 2014).   There is usually a vigorous competition for power in Nigeria but the godfathers determine the outcome. The competition is exclusively between or among godfathers and is determined by the bargaining ability amongst them with the politicians who stand for office themselves not necessarily always being the important actors and the people counting very little. Since the real competition is about office, not policy, the elite often appear interchangeable (Leonard and Egwu, 2008).

The political godfathers determine which candidate is selected for election purpose either through the formal channels of decision-making in the political parties or through informal networks of social ties and obligations that ultimately influence party decisions.   Godfathers are also linked to primitive "accumulation" of votes in which their influence and networks are used to rig election or write election results in favour of anointed candidates. However, the ultimate aim of political godfather is to take over the machinery of governance by determining who takes the juicy cabinet positions having successfully installed a beneficiary as a president, governor or local government chairman. It can also be a legislator at the national or state level. This trend has negative impact on democracy. This is because the power of the people is being mortgaged and the visible things Nigerians need from their state are readily distributed as patronage goods.

Internal Democracy in Nigerian Political Parties and the 2019 General Elections

The focus of this paper revolves around two concepts; viz Democracy (internal democracy) and political party. A conceptual clarification of these two concepts will help to place them in correct epistemological foci within the context of this study.

The concept of democracy is very common in Social Science; However, just as most concepts in social sciences and political science in

particular, democracy is ambiguous and so amenable to differing conceptions. For example, some see it as people's rule while others see it within the context of institutional arrangements. Accordingly, democracy has been conceptualized as "the involvement of the people in the running of the political, socio-economic and cultural affairs of their society" (Chafe, 1994). The ubiquitous definition of democracy is one offered by Abraham Lincoln (one time President of United States) who defined democracy as "the government of the people, but the people and for the people". Nevertheless, a scholarly examination of the different definitions of democracy by scholars will be an unnecessary exercise here rather we shall summarize for the purpose of this study, the basic presuppositions of democracy which includes the following;

(i)   Democracy means majority rule;
(ii)   It means freedom of choice or free will;
(iii)   It gives room for the rule of law and entrenchment of fundamental human rights;
(iv)   It is based on universal adult suffrage.

Political parties on the other hand, are the foundation of any democracy. A political party helps to articulate group aim, foster quality political leadership, formulates and promotes policy alternatives and presents voters with coherent electoral choices by recruiting political leaders, through selection of candidates to represent them at elections (Scarrow, 2005). It is different from other social groups like labour unions and other associations because of the unique functions it performs, such as development of policies and programmes, communicating demands to the centre of governmental decision-making and recruitment and selection of people for governmental and legislative offices. The foregoing roles of political parties reveal and reinforce the inevitable roles they play in democracies, and in performing these roles effectively, there is the need for them to be a paradigm of democracy in themselves.

Unfortunately, political parties especially as we have become used to in Nigeria often fail to perform these roles and even engage in practices that grossly undetermined democracy even in their internal affairs. It has been made palpable that the worst assaults on our democracy are being unleashed by political parties.

The accounts below captures cases of undemocratic practices for which political parties in Nigeria are notorious with focus on the 2019 general elections.

One fundamental way to measure the level of internal democracy in a political party is the process through which it selects candidates for general elections. Party primaries are expected to reflect the will of the people by giving the members the privilege to choose their leaders and representatives. Unfortunately, the common trend in Nigeria today is that party primaries are tainted due to exclusion of many party members from participation. The result is usually the emergence of unpopular candidates.

In the build up to the 2019 general elections in Nigeria, the wards, local governments and state congresses were conducted but the results were weird due to controversy especially in the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC). The situation witnessed parallel congresses, hoarding of nomination forms, non-conduct of congresses and back door selection of delegates. The cleavages that arose therein pitted many stakeholders against one another along divergent interest lines. Against this backdrop were allegations of imposition and shortchanging of candidates; impunity and selective justice by godfathers who maneuvered to place strategic party positions and structures in the hands of their trusted allies. In Rivers State the legal battle that ensued between the faction loyal to the Transportation Minister, the Rt. Hon. Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi and that of Senator Magnus Ngei Abe over the party congresses cost the APC all the elective positions in the State. In an unprecedented decision on 7th January 2019, the Hon. Justice Omotosho of the Federal High Court, Port Harcourt Division, delivered a judgement (in a suit instituted by Senator Magnus Abe) barring the APC in Rivers State from fielding any candidates in Rivers State at any level for the 2019 general elections and also restrained INEC from accepting or presenting the names of any APC candidate for the elections. The court based this decision on the failure of the APC in Rivers State to conduct valid primaries "in accordance with due process", particularly because the primaries were conducted during the pendency of a suit on the same issue and the existence of a ruling barring the APC from fielding candidates delivered by the Hon. Justice C. Nwogu of the Rivers State High Court. Shortly, thereafter, the court of Appeal upturned the decision of the High Court of Rivers State and affirmed the right of the APC to field candidates at the elections. This ruling of the court of Appeal was later set aside by the Supreme Court which invoked its original

jurisdiction under section 22 of the Supreme Court Act. This in effect meant that the judgement of the Federal High Court remained valid, binding and subsisting against the APC in Rivers State.

Also, the decision of the Supreme Court over the political crisis that rocked the APC in Zamfara is a pointer to the negative effect of lack of internal democracy. The Supreme Court held that APC did not conduct a valid primary election in the State with the crude implications for the candidates elected under its platform at the said elections.   It suffice to state that the circumstances that led to non-holding of a valid party primaries in Zamfara State is traceable to the major albatross around the neck of party primaries in Nigeria viz; the elevation of the interest of godfathers over others thereby feeding the emotions which create room for factions and divisions within the political party. This captures the case in Lagos where the APC godfather, Senator Ahmed Bola Tinubu single handedly made the state Governor, Akinwunmi Ambode to fail the gubernatorial primary in the state. The Lagos strong man withdrew his support for the governor and brought out Babajide Olusola Sanwoolu for the governorship position. Speaking to Journalist at Ward C in Ikeja Local Government Area after voting at the primary election, Tinubu described governor Ambode as a "bad party man" who lost the support of party members (Online Punch of 2nd October, 2018). The truth of the matter is that he had a frosty relationship with the governor. This has been the style of Ahmed Bola Tinubu. For instance in the past, the Senator Mamora Olorunnibe Adeleke, a ranking Senator who represented Lagos East Senatorial District in 5th and 6th Senate was replaced with Mrs. Oluremi Tinubu (the wife of the party leader Ahmed Bola Timubu). Tinubu did the same thing during the selection of the deputy governor to Governor Raji Fashola. Against Fashola's wish, Bola Tinubu replaced Mrs. Sara Adebisi Sosan with Mrs. Adejoke Orelope – Adefulire (Ukaeje, 2011 p.29).   This is highly undemocratic.

Ukaeje (2011) notes that the undemocratic tendencies are not the exclusive preserve of the big parties but that the smaller parties are not exonerated.   Jacob (2014) noted that lack of internal democracy and godfatherism of the big parties are exposed because they are parties that can be easily noticed.

Anti-party activities also stifle the consolidation of internal democracy in Nigerian Political Parties. The 2019 general elections witnessed many cases of anti-party activities such as the one exhibited by two All Progressive

Congress governors. They are governors Rochas Okorocha of Imo State and Ibikunle Amosun of Ogun State. They defied the party that brought them to power by sponsoring and supporting opposition candidates against their own party candidates. While Okorocha preferred his son-in-law, Uche Nwosu of the Action Alliance to succeed him, Amosun chosed Abiodun Akinlade of the Allied Peoples' Movement. They encouraged these, their preferred candidates to defect from the APC. It is interesting to note that the two governors did not defect with their adopted godsons but rather stayed put in the APC, contested and won elections into the Senate.   However, ahead of the March 9 Governorship Election, the APC leadership suspended the two governors while threatening them with expulsion.

The politics of carpet-crossing (defection) which has been an underlining feature of Nigeria's party politics also stand as counter to the consolidation of internal party democracy. In most cases the circumstances and excuses for party defection in a multi party democracy have remained the same, but decamping time is both strategic and dynamic. In 2013, five governors (Adamawa, Kano, Kwara, Rivers, and Sokoto, 37 members of the House of Representatives and 11 Senators left the PDP for the All Progressives Congress (APC) giving life to the then newly created opposition party. However, many of the same individuals that left the PDP in 2013 made a u-turn in 2018 as reported by the Guardian of July 24, 2018.   the paper reported that in the build up to the 2019 general elections, 15 senators, 37 representatives and 3 state governors left the ruling All Progressive Congress for other parties mainly the Peoples Democratic Party. Some of the Senators that defected to PDP were Barnabas Gemade (Benue), Shaaba Lafiaji (Kwara), Rafiu Ibrahim (Kwara), Usman Nafada (Gombe), Suleiman Hunkuyi (Kaduna), Rabiu Musa Kwakwanso (Kano). Others were Ibrahim Danbaba, Ubale Shittu, Isah Misau, Suleiman Nafiz, Rafiu Ibrahim, Dino Melaye and Lanre Tejuosho. Also, Monsurat Sunmonu (Oyo) and Abdulaziz Nyako (Adamawa) defected to the African Democratic Congress (ADC). The Sahara Reporters reported that the three governors that defected from APC to PDP in 2013 were Aminu Tambuwal (Sokoto), Abdulfatah Ahmed (Kwara) and Samuel Ortom (Benue).

Also on defection, the online Punch of August 5, 2018 reported that the Senator representing Ebonyi South Senatorial District in the National Assembly, Sonni Ogbuoji and an ex-minister of State for Power and Steel, Goddy Ogbaga and 13 others defected from PDP to APC.   The Senator

representing Rivers West, Osinakachukwu Ideozu in the build up to the 2019 general elections defected from PDP to APC as well as the former Senate Minority leader, Senator Godswill Akpabio (Akwa Ibom North west).

The wind of defection also affected the Senate President Bukola Saraki and the Speaker, House of Representatives Yakubu Dogara. They defected to the PDP from APC.

Concluding Remarks

Investigation has shown that political parties in Nigeria are driven by personalities instead of ideologies. In other climes like the United States of America, political parties are defined by their platforms, manifestoes and ideologies. For instance, if a Republican candidate comes to you, you definitely have a sense of where he or she stands on a particular issue. This is not the case in Nigeria where emerging political alliances are based mostly on personalities and agreements among political leaders and do not in any way reflect differences in policy preference or ideology.

When a politician defects in Nigeria, he or she usually moves with thousands of individuals including officials of the party that he or she is serving as in the case of the five governors and three governors that defected in 2013 and 2018 respectively. While political parties are vessels to government and power all over the world, they are the only way to get into government in Nigeria. In Nigeria, there is no independent candidature, so every person must contest under the logo of a political party.

Investigations have also shown that most politicians defect to other parties with promises of election tickets once they perceive their ambitions are under threats. Others who feel discouraged or denied a level playing field also defect to where they will have opportunity because politics in Nigeria has become a selfish grab for power, glory and primitive accumulation.

Political parties in Nigeria have proved not to be keen in deepening democracy but are majorly concerned with the crude capture of power. They have jettisoned their traditional role of membership recruitment, mobilization and political education. With the emergence of godfathers in all the political parties, the political parties have continued to contribute to democratic impasse in Nigeria. This is because the pervasive lack of respect for internal democratic principles and rules by all the parties has a ruinous consequence on the democratic quality of elections and governance in all respects.

Recommendations

To promote internal democracy in Nigerian democracy, the following recommendations will be very useful.

1.   Political parties in Nigeria should be made to develop along the line of ideology that distinguishes them from one another. This will tame the propensity to defect to other political parties. It suffice to say that the establishment of political ideology in party politics will enhance political competition as voters will be able to choose among varying ideologies.

2.   The Electoral Act 2010 (as amended) should be reviewed especially section 87 of the Act so as to restore the express powers conferred on INEC to reject candidates who are not properly selected by the party members.

3.   INEC should forge partnership with civil society to enhance the capacity to monitor political parties' activities so as to generate credible information on what transpires in political parties.

4.   Public funding of political parties should be institutionalized. This will whittle down the roles of godfathers who finance party activities through which they garner influence to manipulate the activities of their political parties to their advantage.

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GOVERNANCE AND THE PROLIFERATION OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

Philip T. Vande, Ph.D
Department of Political Science
Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria

Abstract

The return of Nigeria to democratic governance in 1999, after a prolonged military incursion in politics and governance was welcome with the hope that the democratic government will usher in a regime of good governance. Yet, two decades on, the State has continued to grope in the dark for good governance, demonstrating a seeming lack of the capacity to monopolise the legitimate use of physical force. This vacuum has given vent to the rise and proliferation of violent extremist groups that have challenged State legitimacy and thrown Nigeria into a whirlwind of insecurity. While there are many factors that fuel and drive extremism, issues around governance take the front burner. This study, therefore, explores the nexus between governance and the proliferation of violent extremism in Nigeria and how the phenomenon affects national security. To underscore the importance of good governance in the proliferation of violent extremism, the Relative Deprivation Theory is used alongside descriptive methodology to investigate the problem of this study. The study concludes that structural deformities, leadership failure, distributive injustice and attendant debilitating poverty are some of the drivers to extremism, driving the country to precipice. Consequently, responsive and accountable governance, poverty reduction and wealth creation, among other recommendations are made towards preventing and ending violent extremism in Nigeria.

Keywords: governance, relative deprivation, poverty, violent extremism and national security

Introduction

Governance, the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a State's affairs demands participation, transparency, responsiveness and accountability. It entails the mechanism through which

citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their rights and meet their obligations. To be effective, good governance precedes the rule of law and ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society, and the yearnings and voices of all especially, the disadvantaged, minorities and vulnerable groups are heard and reflected in decision-making. Yet, governance has remained one of the greatest challenges in Nigeria, the supposed "Giant of Africa". Similarly, quality leadership has remained elusive and democracy has produced meager returns, if any. The net result has been the ever-unending contestations and separatist agitations that have often driven Nigeria to near precipice.

In recent years, Nigeria has witnessed new waves of violent extremism that have taken the lives of many people. While there are a variety of factors that fuel extremism, the grievances that could create an enabling environment for extremist groups to exploit have been identified to include socio-political inequality, prolonged violence and conflict, repression of civil liberties, and negative experiences with law enforcement and security officials. Based on the foregoing understanding, this study contextualises and investigates the drivers to violent extremism, links it with the nature of governance in Nigeria and explores the implications of these on national security.

Conceptual Clarification
 i. Governance

The concept of governance is fraught with numerous attempts at its conceptualisation. For Egwu (2018), governance is about a government's ability to make and enforce rules and to deliver services, regardless of whether that government is democratic or not. He however, posits that for effective development outcomes, the concern should go beyond running effective and clean State to a framework of governance that is democratic. Similarly, Audu (2016) posits that governance encompasses all the aspects of the exercise of authority through formal and informal institutions in the management of the resource endowment of a State. It denotes "the exercise of authority to provide public goods and services, including the delivery of basic services, infrastructure and a sound climate" (Audu, 2016, p. 31).

It follows therefore that governance entails a process of decision-making and implementation. Stated differently, governance is the process of social engagement between rulers and the ruled in a political community,

where good governance is characterised by democratic processes and distributive justice.

ii. Violent Extremism

The term, "violent extremism" is a complex phenomenon and does not have a consensual definition. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) defines it as "beliefs and actions of people who support or use violence to achieve ideological, religious or political goals", including "terrorism and other forms of politically motivated and communal violence" (IOM, 2018, p. 1). According to this definition, all forms of violent extremism seek change through fear and intimidation rather than through peaceful means. Similarly, Leuven (2019, p. 1), posits that violent extremism "refers to the beliefs and actions of people who support or use ideologically motivated violence to further social, economic, religiously-based or political objectives".

While extremism can be defined as the state, tendency, disposition or instance of going to extremes, violent extremism refers to advocating, engaging in, and supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence, to further social, economic, religious and political objectives. In other words, violent extremism is a belief and support for the ideas that are far from the generally correct, acceptable or reasonable standards of thought and behaviour, especially in political and religious matters. It implies the use or resort to violent means by individuals or groups to attain their goals and try to dominate or destroy the opposing parties' ability to pursue their own interests.

iii. National Security

Security is generally a term which denotes the absence of threats to scarce values. In the same vein, Fayeye (2010, p.195), avers that "security comprises the personal and communal state of being secure from a wide range of critical and pervasive threats including but not limited to all forms of violence, injustice and violation of human rights. It is in this sense that the Kampala Document on Security (1992, p.9) clearly states that "the concept of security goes beyond military consideration". Accordingly, the security of a nation must be constructed in terms of the assurance of the individual citizen to live in peace with rights and access to basic necessities of life, while fully and freely participating in the affairs of the society.

Consequently, national security is associated with the safety and survival of the State and its citizens from harm or destruction or from

dangerous threats (Odeh & Umoh, 2015). Furthermore, Babangida (2012), views national security as the physical protection and defence of the citizens and a nation's territorial integrity as well as the promotion of the economic well-being and prosperity of the citizens in a safe and secure environment that promotes the attainment of national interests and those of her foreign partners. Accordingly, Odeh and Umoh (2015) identified seven (7) critical dimensions of national security to include economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security.

Thus, national security is the freedom of a nation and its citizens from threats to lives and property as well as its cherished values. This means that national security is the ability of a State and her citizens to feel safe and secured, protect and defend its cherished values and legitimate interests and the enhancement of general well-being.

Theoretical Framework

This work adopts, explains and applies the relative deprivation theory to explain and provide an understanding to violent extremism in Nigeria. It is noteworthy that this perspective dates back to Aristotle's attempt to explain revolution. Aristotle (in Richardson, 2011) makes the point that "revolution is driven by a *relative* sense or feeling of inequality rather than an absolute measure".

Though the concept of relative deprivation was coined by Stouffer et al (1949) to describe unexpected relationships that emerged from surveys of American soldiers in World War II, the contemporary understanding of the theory of relative deprivation became hugely popular with Gurr's publication of *Why Men Rebel* (1971). In its simplest form, the theory seeks to advance the argument that, instead of absolute deprivation, the key driver of such violence is the discrepancy between expected and achieved welfare (Kiikpoye, 2015). In other words, socio-economic and political violence in a society results from collective discontent caused by a sense of relative deprivation. Thus, it is "the tension that develops from a discrepancy between the "ought" and the "is" of collective value satisfaction … that disposes men to violence" (Richardson, 2011, p. 5). More so, Richardson (2011, p. 6) posits that "the anger induced by frustration is a motivating force that disposes men to aggression."

Thus, the intensification of relative deprivation with regards to political participation, prosperity, distributive justice, collective/communal values and societal status can lead to a decline in ideational coherence which consequently leads to a breakdown in the social order and to violence. As Saleh (2015) further submits, the failure of the state to meet people's value expectations which they believe they are rightfully entitled to can eventually lead to disorientation amongst the citizenry and discontentment on the part of the people towards the State. Thus, societal insecurity occurs when people within a certain geographically defined state assume that their identity is threatened. This perceived threat could be triggered and bolstered by a collective feeling of relative deprivation, be it social, economic, political or cultural. In other words, intensive economic and political insufficiency leads to insecurity within the state. These can manifest in the form of physical threats (pain, injury, death), economic threats (seizure, or destruction of property, denial of access to work or resources), threats to rights (imprisonment, denial of normal civil liberties), and threats to position or status (demotion, public humiliation).

Consequently, the existence of frustration always leads to some form of violence and the greater the intensity and gap of relative deprivation, the greater the intensity of the violence and belligerence (Gurr, 1971).

In spite of the contributions of the relative deprivation theory in understanding the nature of governance and violent extremism in Nigeria, numerous aspects of the theory have been questioned. For instance, critics have questioned the link between feelings of deprivation and the rise of social movements and argue that studies of relative deprivation must recognize egoistic deprivation, fraternal deprivation and self-referenced relative deprivation (Ikezue & Ezeah, 2017). The central idea of relative deprivation suggests that individuals or groups feel deprived when their current circumstances are negatively compared to the situation of others. But critics who questioned the link between relative deprivation and social movements observed that much of the evidence linking social movements to feelings of discontent and ultimately efforts to effect social change, feelings of relative deprivation may or may not definitely lead to the creation of social movements and collective identity (Morrison, 1971).

Again, relative deprivation theory has been criticized for a lack of focus on the individual. Critics assert that sociologists using relative deprivation theory tend to examine individual and collective relative

deprivation but ignore self-referenced relative deprivation. Critics have also noted that people do not need to feel deprived before they move to action and that even when deprivation is intense on individuals or a large group; it is not a sufficient condition for violence. Finally, the theory also fails to explain why certain feelings of deprivation are transformed into collective action, whereas in some similar situations, no collective effort is made to reshape society.

In spite of the shortcomings of the relative deprivation theory, the framework is critical and useful in explaining the nature and nexus between governance and violent extremism in Nigeria. This theory is apt and important to have a better understanding of why there are frequent problems associated with ethnic groups, regions or provinces that are fighting to address their relatively deprived situation especially in federations where resources, appointments, access to power and revenue are not well distributed. The relative deprivation theory is therefore adequate to understand the nature of governance and violent extremism in Nigeria. In other words, the theory sees relative deprivation as the main cause of conflict, insecurity and violent extremism in Nigeria.

The Nature of Governance in Nigeria

The nature of governance in Nigeria can best be appreciated with a clear understanding of the history and evolution of the Nigerian State, which provides a reasonable insight into the nature and character of the Nigerian State and the political class. As submitted by Rafiu, Owolabi and Folasayo (2009), the State, in its evolutionary process, particularly in the colonial era, shaped the outlook and provided the orientation of the indigenous political elites and citizens. They further submit that, Nigeria, born in 1914, after the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates, is a by-product of a 'fraudulent' social contract and not of a 'negotiated will' of the welded parts.

By implication, the foundations of the economy and politics of the Nigeria were laid by colonial imperialism which operated through trade, commerce, unequal exchange and bureaucratic administration. More so, the colonial politics of divide and rule, and its strategy of regionalism effectively laid the foundation for ethno-regional politics and religious bigotry in the crafted State. This essentially turned politics into warfare in the struggle for control and use of State power, a situation in which power is overvalued, even as an end in itself. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the colonial State imposed a patrimonial system of administration (in the ideological guise of indirect rule) on the country. This, according to Rafiu, Owolabi and Folasayo

(2009), was targeted at enlisting the dominant status group in the service of colonial rule and to contain the political consequences of changes in class structure. In this case, the political relations that existed were vertical in nature. It was one of domination, control and dependence, with subordinate clients jostling for the favour of their patrons.

Consequently, the Nigerian State at independence was disarticulated, distorted and underdeveloped, ridden with crises in many senses. Like its colonial precursor, the post-colonial State in Nigeria exists as an instrument in the hands of the ruling class for the domination of other classes in the society. More so, as a neo-colonial State, the Nigerian State exists for the interest of the capitalist metropole as distinguished from the interest of the masses (Ekekwe, 1986). Thus, the post-colonial Nigerian State and its leaders are products of the institutions of the colonial regime, and its vices. It inherited and nurtured the military chain like administration, which guarantees a relation of domination and control between the leaders and the led, a system of patronage of public offices, the practice of political intolerance, and entrenching a winner takes all political system, where the loser loses everything, sometimes including his/her life.

Beside the weak and dependent economy coupled with a warped sense of values and orientation, the neo-colonial Nigerian State is bedeviled with the duality of values. This is what Ekeh (1975) calls the two publics. According to him, there is the primordial public which is socially moral, and the civic public that abhors morality. Unfortunately, it is the amoral civic public which dominates governance and public actions. As such, the tendency is to regard public property, assets, or resources as something that must be vandalised and misappropriated, and the State as something that must be assaulted and if possible privatised. After independence, there emerged out of continual conflict with the colonial authority, political leaders whose interests were not to serve but to use the instrument of the State to enrich themselves, the goal that was difficult to prosecute under colonial rule. This orientation and attitude of the elites, according to Dudley (1973), was not accidental, nor was it self-generative, but was due to the heterogeneous direction provided by the colonial predators who for their own convenience divided the country into three unequal administrative areas grouped around the major ethnic groups. As Okpeh (2003) concurs, this later created political antagonism among the elites along the cultural divide. It is therefore against all these matrices of historical deformities of both the colonial and post-colonial Nigerian State that the

nature and character of the State and its elites, actors and office holders can be understood.

The political environment and governance from independence till date is profoundly hostile to development. The nature of governance has been for the few, who captured and use State power for personal and group aggrandizement. As Ake (1996) posits:

> To become wealthy without the patronage of the State was likely to invite the unpleasant attention of those in control of the state power. Political power was everything; it was not only the access to wealth but also the means to security and the only guarantor of general well-being…. It was generally futile to harbour any illusions of becoming wealthy by entrepreneurial activity or even to take personal safety for granted. For anyone who was part of the ruling faction, entrepreneurial activity was unnecessary, for one could appropriate surplus with less risk and less trouble by means of state power (Ake (1996, p.7).

The political and economic corruption has thus rendered development improbable, while primitive accumulation comes in form of theft, looting, graft, expropriation, money laundering, enslavement and internal colonization. It is noteworthy that the petty bourgeoisie now in position of political authority focused more on relations of distribution and were more desirous of imbibing the life style and privileges of colonialism than in abolishing its injustice and oppression of the Nigerian masses (Ekekwe, 1986).

Again, two decades (1999-2019) after the rebirth of democracy in Nigeria, democratic governance has continued to nose-dive. As Odo (2015) submits, the exhilaration generated by widespread dehumanizing poverty and underdevelopment; insecurity; corruption; mass illiteracy; unemployment; amongst others has created mixed feelings about the desirability or otherwise of democracy. Democracy in Nigeria is going through difficult times as viable democratic institutions such as credible electoral system; independent judiciary, rule of law and other fundamental elements of democracy are yet to take root in the country in the face of such flaws like massive corruption in every facet of the nation's public life. These flaws in the system have become worryingly visible giving rise to disillusion with politics and governance.

Drivers of Violent Extremism

There are a myriad of explanations and narratives as to the possible causes of violent extremism in Nigeria, generally. We can first and foremost group them into the "Push Factors" and "Pull Factors" (Albert, 2018). These terms: "push factors" and "pull factors" are often used when discussing radicalisation and violent extremism. Although there are other models used to understand radicalisation, this is the most widely used one. To Leuven (2019, p. 29), "push factors are conditions or grievances that create a sense of frustration, marginalisation, and disempowerment which encourage people to seek out remedies including, but not limited to, joining extremist groups or embracing violent extremist worldviews". These factors may include structural issues such as demographic imbalances, poverty, inequality, discrimination, or polarised environments and transitional societies. Similarly, Albert (2018) concur that some push factors include exclusion, deprivation, horizontal inequalities, persecution or the perception thereof, limited access to quality and relevant education, unemployment, underemployment, rights denial, historic grievances, weak family system and weak educational system. These are also described as the "underlying" or "structural" factors of violent extremism, but may better be understood as factors that create unmet needs and cannot alone explain the problem of violent extremism without what is called group dynamics and relationships (Denoeux & Carter (2009).

More so, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2017) unequivocally underscores the relevance of economic factors as drivers of recruitment into violent extremism. Accordingly, the grievances associated with growing up in contexts where multidimensional poverty is high and far deeper than national averages, with the lived reality of unemployment and underemployment, render these economic factors a major source of frustration identified by those who joined violent extremist groups. This is a key dimension of individuals' vulnerability to narratives that invite them to channel such grievances and associated desperation into the cause of extremism. If an individual was studying or working, it emerged that that he or she would be less likely to become a member of an extremist organisation. Employment is the single most frequently cited immediate need faced at the time of joining. Individuals who joined but were studying or employed (not in vulnerable employment) at the time of joining the organization took longer to take the decision to join.

As corroborated by Leuven (2019), grievances against government and state security actors are particularly pronounced among those most vulnerable

to recruitment, who also express deep-seated skepticism about the possibility of positive change. Thus, where there is injustice, deprivation and desperation, violent extremist ideologies present themselves as a challenge to the *status quo* and a form of escape. The message is tailored by recruiters to suit different contexts as well as different types of individuals. Still, low levels of education and a reliance on intermediaries to interpret religion allows largely imported ideologies to serve as a lightning conductor for the frustration and anger that is the inevitable consequence of generations of socio-economic and political marginalisation.

Inequality, as a factor that fuels violent extremism has global as well as national and local dimensions. Oxfam International (2016) reported that the world's richest 85 people have as much combined wealth as the poorest 3.6 billion. In a globally connected world, where information is openly available on the web or through other media, the picture of a global inequality problem does influence violent contestation. At national and local levels, horizontal inequalities (economic, political, social, and cultural) linked to a lack of identity and perceptions of injustice that can persist for generations, are important drivers of radicalisation and ultimately, violent extremism. As submitted by Stewart (2010), the risk of violent contestation increases when some groups witness inequality across different dimensions (political exclusion; lack of access to assets, land, jobs and social services; and discrimination based on culture, religion or language). More so, economic, social and cultural inequalities tend to mobilise people; political inequalities tend to mobilize elites. Policies to correct economic, social, and political inequalities and unequal cultural status should therefore be prioritised in multi-ethnic or diverse societies (Stewart, 2010).

While economic needs are important, the lack of political inclusion, limitations on freedom of expression and shrinking civic space are critical factors in understanding and appreciating what fuels violent extremism. This has been witnessed in the Middle East as well as in Central Asia and the Caucasus. The Arab Spring movements enabled many people to vent their frustrations, yet in many countries, including Nigeria, the underlying causes have remained unaddressed. Even in democratic societies where civic space is abundant, feelings of alienation can lead people to renounce more open platforms for participation and either act in isolation or become attracted to other venues of the like-minded (on social media or places of culture and worship) (Global Terrorism Index, 2015).

Understanding the "pull factors", Leuven (2019) argue that they are forces that can be attractive to potential recruits and specifically draw them into radical organisations, such as a sense of kinship, heroism, adventure, economic gain or self-realization. Also referred to as "individual incentives," these factors are more effective when violent extremist groups claim that their goals are to resolve the issues that have been identified as push factors. In a similar vein, Albert (2018) suggests that the pull factors include the existence of leaders with an alternative explanation of state failure; the lure of an institution for pursuing grievances; indoctrinated extremist groups; employment in exchange for membership; fragile state system, the lack of rule of law, corruption, and criminality; global apocalyptic and conspiracy theories; the social media.

Overall, the factors explaining violent extremism are poverty, social exclusion and injustice, but they also argue that political and religious leaders play an important role in the indoctrination and manipulation of the youth, including through financial incentives. It is important to note the role of the preaching centres and Koranic schools for spreading extremist and violent ideologies. Despite the distrust expressed towards the State, the majority of young people think that the State is the stakeholder that is most likely to prevent violent extremism, along with religious leaders (UNDP, 2017).

Thus, perceptions of disempowerment perpetuated over extended periods of time can ultimately drive or fuel some or all of their members towards violent extremism. For instance, strong perceptions of alienation from the national centre, as well as of repeated political manipulation by national authorities, have led certain communities Nigeria's North-East, South-South and South-East to offer refuge to extremists like Boko Haram, Niger-Delta Avengers and the Independent People of Biafra, respectively. Suffice it to add that, a State's failure to provide citizens with basic rights, services and security not only contributes to growing inequality, it also creates a vacuum that allows non-state actors to appropriate state functions, including the monopoly of violence. Again, when States or sub-national governments do not provide protection and access to justice, markets do not provide employment opportunities and communities have lost the social cohesion to contain conflict, violent groups can fill these gaps. Weak States not only provide a safe haven for radical extremists, they also do so for international organised crime syndicates, thereby providing a fertile ground for the cementing of ties between them.

Incidence of Violent Extremism in Nigeria since 1999

Since democratic rebirth in 1999, Nigeria has witnessed an upsurge of separatist groups and violent extremists, seeking for self-determination and autonomous entity of their own or seeking for justice in the political system. Some of the notorious extremist groups in Nigeria within the period include:

i. Boko Haram

As submitted by Ukase (2018), the Boko Haram sect is unarguably the most dreaded terrorist and extremist group that has emerged in Nigeria since 1960. According to him, the group emerged in 2002 but reemerged in 2009 and its leader, Mohammed Yusuf was able to convince the poor and hopeless youths that they were products of long years of neglect by the ruling elites. The group, therefore, emerged as a consequence of the corruption, frustration, and deprivation suffered by a majority of the unemployed youths, especially in the northern part of the country. They also attribute the failings in the country to Western inspired values, which to them are antithetical to the logic of Islam. To them, the Nigeria's democracy has only succeeded in promoting neglect, poverty and pauperization of the people in the north, whilst the politicians continue to live in affluence. In this connection, the group sees anything Western as evil, an anathema against the existential essence of Muslims in Nigeria and environs. Corroborating the foregoing, Ayuba (2011) aptly captures the context in which Boko Haram should be understood thus:

> The emergence of Boko Haram clearly shows that the administration of northern Nigeria has, over time seriously alienated the majority of the local people from their share of the riches of the country. Thus, the group is a product of the poverty and unemployment caused by corruption (Ayuba, 2011, p. 265).

By 2014, the group had hoisted its flag in several local governments in the north eastern states of Borno, Adamawa, Yobe and Gombe. Apart from stretching the capacity of the armed forces beyond its limits, the activities of the sect compelled the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to postpone the 2015 general election for a period, to enable the armed forces reclaim some of the areas taken over by the sect. On November 13, 2013, the United States Department of State designated Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and a Specially Designated Global Terrorists

Group. This declaration was sequel to the internationalization of the activities of the group, following its supposed links with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) (Ukase, 2018).

ii. The Niger Delta Avengers (NDA)

The Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) is a militant group in Nigeria's Niger Delta region who are equally negotiating for space. The group announced their existence in March 2016. Since its emergence, the group has attacked oil producing facilities in the delta region, causing the shutdown of oil terminals and a fall in Nigeria's oil production to its lowest levels in twenty years. The persistent attacks on strategic oil installations have led to the closure of some of these oil companies with grievous implications for the economy. The aim of the NDA is to create a sovereign state in the Niger Delta. They have threatened to disrupt Nigeria's economy if their aims are not met by the government. Its membership is drawn from all spectrum of the society – young, educated, and well-travelled.

The NDA is an off shot of a consortium of insurgent groups that had existed in the Delta region, after the execution of the leaders of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), (popularly called the Ogoni 9) by the Abacha regime and the belligerence of Obasanjo's presidency. Like MOSOP and the other groups that emerged in early 2000, the NDA has also frowned at the continued degradation of the region by prospecting oil companies without tangible commiserate returns or benefits to the affected communities. In 2007, the militants extracted a concession from President Yar' Adua, in what is popularly known as the Amnesty Deal.

In 2015, the group renewed its attack on oil installations in the area. The renewed attacks should be understood within the context of the approach of the Buhari Presidency, which appears to be out of tune with the amnesty deal. For instance, apart from the plethora of other demands, the NDA insisted that the Niger Delta Amnesty Programme must be allowed to continue running and must also be well funded. Besides, the group has asked the government to clean up all oil polluted lands in the Niger Delta and also pay compensation to all oil producing communities. The refusal of the federal government to heed to these demands and its attempt to coerce members of the group to abandon their agitations radicalized their operations. The oil-dependent economy of the Nigeria state severely bled with disastrous consequences on the masses of the people (Ukase, 2018).

iii. Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)

Since the return of democracy in 1999, two separatists' groups have emerged in the South-East, struggling for the resurgence and secession of the defunct State of Biafra from Nigeria. These are the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). While MASSOB is led by a lawyer, Ralph Uwazuruike, IPOB is headed by Nnamdi Kanu, a United Kingdom-based political activist. The ideology of these groups is hinged on the establishment and recognition of the Republic of Biafra, comprising the south-east and south-south regions out of the present structural arrangement that defines Nigeria. Although the philosophy of MASSOB is hinged on the principle of non-violence as propagated by Mahatma Gandi, the Nigerian government has accused the group of violence. For instance, its leader, Ralph Nwazuruike, was arrested and detained on charges of treason but was released in 2007. Due to its insurgent activities, President Jonathan branded MASSOB as one of the extremist groups threatening the security of Nigeria. The President specifically declared that:

> The Nigerian State faces three fundamental security challenges posed by extremist groups like Boko Haram in the North; the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra in the South-East; and the Oodua People's Congress in the South-West (Ukase, 2018, p. 12)

Another group in the South-East, whose activities and objectives are closely related or similar to that of MASSOB, is the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). This group consists of the indigenous ethnic groups constituting what was Biafra during the Nigeria Civil War (1967-1970). This group, like MASSOB, is agitating for self-determination and the restoration of the State of Biafra as separate from the Republic of Nigeria. The group believes that the present structural arrangement of Nigeria makes it impossible to have a workable union. It has organized several protests within and outside the country to create awareness towards its agitations. Some of its protests in the South-East shut down economic activities and vehicular movement. Although the group maintains that its protests and agitations are peaceful, the Nigerian government has descended heavily on its members. The Nigerian government contends that the group is illegal and pursues an unlawful

secessionist's aim that threatens the territorial integrity of Nigeria. The Nigerian Government proscribed and declared it a terrorist group (Uwakwe, 2017, in Ukase, 2018).

iv. Nomadic Pastoralists and Armed Banditry

Another group using arms to negotiate for space and whose activities have continued to threaten various farmers and communities in Nigeria is the nomadic pastoralists, usually called Fulani herdsmen. The activities of this group have taken a militia posture in contemporary times. In the last decade (2010-2019), the group has been on rampage, attacking several communities particularly in the Middle Belt region, killing sedentary crop farmers and destroying farm produce and farm lands in the process.

Within the last decade, the rampaging herders have attacked and sacked several communities in Benue, Kaduna, Taraba, Nasarawa and Plateau States, among others. The protracted and worsening cycle of violence by the marauding herders has witnessed an upsurge in frequency and intensity (Kwaja & Ademola-Adelehin, 2018). Given the gravity of these attacks, the Global Terrorism Index (2015, pp. 43-44) indicates that Fulani Militants (mostly herders) were the fourth deadliest terrorists group in 2014; using machine guns and other sophisticated weapons to attack villages and intimidate farmers. For instance, Amnesty International (2018), reported that about 4000 people were killed by the killer herdsmen between 2016 and 2018. Similarly, Ilo, Jonathan-Ichaver and Ademalekun (2019) report that the violence by the herders has killed more than 10,000 people in the last decade, with approximately 40% of the fatalities occurring in the two years prior to the February 2019 presidential elections.

Similar to the violence by the herders is that the threats from armed banditry has increasingly undermined security and development in Nigeria (Egwu, 2015). In this case, armed and rural bandits seek to expand their reach and resonance by exploiting ongoing conflicts and insurgency, joining forces with criminal networks, establishing safe havens in weak and repressive region, and propagating hatred. The spread of banditry, manifesting in various forms like kidnapping, armed robbery, cattle rustling, insurgency, terrorism and other forms of violent crime pose significant challenges for Nigeria's national security. As the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP, 2020) posits, the pervasive armed banditry and its associated threats to human security in the North-West region of Nigeria, particularly, Zamfara, Katsina, Kaduna, Sokoto and Niger States, have become a subject of national security

and public concern. It argues that the multifaceted layers of criminality involved, and recurrent nature of the armed banditry call for effective mechanisms to mitigate the threat it poses to peace and security in the affected States.

It is noteworthy that extremist groups have their objectives often manifesting from grievances and social discontent against dominant practices, behaviour and conduct in the political economy such as exclusion, marginalisation, distributive injustice and inequity. WANEP (2020) also submits that the causal factors for banditry and terrorism locally thrive on exploiting the fragile or weak State capacity evident in human rights abuses, inequality, poor service provision and unemployment.

The Implication of Violent Extremism on National Security

It is clear from the foregoing that Nigeria is currently at cross roads. The crisis which Nigeria faces today is explainable within the context of its structural deformities and governance failures. It is worrisome that after about six decades of political independence, the Nigerian state is still experiencing centrifugal strains from several groups and individuals negotiating for space within the State. While some of these groups and individuals have become so loquacious, vicious and violent in their contestation for spaces within the Nigerian state, others have become so vocal in their demand for the reconfiguration or restructuring of the country to give more strength, power and resources to the component units, so as to drive development in the peripheries. But as the debate over the restructuring rages on, there are several contending issues as to the nature the restructuring should take.

It is a truism that the history of post-colonial Nigeria is replete with leadership deficit. Several leaders the country produced at various levels of government never had a clear vision on good governance – the majority had little idea as to what direction they desired to lead Nigerians. It is against this background of leadership myopia that many have criticised past leaders and governments, blaming them for their inability to meet the expectations of the people (Okpe & Ukase, 2016). Caught up in the web of their incompetence and lack of vision, Nigerian leaders have continued to aggressively expand the nation's fault lines economically, politically, socially and otherwise. Consequently, politics is, and has always been ethno-politically enmeshed rather than ideo-politically driven. Politicians eager to seize power have often relied on these fault lines and diversities to fan the embers of disunity among

the people. Some of these fault lines and diversities – in the long run – have become impossible to manage thereby leading to corruption, insecurity, poverty, high rate of unemployment, economic degradation, collapsed infrastructure and underdevelopment (these include: road, health, education, transport infrastructure among others). It is sad that what has passed for public policy since independence has been nothing but pain, hunger, marginalization, exploitation, domination and deliberate impoverishment. The multiplier implication being the rising spate of separatist's agitations and violent extremism amongst groups which has earned the country the appellation of a failed state. Obviously because of bad governance, there is hardly any area of endeavor that Nigeria could be said to have been so successful that its example should be a lesson to other countries on the continent or globally.

According to Adams (2016), the quest for stability and development is, without doubt, the Holy Grail for Nigeria; a condition under which the country would be able to develop institutions and structures with the capacity to ensure economic growth, equitable distribution of national wealth, political stability and accountability. To do this successfully, however, requires reduction of threats (actual and potential) that are capable of generating insecurity for the country. Accordingly, there is the challenge to rethink and improve on policy and institutional means of dealing with security concerns arising in the country. Apart from the role that has been played by the traditional security agencies, there have been debates as to the usefulness of community policing, which is now the focus to lead Nigeria in the new era of national security and stability to manage and possibly eradicate threats facing the nation as expressed by the top law enforcement agents in Nigeria.

As WANEP (2020) further submits, violent extremism facilitates the emergence of a complex informal security sector in the country, including the growth of armed local vigilante groups established to protect communities against violent extremists. Yet, many of these groups lack adequate security training and often compete against one another. They have been implicated in acts of criminality including human rights abuses, armed robbery, extortion and appropriation of property from their victims (Rufai, 2018).

Conclusion and the Way forward

The essence of the State from antiquity is the maximisation of the good life of the citizenry. Therefore, anything that negates or derogates from the security, welfare and happiness of the people that the State can guarantee pose

a considerable threat to the security of the State. Good governance is thus, a *sine qua non* for preventing violent extremism in Nigeria. Suffice it to add that the rumble in the Nigeria State can be explained against the persistent and perennial failure in governance. For instance, the prevalence of abject poverty has been linked to the incidence of insecurity in the country. As submitted by Audu (2016), poverty and falling income are the critical drivers of violent extremism in less developed countries. He argues that joining an insurgency and militant group becomes more attractive, especially for the unemployed youth, when legitimate income-earning options are scarce or absent.

Furthermore, development practice has been identified as a critical role in providing the foundation for preventing violent extremism. Sustainable solutions for the prevention of violent extremism therefore require an inclusive development approach anchored in tolerance, political and economic empowerment, and reduction of inequalities.

It is therefore recommended that there is need for governance to be responsible and accountable to the citizenry, ensuring socio-economic justice for all and sundry. Again, an increased focus on fighting corruption helps to enhance the legitimacy of State institutions and directly contributes to reducing perceptions of injustice and inequality. Countries or local communities that make a solid effort to reduce the petty and grand corruption that fuel people's perceptions of injustice provide a visible sign that the causes of inequality and unequal opportunities are being addressed.

More so, there is need for creating effective socio-economic alternatives to violence for groups at risk. This initiative should focus on improving the livelihoods of groups at risk (youth in particular), meaning improving their skills and education levels and ensuring better access to jobs and upward mobility. The combination of these is important as supply-side vocational training projects that are not linked to meaningful employment in the marketplace risk raising expectations that cannot be satisfied, hence possibly aggravating perceptions of unfairness and discrimination.

Furthermore, enhancing participatory decision-making and increasing civic space is critical to preventing violent extremism in Nigeria. Economic empowerment through the creation of jobs and livelihoods is not sufficient. It is equally important to ensure that disenfranchised men and women - young people in particular - are provided with the space and platforms for civic engagement and participation in decision-making.

Similarly, strengthening local government capacities for service delivery and security is another way of inclusive governance and responsiveness. Limited State capacity particularly manifests itself at the sub-national level where people have the most direct contact with state institutions, and where the lack of services and security becomes most apparent. Improving the quality of services and of engagement between authorities and people enhances public trust and state legitimacy that are at the root of just and peaceful societies.

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COUNTER TERRORISM STRATEGY OF THE BUHARI ADMINISTRATION: CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

Sikiru Lanre Nurudeen Ph. D
Department of Political Science and Public Administration
Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Nigeria

Abstract

Since 2009, Nigeria had been in the grip of Boko-Haram's terrorist attacks. Over this period, Boko-Haram has transformed from an insurgency group into a transnational terrorist organisation, with a capacity to inflict devastating attacks. Against this background, this paper examines the effectiveness or otherwise of Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategies under the Buhari administration. The problematic of this study is an attempt to understand why the counter-terrorism strategies of the Buhari administration has failed to defeat Boko-Haram. This paper adopts the realist and functionalist theories as an appropriate theoretical framework. Due to lack of access to the epic-centre of Boko-Haram insurgency, the paper relies largely on secondary, and marginally on primary sources of data. The paper finds out that the war against Boko-Haram, is an unconventional war, and consequently, professionally trained soldiers are not traditionally equipped to engage in an asymmetric war, in which there is no battle line, or rules of engagement, as specified in the Vienna Convention. The paper notes that although the Nigerian military has recorded modest gains in the war against Boko-Haram; yet the idea of a 'technical defeat' of the religious sect does not, in any way, translate to a victory over the terrorist group. It recommends that beyond military response, the Buhari administration should address the issue of poor governance and other socio-economic challenges that have made terrorism attractive to some Nigerians. To defeat Boko-Haram, the paper concludes that Nigeria should intensify the multi-national response in her counter-terrorism strategies.

Key words: Terrorism/Insurgency, Counter-Terrorism, Realism

Introduction

Top on the campaign promises of General Muhammadu Buhari, as a presidential candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), was his promise to fight and defeat terrorism in Nigeria. He gave fillip to this in his Inaugural Address when he directed that the command and control centre in the war against terror be moved from Abuja to Maiduguri (*The Guardian*, 30th May, 2015, p.1). The preceding Jonathan administration had demonstrated failure to confront Boko-Haram insurgency, which was climaxed with the abductions of Chibok school girls. This massive abduction, in addition to scores of suicide bombings, and the occupation of swatch of Nigerian territory in the north-east by Boko-Haram attracted the attention of the international community. The concern shown by the international community to the challenges posed by terrorism in Nigeria, is not without justification, and was based on enlightened self-interest. The Rand Corporation, a United States' Think Tank, in January 2014 report, noted that terrorism in any part of the world is a potential threat to the entire planet, as terrorists respect neither national borders nor the life of anyone (Adelakun, 2015, p. 64).

Therefore, the priority accorded to the fight against terror by President Buhari with his prompt shuttle diplomatic offensive, especially with Nigerian neighbours, into whose territories the Boko-Haram menace had spread, is based on the belief that the Jonathan administration was unable to secure the cooperation of Nigeria's immediate neighbours, as well as the instrumentality of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in its counter terrorism war. The subsequent review of Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategy by the Buhari administration underscored the imperative of a multilateral framework, and premised on President Buhari's belief that without leveraging on a sub-regional and global collaboration, it would be difficult for Nigeria to defeat Boko Haram.

Objective/Structure

The objective of this paper is to examine counter-terrorism strategy of the Buhari administration and its implications for national security. The paper is divided into six sections. Section one defines the concept of terrorism and national security. Section two deals with major review of Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategy undertaken by the Buhari administration. Section three examines the major planks of the counter terrorism strategy under the Buhari administration while section four outlines the major breakthrough in Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategy. Chapter five examines the implications of the

Buhari administration's counter-terrorism strategy for national security. Section six makes recommendations and concludes the paper.

Methodology

Being a qualitative study, this paper relied mainly on secondary sources of gathering data. The secondary sources include research and academic materials, books, journals, newspapers, periodicals, magazines archival materials as well as the Internet, workshop and seminar papers, including official publications from relevant government ministries, agencies and research institutes such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), and National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS). Data were also sourced from the official publications of international governmental and non-governmental organisations such as the United Nations and its agencies, as well as international non-governmental organisations such as International Committee of the Red Cross, Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) or Doctors Without Borders, among others.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is predicated on the functionalist theory which is the basis of integration among states. Galtung (1986) provides a simplistic definition of integration. According to him, when two or more actors form a new actor, the process of integration is completed, but disintegration occurs where one actor split into two or more actors. Integration is usually associated with functionalism. The concept has been more elaborately defined by Mitrany (1950:96-199) who is generally regarded as the father of functionalism. Mitrany viewed integration as a half-way house between world government and the sovereign state; and defined it as a means whereby states with common interests that were non-universal could work together. According to the functionalists, technical experts, rather than professional diplomats, are the best agents for building collaborative links among people living in separate states. Mitrany (1966) also wrote of a basic underlying element which he called ramification that makes for the development of collaboration in one technical field to result in other fields. Integration is achieved when states create a transactional complex of economic and social organisation. Mitrany acknowledged that states would not surrender formal sovereignty, but would transfer executive authority for specific ends.

The idea behind the functionalist theory is that the forces of interdependence and globalisation have complicated domestic politics, and have eroded the ability of even the strongest countries to control their destinies. Indeed, no state can achieve the security and optimise the general well-being of its citizens in isolation from the rest of the world. As attractive as the functionalist theory is, it has been criticised by the neo-functionalist school, championed by Haas (1967). Haas developed the concept of spill-over, which was also applied by Lindberg. According to Lindberg (1963:10) 'spill-over' refers to a situation in which a given action, related to a specific goal creates a situation in which the original goal can be assured only by taking further actions, which in turn create a further condition and a need for more action, and so forth. These criticisms led to the emergence of neo-functionalism, whose proposition is that there exists a continuum between economic integration and political union. Neo-functionalists argue that growing economic interdependence among states require closer political coordination, which will ultimately lead to greater political integration (Kegley& Ray, 2008:280).

In spite of its limitations, the functionalist theory is equally relevant to the understanding of Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategies under the Jonathan and Buhari administrations. Given the transnational nature of terrorism, as well as the experience of other states that have defeated terrorism such as the FARC rebels in Colombia and Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka (www.jinsa.org,Global Briefing, retrieved on 05/03/19), it is extremely difficult for a country, acting alone, without the assistance of a coalition force of others states to defeat terrorism. Here lies the strength of the functionalist theory, hence its relevance to this paper

Concepts of Terrorism and National Security
(i) Concept of Terrorism
There is no single generally accepted definition of terrorism, because it is a value loaded concept, and therefore, very difficult to define. According to Juliet Kaarbo and James Lee Ray (2011) the term terrorism comes with a moral judgment. Defining terrorism on moral ground therefore becomes problematic. Because of the moral judgment connected to the label-terrorism-defining groups as terrorists has become a tool that political actors use to undermine the legitimacy of their enemies, as well as their struggle. Terrorism is also perceived as the deliberate, systematic murder, maiming, and menacing

of the innocent to inspire fear in them so as to gain political ends. The problem, therefore, is defining what are "evil" political ends? Since, there is always considerable disagreement on what is moral, defining terrorism in moral terms becomes problematic. Because of the moral judgment connected to the label terrorism, defining a group as a terrorist organisation has become a tool that political actors use to undermine the legitimacy of their enemies.

Global Terrorism Index (GTI) accepts the definition of terrorism agreed to by researchers of the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) and its advisory panel. It defines terrorism as "the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious or social goal through fear, coercion or intimidation" (GTI Report, 2012: 8). For an act to be regarded as terrorism is that it has to be intentional or deliberate. In Nigeria, terrorism has also been conceptualised under Article 40 of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act of 2002: Part VII-Miscellaneous Provisions, Article 40, defines terrorism as:

> *(a) any act which is a violation of the Criminal Code or the Penal Code and which may endanger the life, physical integrity or freedom of, or cause serious injury or death to, any person, any number or group of person or causes or may cause damage to public property, natural resources, environmental or cultural heritage and is calculated or intended to- (i) intimidate, put in fear, force, coerce or induce any government, body, institution, the general public or segment thereof, to do or abstain from doing any act or to adopt or abandon a particular standpoint, or to act according to certain principles* (EFCC Act of 2002, part vii, article 40).

(ii) Concept of National Security

The concept of national security is also a contested concept because scholars are yet to agree on the definition of the term. This is not surprising as the phenomenon of security is hardly precise. Brian, quoted by Odekunle (2013) asserts that national security is concerned with the perceptions of well-being of individuals and collectives and of assurance of the "core values" central to the self-definition of communities. The National Defence College of India defines national security as "an appropriate and aggressive blend of political resilience and maturity, human resources, economic structure and

capacity, technological competence, industrial base and availability of natural resources and finally military might"(https://en.m.wikipedia.org, retrieved on 20/03/2019). Security is "the preservation of core values and the absence of sense of threats to these values" (cited in Alli, 2010:73). This view is associated with the survival of the state and the preservation of its citizens. Obasanjo (2014:210-211), a former president of Nigeria, also identified three threats to national security to include militancy and oil products stealing in the Niger Delta, kidnapping in the South East initially and subsequently nationwide; and Boko Haram. The operational definition of security adopted in this paper is freedom from threats to a nation's capability, capacity to defend and develop itself, promote its values and national interest.

Strategic Review of the Counter Terrorism Strategy by the Buhari Administration

In line with a major plank of his campaign promise, President Buhari, on assumption of office, gave a directive that the command and control centre in the war against terror should move from Abuja to Maiduguri (*The Guardian*, 30th May, 2015, p 1). This directive gave a clear indication of a strategic shift by the new administration in Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategy. Sequel to this presidential directive, the Service Chiefs, notably the Chief of Army Staff, in order to regain strategic and tactical initiatives, realised the need to move from their comfort zones in Abuja to Maiduguri. Remarkably, within a period of six months the military was able to turn the tide of the war to the extent that by December 2015 it declared that it had technically defeated Boko Haram. In addition, the Buhari administration also anchored its counter terrorism strategy on "a more efficient and effective coalition" with Nigeria's neighbours. President Buhari followed up this declaration, as a matter of priority, with the policy of building a broad local, sub-regional, regional and international support for Nigeria's counter-terrorism efforts. It is within this context that he embarked on shuttle diplomatic visits to Chad and Niger republics in his first working week as President.

The review of Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategy was crystallised in what is popularly known as the 'Buhari Plan'. The Plan is being coordinated and supervised by the Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative, a body in charge of all humanitarian and development initiatives in the Boko Haram ravaged North-East region. As an integrated blue print, the 'Buhari Plan' embraces the North-East States Transformation Strategy (NESTS),

Emergency Assistance, Social Stabilisation, Economic Reconstruction and Re-development for the North East (EA-ES and ERR), the North East Recovery and Peace Building Assessment (RPBA), and Victims support Fund (VSF). The overall objective of the 'Buhari Plan' is to develop a structure and process that are capable of providing leadership, coordination and synergy in achieving its goals: restore peace and stability in the North-East Region, and coordinate humanitarian support for the internally displaced peoples in the North East Region, among others.

The Buhari administration also re-launched the Nigeria's National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) in August 2016. At the re-launch, President Buhari said: "since terrorism is not static; the country must also be decisive and dynamic in approaching and defeating it" (NACTEST Document, 2016). According to the National Security Adviser, Major General Babagana Monguno (Rtd.), "NACTEST is organised around five streams aimed at forestalling, securing, identifying and implementing the key objectives and indicators with a view to effectively ensure monitoring and evaluating successes at each stage" (NACTEST, 2016). Strategically, General Tukur Buratai and his counterpart in the Air Force also personally led the military offensive from the frontline, a strategy that succeeded in boosting the morale of the Nigerian soldiers. Following reports of sexual harassments in the IDP camps, President Buhari also launched a probe to determine the veracity of the allegation and the degree of involvement of security personnel in the alleged sex scandal (https://www.aafricanews.com, 2016/10/31, retrieved on 30/03/2019).

Major Planks of the Counter Terrorism Strategy of the Buhari Administration Strategic Shift in Counter-terrorism Strategy

The counter-terrorism strategy of the Buhari administration is anchored around major military and strategic planks, which include the following:

(i) Adoption of Unconventional Guerrilla Tactics

Having realised that the Boko Haram insurgency cannot be defeated through a conventional approach, the Nigerian military opted for guerrilla tactics in its offensive against the terrorist group. This represents a strategic way of seizing the initiative from the enemy, by using its tactics to fight it (https://issafrica.org, retrieved on 30/03/2019). Thus, the military employed the tactic of 'relentless pursuit' to match Boko-Haram's hit-and-run tactics, an

effective counter-offensive against Boko-Haram which considerably degraded the capacity of the insurgents. This victory was described by the military as a 'technical defeat' of Boko-Haram. With the adoption of this asymmetric military tactics, the Nigerian military began to re-take much of the territories in the combat zones (CZs) previously controlled by Boko-Haram. As a result of this, it became difficult for Boko-Haram to launch conventional attacks against federal troops in the CZs. It had to desperately fall back onto its stronghold in the Sambisa forest in Maiduguri, a mountainous border region, which is very difficult to penetrate. This asymmetric response was also complimented by a different structure/approach in the operations, attitudinal values of the military and security operatives, the operational process, in addition to better funding and the commitment of the political leadership to defeat Boko Haram.

(ii) The Role of the Multi-National Task Force
The full involvement of the multi-national joint task force in the fight against Boko Haram is another major plank of Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategy. When the Multi-national Joint Task Force (MNJTF) was established in 1994 by the Lake Chad Basin countries, it was to serve as an offensive and stabilisation mechanism to 'checkmate banditry activities and to facilitate free movement' along the Nigerian northern border (Sawadogo *etal*, 2016). Given the trans-national nature of the conflict, spilling over into neighbouring West African countries, the mandate of the MNJTF was expanded to encompass counter-terrorism operations. A Nigerian, Brigadier Gen. Enitan Ransome-Kuti was the first commander of the Task Force. By the time the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), under the authority of ECOWAS, came to the aid of Nigeria in late 2015, the Specialised Tasks, Training, Equipment and Protection (STTEP) had succeeded in putting the Boko-Haram on the defensive.
Despite the existence of MNJTF, its headquarters in Baga was overrun by Boko-Haram militants during which local residents were killed and many citizens displaced. There were reports that the Nigerian soldiers were overwhelmed and had to flee from the scene of the attack (Adeniyi, 2017). This unexpected attack forced the Buhari administration to carry out a re-assessment of the MNJTF so as to gauge its effectiveness. After the review, the task force was reinvigorated with the expansion in the number of troops and its mandate, as well as the relocation of its headquarters to N'Djamena,

Chad. Significant structural changes were also introduced in 2015 which included the creation of a new concept of operations, under the supervision of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (Sawadogo *etal*, https://issafrica.org of 15/09/2016, accessed on the internet on 25/05/19**).** To demonstrate the importance that the Buhari administration attached to the MNJTF in the counter-insurgency operations, Major-General Tukur Buratai, a Nigerian was appointed as the first Force Commander of the rejuvenated and repackaged MNJTF in May 2015. But his tenure was short as President Buhari, not long after his assumption of office, appointed Buratai as the Chief of Army Staff in July 2015. Major-General Iliya Abbah, also a Nigerian, was appointed Force Commander on 31st July 2015, to replace Major- General Tukur Buratai. In quick succession, Major General Lamidi Adeosun came on board in January 2016, and was, in turn, replaced by Major-General Lucky Irabor in May, 2017.

However, the operations of the MNJTF are being constrained by the challenge of funding. As it is well known, security is an expensive operation, in men and material resources. The contributions of Nigeria, the worst hit by the conflict, the United Kingdom, Turkey, the community of Sahel-Saharan states (CEN-SAD), and the European Union are not adequate to cover the initial budget of the MNJTF, estimated at US$700 million (Reuters, World News, February 2, 2016). At the onset, only Nigeria and France pledged about $250 million to fund the 8, 700 strong task force, an amount, which is barely one third of the projected budget. The inadequacy of funding of the military operations against Boko-Haram was further complicated when Nigeria slipped into an economic recession in the second quarter of 2016, and barely recovered only in the third quarter of 2017 (https://www.bbc.com, 37228742, retrieved, 31/08/2016, retrieved on 02/04,2019). Although troops under the MNJTF are prepared to work with the limited resources available to them, but the financial constraints have negatively impacted on their operational effectiveness.

Despite the challenges faced by the MNJTF, it is also significant to note that in January, 2016, the Peace and Security Council of African Union (AU) at its 738th meeting held on 7th December, 2017, renewed the mandate of the MNJTF to counter Boko-Haram. Its Communiqué, called for a holistic approach in the implementation of the Regional Stabilisation and Recovery strategy. It also called for additional efforts towards mobilising additional and adequate support for the MNJTF in order to fill its capability gaps, especially in the area of amphibious equipment, counter improvised explosive devices

(C-IED), grounds and air-lift assets, intelligence gathering platforms, among other strategic initiatives, that MNJTF could leverage on to assist Nigeria in defeating Boko-Haram (https://au.int, 06/02/2019, accessed on the internet on 12/08/19).

(iii) De-Radicalisation Programme

Another major plank of the counter-terrorism strategy of the Buhari administration is the de-radicalisation programme. The idea of de-radicalisation was first proposed at a meeting of the Nigerian National Security Council (NSC) in September 2015 before it was adopted by the federal government. Under the programme, repentant insurgents who surrendered were camped at a military-controlled facility known as 'Safe Corridor' in Gombe state where they went through rehabilitation and de-radicalisation programmes which include psychotherapy, art therapy and psycho- spiritual counselling. While Brigadier General Bamidele Mathew Shafa, the coordinator expressed confidence of a positive outcome from the programme, many victims of Boko Haram attacks are, however, hostile to the idea of de-radicalisation (www.dw.com 08/08/19, accessed on the internet on 18/08/19).

(iv) Implementation of 'Operation Lafiya Dole' (Peace by Force)

In order to underscore the urgency to win the 'war' against terror, the Nigerian military set up what it code named as 'Operation Lafia Dole' (OLF). 'Operation Lafiya Dole' which means 'Peace by Force' replaced 'Operation Zaman Lafiya'. This Special Anti-Terrorism Unit has both land and air components and has recorded several feats in the conduct of its assignments, such as Operation Deep Punch II, an offensive and clearance strategy against the insurgents. To make it more effective, a large contingent of Cameroonian soldiers was integrated into Operation Lafiya Dole. This strategic synergy between the Nigerian and Cameroonian soldiers has made Operation Lafiya Dole central in the final push of the war against Boko-Haram, because it led to the destruction of Boko-Haram's Tactical Ground, recovery of seized battle tanks and other battle feats.

The troops under the command of Operation Lafiya Dole are not unmindful of the fact that Boko-Haram insurgency is not only a clear assault and challenge to national security; but also a desperate security nightmare that required a very decisive counter military offensive. The success of this

operation led to the arrest of 407 persons who were either Boko-Haram fighters or members of their families who were hiding on the Islands of Lake Chad on Saturday December 16, 2017. The Lafiya Dole troops also freed 700 persons from Boko-Haram captivity (New Agency of Nigeria, December 17, 2017**)**. On Wednesday 14th February, 2018, Major-General Rogers Nicholas, the commander of Operation Lafiya Dole displayed scores of military vehicles seized from Boko-Haram and also disclosed that Abubakar Shekau was on the run, which signalled, in his words that 'the counter terrorism operation was gradually coming to an end' (*The Guardian*, February 13, 2018).

Major Breakthroughs in Nigeria's counter-Terrorism Strategy under the Buhari Administration

Although, Boko-Haram is yet to be defeated, yet the Buhari administration has made modest progress in the war against terror during his first term in office, in the following areas:

(i) The Release of the Chibok Girls

One major progress recorded in the counter-terrorism strategy of the Buhari administration was the negotiated release of a large number of Chibok girls, in two batches. So far, under the Buhari administration, about half of the Chibok girls that were abducted in April 2014 have been released. In October 2016, the first set of the 21 Chibok girls were released, leaving 219 in captivity. Three girls escaped individually in May, 2016, leaving 197 of them still in hostage. In a surprise move, another set of 82 abducted Chibok School girls were also released on Saturday 6th May 2017, after intense negotiation between representatives of the federal government and a faction of the militant group. President Buhari received the freed girls on Sunday, 7th May 2017, shortly before his trip to the United Kingdom for a follow up medical trip. The release of the Chibok girls is said to be a product of a swap, in exchange for five imprisoned Boko-Haram commanders, and 2 million Euros (cash) in ransom payment. But officials of the Buhari administration have always maintained that no ransom was paid. The released girls were held in a secure medical facility in Abuja, under the care of medical doctors, psychologists, social workers and trauma experts, for a period that the government considered reasonable, and also to allow security experts to debrief them (https:// www.bbc.com, world-africa, January 4, 2018, retrieved on 13/04/2019).

The release of the Chibok girls was facilitated by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which brokered the negotiation in collaboration with Switzerland. The first batch of Chibok girls was released in October 2016, and the second batch of 82 in May 2017. The ICRC also facilitated the release of 10 Policewomen and three University of Maiduguri lecturers in February 2018. Although ICRC was not involved in the negotiations that led to the release of the abductees, Boko-Haram had confidence in the ICRC as a neural intermediary, and that was why it handed over the abductees to the group, who eventually transported them in their marked vehicles to the Nigerian authorities. Unlike other aid agencies like the MSF (Doctors without Borders) that have insisted on the right of access to war victims and IDPs, and the Amnesty International that has routinely criticised the Nigerian military of human rights abuse of Boko Haram detainees, the military seems to have more cordial relationship with the ICRC in its counter-terrorism operations.

(ii) Abduction and Release of Dapchi Girls
On February 19, 2018, one hundred and thirteen (113) school girls aged 11-19 years old were kidnapped by the Boko-Haram terrorist group from the Government Girls Science and Technical College (GGSTC), Dapchi, Yunusari Local Government area of Yobe state (ttps://en.m.wikipedia, 19/02/2018, retrieved on 15/04/2019). But in an unexpected move, in the early hours of Tuesday, 21st of March, 2018, exactly a month after the abduction of Dapchi school girls, Boko-Haram released 106 girls, comprising 104 Dapchi girls, a boy, and one other girl. Five of the girls were reported to have died as a result of the trauma they went through during their abduction, and the stress they faced while in captivity. The remaining girl, Leah Sharibu, who is a Christian is still being held by Boko Haram, presumably, on account of her religion. Garuba Shehu, senior special assistant to President Buhari stated that "the fear of Nigeria's military by the terrorists is what is making her release a complicated and prolonged affair" (https://www.thecable.ng, presidency, 13/04/2019, retrieved on 20/04/2019). Lai Mohammed, the Minister of Information claimed no ransom was paid to Boko-Haram, and no prisoner swap took place. Lai Mohammed said the release of the other girls was facilitated 'through back-channel efforts', a euphemism for negotiation, and added that "...the abduction itself was a breach of the ceasefire talks between the insurgents and the government, hence it became a moral burden on the

abductors" to release the girls unconditionally (www.vanguardngr.com, 25 March, 2018).

(iii) The Liberation of Sambisa Forest

From early 2016, the counter insurgency operations by the Buhari administration began to focus on destroying the camps and safe havens of the terrorists, such as in Sambisa forest, formerly an impregnable fortress, where Boko-Haram usually store weapons, hide captives, and take time to recover, and prepare for counter attacks. Through the application of superior firepower, consistent land and aerial bombardments, the Nigerian military was able to flush Boko-Haram out of the Sambisa Forest. The liberation of Sambisa forest marked a watershed in the war against Boko-Haram fighters when they were denied and stymied of enough window and elbow room to manoeuvre within the Nigeria's north-east border. The forest has now been converted into a training centre for the army. Although Sambisa forest has been liberated, the critical question is: how did Nigeria arrive at a situation in which vast lands meant for national development and games reserve was turned into killing mined fields in the hands of Boko- Haram? It is a fact that Nigeria's vast territorial expanse will continue to be under threats of illegal occupation if the government allow territorial vacuum or an ungoverned space to remain without being policed by the relevant security agencies.

Challenges and Implications of the Counter Terrorism Strategy

However, in spite of the progress made by the Buhari administration in its counter-terrorism strategy, Boko-Haram is yet to be defeated. What has become worrisome, and a major source of concern for the Buhari administration is the resurgence of Boko-Haram towards the end of 2018, especially with the Metele and Baga attacks. The Metele attacks were highly fatal for the military as there were reports that the Nigerian military lost dozens of soldiers (www.premiumtimesng.com, 22 November, 2018). Similarly, in the attacks on Baga by Boko-Haram, although officially denied by the Nigerian military, it was reported that Boko-Haram captured Baga for a few days before the town was later liberated by the military. A report by the *Daily Trust* January 6, 2009, which the Nigerian military found offensive,

detailed how the Nigerian military planned its counter-insurgency offensive to re-capture Baga from the insurgents. The Abuja office of Daily Trust was shut down by the security operatives because they found report by the newspaper offensive and a threat to national security. Despite denials by the military authorities, there is credibility in the report, as it was indicative of a reversal in the gains recorded in the early days of the Buhari administration.

Since resurgence of Boko Haram attacks, especially in the first quarter of 2019, there have been calls for the change in the leadership of the Nigerian armed forces. But President Buhari is not yet persuaded by the arguments of those who wanted a change in the top hierarchy if Nigerian military. Despite the modest gains Nigeria has recorded in the war against Boko Haram, the counter-terrorism strategy of the Buhari administration is still being confronted by a number of challenges**.** These challenges, in varying degrees, have implications for the attainment of the objective of national security for the country. The challenges include the following:

(i) Failure of the Military to Grasp the nature of an Asymmetric War

From the strategic point of view, perhaps the major challenge the Nigerian military is facing in the war against Boko Haram is its failure to understand the nature of an asymmetric war. It is already settled in extant literature on warfare that in an asymmetric war where there are no battle lines and rules of engagements, it is difficult for a professionally trained military to engage a terrorist. This lack of understanding led the military to pronounce that it has technically defeated Boko Haram at a time when the terrorist group merely changed its tactics. This is where the distinction which Rourke and Boyer(2004) made between the power to hurt and power to defeat is relevant. They elaborated on this distinction thus:

> *The power of the military to defeat is the ability to seize territory or overcome enemy military force, which remains the classical goal of war. The power to hurt, otherwise called coercive violence, is the ability to inflict pain outside the immediate military arena. In other words, it means you attack some, so that the resistance of others will crumble* (Rourke and Boyer, 2004:252).

In contemporary warfare, the power to hurt is becoming increasingly popular because waging war effort depends largely on a country's economic

strength, the morale of the soldiers, and the sustained support of the citizens. According to Gallagher (1995), the first military leader to understand the importance of the power to hurt in modern warfare is General William Tecumseh Sherman during the US Civil War. He wrote in his memoirs: 'My aim was to whip the rebels, to humble their pride, to follow them to their innermost recesses, and to make them fear and dread us'. So far, in the current counter-insurgency operations against Boko-Haram, the Nigerian military has only succeeded in hurting Boko-Haram, but it has been unable to defeat the insurgent group. It is this failure to completely defeat Boko- Haram after almost a decade of confrontation, with huge human and material costs to Nigeria, which makes Boko-Haram crisis to remain a major strategic and security challenge to the Buhari administration. As Wilkenson puts it, and quoted in Rourke and Boyer (2004: 262)

> *Terrorism has proved a low cost, low risk, cost effective and potentially high yielding means of winning useful tactical objectives for its perpetrators, such as massive publicity, securing the release of large number of terrorist prisoners from jail, and the extortion of considerable sums to finance the purchase of more weapons and explosives and the launching of a wider campaign.*

(ii) Lack of Capacity to Hold Captured Territories in North-East Nigeria

A major challenge of the counter insurgency operations under the Buhari administration is the inability of the Nigerian armed forces to hold on to territories after they have been liberated due to limited manpower capacity. Since the constitutional role of the military is to defend the territorial integrity of the country, the task of maintaining internal peace and order falls within the purview of the Police. But it is a fact that Nigeria is under-policed, and the Police itself, is faced with operational challenges, from many fronts. The abysmal ratio of 371,800 policemen to the Nigerian population of 170 million, which is presently below the world/United Nations' requirement of one police officer to 400 citizens clearly shows that Nigeria is grossly under-policed (*The Daily Post*, August 11, 2017). This ratio, which translates to about 1 policeman to 602 citizens, is further worsened by the deployment of the police to check the menace posed by the Fulani Herdsmen under 'Operation Cat Race', and other security challenges confronting the country.

The 2016 Country Reports on Terrorism released by the United States Department of State Bureau of Counter-Terrorism, which was released on July 19, 2017, also faulted the decision of the federal government to return internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their original places of abode, noting that this was being done without adequate security. The Report asserts further:

> *The Nigerian military lacks capacity to hold captured territories in northeast Nigeria... Despite gains made by the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF), much of its reported progress was merely duplication of failed efforts carried over from the end of last dry/fighting season... The Nigerian military was unable to hold and rebuild civilian structures and institutions in those areas it had cleared (https://it. us embassy. gov. state department).*

Similarly, the US State Department Report indicated that the Department of State Security (DSS) is the primary investigating agency for terrorism cases, but there have been long-standing sustained concerns about its capacity to investigate terrorist financing, as it does not share case information with other agencies, like the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) that also has the mandate to conduct terrorist financing investigations and prosecutions.

(iii) Weak Anti-terrorism Laws and Slow Judicial Process
In its bid to tackle Boko-Haram's insurgency and terrorism in Nigeria, the National Assembly came up with an anti-terrorism law known as the Terrorism Prevention Act, which, operationally, looks like a paper-tiger. The Act prescribes death penalty for individuals found guilty of terrorism. Ten years into Boko-Haram's insurgency and incessant terrorist attacks, there is little or no information as to the number of people (if any), convicted for terrorism or terrorist related activities in Nigeria. While Mr. Henry Okah has since been convicted in South Africa for master-minding twin car bombings during the 50th Independence Day celebration at Eagle Square, Abuja, in 2010, the trial of his brother, Mr. Charles Okah, who is facing similar charges in Nigeria, has been dragging on for several years. It is either that the provisions of the Anti-Terrorism Act is clumsy and difficult as a framework for adjudication of terrorism cases, or the wheel of the judicial process is deliberately grinding too slowly.

The 2012 US Country Report on Terrorism also cited aspects of Nigeria's terrorism laws, which are weak and inhibiting prosecution, including causing unnecessary delay in the prosecution and securing conviction of the suspected terrorists and the delay in the freezing of their assets. The protracted prosecution of one Aminu Sadiq Ogwuche, who allegedly masterminded the April 14, 2014 bomb blast that killed over 75 persons and wounded 100 others at a crowded motor park in Nyanya, Abuja, is another example of slow judicial process In Nigeria. Unlike the delayed trial in Nigeria, the swift prosecution and conviction of Mr. Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a Nigerian, who attempted to blow up a United States airliner in December 2009, in the United States offers a good lesson to Nigeria (https://www.theguardian.cm, dec,us, retrieved on 14/04/2019). No doubt, the end of justice cannot be served if Nigeria's anti-terrorism law cannot speedily try Boko Haram insurgent. Another example of delayed trial was in the case of Abba Umar, a Boko-Haram commander, who was arrested after a failed suicide mission in Gombe in 2014. He was arraigned on a five count charge, and his trial lasted for almost four year before he was sentenced to 60 years imprisonment by a Federal High Court in Kainji, Niger State (*Punch*, February 13,2018).

(iv) Limitations of the De-Radicalisation Programme

While de-radicalisation is important as a component of Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategy, it cannot be a substitute for a strong military capability that will not only deter potential insurgents, but that can also defeat terrorists and their infrastructure. But for any counter-terrorism strategy to work, there is the need for a combination of both hard-power and soft power, in a manner that one will complement the other. Therefore, for the managers of the Buhari administration's counter-terrorism strategy, if hard power had succeeded in degrading the capacity of Boko-Haram to a level that the insurgents, there is nothing wrong in deploying soft power, a synonym for negotiation, so as to bring the war to a decisive end.

In Colombia, for example, the military employed military might to force the main terrorist movement in the country, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) to the negotiating table with the Colombian government. The Colombia military was able to get to this vantage position through the deployment of hard power against FARC, at the beginning of the war. This substantially degraded the group, and made the group amenable to the deployment of soft-power approach, or the use of carrot (https://

www.eir,info, 2018/08/07, retrieved on   03/04/2019). However, fears have been expressed that such negotiations should not be on terms that could undermine the progress already attained in the counter-terrorism operations, as it would be suicidal for a sovereign state to negotiate with a terrorist group from a weak position(*The Punch*, April 4, 2018, p.1). The United States, for example, is not comfortable with the idea of negotiations with terrorists. Indeed former U.S. President, George Bush once warned the Taliban in his address to Congress on September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre (WTC), when he declared:

> *The Taliban must act and act immediately. They will*
> *hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their*
> *fate...From this day forward, any nation that continues*
> *to harbour or support terrorism will be regarded by the*
> *United States as a hostile regime terrorists* (Rourke J.
> and Boyer, M. 2004, p. 251)

(v) The Counter Productive Nature of the 'Prisoner Swap Policy'

With the over 100 kidnapped Chibok girls still in the custody of Boko-Haram for   more than four years now, the Boko-Haram insurgents have, severally, leveraged on this to force the Nigerian government to the negotiating table. Out of desperation to secure the release of the Chibok girls, the federal government has been negotiating with Boko-Haram from a position of weakness. Although, it has not been officially confirmed, five senior Boko- Haram commanders were reportedly freed in exchange for 82 of the abducted Chibok schoolgirls. In a BBC report titled–*The Fate of the Chibok Girls*, it was revealed that the Boko-Haram fighters that were released were "high-level Boko-Haram bomb-makers", and that ransom were paid twice in 2016 and 2017, and this transformed "a threadbare insurgency to a more daring and audacious terrorist group". What is the guarantee that the money paid to Boko-Haram as ransom will not be re-channelled towards acquiring more weaponry?

The possibility that Boko-Haram may come out stronger from the prisoner for ransom swap is high against the background of an allegation that the three Boko-Haram commanders, who were released in a swap deal for 82 Chibok Girls, threatened to bomb Abuja, Nigeria's federal capital, few days after they were freed. So far, the evidence is scanty about how Nigeria's

counter-intelligence and surveillance resources have been deployed to debrief the released Chibok girls, in a manner that would enhance the counter-terrorism operations, and assist in the rescue of the remaining Chibok girls. Nevertheless, the idea of prisoners-swap is not new to inter-state relations, and such exchange is usually between two sovereign nations and the individuals involved are known. There was a prisoner exchange between Israel and Hezbollah in July 2008, when Hezbollah transferred the coffins of two Israeli soldiers, Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, in exchange for 5 Palestinian Liberation Front (PLF) militants, among whom were Samir Kuntar and Nasim Nisr held by Israel (https://www.the guardian.com, 29 June, 2008).

The US and Iran also exchanged prisoners in 2016. Four Iranian-Americans and an American student were released from jail in Iran, and six Iranian-Americans and an Iranian convicted in the US for violating sanctions were flown to Tehran. Reza Marashi described the deal as "a victory for diplomacy...it simply could not have happened without dialogue between the US and Iran" (https://www.huffingtonpost.com, 16/01/2016, retrieved on 21/04/2019). Similarly, Cuba and the United States discussed a prisoner swap deal in 2016. But curiously, prisoners-swap in Nigeria has been shrouded in secrecy. Having seen the efficacy of kidnap-for-ransom-and-prisoner-swap-deals, Boko- Haram militants have continued to deploy this bargaining chip to its advantage.

(vi)   Premature Declaration of victory over Boko Haram

It is an established principle in an asymmetric war for either side to claim victory because there is no battle line between the combatants. Also, there is absence of rules of engagement. The fact is that even if the Buhari administration succeeds in defeating Boko-Haram militarily, as long as the ideology that drives members of the sect is still rooted in their minds, such victory would be temporary. But the use of the term 'technical defeat' by the military can be said to be in order at that stage of the war because it does not denote or connote final victory over the insurgents, as there is also the post-conflict stage, which is also important in the peace building process, after the cessation of hostilities and confrontations. One dangerous implication of the declaration of technical defeat is that it might lull the military into complacency, which may be fatal in an un-conventional war.

(vii) Inter-Agency and Departmental Coordination of the Implementation of Counter-Terrorism Strategy

For the greater part of the Buhari administration, so far, there have been cases of inter-departmental rivalry and lack of coordination among the agencies that are charged with the implementation of Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategy, especially the DSS and the EFCC. This lack of collaboration reached its climax when the DSS, under Lawal Daura, wrote a negative report to the Senate, which questioned the integrity of Ibrahim Magu, the acting chairman of the EFCC. This report, upon which the Senate stood to reject the confirmation of Ibrahim Magu as the substantive Chairman of the EFCC was clearly against the position of the presidency, which has forwarded Magus's name and had cleared him against any wrong doing. Similar controversy was raised when a northerner was named as a replacement for Ayo Oke, the former Director General of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA). The appointment of Ahmad Rufa'i Abubakar by the Buhari administration was considered insensitive at a time when issues have been raised about the lopsidedness in the top hierarchy of the Nigerian security agencies which was alleged to have marginalised the southern part of Nigeria (Katsina post.com,ng/2018/01/14). No doubt, these ethno-religious interpretations of appointments into the security agencies have implications for the implementation of an effective counter-terrorism strategy.

(viii) The Management of the External Dimensions to the Boko-Haram Crisis

The management of the external dimensions of the war against Boko-Haram also has implications for the success or otherwise of Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategy. What is clear is that the Buhari administration, unlike its predecessor has been to rally global support for the war against Boko Haram. From the sub-regional, regional and global levels, the international community has demonstrated willingness to collaborate with the Buhari administration. While the United States clearly refused to sell critical ammunitions to the Jonathan administration, Washington has already concluded plans to sell 12 Super Tucano to Nigeria. This is in addition to the Arab solidarity, championed by Saudi Arabia, to partner with Nigeria in the battle against Boko Haram.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Against the background of the challenges discussed above, the paper makes the following recommendations, from where it draws its conclusion

Policy Recommendations:
(i) A need for a New Security Architecture for Nigeria

There is a need for a new Nigerian security architecture that is composite in nature, and that will depend on trained military personnel and vigilant civilian populations. In this regard serious consideration must also be given to the involvement of civilians in counter-terrorism war, in line with the slogan that security is everyone's business. The establishment of a National Guard that will create security alertness and consciousness among the citizens will complement the standby Nigerian military force, and will go a long way in making the citizens as the first bulwark against insurgency and terrorism.

(ii) Strengthening of Nigeria's Intelligence and Operational Synergy among the Agencies

Without a good intelligence, no country can proactively respond to security threats. Therefore, the ability of the intelligence agencies to carry out a holistic threat analysis and assessment is crucial in preventing and warding off any security threat at its incipient stage. Defence matters, because of their sensitive nature, are usually shrouded in secrecy. No nation indiscriminately divulges or exposes defence data, in order not to compromise or endanger its national security. While the mainstream military focuses on the training of special force and acquisition of advanced weaponry, the intelligence agencies should concentrate on intelligence gathering, sharing and application.

(iii) Social Policy Interventions to address Societal Grievances/ Humanitarian Issues

The Buhari administration should provide a more conducive economic component to mitigate the conflicts and attraction to violence. It is an elementary knowledge that there is a positive correlation between a strong economic base, security, and ultimately, political stability. A country cannot be said to be secured if its economy is, not only foreign dependent, but also, vulnerable to manipulation by vested foreign interest and saboteurs. It is also imperative for the Buhari administration to take a close look at the worsening humanitarian situations in the IDPs camps. To underscore the challenges posed by the humanitarian crises created by Boko Haram, it is reassuring that

President Buhari in his second term has created a ministry of Humanitarian Affairs/Disaster Management and Social Development.

(iv) Overhauling and Better Implementation of the De-Radicalisation Policy

The recognition of the need for de-radicalisation is hinged on the belief that if terrorists are militarily destroyed, the legitimacy of their cause may still exist and even become stronger, depending on how the operation is perceived. As expedient as the soft-power approach is, or what the Buhari administration prefers to label an amnesty programme, there is the need for caution in the implementation of the programme, in view of the regenerative nature of Boko-Haram. There is the danger that an indiscriminate release of Boko-Haram fighters from custody may create a situation whereby the federal government will unwittingly create an opportunity for the insurgents to re-arm and re-tool their fighting capability, to the detriment of Nigeria's counter terrorism strategy..

Conclusion

Terrorism has been around for many centuries, but the modern era, with its mass communications technology and increasingly available weapons, has made terrorism to present a new global challenge. Indeed, terrorism is not only a Nigerian or an African problem, but a global challenge. Even though Boko-Haram may have its roots in internal feeling of discontent in Nigeria, over the years, it has been fuelled by external factors, which were facilitated by the expansive and porous nature of Nigeria's borders. No doubt, President Muhammadu Buhari, a retired General of the Nigerian army, has been able to bring his experience to bear in the planning and implementation of Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategy. But despite his military antecedents, including his reputation as the General Officer Commanding, of the 3rd Mechanised Division in Jos, in spearheading the defeat of the Maitatsine religious sect during the Second Republic in 1982, it is still astonishing why Boko-Haram still remain active in Nigeria after almost four years of Buhari's administration.

Although the claim that the Nigerian military has technically defeated Boko-Haram has been faulted, the fact that Boko-Haram is no longer in control of any part of Nigeria's territory is indicative that the Nigerian military has been able to discharge its constitutionally assigned task-securing the

territorial integrity of Nigeria. But the reality is that in the current war against Boko-Haram, professionalism and conventional approach to warfare, which focuses on physical defeat and surrender of the enemy, is proving daunting and challenging for the Nigerian military. It is daunting because the territory occupied by Boko-Haram is not strictly physical; it is an area of belief, lodged in the mind. It is mental and intractable because it is lodged in the terrain of faith. As long as the ideology which drives Boko Haram remains strong, and the will of insurgents to continue the struggle remains potent, it will be illusory to claim that Boko Haram has been defeated in Nigeria.

Therefore, Nigeria should move beyond pure military approach in dealing with Boko Haram. Without this understanding, terrorism will continue to remain a security challenge to Nigeria, and a threat to national security. In the final analysis, it is safe to conclude that the Buhari administration has recorded tangible gains in the war against Boko Haram in the areas of policy review and implementation of the counter-terrorism strategy, better funding of military operations, more transparency in management of funds, coupled with increased support from the global community. Yet, the counter-terrorism strategy of the Buhari administration cannot be said to have succeeded until Boko Haram is finally defeated.

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SECURITY OPERATIVES AND OIL THEFT IN THE NIGER DELTA REGION

Epoweide Isaiah Koko
Department of Political Science
Niger Delta University
Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State

Abstract

Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta has been confronted with violent conflicts that have profoundly threatened the stability of the region, and indeed, Nigeria's national survival. This paper investigated the activities of the Security Operatives and Oil Theft in the Niger Delta Region. The menace of artisanal petroleum refineries in Nigeria continues despite the extensive campaign of the Nigerian military, which have burned illegal refining sites, vessels and storage facilities for illegally acquired crude oil. Despite the best intentions of the military, they are ill-equipped to handle crude oil theft. The theoretical framework adopted for this work was the theory of Civil-Military Relations. This theory was adopted because one of the critical institutions germane to the survival and stability of the nascent democratic process in Nigeria is the military. The possibility of a military backlash through military coup is often very real in post-military states such as Nigeria, as military officers who have enjoyed enormous privileges, with entrenched interests in the old order usually do everything to preserve such. The study found out that military action alone cannot solve the problem without addressing persistent scarcity and the high cost of consumer fuels, weak environmental standards of oil and gas companies, and corruption in the security services. Addressing the problem would require actions to ameliorate poor access to energy services, impoverishment and youth unemployment in communities. Despite all the measures adopted by the federal government, it is evident that only a coordinated multi-stakeholder approach to curb this menace and possibly provide a lasting solution.

Background to the Study

Currently, Africa's largest oil producer and sixth largest in the world (Maduekwe, 2008) Nigeria, occupies a strategic position in the region. With an average production of 2.27mbpd (NNPC, 2007), Nigeria's total oil production was put at 880 million barrels in 2007. Crude oil thus constitutes about 95% of Nigeria's total export, 83% of her gross revenue and 40% of her GDP (Gary *et al.*, 2005). This indicates that Nigeria's domestic economy is oil-dependent. But with her huge oil, Nigeria still offers an archetypal example of the paradox of plenty by which vast of wealth bets extravagant corruption, deep poverty, polarized income distributions and poor economic performance (Ross, 2004). In addition, Nigeria is plagued with activities of armed groups that constitute threats to her national peace and security.

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attack altered the global energy security supply network. Coupled with this development, defence strategists have become more increasingly concerned about the growing threats to world energy security. Both the developed and emerging economies thus became vulnerable due to their increasing demand for energy resources. This has, in the case of Nigeria, promoted oil-related violence and threats, which can be divided into immediate and remote threats. Immediate threats are in the form of communal conflicts, armed attacks and kidnappings. While remote threats include gun-running, oil-stealing and clandestine actions of external rogue actors (both state and non-state) in the Niger Delta region. The latter gives armed groups illegal access to oil wealth and at the same time increase the capacity of the armed groups to undermine the country's national security.

Statement of the Problem

It will take more than disarmament, commitment and drawn-out negotiations to obtain peace in the Niger Delta. Not only are stakeholders faced with a history of corruption and bad governance, poverty and youth unemployment, but also arguably the biggest challenge of the future: trust (Inuwa, 2009). The widespread security problems in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, especially in the oil-producing communities where the oil wells are situated, have necessitated the intervention of the security operatives in the region. This insecurity is as a result of the brazen systematic socio-economic, political and cultural underdevelopment of the region by the Nigerian state. The condition of underdevelopment has degenerated into conflicts and piracy which have not only affected the production of oil in the country but the political development, unity and sustainability of the Nigerian nation. As a

result, the Nigerian Government has developed various means to resolve the crisis through political, military, institutional and direct developmental measures.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to investigate the activities of security operatives and oil theft in the Niger Delta Region; and to examine the various responses embarked upon by the Nigerian state in the development of the Niger Delta Region.

Significance of the Study

This study is crucial for an understanding of the geo-strategic politics of crude oil production in the 21st Century. It is also significant to analyse and examine the inevitable development of the Niger Delta region as a necessary condition for the continued socio-economic and political development of Nigeria. With her huge oil reserves and abundant natural resources, there is a pressing need to protect the country's Niger Delta oil wells. This study will systematically deploy data to establish the link between oil, insecurity and the relevance of the security operatives in the preservation and unity of Nigeria as an indivisible entity.

Methodology

The sources of data for the study were secondary sources of data collection based on previous studies done in this area of study. These include book publications and journals, electronically downloaded materials (via the internet), media reports such as newspapers and magazines, government policy document or publications and reports from non-governmental organizations and independent research conclusions.

Literature Review

Idehen (2008) in his work "Militancy in the Niger Delta: Implications for Nigeria's National and Sub-Regional Security", wrote that the Niger Delta region of Nigeria is a swampy area of about 70,000 square kilometres. The region presently comprises of nine oil producing states in Nigeria viz; Delta, Edo, Bayelsa, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Rivers, Imo, Ondo and Abia. These nine states constitute what is known by scholars as the political Niger Delta. The population of the nine states of the Niger Delta is put at about 21 million.

The region is home to multi-ethnic nationalities in Nigeria such as Ijaw, Isoko, Kalabari, Ndoni, Efik, Annang, Urhobo, Itsekiri, Edo among others, with over 3,000 communities. The region accounts for 77.4% of Nigerian's wetland and about 3.2% of total landmass of the country. It is the largest wetland in the African continent and the third largest in the world after Mississippi and Pantanal (NDDC, 2006). The wetland area is made up of 36,000 square kilometres of marshland, creeks, tributaries and lagoons and is extremely rich in fish and wildlife resources, with a high biodiversity and many unique species of plants and animals (Ojo, 2002). The region is richly blessed with abundance of mineral resources such as crude oil and gas.

The region accounts for Nigeria's oil production capacity of about 2.3 million barrels a day with gas reserves of about 160 million cubic feet and about 30 billion barrels of oil reserves (Omene, 2003). From 1956 to 2000, about 30 trillion dollars' worth of oil has been produced in the Niger Delta region. The oil reserve is expected to go extinct between 20 and 25 years to come while the gas reserve will last for about 130 years from now (Darah, 2001). Majority of the people in the Niger Delta are farmers and fishermen and reside in rural communities. They make their living from the swampy land and creeks, using the proceeds and their toil to feed, shelter, clothe, and educate their wards. With the advent of oil and gas exploration, their farmlands became contaminated with oil; the biological and ecosystems are disturbed by noise from drilling and oil-spillage.

Further, laying of pipes for oil takes a lot of forest clearing. The people are left with little or nothing to sustain their lives as a result. Nigeria is the world's 6th largest oil producer and the 8th largest exporter of crude oil. Petroleum alone provides up to 70% of Nigeria's foreign exchange. However, the abundant oil and gas deposits, which should have been a blessing, have had very negative impact on the environment due to unsustainable exploitative activities being practiced without consideration to the environment. These negative impacts do not end on the biophysical environment alone but also affect the wellbeing of the people including their security (Idehen, 2008).

Today, there are in the Niger Delta, not less than 11 oil companies operating not less than 159   oil-fields and about 1,481 wells. For 55 years now, to the overwhelming majority of the citizens of Nigeria, particularly those of the Niger Delta, the discovery of oil is a curse. However, to the beneficiaries of the oil industry, mainly those who have been to the helm of affairs of the Federal and State power over the years, the discovery of oil has

been a blessing. The Niger Delta harbours 100% of Nigeria's oil and gas reserves, which accounted for 80% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 95% of the National Budget (Darah, 2001).

The vital establishments such as petrochemical plant, refineries, fertilizer plants, steel complex, major power stations, and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) projects are found in the region. Nigeria contributes 3% of the world's oil total production and the 5th biggest source of the United States' oil imports (Uchebuaku, 2006). The crude oil derived from the Niger Delta region of Nigeria is most preferred world-wide due to its quality. Without refining it, it can be used to power automobile (Darah, 2001).

Security Operatives Responses in the Niger Delta Crisis

The story of the relationship between the Nigerian state and the Ogoni and Ijaw, two ethnic minorities in the Niger Delta, is a useful illustration of the role of state violence in understanding the politics of oil in the region. The Ogoni and Ijaw are important ethnic groups in understanding the story of the Niger Delta not only because in total they constitute about sixty percent of the population of the Delta, but also because they played a frontal role in resisting state violence against oil communities. They are also important because the similarities and contrasts in their strategies and state responses facilitate appreciation of the different ramifications of state-community relations in Niger Delta conflicts. For instance, while the Ogoni struggle was highly cerebral and led by the middle class and professionals, the Ijaw struggle has tended to be more militant and led by mainly unemployed youths.

The Nigerian Government Responses to the Niger Delta Crisis

The Nigerian government has made some efforts to control bunkering in the past. However, these efforts were usually not sustained or were executed in a half-hearted manner. They have included the followings:

i. **Arresting Oil Bunkerers and Traffickers:**

The Nigerian government has made several attempts to crack down on oil bunkering, dating back more than twenty years. General Buhari, the military head of state from 1983 to 1985, jailed several people for contributing to the "economic adversity of Nigeria," which perhaps was a factor in the

overthrow of his government. Buhari's successors, Generals Babangida and Abacha, took a more lenient approach toward bunkering. With the reintroduction of democracy in 1999, the level of bunkering increased, perhaps due to the decreased military presence in the region. Another credible theory is that bunkering increases during the run-up to elections, as its profits fund attempts by political leaders to manipulate the polls. In President Obasanjo's second term, beginning in 2003, his government began to take more serious measures to address the problem, which had begun to get out of control. A number of ships involved in the trade of blood oil were seized. However, these actions seldom led to successful prosecutions. In spite of improved equipment for the Nigerian Navy, there was no marked improvement in the patrolling of coastal waters.

ii. **Closing Markets for Illegal Oil:**

The Nigerian government has urged governments known to receive stolen oil to stop accepting it. It issued a warning to Côte d'Ivoire in 2003 and offered the government in Yamoussoukro contracts for the supply of legal oil to the state-owned refinery. This model might have proved effective had it been continued toward Côte d'Ivoire and other destinations for stolen oil.

iii. **Increasing the Military Presence in the Niger Delta:**

The introduction of the Joint Task Force (JTF) into Warri, Delta State, following the violence surrounding the 2003 elections between the Itsekiri and Urhobo and later the Itsekiri and Ijaw ethnic groups, has not had the desired effect of controlling the blood oil business. Indeed, it has had the opposite effect of not only alienating the people but of also providing military personnel with an opportunity to participate in the bunkering business, to extort money from local communities, to commit rapes, and to generally intimidate the local populace.

Conclusion

Several years after the Yar'Adua administration declared the Niger Delta to be one of its top priorities and ten months after the Nigerian government first publicly asked for help in addressing the problem of the Niger Delta, very little has happened. In these years, much money has been lost to bunkering that could have been better used for the development of the Niger Delta. Violence has been perpetrated against the people of the region,

both by the militants-bunkerers and by the government that is meant to protect its nationals, as in the May 2009 Delta state attacks. The government's inactivity demonstrates both a lack of political will and a lack of competence.

Suggestions to the Nigerian Government

Putting an end to the trade in stolen oil can only be achieved through concerted, coordinated, and sustained action by Nigeria, the international community, and the United States, with technical support from multilateral organizations. A solution will not be found unless the Nigerian government faces up to the scale of the blood oil problem and proves by its actions that it sincerely wishes to address it. As part of this action, Nigeria should take the following steps:

i. **Address the Economic, Social and Political Problems of the Niger Delta**: The trade in stolen oil is at heart a purely criminal enterprise, but the Nigerian government must recognize that its disastrous neglect of the Niger Delta has helped it to flourish. The people of the Niger Delta have received few benefits from the oil that lies beneath them. Indeed, the fight for control over this precious resource has led to ethnic rivalry, endemic corruption, and a long-running insurgency. The Niger Delta remains pitifully underdeveloped, and its people have had to contend with the destruction of their environment and their traditional livelihoods. For all these reasons, they are unlikely to voice disapproval when a leading militant, Mujahid Dokubo-Asari, justifies his oil bunkering activities as an attempt to claim for the people of the Niger Delta what is rightfully theirs. The Nigerian government must work harder to address the socioeconomic grievances of the people of the Niger Delta, and by doing so, remove any justification they might have for turning a blind eye to the activities of the criminals in their midst.

ii. **Provide Legitimate Employment Opportunities**: The government could go a long way toward building confidence and harnessing goodwill in the Niger Delta by improving the local infrastructure through a road-building project. This would not only have the benefit of improving the transport network in the region but it would also provide jobs for unemployed youth whose current options are limited to criminal enterprises such as oil bunkering. A homegrown public works project using local youth to build infrastructure using labor intensive techniques would also

mean there would be no foreign companies in the region to harass. The International Labor Organization office in Abuja could help the Nigerian government devise the project. Other employment initiatives could involve training young people in sustainable livelihoods suitable to the region, such as advanced welding, gas-to-power projects, and effective maritime transport systems. A limited number of people could be trained to become competent contractors to the oil and gas industry.

iii. **Implement the Key Recommendations of the Technical Committee**:

The report of the Niger Delta Technical Committee contains a number of important recommendations, notably an immediate increase in the percentage of oil revenue given back to states by the federal government from 13 percent to 25 percent. The committee calls for this percentage to rise still further over time, reaching 50 percent within several years. Increasing the amount of money oil-producing states receive for their own resource would be a powerful way of easing the sense of neglect felt by the people of the Niger Delta and would help to remove any rationalization for the trade in blood oil. In addition, the technical committee report has made several specific recommendations to tackle blood oil, which the Nigerian government should implement without delay.

Suggestions to the International Community

Although the Nigerian government has repeatedly requested assistance in addressing the problem of blood oil, it has not always accepted such assistance. The international community must take this request literally and hold Nigeria to its stated commitment. Further, the international community should take the following specific steps:

i. **Revamp the Gulf of Guinea Energy Security Strategy**:

Some of Nigeria's European partners are keen to revamp the inactive GGESS and elevate it from a talking shop to a body with political clout that takes concerted action. The Dutch ambassador in Abuja visited the previous two ministers most likely to spearhead this process: the minister of petroleum, RilwanLukman, and the senior minister of the Niger Delta, ObongUfotEkaette. The GGESS can coordinate energy security initiatives not only in Nigeria but throughout the whole Gulf of Guinea region and has the

potential to lend important technical support, with countries offering specific expertise—for example, the Netherlands on bunkering, Norway on fingerprinting, Canada on small arms, and Switzerland on money laundering. The Netherlands, which is particularly concerned about instability in the Niger Delta because of Royal Dutch Shell's involvement in the region, should be prepared to take a greater role in the GGESS. It is one of the few Western nations with staff on the ground in the Niger Delta, having recently opened a consulate in Port Harcourt, albeit in the Shell compound.

ii. **Prioritize the Search for a Reliable Method of Fingerprinting Oil**:

The Ministry of petroleum should use its influence to bring the various oil companies together to develop a common national database and initiate a system for identifying and tracking Nigerian crude, similar to the one used for blood diamonds. This can be done with the help of the United Nations, which is willing to set up an expert committee similar to that established on blood diamonds. Although there is a cost to finger printing oil, it is insignificant compared to the cost of oil theft.

iii. **Follow the Money Trail from Blood Oil**:

Nigeria's international partners can share information and help trace the money trail from oil bunkering. Interpol or NGOs, such as Global Witness, can trace and expose these money trails. If possible, this money should be frozen and repatriated to the Nigerian government, as was done with the return by the Swiss government of money stolen by former Nigerian head of state, Sani Abacha.

iv. **Expand Dialogue to Include Other International Players**:

China, Russia, and India should be included in dialogue with and about Nigeria. The more unified the international approach is to stopping blood oil, the more effective it will be.

v. **Strengthen The Nigerian Military**:

A solid security sector reform process should be undertaken to restore the competence of the Nigerian military.

Suggestions to the United States of America

Within the international community, the United States is uniquely positioned to take a leadership role in helping to dry up blood oil and address other issues in the Niger Delta. The Netherlands has too small a presence in Nigeria, and the United Kingdom is encumbered by a somewhat negative colonial history in the Niger Delta, and its government is not presently in a position to lead the international community's efforts—though it would support an effort coming from Washington. The United States can capitalize on this, with continuous support and encouragement to other key players in the Nigerian government to do exactly what they have already said they are going to do: (1) make the Niger Delta a priority and (2) reduce blood oil.

David Goldwyn, in reviewing U.S. energy security during the Bush administration, notes that U.S. engagement with Africa was greatly reduced during those eight years. Yet testimonies before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Subcommittee on African Affairs in September 2008 emphasized the importance of the Niger Delta. In his submission for the record, Subcommittee Chairman Russ Feingold himself stated:

> We must think creatively about how we can rally our international partners and muster the many resources at our disposal to push for a comprehensive solution [in the Niger Delta]. In the months and years ahead, I believe there are few more pressing issues in terms of U.S. security and interests in Africa

In turn, the United States must take a more proactive approach to Nigeria and the Niger Delta and take the following steps:

i. **Restart U.S. - African Energy Partnerships and Binational Commissions**:

Such partnerships and commissions were in place during the 1990s and should be resumed as platforms for dialogue.

ii. **Develop a Strategic Energy Security Policy in Africa**:

With a central focus of responsibility, it should draw in the Departments of State, Energy, Commerce, Defense and Treasury; the U.S. Trade and Development Agency; and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

iii. **Get the Diplomatic Corps into the Region**:

The diplomatic corps should identify the full scope of the area's problems and develop a sound plan for addressing them. Interviews with staff members

at the U.S. embassy in Abuja demonstrated their frustration at their lack of real knowledge about the Niger Delta. This suggestion was emphasized by the three Niger Delta governors during the recent Chatham House meeting. Gov. Timipre Sylva of Bayelsa State stated, "There is no one who can administer the Niger Delta from the outside. Foreign embassies are in Lagos and Abuja, so any information that they give out about the Niger Delta can only be rumor."Likewise, Gov. Rotimi Amaechi of Rivers State stated,

> I don't attend any function concerning the Niger Delta which takes place in Lagos or Abuja. I do not even send my staff or a representative, as a policy. If you want to discuss with me, then come to the delta

iv. **Offer Greater Support for Work on Governance**:

Transparency and accountability, as well as meeting the needs of the people, continue to be problems in Nigeria, especially in the Niger Delta. During the Bush administration, there was an increased focus on military efforts, AFRICOM being a prime example, as well as a preoccupation with terrorism. However, research conducted for a recent conference in London showed that militancy of the type found in other parts of the world is not a major concern in Nigeria. Rather, poor governance is a major factor in militancy. An earlier conference in Washington also identified the long-term needs for good governance, stability, economic development, and more equitable sharing in the benefits from oil proceeds. Thus, work on good governance should be a top priority for the United States, Nigeria in general and the Niger Delta in particular.

v. **Promote A Relationship With Nigeria Based On Mutual Respect And Partnership**:

In January 2009, Ojo Maduekwe, the Nigerian foreign minister, told an audience at the Center for Strategic and International Studies that Nigeria wanted to be treated with respect and in return was ready to fulfill its international responsibilities. The United States should strongly encourage and support Nigeria in addressing its internal issues and those that affect other countries, such as security in the Gulf of Guinea. There should be a continued flow of high-level visitors between the United States and Nigeria, reinforcing the idea that Nigeria is important to the United States and reiterating the

messages of good governance, human rights protection, and the need for improved development and security. Such efforts might include the following:

a. Appointing a special envoy to the Niger Delta or Gulf of Guinea region similar to the special envoy to the Great Lakes during the Clinton administration.

b. Implementing the anti-kleptocracy provision of the Consolidated Appropriations Act that denies entry to the United States to all foreign government officials about whom the secretary of state believes there to be credible evidence that they were involved in corruption relating to natural resources. The head of Global Witness, an NGO which has exposed resource-related corruption and money laundering in many African countries, and has pointed out that corrupt African leaders do not want to spend their money in Kinshasa; they want to enjoy it in the United States. The anti-kleptocracy provision can keep them from doing so.

c. Enforcing visa bans, even for those not directly involved in resource-related corruption. The State Department has a standard measure of denying U.S. visas to people, particularly politicians. However, it is not common for those persons refused visas to the United States to be publicly named. Because most Nigerians would like to come freely to the United States and would not want the embarrassment of being publicly shamed with a visa ban, these bans should be made public.

d. Introducing electronic bills of lading. The software for electronic bills of lading is currently available, and the U.S.-based Liberian Shipping Registry is willing to work with Nigeria.

e. Developing a certification scheme to track the theft and sale of blood oil. American oil companies can take the lead in tracking illegal oil out of Nigeria and preventing it from entering the United States.

f. Prosecuting companies and individuals found guilty of bribing foreign officials. The United States should enforce good ethical practices among its companies and encourage its European partners to do likewise. This will close off some of the opportunities for corruption in countries such as Nigeria.

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THE PHENOMENON OF IDENTITY POLITICS IN NIGERIA: INTERROGATING ITS CENTRIFUGAL AND CENTRIPETAL IMPLICATIONS

Maina Williams Apikins

Nigerian Institute of Transport Technology (NITT)

An Affiliate of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State

Abstract

In the past, diverse ethnic nationalities in Nigeria lived independently with distinct political, economic and socio-cultural configurations until a Colonial Actor scrambled and amalgamated them into political conglomerations without consideration to their pluriversalism. Thus, the post-independence politics of Nigeria is characterized by identity politics and the inadequacy of distributive justice. The persistence of these grim factors creates unhealthy rivalry and conflicts among ethnic chauvinists mainly from the three largest ethnic groups (Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and the Igbo) centered on national economic control and political leadership. It is within this context that the problematique was deduced. The Group Theory is adopted for analysis; and the study relies on qualitative data. The paper contends that identity politics creates centripetal conditions that can redress the inequalities and structural imbalance of the Nigerian state and serve as a stabilizing force necessary for national integration on one hand; and on the other hand, it creates centrifugal conditions that are bedrock of mutual distrust, discrimination, division, and destruction which seriously threaten the corporate existence of the country and will make our quest for national integration illusory. The Paper recommends inter-alia, that identity politics must be guided by democratic values for it to be productive.

Keywords: ethnic, groups, identity, Nigeria, politics.

Introduction

Nigeria as a political enclave came to be when the Colonial Administration of British, under Fredrick Lord Lugard amalgamated the then Eastern, Northern and Western Protectorates on January 1st 1914. Flora Shaw, a British journalist called this territorial space Niger Area, which later became

Nigeria. The merging of the defunct Protectorates was done with the aim to bring the heterogeneous and diverse cultures or identities and fatherlands, and integrate them politically as one people, one nation with one destiny in a comity of nations (Anderson, 1983). In many respects, the enclave consists of pluralism of language, religion, socio-economic and political formations as well as administrative styles, social norms and personality types. There are equally diversities amongst them resulting from factors of historical evolution, disproportionate population sizes, unequal economic resources and educational attainments, as well as range of social needs, preferences and talents (Anderson, 1983).

The amalgamation was intended to achieve certain specific objectives meant to serve as a steering mechanism for identity and distributive politics; de-emphasizing the relevance of the Provinces and giving prominence to the regions. The regions at that time were identified with specific ethnic identities, when one spoke of Eastern region, the Igbo ethnic group came to mind, just as the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba ethnic groups came to mind in talking about the Northern and Western regions respectively. It is a historic knowledge that it is from these regions that the first twelve states and subsequent states were created. Identity politics refers to the sort of politics that is founded and limited to the articulation of self-interest and the perspectives of self-identified groups. The identity may be based on religion, tribe, class or sexual orientation. For a Country like Nigeria with over 450 ethnic groups and boasting over 510 languages, it was not surprising that its politics is hostage to tribalism, as most people identify with, and are loyal to their ethnic groups, rather than the country. As a result people are identified by their tribes; as you hear people say, that is a typical Yoruba man" or "that must be an Igbo Woman", "that or "that must be a Hausa-Fulani" or "that must be an Edo girl" etc. the point is everybody is first, indigene of an ethnic group, before a Nigerian (Tamuno, 1978 and Usman, 1991).

Nigerians still see Nigeria as a colonial journey, as a mere geographical expression (Tamuno, 1978). Unfortunately, the debate about tribe, tongue and creed is not being conducted with civility or intellection; but in the stead, people are using knives, machetes, stones, cudgels, bombs and bullets. Ethno-religious and sectarian violence in Benue, Bauchi, Borno, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara, Oyo, Plateau, Taraba, Adamawa, Nassarawa, kogi, Anambra etc are expressions of the doubts, and the rejection of the idea of compatriotism, the state of being compatriots across tribal and religious lines.

In other sense, people are questioning the idea that people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds can be equal citizens with them; people are still finding it hard to accept other Nigerians as equal citizens and stakeholders 58 years after decolonization (Karl, 2000).

This mutual intolerance is paralleled by corresponding distrust, believing that if given the opportunity, the other tribe would oppress, repress and suppress the other in the political space called Nigeria, each tribe strives to outdo the other in the quest for positions, power, admissions, employments, appointments etc in the believe that being in the office or power is the only way to advance, protect and sustain its interests. In a deeply segmented nation like Nigeria, there is often intense political rivalry, unjust distribution of common wealth, permissible inequalities, strife and competitions within the various ethnic divides. Hence, as noted earlier many Nigerians tends to identify themselves with their tribal distinctiveness and preferences than considering themselves as Nigerians whose goals should aim at transforming the possibilities for a more robust national identity. Indeed, the ethnic identities pay allegiance and think of the good of their respective nations before the good of the entire Nigerian nation (Kabuk, 2015).

Thus, it becomes very transparent that ethnic consciousness or ethnicity is one type of political groupings within the framework of the modern state, which often functions as informal pressure groups involving elements of national goal-oriented behavior and affirmative attitudes. Since ethnicity owes its continued vitality to the keen nature of the struggle for power and resources in a context of scarcity, insecurity or inadequate confidence in official norms and regulations, as informal groupings, it cannot function in the same way as trade unions or other professional associations. Thus, ethnicity is characterized by a common consciousness of being one in relation to other relevant ethnic groupings. Exclusiveness is also an attribute of ethnicity; in-group and out-group boundaries emerge with it and, in time, become marked, more distinct than before, and jealously guarded by the various ethnic groups. This fact of exclusiveness is usually accompanied by nepotism and prebendalism; merit is sacrificed on the altar of ethnic chauvinism and solidarity (Uroh, 2014). Such politics of ethnic loyalty fans ember of sectional struggle in the distribution of rights, opportunities and other social goods which weakens the fabric of national unity and integration. No doubt the problems of identity politics have been haunting Mankind since times immemorial but in contemporary era these have become more pervasive

and most violent. It is within this context that the problematique for the study was deduced.

Conceptual Explication
Identity

Identity can be defined as an abiding sense of selfhood, the core of which makes life predictable to an individual. It means the state or quality of being identical or the same; it follows that a group of persons may have certain traits, features, cultural realities, economic aspirations etc. that binds them together. These markers distinguished a group from other groups and placed that group on a different pedestal depending on how it asserts its identity with its relationship with other groups. It is conceived of as more than a psychological sense of self; it encompasses a sense that one is safe in the world physically, psychologically, socially and even spiritually. Events which threaten to invalidate the core sense of identity will elicit defensive responses with an objective aimed at avoiding psychic and or physical annihilation. Identity is postulated to operate in this way not only in relation to inter-personal interactions but also in interactions between groups (Egwu, 2001).

According to one reckoning of international politics and the on-going conflicts the world over, more than 85 percent are intricately related to identity. The dynamics and dimensions of these identities are very serious that they pose a threat to the fabric of social cohesion and territorial unity and integrity of most modern Nation States. Most of the fundamental and the phenomenal essence of identity are based on the threat to, the survival of, and the sustenance of ethno-religious politics. As evident, identification is an inherent and unconscious behavioural imperative in all individuals; as they actively seek to identify in order to achieve psychological security, and they actively seek to maintain, protect and bolster identity in order to maintain, enhance, and perpetuate this psychological security, which is a sine-qua-non of personality, stability and emotional well-being and satisfaction (Asogwa, 2011).

Shaping Identity

As the hypothesis between the diverse communities in the Nigerian State are calibrated and competition for access to political and economic decision making institution intensifies, a starting point in comprehending Identity politics in Nigeria is to examine the historical and social formation of

regional identities (Okonkwo, 2009). Much has been said about the colonial administration which on the one hand, was a system which legally defined and gave demographic merits to the northern region and contributed to inter-ethnic suspicions, rivalry and antagonisms. Although the amalgamation was a colonial heritage, but historians suggest that the British merely formalized pre-existing systems through a series of imperial edicts recognizing formal autonomy for the ethnic communities (Tamuno, 1978). This demarcation of communities translated into ethno-religious and political practices which in the process of social reproduction, the members of each community acquired a cognitive sense of their difference in relation to other communities. Thus, the issue of communitarian identity and some basic modern fissures in group identity in the Eastern, Northern, Southern and Western regions was later encouraged through policies during the waning period of the colonial administration in Nigeria. Through the early negotiations concerning territorial dimensions and the minority fears, and throughout the discussion on independence, to the civil war, and to the contemporary quagmires; it follows then, that in framing questions related to governance, democracy, recruitments in the military and public services in Nigeria, the historical social formation of the country and the legacy of the British divide and rule policies must be factored (Ray, 2003). In fact, it is precisely in examining the historical social formation of the Nigerian state that we can see the seeds of division and discord planted and nurtured to fruition. It is then suffice to say that colonial rule in Nigeria was rooted, protected and sustained through ethno-religious divisions. In such case, fault lines between different ethnic groups, religious, or national communities were leveraged by regimes to produce favorable political conditions.

Politics

Politics can be defined as the judicious allocation of resources through institutionalized mechanisms for the harmonization and protection of the plural interests in a social formation. The social formation is characterized by vested interests and intense competition among the various groups which if not properly regulated, could destabilize the political system and threatens the corporate existence of the various groups. Hence, each group strives for the available resources in other in order to protect its interests and to assert its identity. Thus, in sum identity politics is the frantic efforts instituted by a group to its interests and to assert and maintain its identity (Gellner, 1983).

Ethnic Identity

Nnoli (1978) observed that in Nigeria, the colonial urban setting constituted the cradle of ethnicity. It provided the converging point for members of the different pre-colonial politics and diverse linguistic and cultural formation; it was here that ethnic groups acquired a common consciousness. He opined that contact alone didn't cause ethnicity, but the competition for scarce resources among different groups enhances people being conscious of the ethnic group they belong. He showed how ethnicity does not exist in a pure form; it is always closely associated with political jurisdiction, religious and other social view which constitutes its significant ingredient. To him ethnicity is a social phenomenon associated with interaction among members of different ethnic groups. These ethnic groups are social formations distinguished by the communal character, which may be tongue, tribe, religion or the tripod. Ethnicity is generally regarded as the most basic and politically salient identity in Nigeria. This claim is propped by the fact that both in competitive and non-competitive settings, Nigerians are more likely to define themselves in terms of their ethnic affinities than any other identity. According to Gilbert (2002) ethnicity is demonstrably the most conspicuous group identity in Nigeria. His survey found out that almost 48.2% of Nigerians chose to label themselves with an ethnic identity, compared to 28.4% who opted for class identities and 21.0% who chose a religious identity. In essence, most Nigerians see themselves as members of primordial ethnic, regional and religious groups. What is more, religious and ethnic identities are more fully formed, more holistic and more strongly felt than class identities; as evidenced in the fact that whereas those who identify with religious and ethnic communities are almost universally proud of their group identities. Ethnic formations are the most historically enduring behavioral units in the country and were further re-enforced by the colonial and post-colonial regimes (Edward, 1993).

Achebe (1982, p.50) argued that ethnicity has proved a largely fertile word around us and will stay around us as there is work for us to do. A Nigerian child seeking admission into federal schools, students wishing to enter college or university, graduate seeking employment in public service, a business man tendering for a contract, a citizen applying for a passport, will have to fill a form to state or confess his or her state of origin. He further asserted that the formation and participation in polities are also based on tribal

and ethnic affiliation. Barongo (1983) contented that conflicting material interest in the society tends to divide the society into hostile camps and structure themselves through organized institutions such as political parties, the workers union, or informally through the façade of ethnic and religious sentiments. That in Nigeria all the vagaries of crisis that usually develop into situation of bad governance are of ethnic, religious or elite manipulations/kind. According to him, ethnic prejudices and antagonism are most prevalent and most violently expressed in situation where employment in the civil services, in industry, in universities, and in other places that one may suddenly become conscious of one's ethnic tags and one's difference from competitors, depending on how one's employment needs and interests are satisfied or denied (Barongo, 1983).

Osaghae (1992) posited that ethnicity as a concept is a social formation resting upon culturally specific practices and a unique set of symbols and cosmology. Hence, ethnic groups are formed to the extent that the actors use identities to categorize themselves and others for the purpose of interaction. He further asserted that ethnicity can be conceived as an interaction or relationship that exists among people of different ethnic groups who decides to base their relationship on such differences. Nnoli (1994) posited that the stage for unstable politics in Nigeria was set in motion by the pattern of colonial administration with extreme ethnic or regional orientation. Such ethnic orientation according to him has become an important variable militating against national integration. He pointed out that the pattern of disunity amongst Nigerians could be found from the analysis of the activities of the three major ethnic groups in the country. Also, Edward (1999) remarked that ethnic groups at least in Nigeria may not be regarded as creations of colonialism. They existed prior to this event under changing nomenclatures, though some of them must have made vague boundaries with some internal diversity. Therefore, positive ethnicity must be cultivated and negative kind discouraged. With positive ethnicity, ethnic pluralism will form a cause and a context for self development. It has been observed that many critics on ethnicity are more concerned about cleavages than about links, more about conflict than cooperation and reciprocity.

Religious identity

Religion means different things to different people; there is no consensus of opinions on its meaning. Consequently, Egwu (2001) argued that

religion is a difficult subject of enquiry including attempts at its definition and conceptualization. Religion is thus defined in many ways and the definitions usually vary among scholars. According to Maina (2018), religion is a body of truths, laws and rites by wish man is subordinated to the transcendent being. This implies that religion deals with norms and rules that emanated from God and which must be followed by the believers. Similarly, Usman (1990) postulated that religion is one of the systems of faith that are based on the beliefs in the existence of a particular God or gods. The concept has also been defined as a particular interest or influence that is very important in one's life. Tamuno (2015) explained religion as the belief in a super human controlling power that is entitled to obedience and worship and as a particular system of faith and worship that one is entitled to. Usman 1991 defined religion as the opium of the people.

Kabuk ((2015) understood religion in two ways, first, in a material sense; it refers to religious establishments that is (institutions and officials) as well as to social groups and movements whose primary objectives are found within religious concerns. There is also the spiritual sense which deals with models of social and individual behavior that help believers to organize their everyday lives. In this sense, religion has to do with the idea of transcendent, supernatural realities and the sacred; as a system of language and practice that organizes the world in terms of what is deemed holy and the ultimate conditions of existence. From the foregoing conception, one may not be faulted in defining religion as a system of relation which linked man to an ultimate being or ultimate value epitomized in God. Usman (1991) opined that religion is an attitude of the mind from which springs motives and beliefs. Religion is not only an attitude of the mind nor is it concerned only with a mere belief in God or gods; it also involves the expression of that belief in the acts of worship such as prayers and rituals. Usman (1991) observed that religion is a set of beliefs, symbols and practices which is based on the idea of the sacred and which unite believers into a community. The sacred is contrasted with the profane because it involves feeling of awe. Religion therefore is the ultimate concern which all human beings have to address. It follows that a peaceful atmosphere, which is necessary for national integration, can only exist in a society pegged and entrenched in high moral and religious motivation, for with religion the expectation is that man would live a virtuous and peaceful life in the community which he finds himself. In sum, religion greatly shapes ways of life, structures, processes, and

institutions. Its influence on the process of national integration can only be underestimated at the peril/risk of success.

Identity Politics in Nigeria

The territorial ambit of the Nigerian state is both contested and dynamic. It comprised not one but multiple geographies and at State level, not one but multiple federating units with semi-sites of powers and informal and formal legal systems as provided for by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. it is not a fixed immovable space, but one that, through its historical social formation, has been continually transformed. That the agitation for the transformation is on-going, as depicted in the political mobilization and quests for political domination, resource control, restructuring, fiscal federalism and self determination by some ethnic groups within the Nigerian territorial space. The sectarian complexion of the movements, religious and ethno-political, unfolding across the socio-political landscapes reflects a rootedness in the identity politics of the country. Since independence in 1960, there has been intense struggle among the various ethnic groups/nationalities in Nigeria over natural resources and political power that has led to a civil war between 1967 and 1970. This war was fought between mainly the Igbo dominated Biafra and the rest of Nigeria; over three million of its citizens mainly of Igbo extraction were killed. The causes of the war are very controversial. However, the general consensus among historian, social commentators, and political scientists was fear of domination and struggle over economic resources.

Today in Nigeria, there is a serious rivalry among the major ethnic groups over issues such as power and resource sharing formula, the status-quo is being contested by other ethnic groups especially those in the Niger–Delta region that produces the bulk of the crude oil in the country. There are many conflicts brewing in the country today for control over politics, religion and fiscal federalism to mention but a few. The struggle is in triangular form between the North and the South, between the major ethnic nationalities on one hand, and the Niger-Deltans who desire to control their natural resources (Tamuno, 1987). Successive governments have tried to find solution to these problems but to no avail. The military which had ruled Nigeria for the greater part of its history had tried both the "carrot and the stick approach" as a solution, but in its stead, Nigeria continues to slides deeper into disunity and underdevelopment. Since 1960, the country had experienced all kinds of

political and economic strategies in search of a sustainable solution to identity politics, but instead of providing positive result, turns the country into the worst state of economic mismanagement and corruption.

Hence, the introduction and establishment of certain socio-political platforms or strategies like zoning of political offices, state creations, federal character and the quota system in minimizing the impacts of identity politics and balancing ethnic justice. This is necessary for ensuring less acrimonious relationships amongst the diverse ethnic groups in Nigeria. However, the weaknesses of these strategies and platforms have been established, and it is a popular view that they are not free of some glaring shortcomings/challenges. Consequently, it made naught of the intended objectives (fair or equal representation of ethnic groups) of these principles or strategies designed for distributive justice.

Zoning of political offices is the practice whereby offices are rotated among the constituent ethnic groups of the states and country is an attempt to resolve or limit this unruly scramble for positions of influence and its attendant implications. The idea is that by sharing offices among the various constituents groups or zones, people would be given a sense of belonging that will cushion tensions, agitations and conflicts. Clearly anything in a multi-ethnic setting that is participatory and inclusive, that gives people a sense of belonging is a noble thing, but at what cost? Zoning carries a heavy burden of high cost; it breeds a culture of entitlements amongst the general population, as people get used to the idea of aspiring to positions for which they are not personally or professionally qualified; and more importantly, it directly hinders development and national integration. This is so because at the highest levels of government, square pegs are put in round holes, to the detriment of meritocracy. People are given appointments, just because it is their "turn", no wonder then that these appointees are not only incompetent, but having been appointed for reasons other than conventional/merit, they turn their positions into patronage-machines, dispensing favors to associates, kin-men and women, friends and family members. Thus, at the individual level, everyone suffers when a government is inept, including the officials with their inner circles of cleavages-(contractors, consultants and sycophants or praise-singers).

Theoretical Framework

In the social sciences and humanities, hardly do we analyse concepts or phenomena without linking them to their appropriate theoretical paradigm. Thus, this paper finds its theoretical base in the group theory as developed by Truman (1951). The theory primarily deals with groups rather than individuals as the main component of the political system. It focuses on the fact that every society is made up of different groups which are not just a collection of individuals but a world-wide-web of interactions. Different groups according to Truman (1951) are based on the notion of interest. The shared attitudes constitute the fundamental interest of the group. That every group is basically an interest group, thus it is evident that the taproot of every group is the interest of the members it protect. In the course of protecting their interest, the Group asserts their identities and strategized on how best to have access to state resources. Oftentimes, these interests clashes with the interests of other groups, and if there is no adequate institutional arrangement based on democratic values, it leads to conflict. In this circumstance, identity politics is seen as the conscious efforts made by a group in relation with other groups to protect its interest and to assert its identity.

Hence, within the parameters of group dynamics, the reality of politics, as the case in Nigeria, is hidden below the surface of the properly constituted and recognized organs through which decisions are articulated. It is hidden in the continuous struggle for power and positions of influence upon which groups constantly engaged (Young, 1990). Consequently, the struggle for power, positions, influence, and the protection of different groups' interests makes the political system volatile and more susceptible to conflicts. The relevance of the group theory to this paper can be deduced from the fact that Nigeria is a plural society, made up of different ethnic groups that are constantly struggling for power, position, influence, and the protection of their interests. This struggle became more devastating given the centrifugal tendencies inherent in the colonial policies of indirect rule, divide-and-rule and isolation. The sudden amalgamation of the different ethnic groups in 1914 became a marriage of inconvenience, which exacerbated the fear of domination, oppression, repression and suppression among the various groups. The consequences of this fear made the different ethnic groups to shrink into their ethnic cocoons with the sole objective of protecting and preserving their interest and asserting their identities. Thus, rather than politics playing the traditional centripetal role of interest aggregation for national integration, it became agent of disunity. The above narratives are evidences that the activities

of group in relation to the activities of other groups in a plural societies goes a long way in comprehending the dynamics of a political system, especially as it concerns the efforts towards achieving national integration.

Methodology

The study is qualitative in nature; the data were sourced through secondary channels like Journals, Conference and Seminar materials, textbooks and internets. The data generated through this method provided immense insights on the problematique. The analysis of the data was done qualitatively where the research analytically discusses the statements of the problem.

Centrifugal Implications of Identity Politics in Nigeria

Identity politics derives from a combination of two words, identity and politics. It is referred to the political methodologies (policies and arguments) that focus on primordial groups or self-identified pressure groups and the purviews in which politics is construed by certain aspects of identity such as race, class, religion, sexual orientation and traditional dominance. To this extent, a group tends to assert its identity vide an oppressive mechanism usually in form of political structure designed to oppress, subjugate, exploit and relegate other competitors in the social formation to background. Young (1990) and Obi (2009) buttressed this view when they observed that identity politics, as a mode of organizing, is closely related to the issue that some social groups are oppressed, hence the formation of pressure groups for redemption. In this light identity politics is seen as the politics of group-based movements requesting, claiming and protecting the interests and identity of their groups at the detriment of the Comity-of-whole. Oftentimes, the phenomenon of identity politics is deceptive, because instead of it being seen as the politics of recognition, since it demands recognition on the basis of all grounds, many political leaders of certain groups masquerade under the guise of identity politics to exploit and marginalize members of their own group for their selfish interests. Unfortunately, this makes the group more vulnerable to exploitation, oppression, and marginalization by other groups in a social formation.

Thus according to Okonkwo (2008) the group become entangled in what he referred to as victim politics, a situation/circumstance where a group identifies it-self as oppressed and seek either to end the oppression, or uses the

oppression to justify certain actions it takes. This breeds a constant struggle by groups to extricate themselves from the clutches supremacist politics, a situation where groups seek to dominate other groups for what they perceive as sine-qua-non and the ultimate goal for their existence/survival. Based on its deceptive nature, some people cast doubts on the potency of identity politics in actually protecting the interests of the group and at the same time asserting their identity. Instead, it reinforces the temptation to believe that identity politics is simply a game for ethnic chauvinists or religious bigots who hide under the cloak of ethnicity, religious belief, or other forms of identities to protect their selfish and parochial interests. According to Wonah (2017) this scenario can be likened to the belief that identity politics has the "voice of Jacob and at the same time the hand of Esau", meaning that identity politics propelled both centrifugal and centripetal forces.

However, it has been argued that in a social formation where different component units compete for resources in order to protect their interests and to assert their identities; the diversity expressed in anthropological and sociological configurations to a large extent becomes a centrifugal force which negates the prospects for national unity. Obi (2009) opined that the existence of some elements of pluralism in the form of ethnic, socio-cultural, economic and language in a political unit constitutes a problem because each of these factors can be consciously manipulated to hinder the process of creating a sense of territorial nationality. This can be juxtaposed and/or contextualized to the Biblical Tower of Babel where the builders spoke different languages; consequently they were no longer at ease, as they could not comprehend one another so the centre can no longer hold and things fell apart. In view of elitism in the Nigeria's political space, identity politics will thrive. Political elites use their power and influence to mobilize State resources and its coercive apparatuses to fan the embers of discord between the different ethnic groups just to satisfy their personal or sectional interests.

Similarly, Abodike (2015) asserted that the identity politics is manipulated and channeled to serve the overall interests of the petty bourgeois ruling class who decides who gets what, when, where and how. That the bourgeois class gets themselves entrenched in power and through the applications of various policies strive to reconcile their class differences and operates/initiates acceptable formulae for the allocation, distribution and sharing of national resources and benefits among themselves. While they do

this, they capitalize on, and fan embers of the ethnic differences among the various Nigerian people to win the support of the masses in their areas.

It was further noted that in the course of the elite game, members of this class ascends to positions of power and influence, accumulate wealth and enriched themselves. This is mainly the outcomes/results of disparities and disequilibrium in terms of power and resource distribution occasioned by the homogenizing effect of the post-colonial State. Nnoli (1989) buttressed the situation aptly when he posited that, in Nigeria the process of homogenizing has been bedeviled with problems and it is often being undermined by authoritarianism, socio-economic crisis, and the inequalities entrenched in the distribution of power and resources.

This view has been empirically demonstrated in Nigeria by the plethora of sectarian and ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria for instance, the ethno-religious conflicts in Adamawa, Benue, Kaduna, Kano, Kogi, Nassarawa, and Taraba States, there were also the, Ife/Modakeke, Aguleri/ Umuleri, The civil war, Tiv-Jukun, Ijaw/Ishekiri, Fulani-Herdsmen/Crop-Farmers conflicts, the Sharia violence in Kaduna and the Boko-Haram terrorist attacks. There was also the civil war and the separatist movements, and the indigene/settlers conflicts in Jos, Plateau State to mention but a few. The raison-detre of these conflicts is the domination, repression, marginalization and exploitation of one ethnic group by another. The denial of a group to State resources through the politics of exclusion ignites combustive, aggressive and violent behaviors which are centrifugal in nature. Similarly, the institution called the State, which has the monopoly for the use of force and coercive apparatuses, draconian law and arbitrary policies suppresses, represses, dominates and marginalizes groups to the extent that the groups no longer have a share in the commonwealth. In this instance, conflicts can be re-generated if a dominating group is confronted with a wind of change, resisted the change.

It is lucid that this conditions which leads to conflicts also reinforces identity politics which threatens the corporate existence of the State and halts or impedes development and national unity. Hence Kabuk (2015) maintains that we have to contend with the fact that ethnic consciousness is one type of political grouping within the framework of a modern nation state, which often functions as informal interest groups. Identity politics owes its vitality to the keen struggle for power and resources in the contest of scarcity, insecurity or lack of confidence in official norms and regulations. This is occasioned by

hate speech and antagonisms that manifests into conflicts. Exclusiveness is also an attribute of identity politics, in-group and out-group boundaries emerge with it and, in time, became marked, more distinct than before, and jealousy guarded by the various ethnic groups became imperative. This fact of exclusiveness is usually accompanied by nepotism and massive corruption, merit is sacrificed and/or tradeoff on alter of ethnic chauvinism and solidarity. Usoh opined that such politics of ethnic loyalty propels sectional agitations and quests in the distribution of rights, opportunities and other social goods among the various ethnic groups thereby weakening the Zoning of political offices, the Federal Character Principles, State Creation and Quota System that are considered as an expression and determinant of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to satisfy States' claims to representation and at equalizing access to the means of political power and other social benefits. The ultimate objective is to guarantee that no Nigerian shall have cause to feel aggrieved or excluded on the grounds of his gender, tribe, tongue or creed.

However, Okonkwo (2009) was quick to observe that some emergent paradoxes of these principles and strategies, where, instead of achieving unity through fair and equal balancing, the country is further divided, which unavoidably threatens the appropriateness of these principles and strategies as well as the cohesion and stability of the Nigerian state. Similarly, in this instance, Uroh accentuates that people who are discriminated against either in admission into public schools or employment into government establishments, are the same group of people who do not have access to political or economic powers of the country. He concluded that the application of these principles and strategies which are tailored to the merit of the worst-off ethnic groups, are used by the better-offs to exclude some ethnic groups who have already lost out in what l referred to as "national lottery for the commonwealth" (Maina, 2018). It has been argued from different angles that the problems of identity politics is pervasive in States made up of different and unequal ethno-religious groups, that the above mentioned principles and strategies, particularly the zoning principle invariably enthrones ethnicity and de-emphases national values. It is noted too that, the mechanism strengthens the parochial, particularistic orientations and primordial ethnic attachments of Nigerians because these tendencies form the basis of disaffection among various groups in the country (Abodike, 1993). The appointment and promotions in the armed forces in Nigeria are determined by the politics of ethno-religious identities. The civil war, the Tiv-Jukun conflicts, the Farmers-

Herdsmen conflicts, the various Communal and religious conflicts etc are all indices of identity politics.

Centripetal Implication of Identity Politics in Nigeria

      The doctrine of identity politics is aimed at maximizing/satisfying the interests of ethno-religious groups in a social formations. No doubt, successive regimes in Nigeria made efforts to address the concomitant effects of identity politics in Nigeria through some policies and strategies like state creation, federal character principle, quota system, derivation formulae and the zoning of political offices, that is, rotational power sharing or power shift among and within the six geo-political zones of the country (Abodike, 1993). The implementation of these policies and strategies to a great extent minimized the seemingly persistent problems of ethno-regional, religious, and sectarian bigotry, expressed in identity politics, which has become morally reprehensible and had undermined the doctrine of justice and fair play with impunity. Nigeria has been held together as a kind of vessel that maintains the hopes, aspirations and the lives of many people. And it doesn't hold together because that's its natural state. It doesn't hold together because it has in the past. Our fore-bearers did a series of things that were designed to help all of the parts of Nigeria come together. Not just to talk of unity but to find ways to unify. Some good examples are the policies and strategies mentioned above plus the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) for graduates from university, the annual cultural and sports festivals, the federal capital territory which represents a centre of unity, the efforts of the military, and the police and other institutions to make sure people serve all over the country and get to know it. Or business practices, that have long united the various part of the country. Hence, to a reasonable degree, the cumulative effect of these polices and strategies assists is the amelioration of the concerns of mutual distrust and rivalries among the diverse groups and interests in Nigeria, politicized in identity. Things have been worst-off without these policies and strategies in place. Thus, the advocacy for the judicious implementation of these policies and strategies to sustain the march to/for greater unity in diversity, as well as the retention and entrenchment of a stable democratic socio-political order, towards the continuous survival of the Nigerian federation.

Centripetal forces are factors that drive the enthusiasm for togetherness, collectivism and nation building. Its major thrust is the conversations around the major principles and values Nigerian share/have in common, an utmost desire for national unity, an appreciation for diversity, and recognition of the need for a diverse people to work together if they are to succeed and prosper. Thus, identity politics can be centripetal, and serves as a stabilizing force in a plural society. It nurtures and develops the much needed enlightenment and objective conditions/atmospheres necessary for national integration and transformation (Symington, 2017). Every Nigerians most demonstrate deep, wide and strong conviction that our unity is more important for us personally as well as for the country; this will foster the recognition that we are stronger together and that our diversity should be hailed rather than being viewed as a source of weakness and discord. It has been variously observed that Nigeria's diversity is greater than the diversity of all countries on the planet. There is no country in the world where more Christians and more Muslims live together under the same national roof. There is no country in the world where more different languages are spoken by people and yet where they meet together and build a common feature. The strength of Nigeria is diversity and the strength of the globe itself is diversity. As Nigeria continues to move forward united together, there is a better chance that the world will move forward together.

As Nigerians, we should not just think about the future of our country, with our remarkable diversity, resilience, energy, warmth, team-work, friendliness, welcoming spirit, innovation, entrepreneurship, diligence, great foods, abundance mineral resources, powerful regional military, amiable geographical location, wonderful athletic teams, and all those things that bring us together like the waters of the Benue and the Niger River with a confluence at lokoja, we should not just think about Nigeria, rather we should think that what we do here is about the whole world. In a circumstance where the different ethnic groups understands the strength/merit and weaknesses of other groups and are ready to tolerate one another in a spirit of give and take; the various ethnic groups will stay committed to the dynamics and ideals of unity by safe-guarding equal opportunities for the various groups in the comity of the Nigerian State. Thus, popular wise saying that "united we stand, and divided we fall", will be prima-facial..

The Synthesis and Way Forward

Historically, a rise in national consciousness is a shared sense of national identity the first pragmatic step towards the creation of a nation. National consciousness is one's level of awareness of the collective understanding that without "them" there is no "us". This allows a collective identity, an awakening spirit of mutual understanding that galvanized national community (Anderson Benedict, 1998, Imagined communities London Version). It produce a scenario when citizens of a country are conscious of the fact that they have a common identity, regard themselves as one and work together to ensure the development of their country irrespective of differences in class, ethnicity, religion, political affiliations or any other differences that may exist between them. It is time to use new instruments and methods to bring people together. Sports, dramas, conferences, seminars (academic festivals) and moving messages vide the social media platforms to convey to everyone, the idea, that together, not only are we better and stronger but that we will forge ahead, the whole world will be going with us. We must be committed to the ideals of inclusiveness in all its ramifications and to give all the segments of the society a sense of belonging vide equity and fair play, better-still called distributive justice. The philosophies of nationalism and national integration are sine-qua-non for unity and must be engineered by these principles.

1. De-emphasizing tribe, origin and religion: Traditional and Religious leaders in Nigeria should educate their followers on the importance of National integration; emphasizing that segregation based on ethnic group, tribe or religion leads to divisive tendencies and ultimately hampers development of the country.

2. Citizens must be taught to imbibe the messages behind our national anthem and pledge as a way of life, and show robust reverence for other national symbols.

3. There must be equal opportunities for all citizens in employments, recruitments and admissions based on merit system regardless of status, tribe, religion or other factors. This will foster national unity and integration.

4. Youth Employment: it is noted that not all youths are privileged to have formal education, thus they may not obtain white-collar jobs or gainful employment. Consequently, the government must find ways of empowering them through vocational education and create employment for themselves and for others. This will keep them occupied and abate the "Frustration-Aggression" tutelage. There will

also be less army of unemployed youths to be used as tools to cause tensions and conflicts by greedy or selfish elites.

5. The principles of true Federalism must be practiced as enshrined in the Constitution. Power must be shared between the federal, states and local governments. If true federalism is adopted, no part of the country will feet marginalized, oppressed, repressed and suppressed; thus strengthening the unity of the country.

6. Resource control, every state in the country should be allowed control the resources it generates. This will empower states to undertake developmental projects at the grass roots that will provide jobs, improve standard of living and alleviate poverty. When revenue is centralized and disbursed by the federal government as practiced in Nigeria, the states that produced the bulk of the revenues will always feel short-changed. This often leads to militant protests and agitations for fiscal federalism better-still called "resource control".

7. Constituency Projects must be judiciously implemented by politicians to provide the dividends of democracy for the electorates. Politicians at all levels of government must have the interest of the people at heart, and not just go into politics for their own selfish interests. It has been established that approved funds for constituency projects are diverted by most of our politicians for selfish use. In addition, politics should not be made a "do-or-die affair", and winners in elections should be magnanimous in victory. This will avert crisis, promotes national development and integration; and the people will have confidence in the government.

8. The National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Scheme should be revamped. The objectives of this scheme should be pursued to fruition; graduates should stop lobbying to be posted to their states of choice. They should be posted across all the states of the federation without any bias or consideration of ethnic group or socio-economic and political influence. Employers of labor in States should receive Corps members with open hearts and hands, and treat them as national treasures. The Corps members should be deliberately encouraged to learn the languages of their hosts, and should be offered employment opportunities in the State's civil services. This will strengthen national consciousness and unity, which is a fundamental objective of the scheme.

9. The issue of Hate Speech: Hate speech is speech that attacks a person or group on the basis o attributes such as race, religion, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. Hate speech incites conflicts, violence and intolerance.

10. Advocacy for State Police. In view of the gaps in the security apparatus in the country, some State and non-State Actors have argued for the establishment of State Police Services in Nigeria. This means that every State in the country will be authorized to create a Police Services to safe-guard lives and property (security) in the State. The proponents argued that no doubt, State Police Services will ensure deeper grass root penetration by operatives due to greater understanding of the local conditions, give Governors more de-facto supervision of security and create employment opportunities. However, antagonists of state police have cautioned that the advocacy for State Police must be balanced against the fears of the politicization of police activities, arm proliferation and bias.

Conclusion

It is worthy of note that a competent government regardless of the provenance of its heads, work assiduously for the benefit of all, in tandem with the spirit of the Social Contract theory by providing the basic necessities of life, improving human subsistence and national economic growth and development. If the government delivers the dividends of democracy to citizens, why should any citizen care about the President's origin? Whether the President is from the North, South, East, West or Christian, Moslem or Animist would be of no consequence. As human beings, we come from differing backgrounds and cultures, have different temperaments and opinions, and we belong to various groups by birth or affinity. These differences, in human considerations alone, give rise to rivalry, jealousy, competiveness, discord and conflicts. However as a people, we are urged to admire our diversities as a model for interpersonal relationships for unity. Our differences, instead of being a cause of division, become a richness to be accepted, encouraged and celebrated. Our varying gifts or talents become catalysts to be used in collaborations with others for good of all. We should strive to build our faith in one nation, with one destiny to enable us to rise above petty

human divisions to embrace and reflect our commitments for national unity and integration.

If we are going to develop Nigeria as fast as we want, we must fervently pursue the goals of "unity in diversity" seeking to wish away socio-cultural differences and imposing uniformity in spite of complex cultural diversity. The objective is to surmount the obstacles to unity, peaceful co-existence, progress and stable development; these benefits can be realized only with the development and entrenchment of a supportive public culture; understanding, respecting and tolerating differences occasioned by socio-cultural diversities and/or identities. Similarly, we must develop new institutions and mechanisms that address poverty, unemployment, insecurity, revenue allocation and other critical national issues. Furthermore, the factors enumerated above as a way forward are sine-qua-non towards nation building and national unity.

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PEACE INITIATIVES AND ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA: LESSONS FROM THE 2015 AND 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS

Sharkdam Wapmuk

Division of African Politics and Integration

Research and Studies Department,

Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos, Nigeria

Abstract

The paper examined the impact of peace initiatives in curbing electoral violence in Nigeria's 2015 and 2019 elections and highlights lessons in averting violence for future elections. The paper adopted a qualitative approach to research. Data for the study were gathered from secondary sources, specifically documentary sources including journals, books, monographs, records and documents from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and other relevant internet sources. The data collected were analysed through content analysis. The major finding of the paper is that, in varying degrees, peace initiatives played vital roles in curbing violence and ensuring the successful conduct of Nigeria's 2015 and 2019 General Elections. From the experiences of these elections, the paper noted that elections violence could be prevented through commitment of parties to peace pact; positive roles played by think thanks and civil society organizations; positive perception of the Elections Management Body (EMB); and interventions of members of the international community, eminent personalities and organizations. The paper concluded that peace initiatives helped to instilled confidence in the electoral process and encouraged citizens to support democratic practices particularly in 2015 compared to the 2019 elections. Through the peace efforts, even after postponement of the elections, the electorate was assured that INEC was committed to managing the electoral process and to conduct free, fair and credible general elections. While drawing lessons from the 2015 and 2019 General Elections, the paper recommended that peace initiatives should not only be encouraged in future elections, but should also be broadened beyond the national level to promote

similar efforts at state and local levels to include a broader spectrum of stakeholders.

Introduction

In a democratic system of government, elections are regarded as the cardinal principle of democracy through which the citizens of a country elect their representatives. Even though elections are not sufficient determinants of democracy, however, they remain the primary indicators for democratic governance (Yoroms, 2017). When elections are seen to be free, fair and transparent, they usually confer credibility and legitimacy on the result and the elected candidates. However, over the years, elections in Africa have not only acquired a reputation for violence, but have become a source of major conflicts (Goldsmith (2015, p. 818). Straus and Taylor (2012) have argued that electoral violence remains one of the most reoccurring forms of violence seen on the continent of Africa. They argued that 60 percent of elections held in Africa between 1990 and 2008 were characterized by various forms violence, wanton killings and destructions of properties.

The reality is that historically, democratic transitions in Africa have been problematic (Yoroms, 2017). Examples include Angola's 1992 elections which resulted in the losing candidate rejecting the results and reverting to violent rebellion; Sierra Leone's 1996 election saw severe violence against the civilian population by rebel soldiers. The disputed 2011 elections in Cote d'Ivoire led to the resumption of the civil war and the arrest of the sitting president. The outcome of the December 2016 presidential election in The Gambia was rejected by its immediate past President Yahaya Jammeh. It took the efforts of ECOWAS led by Senegal and Nigeria to swiftly move in January 2017 to ensure that there was no escalation of post-election violence and reversal in the democratic fortunes of that country. In the case of Nigeria, post-independence history of elections reveals varying cases of violence, which according to Omotola (2010) have assumed an unprecedented magnitude since 1999 as politicians struggle to grab and retain power using all the means available to them. This is further compounded by brazen manipulation of regional, ethnic, religious and forms of sentiments to garner votes.

Since Nigeria's return to civilian rule in 1999 after fifteen years of military dictatorship, the country has managed to conduct elections six general elections (1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019) with varying degree of incidences of electoral violence. Electoral violence is understood as acts of

violence perpetuated in the course of political activities, including before, during and post-election periods. In essence, electoral violence does not only occur on the Election Day, but could also occur before and after elections. Election violence include, but not limited to the use of force to disrupt political meetings or voting at polling stations, or the use of dangerous weapons to intimidate voters and other electoral processes or to cause bodily harm or injury to any person connected with electoral processes. To some extent, even though the outcome of the 2011, 2015 and 2019 general elections were adjudged free and fair, by both local and international observers, these elections also witnessed varying levels of violence in different parts of the country.

The 2015 and 2019 general elections were approached with fear and apprehension across the country. The two major political parties, the People Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC), adopted a do-or-die attitude towards the elections. Despite the palpable fear that the consequences of failure of the 2015 general elections in Nigeria were going to be devastating, especially against the backdrop of escalating security challenges including the Boko Haram insurgency, farmer-herders crisis, kidnappings and other forms of violence, the democratic transition of power to the opposition in 2015 was achieved partly due the peace initiatives introduced by local and international stakeholders. The peace initiatives sought to prevent violent conflict and to ensure peaceful conduct of contestants and their supporters and to ensure 'free and fair elections' and smooth transfer of power. The peace initiatives, which included the Abuja Peace Accord by the National Peace Committee, diplomatic interventions, think-tanks and civil societies advocacy, and several visits, calls and messages by international eminent personalities proved to be somewhat effective in curtailing violence in the 2015 general elections. Drawing lessons from the peace initiatives in the 2015 general elections, these initiatives were re-introduced by stakeholders to avert elections violence in the 2019 general elections.

The objective of the paper is to evaluate the impacts of the peace initiatives in 2015 and 2019 general elections and to draw lessons in conflict prevention and resolution in future elections. The main argument in the article is that the peace initiatives played major roles in restraining the tensions, fear and pessimistic expectations from local and international environment, which surrounded the preparation towards the 2015 and 2019 general elections. The article is divided into six sections. Following the introduction, section two

attempts to clarify and operationalise concepts as used in the article. While section three focuses on a brief historical background of elections violence in Nigeria, section four discusses the background to the 2015 and 2019 general elections. Section five discusses the major peace initiatives in 2015 and 2019. Section six evaluates the lessons from the 2015 and 2019 peace initiatives for future elections in Nigeria and concludes

Conceptualising Peace initiatives and Elections Violence
Peace Initiatives
Peace initiative is a combination of two words 'peace' and 'initiative'. Peace as a concept is universally known but it cannot be said to be universally understood or its definition universally accepted. Etymologically, peace originates from the Latin word pax - meaning tranquility or absence of war. The tendency is to conceptualise peace as absence of war, and by extension, define war as the absence of peace. It was Sugata Dasgupta who first proposed the notion of "peacelessness". This refers to the situations, especially in developing countries, where, in spite of the absence of war, human beings are suffering just as much from poverty, malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, discrimination, oppression and so on, as from war (Dasgupta 1968). Accordingly, once this definition of peace was accepted, the absence of interstate war would not be the only one sufficient condition of peace. Johan Galtung further elaborated the concept of peace by popularising the notion of "structural violence" (Galtung 1978). Galtung provided a broader theoretical framework which could deal not only with the issue of war, but also issues of poverty, disease and human rights violations. The key to his proposal of a new definition of peace was a new concept of violence. Galtung defined peace as the absence of violence, and not as the absence of war (Galtung 1978, p.167). According to Ibeanu (2006, p.4) peace can be seen as 'a means to an end', and as a necessary condition for sustainable development. Peace is primarily concerned with creating and maintaining a just order in society and the resolution of conflict by non-violent means. For the purpose of this paper, we define peace as safety, living without fear or threat of violence, and where no form of violence is tolerated in law or in practice.

While initiative is defined as the ability to assess and initiate things independently, it can also be defined as the power or opportunity to act or take charge before others do and a new plan or process to achieve something or solve a problem; to start something, with the hope that it will continue (Alli,

2015). When juxtaposed, peace initiative is understood as the opening move in negotiating peace deal between individuals, groups, or society. It involves series of actions towards forestalling situations that could otherwise lead to violent conflict. Birch and Muchlinski (2018, p.386) defined peace initiatives as interventions designed to prevent and/or mitigate electoral violence. These include a wide range of activities targeted at electoral actors: police training, security planning, electoral management body capacity building, peace messaging, codes of conduct, stakeholder fora and grassroots peace advocacy by civil society groups.

Election and Electoral Violence
Elections are cardinal in democratic governance and several definitions have been offered by scholars (Yoroms, 2017). Elections are purposely geared towards producing legitimate government, accountable and responsible for the plight of its citizenry but may result in legitimacy crises if not properly conducted and managed (Nwolise, 2007, p.157). Therefore, elections are supposed to allow for the orderly transfer of power and facilitate communication between the politicians and citizens. Ashindorbe (2018, p.95), notes that in the technical sense, they are the process through which an office or a post is assigned to a person by an act of volition that requires the simultaneous expression of many people's opinions. Election therefore refers to the process of selecting candidates of choice through the votes to occupy position of representation and decision making for a period stipulated by the constitution of the land. Robert (2011) traces modern and democratic elections to the 17th century and a means through which modern democracies and newly independent colonies of formal colonial masters can choose those to represent them in the affair of governance and effective management of the common wealth of the country to the benefit of all. Elections have become the commonly accepted means of legitimizing government. The conducts of elections to governmental offices are always branded with various preparatory events and political schemes that contenders embrace to surface as its party's contestant, in advance to contesting against other party's candidates in a general election. While elections are viewed in theory as democratic means of resolving disputes and making collective decisions, experiences reveal that elections have become a highpoint for violence and insecurity in many states in Nigeria (Nwolise, 2007).

Violence is a phenomenon that permeates all societies. It has been used as a tactics or strategy of political action or change (Anifowose, 2006). According to Albert (2007) violence involves the use of physical force purposely to injure or damage the object of violence which can take several forms from the subtle to the most extreme act of violence like killing and assassinations. Violence is therefore distinct from force which is defined to mean legitimate use of violence by constituted authority for and on behalf of the State. According to Birch and Muchlinski (2018, p.386), electoral violence can understood as "coercive force, directed towards electoral actors and/or objects, that occurs in the context of electoral competition". According to Albert (2007), electoral violence involves all forms of organized acts of threats aimed at intimidating, harming, blackmailing a political stakeholder or opponent before, during and after an election with an intention to determine, delay or influence a political process. Ogundiya and Baba (2005), argue that electoral violence include all sorts of riots, demonstrations, party clashes, political assassinations, looting, arson, thuggery, kidnapping spontaneous or not, which occur before, during and after elections. Taylor (2018) insists that electoral violence is any random or organized act that seeks to determine, delay, or otherwise influence an electoral process. These could be done through threat, verbal intimidation, hate speech, disinformation, physical assault, forced "protection", blackmail, destruction of property, or assassination. Similarly, Igbuzor (2010) posits that electoral violence are acts of violence perpetuated in the course of political activities including, pre, during and post-election periods. They may include any of the following acts: thuggery, use of force to disrupt political meetings or voting at polling stations, or the use of dangerous weapons to intimidate voters and other electoral process or to cause bodily harm.

There have been lots of concerns about the causes of electoral violence. Taylor (2018) notes that political systems based on patronage and clientelism are more likely to experience election violence. What this author suggests is that political systems in which formal political institutions are superseded by informal relationships based on the exchange of resources and political loyalty, political supporters seem willing to perpetrate election violence in support of their preferred candidates. There is no doubt that this is characteristic of the Nigerian political scene, where political actors tend to dangle resources at elections to mobilse support and rig elections. Other reasons that have been put forward as causes of elections violence include, but

not limited to: inter and intra-party rivalry leading to the fragmentation and factionalisation of political parties; weakness of electoral management bodies, such as electoral commissions because of their important roles in ensuring credible elections; the presence of pre-existing social conflicts, such as ongoing farmer-herders conflicts, terrorism in the north east, kidnapping which increases the likelihood of election violence (Taylor, 2018; Fjelde & Höglund, 2016, p. 297–320; Goldsmith, 2015).

Theoretical Framework

Theory forms an important aspect of research work and scholars choose relevant theories and suitable paradigms to guide their studies and which assist to yield meaningful and reasonable interpretations and understandings. This paper will be guided by the elite theory in understanding the phenomenon of electoral violence in Nigeria and the role of the elite in a democracy. Major proponents of the elite theory include Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923), Gaetano Mosca (1858-1941), and Robert Mitchels (1876-1936) and (Verma 1975), amongst others. The major assumptions of this theory include, first, that the understanding that the overriding and ultimate power can be found among the people who hold key positions in the economic, political and military institutions in any society. Secondly, that all men love power and since all men are not all endowed alike, some are psychological and intellectual superior. Third, the theory also argues that the political elite are imbued with personal resources such as social skills, intelligence and special interest in politics. Fourth, the theory divides the society into two different classes or groups because politics is, essentially, a relationship between rulers and the ruled and it is defined in terms of power. While Pareto insists that the character of democratic elites is not qualitatively different in democracy, Mosca, on the other hand, lays emphasis on the pluralistic character of democratic elites and postulates a reciprocal relationship between the rulers and the ruled, instead of simple dominance by the rulers over the ruled (Mosca, 1939; Pareto, 1935). Mosca identifies the political class with men of property in general, and sometimes with intelligentsia, but most often with the political personnel in government.

The elites involve a broad spectrum of political, military, and business men/women who form overlapping cliques. According to Mazi-Mbah (2006) political power like other social values in Nigeria is distributed unequally and the political playing field is skewed in favor of those in power who use this

opportunity to manipulate elections and win them at all costs. The ruling class and the political elites use the state power to accumulate wealth in order to strengthen their economic bases and render the state power attractive. As argued by Ake (2000) under this circumstances violence become endemic as political actors struggle to acquire power by all means. The elite theory therefore underscore the basis of Nigerian electoral violence and democratic consolidation given that, the elites determine who qualifies to view for any elective positions, political participation is therefore a restricted activity of the elite of different roles, especially the incumbent and of the citizenry during election. Therefore, the elite theory is adopted to guide the study on peace initiatives and electoral violence in Nigeria.

Brief History of Elections Violence in Nigeria
The problem of electoral violence is not a new phenomenon in Nigerian democratic history. An examination of the history of Nigeria's democratic experiment reveals that elections and electoral politics have, at various times, been characterized by violent conducts that contributed to the collapse of democratic experiments in the country. Prior to Nigerian independence in 1960, the British colonial government allowed elections only to assuage the pressures from the nationalists who were demanding for greater representation, involvement and participation in colonial government. For example, under Sir Hugh Clifford, Elective Representation in the Legislative Council for Lagos and Calabar that was introduced in 1922 only allowed only men with a minimum income of 100 pounds a year to vote. In the case of Arthur Richards Constitution, election was held through indirect Electoral College in 1946. Elections up to the 1959 general election were devoid of high level of electoral violence. Even so, there were records of some forms of intimidation and victimization of opponents. For example, Toyin (2013, p.169) noted that Chief Obafemi Awolowo was attacked and an attempt was made to set his helicopter on fire during his campaign tour to the Northern region in 1959. During this period, the Nationalist were concerned with change of government from the colonial administration to self-government (Kurfi, 1983).

The post-independence era was to witness varying degrees of successes and failures, as well as challenges, including electoral violence in general elections that took place in 1964, 1979, 1983, 1993, 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019. According to Omotola (2008) beginning from the

1964-1965 general elections, violence has been the major feature of electoral politics in the country. The dominant political parties at that time, namely, National Council for Nigeria and Cameroun (NCNC), Northern People's Congress (NPC) and the Action Group (AG)-led by Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, Alhaji Tafawa Balewa and Chief Obafemi Awolowo struggled to maintain control of their respective regions and the federal government at the centre at the same time. The western region crisis, jailing of Chief Obafemi Awolowo on charges of treason in November 1962, and the 1963 census, amongst others, set the tone for the crisis that eventually led to the first military intervention that ended Nigeria's first democratic experiment in 1966. The first military coup of January 1966 coup that brought General Aguiyi Ironsi as the Military Head of State was short lived as a counter coup brought in General Yakubu Gowon as the Head of State. The religious and ethnic controversy surrounding Nigerian politics did not spare the military in power. Having tasted power, the military was unwilling to hand over power to a civilian government until the Murtala/Obasanjo regime handed over on October 1, 1979 to Alhaji Shehu Shagari, thus setting the stage for Nigeria's second democratic experiment.

The 1979 elections that brought in the Shagari government and the 1983 elections conducted by his administration were characterized by taut competition, intolerance, and violence in various parts of the country, particularly the South Western states of Oyo, Ondo and Ogun, and Northern states of then Gongola, Sokoto, Kaduna and Kano states. Several persons lost their lives and properties were destroyed in the process. The announcement of the presidential election results as well as petitions that followed at the elections tribunals and courts further compounded the already volatile situation in various parts of the country and resulted in series of violence that engulfed the federation in 1983. It was not so surprising that the military again found a reason to terminate the second republic in December 1983, just four years after the second democratic experiment in the country. This set the stage for prolonged military rule in the country that lasted till May 29th, 1999. The short interregnum tagged Interim National Government (ING) under Chief Ernest Shonekan, following the aborted transition to a democratic rule from 1991 to 1993, was dislodged by General Abacha. His death in office brought General Abdulsalam Abubakar who organized another election and subsequently handed over power to a democratically elected government in 1999.

Since Nigeria's return to the path of democratic rule in 1999, the country has managed to transcend two decades without military interruption of the democratic experiment. However, elections organized and managed by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) have been far from being free, fair and transparent. In fact, elections held in the country in 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019 have been characterized by varied degrees of contestations as well as electoral violence. The 2003 elections that culminated in the reelection of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as civilian Head of State, was not without hitches. In fact the period preceding the 2003 elections was marked by organized violence. Several politicians among, whom was the late Bola Ige, were either actually assassinated or assassination attempts were made on them. Reports by international and domestic observers confirmed that the run-up to the country's 2003 general election, not less than 100 people killed (Ugho, 2004). The 2007 election actually marked the first civilian to civilian transition since Nigerian returned to democratic rule. The poor management of the 2007 election by the INEC as well as undesirable conduct of the politicians during this election led Jega to describe the 2007 elections as the "nadir of election management in Nigeria" (2011, p.10).

Despite efforts on the part of INEC to address the flaws in the 2007 elections, in preparation for 2011, there were several reported cases of political violence including politically motivated killings and the attack of civilians during political campaigns and rallies in some states indicated that elections are still perceived as a "do-or-die" affair in the country. As the 2011 elections approached, the threat of violence became high in states like Bauchi, Borno, Yobe, Plateau, Abia, Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers, among others. While the militant group – Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) threatened attacks in the Niger-Delta region, Boko Haram claimed responsibility for bombings at political rallies and the assassinations of a gubernatorial candidate, Modu Fannami Gubio and six of his supporters in January 2011 in Borno state. Consequently, the 2011 general elections held in April orchestrated violence which left more than 800 people dead and more than 65,000 homeless, with more than 350 churches burnt (Human Rights Watch, 2014). The violence began with protests by supporters of the main opposition presidential candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, from the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), following the reelection of the incumbent Goodluck Jonathan, who was candidate of the People Democratic Party – PDP. It degenerated into sectarian and religions killings (Human Rights

Watch*, 2014)*. Despite the violence before, during and after the 2011 elections, local and international observers had judged that the 2011 elections was the most organized, free and fair in the country electoral history since 1999 (Jega, 2011, p.21).

In preparation for the Nigeria's 2015 elections, the ruling and opposition political parties intensified campaigns and strategies to win votes and return an elected government. While the ruling political party - PDP was quite determined to retain power at the federal centre, the opposition political parties were determined to wrestled power from the ruling PDP. Several underlying issues set the stage for the 2015 general elections, which were keenly contested at all levels in the country. Boko Haram terrorism and insurgency, intimidations, assassinations, hate speech and destructions of properties, and related developments somewhat created tensions, fears and national security concerns. In February 2013, four major opposition parties in Nigeria, namely the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), and a faction of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), merged into a new party known as the All Progressives Congress (APC). The inability of the PDP to resolve its internal crisis led to mass defection to the APC (Page & Tayo, 2018). This gave the APC greater leverage to further challenge the ruling party at the polls.

Another major challenge in the way of the 2015 general elections was the Boko Haram insurgency, which had become a serious security threat in the country. The threats posed by the Boko Haram insurgency raised doubts about the possibility of holding the 2015 elections in north-eastern states. As the elections drew nearer, there were concerns of postponing the 2015 general elections entirely. INEC also experienced some hiccups in the preparation towards the 2015 elections. Examples include the distribution of permanent voter cards (PVCs) and the failure of some Smart Card readers (SCR) during the conduct of elections. Of significance in the 2015 general elections is the role of peace initiatives in averting post elections crisis in the country. These included the National Peace Committee (NPC) and the Council of the Wise; coordinated diplomatic visits and interventions, think tanks and civil society organizations initiatives, and faith-based initiatives.

Background to the 2019 General Elections

The 2019 general elections followed Nigeria's first peaceful transition of power to the opposition in 2015. This time around, while APC as the ruling

political party sought to retain power at the centre, the major opposition parties such as the PDP intensified campaign to recapture the presidency amongst other major positions, including majority seats in the National Assembly, Governorship and State Houses of Assembly elections at state levels. There were many reasons for the ruling APC to be concerned. The 2019 campaign witness influx of new and old aspirants including President Muhammadu Buhari, Atiku Abubakar, Datti Baba-Ahmed, Ibrahim Dankwambo, Donald Duke, Fela Durotoye, Ayodele Fayose, Jaye Gaskia, Rabiu Kwankwaso, Sule Lamido, Ahmed Makarfi, Oby Ezekwesili , Kingsley Moghalu and Omoyele Sowore, amongst others. Several groups had arisen to challenge the performance of the government and demanded for greater participation and accountability of governance. These included the "Not Too Young to Run initiative", created by the Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth and Advancement; the Red Card Movement led by the former federal minister of education and social affairs activist Oby Ezekwesili; Coalition for Nigeria Movement (CNM), founded in early 2018 by former president Olusegun Obasanjo. In addition to the highly charged polity in the preparation for elections by the leading political parties and their candidates, the several security challenges that have either emerged or intensified since 2015 also threatened the political space. In the far northern, central, middle-belt states, the pastoralist-farmer conflicts had shaped perceptions that the incumbent APC government is either ineffective or complicit in the violence that engulfed large parts of the country making it insecure (Verjee, Kwaja & Onubogu, 2018).

The campaign slogan of 'change' that brought the APC to power was also perceived as ineffective in bringing about the expected change in forms of improved living standards across the country. Furthermore, there were divisions within both the APC and the PDP leading to cross-carpeting of dozens of federal legislators from the APC to the PDP and break-away factions such as the establishment of the Reformed APC (R-APC) led by Alhaji Buba Galadima, a former ally of President Buhari. The inability of the party to consolidate its internal party structure and effectively resolve internal rivalries arising from nominations, primaries, and voting were seen as potential triggers of violence. Controversial reportage by the mainstream media was amplified by the social media which largely served in some cases to misinform and open the door to intolerant responses and reactions. As was the case in the 2015 elections, northeast Nigeria was seriously affected by the

Boko Haram insurgency. This was despite the assurances of the government that the Boko Haram had been technically defeated. Despite the statements denouncing violent conducts by supporters from the leading candidates contesting for the office of president particularly, President Muhammadu Buhari of APC and former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar, Nigerians were skeptical and the fear of violence during the 2019 elections remained endemic (Okere, 2018).

When INEC announced the rescheduling of the elections by a week at around 02:30am on Election Day on grounds of logistical and operational challenges, it was not well received by most Nigerians. This further fueled suspicion among the opposition that there were plans with collaboration of INEC to manipulate and rig the elections in favour of the ruling party (The Commonwealth, 2019). The Presidential and National Assembly elections were postponed to 23 February 2019. The Governorship, State Assembly and FCT Area Council elections were postponed to 9th March, 2019. The suspicion was fueled by perceptions of INEC's past performances especially between 1999 and 2011. Despite changes of leadership and conduct of the 2011 and 2015 general elections, INEC was in constant state of internal reform. This was necessary in addressing electoral challenges such as shortcomings of the electoral act, funding, shortage of staff, the non-delivery of voting papers and equipment malfunctions. Some of the challenges that confronted INEC were rooted in contestations between the Legislature and Executive arms of government over the sequence of elections. Traditionally, the presidential election and national assembly elections are first to be conducted, followed a fortnight later by the state governorship and state assembly polls. In preparation for the 2019 elections, the Senate supported a legislative proposal to alter the order and hold elections over three days, with national assembly elections first, followed by state governorship and state house of assembly elections, and with presidential elections coming last in the sequence (Page & Tayo, 2018). INEC released its election timetable in January 2018, but the bill to enable the reordering of the electoral sequence was, controversially, passed by the National Assembly a month later. President Buhari refused to sign the bill into law, warning that it might undermine INEC's ability to organize, undertake and supervise elections. The whole bickering also fueled suspicion, distrust and fear of violent general elections in 2019.

Imperative of Peace Initiatives in Preventing Violence in the 2015 and 2019 Elections

The campaigns towards the elections of 2015 and 2019 were also characterized by incidences of violence in various parts of the country. In the case of 2015 in particular, Nigerians were apprehensive of a possible repeat of the post-2011 presidential election violence. In both the 2015 and 2019 elections, the two major political parties APC and PDP adopted a do or die attitude towards the elections. More so, the Boko haram and attendant humanitarian crisis was regarded as the most severe security challenge in 2015. However, by 2019, the security situation had further degenerated. Widespread were cases of conflicts between farmers and herders, kidnappings, armed banditry, inter-communal, inter-ethnic, inter-religious which continue to undermine food security and endangering human lives and wellbeing. The Centre for Democracy and Development's 'Buharimeter' monitoring projected reported that security had further deterioted in the country with more than 800 people dead as a result of insurgency-fuelled violence in the northeast during Buhari's first 100 days in office (Page & Tayo, 2018). Several unsettling developments and security challenges were observable as Nigeria approached the 2019 elections. In the middle belt, clashes between farmers and pastoralists were devastating the north central states. In the southern parts, Niger Delta militants were threatening a fresh wave of violent attacks against oil infrastructure even as contestations in River's politics resulted in serious clashes between the political parties and supporters. In the South East, the Indigenous People of Biafra hand renewed calls for Biafran freedom. According to Verjee, Kwaja & Onubogu (2018), the concern that Nigeria was pruned to election violence in the preparation to both the 2015 and 2019 elections were not only domestic; the international community and development partners were equally worried about the potential of crisis in the country (European Union Election Observation Mission, 2015).

To avert violence before, during and after the elections in 2015 and 2019, critical stakeholders launched initiatives and activities. These included the National Peace Committee (NPC) and the Council of the Wise; coordinated diplomatic visits and interventions, think tanks and civil society organizations initiatives, and faith-based initiatives. Others included the use of electoral observer groups, especially in high-risk areas; measures taken by security agencies to prevent or curb electoral violence; non-violence campaigns by civil society organisations; the role of the media; and

interventions by community elders, traditional authorities, religious leaders, the INEC, and political parties.

Major Peace Initiatives in 2015 General Elections

The major peace initiatives in the 2015 general elections included National peace committee (NPC), Diplomatic interventions, the council of the wise, Faith-based initiatives Think-tanks and civil society organizations. The National peace committee (NPC) that was chaired by General Abdulsalami Abubakar (Rtd) had a broad based membership of eminent personalities in Nigeria. Their primary goals were to ensure that the contesting parties should behave well; institutions of state should also behave well; INEC should ensure free and fair elections; and security agencies, police, SSS, Armed Forces, and Judiciary should ensure impartiality in the discharge of their responsibilities (The Kukar Centre, 2018). There were also diplomatic interventions by prominent international personalities, and leaders that undertook high-level diplomatic visits and brought peace messages from overseas. These included the former South African President, Thabo Mbeki, and former President of Ghana, John Kufuor. The U.S. President Barack Obama, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, U.K. Prime Minister David Cameron, U.K. Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond, registered their own concerns and encouragement for the process; the U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon, former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the African Union, ECOWAS, and the European Union, made a strong cases for peaceful conduct during the elections and cautioned the leaders on the need for peaceful conduct (Alli, 2015).

Furthermore, the Council of the Wise, led by the founder of the Savannah Center for Diplomacy Democracy and Development (SCDDD), Prof. Ibrahim Gambari, set out to decipher a way forward and to ensure free, fair and credible elections in the country. The Council of the Wise travelled to all the geo-political zones and interacted with prominent community, party, religious and youth leaders. It also held interactive sessions with groups, on the need to ensure, free, fair and credible polls in the country. The role of the Faith-based initiatives in the 2015 elections was commendable. These included the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) brought Muslim and Christian clergy together at a meeting chaired by the Sultan of Sokoto. Both Christian and Muslim clerics worked to reduce tensions and preach peace to their congregations in sermons and on radio and

TV and also encouraged them to register, collect their PVCs, cast their vote peacefully, and remain vigilant throughout the elections and to avoid post elections violence (The Kukar Centre, 2018). CAN and JNI brought Muslim and Christian clergies together at a meeting chaired by the Sultan of Sokoto. Among the think tanks that played major roles in preventing violent conflict in the 2015 general elections in Nigeria were the Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR), Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) and the International Republican Institute (IRI), amongst several others. The civil society organizations also played major roles in preventing violent conflict in the 2015 general elections in Nigeria. Civil society organisations such as the West African NGO Network (WANGONET) launched its 9ja Voter project, the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), Human Rights Monitor Nigeria, and Nigeria Women Trust Fund, educated the people on peaceful conduct before, during and after elections.

Major Peace Initiatives in the 2019 General Elections
As was the case in the 2015 elections, though with less activism, in 2019 general elections, the major peace initiatives promoted by stakeholders to avert elections violence included the National Peace Committee (NPC), Diplomatic interventions (DI), National Peace Advisory Forum, (NPAF) Faith-based initiatives (FBI) Think-tanks and civil society organizations.

National Peace Committee (NPC)
The National Peace Committee chaired by General Abdulsalami Abubakar (Rtd) spearheaded national efforts aimed at ensuring peaceful conduct of the presidential candidates during the 2019 general elections. The NPC succeeded in not only bringing together stakeholders to reflect on the need for peaceful elections in the overall interest of the country, but most importantly, committed the presidential candidates to sign a National Peace Accord on 11 December 2018 and a repeat on 13 February 2019. During the signing ceremony, the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth stated in a Speech that:

> The promotion of peace is the shared responsibility of all stakeholders in Nigeria's democracy. We are all expected to play our respective roles and we must pursue this common interest with sincerity and goodwill, with a view to strengthening Nigeria's democratic credentials, not only in the forthcoming election, but for the benefit of

coming generations. By signing this National Peace Accord, Nigeria's political leaders are committing themselves to writing a new chapter in the country's future growth and prosperity – a chapter which we can all be proud of (Speech by Commonwealth Secretary General,   13 February 2019, p.11).

Apart from some of the presidential candidates invited, several major stakeholders witnessed the signing of the Peace Accord and affirmation of commitment to violence-free elections in 2019. These included former Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon (Rtd.); a former Chief of Justice of Nigeria, Justice Mohammed Uwais; the Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Ogunwusi; the Bishop of Sokoto Diocese, Matthew Kukah; and the European Union Ambassador to Nigeria, Ketil Karlsen, Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of Liberia and leader of the ECOWAS election observer mission, Mr. Festus Mogae, former President of Botswana, and leader the NDI/IRI observer mission; Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, and leader of the Commonwealth Observer Group (The Commonwealth, 2019). Even though Alhaji Atiku Abubakar of PDP was absent at the first ceremony, he later signed the next day. The Peace Accord, which the leaders committed themselves was put to the test ahead of the elections, on Election Day and the days that follow, and in particular, after the results are announced. The 2019 elections were not exactly free from violence as was observed in some states such as Lagos and Rivers. While some of the candidates accepted the result of the election, former Vice President rejected the result and headed to court to seek redress.

Think-Tanks and IPCR's National Peace Advisory Forum
As was the case in the 2015 general elections, think-tanks, particularly the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) played a vital role in averting elections violence in 2019. The IPCR created a National Peace Advisory Forum (NPAF), which also complimented the efforts made by the National Peace Committee. As a research think-tank IPCR had undertaken a study with input from seasoned scholars on the lessons from peace initiatives in 2015 (Michael, 2019). The outcome of the study was a launched book titled "Election Conflict Management: Lessons From the 2015 General Elections in Nigeria". The goal of the NPAF was to make issues of peace more

collaborative, governance to be participatory and challenges treated as common for joint action so as to attain durable peace and sustainable development. The whole essence of these efforts was to ensure the promotion of peace, tolerance, efficient and effective ways of conflict resolution and national cohesion (Michael, 2019). During the 2019 elections, the NPAF served as a veritable platform for government institutions/agencies and the people to from time-to-time interrogate issues and canvass support in bridging the gap between the government and the people.

Diplomatic Interventions
As Nigeria prepared for the 2019 general elections, diplomatic missions in Nigeria, international personalities and leaders and organisations cautioned Nigeria on peaceful conduct during the general election. Even when INEC postponed the general elections, they expressed support for peaceful conduct of elections and encouraged both the politicians and electorate to work with INEC for peaceful elections. For example, the UK Government urged Nigerians to be patient and support the democratic process following the postponement of the general elections by the INEC (Premium Times 2019). The United States also supported the decision of the heads of ECOWAS and other international missions on the postponement of the election in Nigeria (Premium Times 2019). From the Commonwealth, Jakaya Kikwete, former President of Tanzania; and Rupiah Banda, former President of Zambia, called for peaceful conduct of elections. Within the African continent, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the former President of Liberia, who lead ECOWAS observer mission, and Hailemariam Desalegn, former Prime Minister of Ethiopia, who led the African Union observer mission, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, the Director of African Political Affairs and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel, caution the politicians to conduct themselves in peacefully and in the national interests (The Commonwealth, 2019).

Faith Based Initiatives and Civil Society Organisations
Faith-based initiatives and civil society organisations also played influential roles in preventing violence in the 2019 elections. As part of the effects to avert violence during the 2019 general elections, a forum was convened on 18th January, 2019, for religious leaders to proffer solutions to peaceful, violence free and credible elections in Nigeria. The forum was organised by

Community Life Project (CLP) under the Reclaim Naija platform and sponsored by Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA). The groups that proffered solutions to elections violence at the forum included the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI). Reverend Father George Ehusani, former General Secretary, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN) who delivered a lead paper titled The Ethical and Moral Imperative of Free, Credible and Peaceful Elections: Role of Religious Leaders and Faith Communities stated that:

> Many do not seem to realize that the looting of national, state or local government treasury for the purpose of buying party chiefs; the intimidation, killing and maiming of opponents and the destruction of their property; multiple registration and multiple voting; substitution of candidates' names, diversion of electoral materials, selling of voters cards, stashing of and outright stealing of voter boxes, falsification of figures; declaration of false results; and the favouring of one candidate against another by agents of the law; corrupt deals and judicial malpractices at the election tribunals, etc., are not simply electoral offences or an assault on universally accepted democratic principles (cited in Fadipe, December 19, 2018).

According to the Secretary General, Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI), Dr Khalid Abubakar:

> As usual, tensions within and between political parties, competing claims to the Presidency between the incumbent and the opposition, barrage of hate campaign by religious and opinion leaders, religious/ ethnic violence bedeviling some states, desperation among politicians, floodgate of litigations resulting from party primaries and many other factors are indicators that the 2019 elections should be carefully handled lest it degenerates into violence (cited in Fadipe, December 19, 2018).

On a whole, the participants at this forum encouraged Nigerians to participate in the electoral process by voting and ensuring violent free elections in the country. In preparations for the 2019 elections, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) also played important roles in elections education and advocacy on non-violent elections in Nigeria. As part of its efforts to promote peace in the 2019 elections, an NGO, Legacy Initiative International Advocacy, organized

a national day of prayers to seek God's intervention for the peaceful conduct of the 2019 general elections January 10, 2019 (Fadipe, <u>December 19, 2018</u>). On its part, the Christian Aid called for calm due to concerns over violence and insecurity in Nigeria, after the country's General Election was postponed only a few hours before polls (Christian Aid, 2019). Under the auspices of its Watching the Vote project, YIAGA AFRICA, an NGO, undertook peace advocacy visits to elections stakeholders such as INEC, the Nigerian Police Force, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corp (NSCDC), National Orientation Agency, Nigerian Union of Journalists, Civil Society Organisations, Traditional and Religious Leaders as well as Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) (YIAGA-AFRICA, 2019).

Lessons from the 2015 and 2019 Peace Initiatives for Future Elections in Nigeria

There is no doubt that the peace initiatives had impact and were effective in curbing violence in the 2015 and 2019 general elections. The peace initiatives were mutually reinforcing and helped the public to identify with the electoral process. They helped to assure Nigerians that elections can and should be peaceful. The National Peace Committee (NPC) had made it clear to the political class that Nigerians were watching their conducts and persuaded the main presidential candidates to publicly reaffirm their commitment to the Abuja Peace Accord, while calling on their supporters to refrain from violence. There are several lessons to be drawn from the peace initiatives of 2015 and 2019. First is that all parties need to keep faith with the pact. In the 2015 general elections, former President Jonathan and President Buhari both kept faith with 'The Abuja Accord'. While President Jonathan's timely acceptance of the outcome of the election went a very long way in averting post-election violence in the country, former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar rejected the outcome of the 2019 presidential elections and opted to challenge the results in the courts.

The second lessons is that strong messages of peace from eminent persons help to inspire confidence in the electoral process, and encouraged citizens to participate in elections in a peaceful manner. In this regard, former heads of states, international personalities, diplomatic missions, think thanks such as the IPCR and civil society organizations have helped to sensitise the public on the value of peaceful elections. Notably, faith based organisations such as CAN and Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) sought to influence their

communities for peaceful elections through civic education and peace messaging, however, in its election report, the Commonwealth stated in its report that some faith groups being partisan (The Commonwealth, 23 February 2019).

The third lessons hinge on the perception of the electoral management body, INEC. Following the postponement, suspicions are rife and INEC caution its staff to ensure transparency to avert post-election violence that could be fuelled by perception that elections were manipulated in favour of one party. It took lots of efforts by well-meaning Nigerians and international partners to assure Nigerians that the elections would be conducted peacefully. Even so, INEC was not spared of elections violence in some parts of the country, before, during and after the 2019 elections. For example, not long before the elections, INEC offices and materials were burned in Plateau, Abia and Anambra states**.**

On a whole, the 2019 elections served as a litmus test for the peace initiatives. Compared to 2015, the peace initiatives in 2019 did not seem to yield the ultimate goal of ensuring peace before, during and after the elections. There were reports that violence were recorded in different parts of the country, though not on a large scale when compared to the 2011 polls, 2019 witnessed violence in some parts of the country (The Commonwealth, 2019).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper has examined the peace initiatives that were introduced by various stakeholders with a view to preventing elections violence in 2015 and 2019. The paper examined issues surrounding elections violence in Nigeria and to draw lessons in for future elections in the country. It also discussed the history of elections and electoral violence in the country. Examination of the background to the 2019 elections revealed that if election violence was to be avoided, a repeat of the peace efforts by stakeholders was imperative. Accordingly, though characterized by less activism compared to the 2015 efforts, prominent initiatives included the National Peace Committee (NPC), Think-Tanks and the National Peace Advisory Forum (NPAF), diplomatic interventions, and Faith Based Initiatives and Civil Society Organisations advocacy. Our discussion in the article noted that the peace initiatives were less effective in curbing violence compared to the 2015 general elections in Nigeria. Apart from the rejection of the outcome by the PDP presidential candidate, violence was pervasive before, during and after the elections in

some states such as Lagos and Port Harcourt. Notably, the reports of Election Observer Groups such as the Commonwealth criticized the partisanship of some faith based groups (The Commonwealth, 2019).

That notwithstanding, there are valuable lesson from role of peace initiative in preventing elections violence in Nigeria. These include, but not limited to, the commitment of parties to peace pact; positive roles played by think thanks and civil society organizations; understanding of the drivers, triggers and major actors involved in post elections violence; the role of the media in shaping public perception and opinions; positive perception of the Elections Management Body (EMB) helps ensuring peaceful elections; and role of members of the international community, eminent personalities and organizations. The paper concludes by underscoring the fact that despite the concerted efforts to promote free, fair and credible elections through instrumentality of peace initiatives, elections violence remains a huge risk to democratic consolidation in Nigeria, even after two decades of uninterrupted democratic experiment in the country. It recommends that peace initiatives should not be concentrated at the national level, but replicated at state, local and grassroots levels. This should involve a broader spectrum of stakeholders including leaders, politicians and political parties, security agencies, CSOs, traditional rulers, women and youths.

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NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY AND DEMOCRATIC ETHOS: EMERGING TRENDS BETWEEN DOGMA AND DYNAMICS

Franc Ter Abagen
Department of Political Science
Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria

Abstract

This paper questions the intrigues of Nigeria's foreign policy principles in the face of constant flux in the international system especially the presence of divergent external interests. At the dawn of the 1960's, many African States including Nigeria embarked on the journey of political sovereignty. The foreign policy of most of these newly independent states had a strongly overt Pan-African premise. The issues of good governance and democratic ethos did not occupy National Interest discourse because it was generally accepted by the leadership and the electorate that the nature and character of governance would be democratic and ensure popular franchise. The incidence of numerous military coups and undemocratic processes critically underscored the political upheavals that exposed the lack of democratic ethos as a core determinant and component of Nigeria's foreign policy. Contemporary world trends have changed and democratic ethos and culture have been given impetus but the challenge here is that Nigeria is yet to codify these among her foreign policy principles and this paper argues that like Afrocentricism, democratic principles should also be embedded in Nigeria's foreign policy.
Key words: Foreign policy, democratic ethos, Afrocentricism, good governance, Nigeria

Introduction

The world generally regards democracy as the best form of political governance as its processes readily assures accountability to the people. It is the realization of the importance of democracy that states such as the United States of America, USA, France and even Russia recognized it as the most inclusive form of governance despite the undemocratic periods that situated themselves in the political histories of such states. It has become so important that it is entrenched in the foreign policies of these states.

In the words of Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth President of the United States, democracy is a government of the people, by the people and for the

people, (Aluko, 1981 p.1). Nigeria was one of the seventeen countries that became independent in 1960, the year became generally known as **'**annus mirabilis" (the miraculous year) in which many states attained independence. At independence, Nigeria joined international organizations such as the Commonwealth of Nations, the European Union (EU) then known as the European Economic Community (EEC) with an observer status through the influence of the United Kingdom (UK), her former colonial master and also the United Nations. The logic of events and the colonial legacy created the unique flavor of pressures felt by the political leadership in crucial decisions on what Nigeria's National Interest was and its utility as a core determinant of Nigeria's foreign policy. At the time of independence, the world was effectively bi-polar with US leading the West and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) leading the East and this scenario had impact on the foreign relations choices Nigeria would subsequently make.

Despite "annus mirabilis" of 1960, many African States were still under colonial rule hence the choice of a pro-African foreign policy. Subsequently, issues of non-alignment, international peace and security, governance and democracy would later form the fulcrum of National Interest and serve as determinants of Nigeria's foreign policy as dynamics in the international system indicated.

Foreign Policy, Afrocentricism, Democratic Ethos and Good Governance; Brief Conceptual Elucidations

Foreign Policy

Abagen and Tyona (2018), define foreign policy as, rules, regulations, principles and ideologies that catalyze plans or strategies of action of a state in relations with the international system. To Okajare (2016, p.12), 'foreign policy entails all those polices a country formulates towards the production of its interest in the international system. Two factors suffice at this point; the interest of the state i.e its objectives and the environment of action which is the international system. Scholars such as Rosenau as cited by Kolawole (1997, p. 273) explains foreign policy as the authoritative actions which governments take or are committed to take in order to preserve the desirable aspects of the international environment or alter its undesirable aspects." Kolawole (1997, p. 272) is quite blunt when he describes foreign policy as 'the instrumentality of making friends and creating enemies'. The sphere of

this "friend or enemy" creation is indeed the international system. These aforementioned postulations also agree with Modelski's definition of foreign policy as 'the system of activities evolved by communities for changing the behavior of other states and for adjusting their own activities to the international environment, (Modelski, 1962, p.7).

Similarly, Herman (1983, p. 269) explains foreign policy as 'consisting of plans, goals and actions of national governments directed as entities outside the nation'. We may assert at this point that since international law exists, behaviour between states to a large extent has been standardized and foreign policy provides both the platform and fulcrum for these states to articulate and implement their objectives. It is critical as a core process to engage and influence other international actors in interstate relations.

Democratic Ethos

Democratic ethos refers to democratic culture or character. The word 'ethos' is Greek in origin meaning "nature, disposition, the distinctive spirit of a culture or an era," (Showmeword, 2019). Nachman (1981, p. 43) in furtherance gives a very direct definition of democratic ethos as "a situation of moral and legal equity". He further opines that only liberal democracy can ensure this state of affairs. Halloran (1982) describes ethos as the guiding beliefs of a person, group or organization. Democratic ethos from the foregoing dwells essentially on the guiding principles on the existence of liberal democratic practice especially the extent of its entrenchment.

To DeLeon and DeLeon (2002), Democratic ethos refers to the viable principles in public service and citizen management. They assert that the availability of democratic ethos ushers the trust between the citizens and government creating an environment for development and justice. Glynos (2003), at this point give us a rather radical understanding of democratic ethos. He asserts that a simplistic belief system in democratic practice is farfetched and overrated. What to him defines democratic ethos is the nature of power relations between the citizens and the political leadership. If the political leadership manifests, more power as in most cases the democratic ethos is skewed and merely accentuates the status of divergent citizens in a country's political space. The availability of democratic ethos itself is not enough without cognizance of power relations between the leadership and the citizens. In the international interactions of states, foreign policy thus provides the obvious platform where democratic ethos as National Interest is not only

advanced by the political leadership but easily manifests and is visibly observed.

Afrocentricism

Afrocentricism depicts ideological and behavioural bias towards norms, customs and idiosyncrasies that are African or have African origins. Pro- African thought and consciousness is generally ascribed to the Pan-Africanist ideology propounded by Marcus Garvey which became popular in the US, the Caribbean and Europe where large Negro populations were located. The main motivation for this postulation was the racism experienced by Negro populations that were previously slaves. It was a strategy at reinventing the Negro identity to make it powerful, assertive and attractive than the image of slavery, inferiority and subjugation it had. Pan-Africanism also included the consciousness and platform of inter-African solidarity not only among negroid populations in diaspora in the 18th century but also indigenous Africans such as Nnamdi Azikiwe, Robert Mugabe, Patrice Lumumba, Kwame Nkrumah, Herbert Macaulay and Obafemi Awolowo from colonial territories who travelled abroad for educational purposes. Apart from Marcus Garvey, other African scholars such as Maulara Karenga, an African American that initiated the Kwanzaa Festival in the US in 1966 and Senegalese Scientist, Cheikh Anta Diop also wrote extensively on the cultural unity of Africa. It is the consequent consciousness of pan-Africanism that gave rise to Afrocentricsm. What we may finally deduce is that pan-Africanism operates more at the individual or group level while Afrocentricism is its counterpart in interstate relations.

All these facts agree with those of Chawane (2016, p. 2), that central to Afrocentricism is the conscious and consistent challenge to biased traditional Eurocentric perspectives on the nature and character and society of the African. In contemporary terms Afrocentricism has been interchanged with Pan-Africanism; a proposition that maintains and upholds African unity and empathy. Nigeria's ideological foreign policy bias can generally be adduced from this perspective.

Good Governance

Good governance refers to the culture of effective statecraft. It also entails the management of public resources for the good and welfare of the citizenry. Accordingly Burns (2000) describes good governance as respect for

the basic rights of individual (citizens) as enshrined in the constitution of the state. It also includes adherence to the rule of law, transparency and accountability in handling government's affairs in terms of managing the country's resources. To a large extent Burn's conceptual perspective on good governance also agrees with that of Ali (2015) who explains good governance to mean greater accountability by public officials, transparency in governmental procedures as well a predictability of both government itself and the political system.

Intellectually and in practice, good governance shows congruence with democratic ethos. In fact democratic ethos forms the pedestal on which good governance is expressed. When codified in a country's foreign policy objectives, it creates an international platform for the attainment of the goals of inclusive governance through liberal franchise thus creating a more stable and effective political system.

National Interest as Theoretical Framework

The framework for understanding this paper's analytic perspective is the concept of National Interest. Foreign policy is mostly understood from the premise of National Interest which represents the core value in the articulation of objectives in a state's international relations. Obi (2015, p. 15) opines here that 'the concept of National Interest indeed occupies a prime position in a nation's foreign policy, therefore National Interest and foreign policy are at the root of the study of International Relations. Obi (2015, p. 15) further opines that 'the concept of National Interest indeed occupies prime position in a national's foreign policy, therefore National Interest and foreign policy are at the root of the study of international relations. Burchill (2005) notes the importance of National Interest in interstate relations and his view is congruent to Obi's assertion that National Interest is the starting point in clarifying determinants of foreign policy, (Obi, 2015).

According to Morgenthau (1973) National Interest is 'the guide, the main blue print that codifies expected behavior of states in the international system. To this end Friska and Finally (1968, p. 107) submit an apt description of National Interest as 'the general and continuing ends for which a nation acts'. We see in this case the explanation of National Interest as the key motivating factors in the plethora of objectives, states strive to achieve internationally. Whether these interests are core or remote they give a

country's foreign policy its peculiar flavor and in consequence it international image and reputation.

In an analysis of Hans Morgenthau's submissions on National Interest, Kiyono (1969) informs that the chief determinant of National Interest is the political leadership. This leadership is greatly influenced by the domestic and external environment including certain idiosyncrasies. Therefore National Interest faces constant redefinition due to the apparent dynamism in a state's political leadership. Despite this situation a few National Interest objectives remain same despite regime change due to their obvious importance.

Afrocentricism was decided as core National Interest by Nigeria's post independence leadership based on the experience of colonial rule and the realization that solidarity was needed if African states were to pursue their objectives internationally. As Frankel (1970) notes, National Interest is indeed an amalgam of ideological learning, cultural makeup, public aspirations and historical memories. Nigeria's post independence political leadership has tried to be dynamic in the pursuit of foreign policy objectives but this has sometimes been confusing and fortuitous.

Afrocentricism and Democratic Ethos in Nigeria's Foreign Relations

Despite the unending situations of a lack of consensus among international relations scholars on the utility of National Interest as the main determinant of foreign policy, experience in international relations shows that National Interest indeed exists and is the basis for a gamut of interstate interactions. Critics such as Rosenau (1976), Burchill (2005), and Obi (2015) observe that the standard for assessing and determining what constitutes National Interest is difficult and somewhat elusive. They also note that what constitutes the core of National Interest is not immediately perceptible.

Frankel (1970) attempts a 4 point clarification of the various levels of National Interest which he terms as aspirational, operational, explanatory and polemic. The aspirational level indicates the vision of the leadership of the state in terms of objectives. These can be norms, beliefs or principles or a national value. The operational level refers to the totality of interests and policies of state. The explanatory level seeks to analyze, explain and evaluate interstate relations while the polemic level rationalizes or criticizes foreign relations (Obi, 2015, p. 15).

The background above situates the difficulty in legitimizing National Interest. Should the political leadership determine it or should a participatory

process give citizens the capacity to set its components? Practical observation of the international political space underscores the fact that the political leadership especially its idiosyncrasies, fears, interests and motivation create a country's peculiar National Interest disposition, (Fukuyama, 2005). In Nigeria, the motivation in 1960 was liberation from colonial rule with Afrocentricism as its premise. Nigeria's political leadership was aware of the fact that many states in the Southern and the Eastern parts of Africa were yet to attain political independence. It also realized that a stronger, politically allied Africa would be more formidable in the bi-polar international system it emerged from as a sovereign state. In doing so the political leadership led by Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa at the United Nations on 7th, October 1960 outlined Nigeria's foreign policy goals thus;

- The defence and promotion of Nigeria's sovereignty, territorial integrity and national independence
- The creation of the necessary economic and political conditions to secure the government, territorial integrity and national independence of other African countries and their total liberation from imperialism and all forms of foreign domination.
- Creation of the necessary conditions for the economic, political, social and cultural development of Africa.
- Promotion of the right of all Black and oppressed peoples throughout the world.
- Promotion of African unity
- Promotion of world peace built on freedom, mutual respect and equality for all peoples of the world.
- Respect for the territorial integrity of all nations
- Non-partisanship in East-West ideological disputes and freedom of association and action in the international system, (Okajare, 2016, p. 13).

Okajare (2016, p13), further opines,

It is noticeable that Africa occupied the central stage in Nigeria's foreign policy thrust at independence and these principles have over the years remained the major base of the country's conduct of international relations with not too fundamental modifications.

As observed above, democratic ethos was generally relegated to the background as a National Interest issue and was not included in the principles

and thus codification of Nigeria's foreign policy. What could be termed as the major factors subsisting as Nigeria's National Interest was the liberation and development of Africa and non-alignment in world affairs. Democratic ethos was not an issue. It was not demanded as a criterion for international engagements and the consequences of this were to affect Nigeria and the rest of Africa later. Therefore in Nigeria's international relations, the political leadership, the bureaucratic elite and the electorate took the importance of the inclusion of democratic ethos for granted. The consciousness at the time was towards Afrocentricism than the entrenchment of democratic governance principles as criteria for interstate relations.

The non inclusion of democratic ethos in both national and interest permutations in consequence also led to the non–inclusion of progressive governance values in Nigeria's foreign policy. These values such as accountability, rule of law, equality, inclusive participation, non-discrimination and political representation that would in decades later form the praxis of good governance were not part of the requirements for foreign alliances. The dominant theme of foreign relations was Afrocentric liberalism, a path that has ensured a never ending debate by scholars and policy makers on the relevance of Nigeria's continuous pursuance of the ideology as its main foreign policy focus.

These arguments are pertinent because the foreign policy objectives of a state reflect its peculiar interest. The euphoria of independence led to the drafting of a foreign policy blue-print that looked more like the manifesto of a mobilizing organization on the principles of negritude than a robust plan for an extensive engagement with the international system. Foreign policy also has reciprocity as an aspect therefore states do not just engage in bilateral or multilateral alliances to make another country's interest more attainable than theirs. Nigeria's posture as a defender of Afrocentric ideals is indeed noteworthy. However the apposition here is whether the benefits have outmatched the losses in her foreign relations? This paper's position is that it has endured more losses than benefits due to the eroded relevance of Afrocentricism overtime. Situations such as the official recognition of Biafra by Gabon, Ivory Coast (Cote d'Voire) and Tanzania, the lack of Africa's support for Nigeria's bid for the Secretary General position of the UN in 1991 and surprising loss of the Bakassi Peninsula and kilometers of border territory to the Republic of Cameroon in 2002 including the heavy criticism of

Nigeria's military by Chad in 2014 on the tackling of the Boko Haram insurgency are clear examples.

Challenges to Nigeria's Foreign Policy; between Dogma and Dynamics

The ascendance of military rule in various African states and Nigeria inclusive in 1966 had marked effects on the implementation of the nation's foreign policy. At the time, military rule was seen as panacea, a solution to the governance problems that resulted in political instability in many states across Africa. The very first impact of military rule was the elimination of the democratic process as platform for political participation. Foreign policy articulation directives came through military fiat than as a result of healthy, germane and progressive discourse.

In consequence, most of these military governments had very poor human rights records as they were repressive, brutal, and corrupt and subverted all forms of social justice. In Nigeria the military ruled by decree and these decrees censored the media and totally outlawed popular political participation. These situations did not however occur at the same time in all the particular states such as Nigeria which also had military government. The nature of African military governments no matter benevolent outlawed democratic ethos domestically and soon lost any modicum of legitimacy they may have initially obtained when they overthrew various democratic governments.

Most of Nigeria's military governments from the regime of General Johnson Thomas Umunnakwe Aguiyi-Ironsi to General Abdusalam Abubakar maintained Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy but the motive was to elicit favour and recognition from other African military governments in the quest for international legitimacy. From 1966 to 1999, Nigeria experienced 8 military regimes with varying themes in foreign policy implementation. Some of these themes according to Pine (2014, p.1) are "conceptual mutations in foreign policy engineering that lack ideological consistency with Afrocentricism". These conceptualizations of Nigeria's foreign policy include "national consensus in foreign policy, dynamic foreign policy, concentric cycles, concert of medium powers, economic diplomacy and citizen diplomacy.

Pine (2014, p.2) is quite scathing when he further opines that, "these foreign policy conceptualizations are operationally barren and philosophically vague". Despite his strong criticism it is the contention here that his perusal

did not identify and isolate the obvious lack of democratic ethos in Nigeria's foreign policy.

The sum of this situation is that since democratic governance values were not situated in interstate relations, it was easy for military rule and civilian dictatorships to rapidly spread. Democratic ethos was not in the foreign policy debate till the incidence of repressive military rule when the African and specifically Nigerian electorate stridently demanded for it. The other consequence of this scenario is that the undemocratic nature of military governments and civilian dictatorships in Africa also led to obvious governance challenges.

Philips (2005) notes this obvious aberration to democratic ethos that prior to 1990 two-thirds of African states had military regimes or civilian dictatorships therefore opposition parties were prohibited or silenced. The political norm was for the military to rule through a provisional council (that was dominated by military officers) or a civilian dictatorship where a highly personalized executive governed through a tightly controlled one-party structure. There was practically no room for dissent or legal challenge to the ruling elite. Only Botswana since 1966 and Zimbabwe since 1980 were rated as truly democratic and maintained political pluralism. In West Africa The Gambia, Senegal and Mauritius sustained democratic pluralism but not for the entire post-independence period. Apart from these states Africa was generally a continent where governments were removed by force and not by elections, (Philips 2005).

Therefore for most African states democratic ethos was not contained in either the foreign policy principles or practice. Adeyemo (2002) agrees that the democratization wave for most African states were impulses from the international system at the end of the Cold War and also the end of socialist regimes across Eastern Europe and Latin America than from within the continent.

This impulse also referred to as "the third wave of democratization" by Huntington (1983, p.3) provided the impetus for the general movement towards democratic ethos than by pragmatic decision making by most of Africa's political leaders in their interstate relations. The situation described here is the reason why democratic ethos has continually failed to be codified in Nigeria's foreign policy objectives. It is also the reason why a military regime in Nigeria led by General Sani Abacha would attempt to "install"

democratic government in Sierra Leone and Liberia in 1995 and 1997 respectively.

It is pertinent to note that Nigeria's foreign policy objectives are provided under section (19) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 is the year democratic rule returned to Nigeria. The foreign policy objectives imbedded are thus;

- Promotion and protection of the National Interests
- Promotion of African integration and support for African unity
- Promotion of international cooperation for the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations and elimination of all its manifestations.
- Respect for international law and treaty obligations as well as the seeking of settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication and
- Promotion of a just world economic order.

A cursory observation of these objectives indicates that Afrocentricism is still maintained as the prime ideology of Nigeria's foreign policy. The principle of non-alignment has been removed and rather replaced with the main objective of the Non-Aligned Movement which has always been the establishment of an equitable world economic order. There is however no inclusion of principles that propel democratic ethos among these objectives despite the so-called religious respect and support by the Federal Military Government for the establishment and protection of democratic values and structures. It is because of this democratic ethos that put President Olusegun Obasanjo and Togo's President Faure Gnassingbe (Late President Gnassingbe Eyadema's son) on a collision course when the latter attempted to succeed his father through an undemocratic process in 2005. The respect for democratic ethos was the reason why the military coup in Burkina Faso in September, 2015 was condemned by leaders of the Economic Community of West African States, (ECOWAS) which led to the failure of the coup and the re-establishment of democratic rule.

The respect for democratic ethos also led to the strong posture of ECOWAS led by President Muhammadu Buhari as its Chairman to direct the special international military contingent to The Gambia to remove President Yahya Jammeh who lost the presidential elections, conceded defeat but later reneged on his initial concession. He was forced to leave on 21, January 2017

to allow the winner, Adama Barrow assume power. Incidentally Jammeh survived an attempted coup on 6th January, 2015. The military coup in Sudan in 11th April, 2019 has also received condemnation from African leaders and led to the suspension of the country from the African Union (AU).

Democratic ethos does not manifest by itself nor is implanted by military governments but is most times encouraged and influenced by the international system. It is articulated and implemented by the political leaderships of states through institutionalizing processes that enrich universal values that support democracy. The foreign policy process provides a very viable example how democratic ethos can be nurtured internationally.

Conclusion

It is the contention of this study that democratic ethos and good governance can receive elevated support in the concert of states. These very congruent concepts form objectives of foreign policy. Some of these countries include France, United States, Canada and Belgium. This situation however is at variance with Nigeria whose foreign policy objectives lack these. Africa still suffers threats to her democratic aspirations and contemporary situations illustrate that these threats are quite evident. Values such as respect for diversity, pluralism, tolerance, justice, freedom, human rights and non-violence are core universal values that motivate contemporary interstate relations. Many of these are also included in the blue prints of many countries' foreign policy objectives.

The inclusion of democratic ethos in Nigeria's foreign policy will further ensure the sanctity of democratic practice especially its philosophy as a platform for inclusive and participatory governance. Dogma at this point requires that Nigeria should rigidly adhere to her Afrocentric ideology while being dynamic in the international system requires Nigeria to adjust to contemporary changes in world trends and in this instance; democracy and good governance. As former UN Secretary General, the late Kofi Anan, asserts, democracy is a universal right that does not belong to any country or region and that participatory governance based on the will of the people is the best path to freedom, growth and development, (World Movement for Democracy, 2010).

Recommendations: Prospects for change

The prospects for a progressive change in Nigeria's foreign policy thrust are indeed strong. It would essentially require collective political will to attain. First this study recommends a structured and periodic review of Nigeria's foreign policy to ascertain its reciprocity profile i.e. the extent foreign policy objectives such as Afrocentricism and the quest for a new international economic order have been attained and the required adjustments be subsequently made.

Secondly, democratic principles and a central democratic philosophy which encapsulates Nigeria's democratic ethos should be codified with the extant foreign policy objectives. This would also ensure and increase intolerance and sanctions towards violations of the democratic process and institutions across both bilateral and multilateral foreign relations.

Finally, Nigeria in concert with other aspiring states should create a democratic peer review process to encourage and measure compliance with the democratic ethos articulated through international consensus. The key idea is to make democratic ethos a core National Interest factor because it may far outweigh blind pursuance of Afrocentricism and Nigeria's foreign policy indeed provides the pathway to ensconce it rapidly and effectively in her interstate relations.

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VOTE SELLING, ELECTORAL OUTCOMES AND GOVERNANCE QUALITY IN NIGERIA, 2015-2019

Elem, Emmanuel Obona
Department of Political Science
Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki

Abstract

Nigeria, a country blessed with abundant natural and human resources has the unenviable statistics of over 85% of its population currently living below poverty line and of being the poverty capital of the world. This situation is widely attributed to bad governance. With the increasing rate of selling and buying of votes in the country, this study examines the implication of vote selling, especially the poor, for good governance in Nigeria. The specific objectives include: to ascertain whether there are proven cases of vote selling in Nigeria; determine if vote selling is as a result of poverty; and to analyze its implication for quality of governance in the country. The study relied on quantitative research method with cross-sectional survey design combined with purposive sampling technique. The study was carried out in 3 Local Government Areas in Ebonyi State and the instrument was administered on 400 respondents. The descriptive statistical analytical methods involving frequency tables and percentage were employed for data analysis, while arithmetic mean was used to analyze the research questions at a decision point of 2.5. The study adopted Social Action theory as its framework of analysis. It found that some electorates sold their votes as a result of poverty, and that the politicians, after buying their votes and winning elections abandon the needs of the communities and their constituents. The paper recommends among others that Independent National Electoral Commission should control vote buying through stringent electoral laws.

Keywords: Vote Selling, Vote Buying, Poverty, Electoral Outcomes, Governance.

Introduction

Nowadays, people all over the world are witnessing an upsurge in the popularity of democracy as the primary vehicle for the fulfillment of individual aspirations, the articulation of interests and the nurturing of civil

society (Nkwede & Obona, 2017). This they attributed to the fact that political systems adhere to the fundamental values of respect for human rights and dignity, justice, equity, participation and accountability. In democracy, the citizens are constitutionally given the power to elect their leaders through the process of elections to represent them in governance and decision making. As a result of this freedom, people now see democracy as one of the best forms of government over the world.

In Nigeria, the return of democracy in 1999 after about 28 years of the military rule that took place between 1966 to 1979, and 1983 to 1998 was received by the people with a sigh of' relieve. The citizens had the hope that with the right of' the people to elect their leaders, through free and fair elections, that qualified leaders who have the interest of the people would be elected. This they believe would take care of their socio-economic needs, thereby improving their living standard, since governance is a social contract (Hobbes, 1991). The people equally believe that those who are unable to live up to their expectations could be changed as well through the process of elections.

However, after about eighteen years of civilian administration in Nigeria, records still show that the citizens are getting poorer, as over 70% of the population does not feed well, no access to socio-economic and infrastructural facilities, children of school ages are out of school, while there is no health care facilities for the citizens as noted by Ogbeide and Agu (2015). The citizens are being thrown into deep ocean of poverty, as the poverty level of the people continue to go beyond the United Nations poverty bench mark of 2 US$ spending rate per individual per day. The recent rating of Nigeria as one of the twenty poorest countries of the world and a country with the highest number of people living in abject poverty (Brook, 2018), is an indication that the country has nothing to show for its return to democracy since1999.

With the Nigeria's abundant natural resources including oil and gas, it is believed that with good leadership, the country should be rated as one of the richest countries of the world, especially with the return of democracy where the citizens have the constitutional right to elect good leaders and as well change the bad ones. This situation has continued to agitate the minds of both scholars and citizens as to why the people have been unable to choose good leaders that can improve their living standard as it is believed by many that the leadership of the country has been the course of its poverty level which is

attributed to poor management of the Nation's economy. At this level, it becomes confusing why the citizens cannot through their votes, elect good leaders.

However, some scholars have come up with the notion that the process of election in Nigeria has been undermined by the politicians as the electorates are never allowed to vote for the candidates of their choice as a result of inducement through buying of votes by the rich politicians who capitalize on the poverty level of the citizens to pay them some monetary and material items in exchange for vote, not minding whether such candidates are capable of caring for their needs or not.

Based on the above, the study sets to examine poverty and electoral voting in Nigeria with the specific intention of studying the 2019 general election in Ebonyi State Nigeria.

Statement of Problem

Voting is one of the processes of election through which people elect their representatives to various positions in government. Democracy is seen today as one of the best forms of government since it gives the citizens the opportunity to elect leaders of their choice through free and fair elections. Elections are deemed to be free and fair only when the people's choice prevail in an election by majority vote without intimidation or coercing people to vote for people that are not their choice. However, in as much as people are allowed to make their choice, the recent happenings during elections in Nigeria calls for concern, as politicians and political parties accuse themselves of influencing vote through vote buying.

Bratton (2008) states that vote selling which used to be widespread during the early stage of democracy in Western Europe has disappeared as a result of the economic development in Europe, however in recent years, a report shows that vote selling has shifted to and remained among the poor continents of the world including Nigeria (Bratton, 2008).Vote buying which is the direct exchange at the individual level of rewards and material goods by political patrons in return for electoral vote by voter seems to have become an integral feature of electoral politics in new democracies across the world especially among the poor countries including Nigeria. (Jenson and Justesen, 2014). It is believed that electoral buying tends to weaken or even reverse the accountability link between voters and politicians (Stokes, 2005) which evidence suggests that may contribute to increased electoral support.

In Nigeria, Ornofuwa (2014) states that those who expect a hungry uneducated man to have an understanding or care about the power of this one vote is expecting too much stating that as much as man has hunger problem, his life choices will always be dictated by his immediate satisfaction of that use. This implies that the poor are induced into voting as a result of the immediate reward of money or material needs from the contestant instead of voting for candidates of their choice with its intended consequences.

It is against this background that this study is carried out to assess vote selling among the poor and its implication for good governance in Nigeria. Based on this purpose, the researcher seeks to find out the answers to the following research questions:

Research Questions

5. Did electorates sell their votes in Ebonyi State during the 2019 general election?
6. Was vote selling in Ebonyi State as a result of poverty?
7. Has vote selling in Ebonyi State any implication for good governance?

Definition of Operational Concepts

This chapter gives an insight into various studies conducted by outstanding researchers as well as explained terminologies with regards to the poverty and electoral voting in Nigeria 2019 general election.

Poverty

The term poverty has no universally accepted definition. Many scholars view it in various ways based on their different discipline and orientation and attempted without success to provide a universally accepted definitions. According to Oxford Advanced learners Dictionary, poverty is the state of being poor: lack of income and other basic needs necessary for human lives such as food and cloths. Olukoya Obafemi (2014) sees poverty as lack of adequate income transfer and severed access to basic and pressing needs, adding that it is lack of access to standard social -economic life which is the case of contemporary Nigeria.

Poverty as a concept is difficult to definitely encapsulate in the web of different connotations as some view it as absolute level of deprivation or relative social condition of individuals. In Galbraith relative view, people are poorly stricken when their income, even if adequate for survival, falls

markedly behind the average obtainable in their immediate communities (Gilbrath, 1995). Using the purchasing power parity, the UNDP sees those living below one USD per/day as living in absolute poverty and those living below 2 USD per day as living in relative poverty (Sach, 2005). There is a subjective definition, which is the function of how an individual/group perceive himself/themselves as against description by others.

Today poverty refers to the consequences of the rule of money. It is seen as moneylessness and powerlessness, deprivation insecurity, voicelessness lack of power and all other human right conditions that are produced and reinforced by poverty (Khan, 2009).

The world summit on social development in Copenhagen in 1995 broadens the concept of poverty and captions as cross cultural when he states that poverty has various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihoods: hunger and malnutrition: ill health, limited of lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness, homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environment and social discrimination and exclusion. It is characterized by lack of participation in decision making and in civil, social and cultural life while mass poverty in Nigeria grows at a geometric proportion (Mattes et al 2003).

Quality Governance

Good governance describes how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources with a view to ensuring the realization of human needs and rights (World Bank, 2010). Quality governance is epitomized by predictable, open and enlightened policy making, a bureaucracy embedded with professional ethos; an executive arm of government that is accountable for its actions; an active and strong civil society participating in public affairs, and all behaving under the rule of law (World Bank, 1994). Quality governance drives development in the sense that it involves the promotion of the rule of law, tolerance of minority and opposition groups, transparent political processes, an independent judiciary, an impartial police force, a military that is strictly subject to civilian control, a free press and vibrant civil society institutions as well as peaceful conduct of elections (Collins & Udumaga, 2017), stating further that development has continued to elude most African countries due to bad governance which manifests in corruption, economic mismanagement, embezzlement and misappropriation of

funds meant for development, sit-tight syndrome, leadership insensitivity to the ruled, poor accountability among others.

Vote Selling and Vote Buying in Nigeria

The monetization of politics has given rise to the phenomenon of vote selling and vote buying in Nigeria as noted by (Lucky, 2014). Vote buying and selling is literally an economic exchange and an act of contract or perhaps an auction in which voters sell their votes to the highest bidder for pecuniary advantages (Frederic and Scheddler, 2005). It starts at party primaries where delegates simply converge to sell their votes to the highest bidder. In the general election, Poor people sell their votes for money, foodstuffs, wrapper, farm implements and tools etc. sometimes on promise of jobs or scholarship that are not forthcoming. This became more open in Nigeria since 1999. Vote selling has become a dominant political behavior of the poor- a behavior conditioned by stomach politics. Craig Dosanto (2006), asserts that the rich people and the privileged ones do not sell their votes, thus identifying vote selling with poverty. When power and money determine electoral choices, constitutional guarantee of democratic freedom, equality and democratic participation turns to dead letters. It is in this light that Ake (1993) describes African democracy as un-emancipatory for it offers right that cannot be exercised and voting that never amounts to choosing, freedom that is patiently spurious and political equality that disguises highly unequal power relation. This is why concern about clientelist control for the vote of the poor therefore arises whenever electoral competition unfolds. In the face of glaring socio-economic inequality, the resultant effect become wrong choice being made. Meanwhile, if votes can be stolen and bought with impunity, then one cannot take seriously the fight against political corruption. These festering problems plaguing our democracy can only lead to deep disaffection, apathy and cynicism.

The phenomenon of vote-selling is currently the most apparent and predominant electoral strategy that political parties and their candidates employ to prosecute elections in Nigeria. The vote-selling phenomenon pervades Nigerian election as noted by (Onapajo, Francis and Okeke-Uzodike, 2015), and no single factor determines vote buying as scholars have found that it is a function of a mixture of socio-economic, cultural and institutional factors (Hicken, 2007).

Vote-selling as an open form of bribery substantially corrupts the Nigerian electoral system (Uchnna Emezue, 2015) while the same vein, corruption impacts the electoral system. Fundamentally, unbridled political corruption among Nigerian public office holders lead to inadequate provision of road, water, health care, electricity and other infrastructure (Ajisebiyawo, 2016). Therefore, vote-selling in any given election has a long role to play in shaping the voter's behavior during election period.

The Implication of Vote Selling and Buying on Quality Governance

The negative consequences of vote selling are not apparent because they attack the heart of democratic governance and unnoticeably erode its essence (Lucky, 2013). Jenson and Justesen (2014) note that the consequential impact of vote selling have been to cast doubt on the value of the practice of democracy because of its paradoxical disposition. On the other hand, democratic election enables voters to choose freely the candidate that they want to govern or rule over their affairs, while it equally allows the use of vote buying with an electoral strategy that influences the outcome of elections thereby corroding the essential character of democratic governance (Jenson et el 2014). This prompted Vicente (2014) to state that the worst public policies and public services were the consequences of vote selling and vote buying. Jenson et el (2014) equally argued that vote buying results in reduction of supply of public goods, while Gomez & Hansford (2012) maintain that vote selling or buying amount to silencing the voice of the voters, which is destructive since it adversely impact on public service.

It is pertinent to note that vote selling results to poor public welfare. In all, vote selling or vote buying hinders electoral accountability by the failure of voters to hold incumbent politicians accountable by trading their votes for money during election.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on social action theory. It was based on Max Weber's (1964) theory of social action that individuals or group act in accordance with their own definition of the situation (Mughan, 1990). This action is ignited by what the individuals or group perceive to be the only means of satisfying their conscience which may be active or passive. This

behaviour is induced by the past experiences of those concerned which they use to measure the present and the future outcome of such similar situation.

Weber (1964) argues that not all human behaviour amounts to action; neither is every human action social. In line with this, one can argue that the action of electorates with regard to vote selling in general elections is based on the rational perception of the political leaders. The typical social facts in any society are laws and customs, the content of electorates and currents of opinion and all these constitute the culture of a particular people, and based on this, individuals or groups behave in a unique manner and some forms of uniformity of behaviour is discernible for groups or an entire society (Adeleke, 2016).

The social action theory is suitable in this study as it takes consideration of both internal factors (hunger and needs) in addition to external factors (that is, electoral process and action of political leaders). The relevance of this theory lies on the fact that the electorates believe that by voting for credible candidates that there would be improved standard of living, but unfortunately, this is not the case, as political leaders after winning elections abandon the electorates. In the second aspect, the electorates equally discovered that those who emerged as candidates from their respective party primaries bought their way through with money and other material inducement from party primaries, in addition to the fact that they still do not trust that their votes would count in determining the winners. This situations coupled with hunger, left the electorates without any other option than to resort to selling their votes to take care of their immediate needs which has become a social norm.

Methodology

This study in order to accomplish its purpose, adopted quantitative research method and applied cross sectional survey design, while purposive sampling techniques was adopted. The study was carried out in 3 Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, South East Nigeria where 1 Local government Areas each was selected from the three senatorial zones of the

state. The three Local government Areas are, Onicha, Ikwo and Ohaukwu with a total registered voters of 369, 643 that formed the population of the study. The choice of these Local Government Areas were guided by their rural locations where poverty is more prevalent. With the application of Taro Yameni mathematical formula, a sample size of 400 respondents were selected, 133 representatives from each of the 3 Local Government Areas. The 3 Local government Areas have a total of 47 electoral wards.

Three research questions were formulated to guide the objective of the study, while the study made use of primary source of data collation. The instrument for data collation was a 12 items structured questionnaire titled; questionnaire on poverty and vote selling, implication for quality governance with the response option format of 5 point Likert scale of strongly agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1), with values assigned to them. Face to face method was used in administering the 400 copies of questionnaire with the aid of research assistants to eligible voters in all the wards who were purposively selected. A total of 380 copies that were properly filled and returned were used for analysing the result.

The descriptive statistical analytical methods involving frequency tables and percentage were employed for data analysis, while arithmetic mean was used to analyse the research questions at a decision point of 2.50. This implies that any mean value above 2.50 was considered as agree while any mean value under 2.50 was considered as disagree. Construct validity and Inter-rater reliability methods were respectively used to guarantee validity and reliability of the measurement and findings.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Results of the Questionnaire Items.

The 12 questionnaire items were designed to illicit information with regards to the three research questions, 4 questionnaire items for each research question.

Table 1. Research Question One. Did electorates sell their votes in Ebonyi State during the 2019 general election?

Questionnaire items	Responses/ Percentage					Total	Mean Score
	SA5	A4	UND3	D2	SD1		
1. Contestants shared money to electorates during the 2019 general election in your areas in exchange for vote	170 (45%) 850	160 (42%) 640	5 (1%) 15	20 (5%) 40	25 (6%) 25	380 (100%) 1570	4.13
2. Items such as rice, tomatoes, cloths, magi etc. were shared to electorates by Politicians.	130 (34%) 650	160 (42%) 640	20 (5%) 60	60 (15%) 120	10 (3%) 10	380 (100%) 1480	3.89
3. Motorcycles, tricycle and buses were shared to electorates by Politicians during the 2019 general elections in your place.	140 (37%) 700	150 (39%) 600	20 (5%) 60	40 (11%) 80	30 (8%) 30	380 (100%) 1470	3.86
4. Promises of political appointments and employments were made to electorates by Politicians during the 2019 general election campaigns.	150 (40%) 750	165 (43%) 660	15 (4%) 45	30 (8%) 60	20 (5%) 20	380 (100%) 1535	4.03
Grand Mean							**3.97**

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table one above shows the responses of respondents on research question one which centers on finding out whether there were vote selling during the 2019 general election in the study area with four questionnaire items selected as indices of vote selling.

Item one sort to find out if those that contested for various positions in the 2019 general elections shared money to the electorates in exchange for their votes. The responses on this as shown in table one above, shows that 170 respondents, representing 45% of the total respondents strongly agree to this question with a total value of 850, 160 respondents representing 42% agree to this question with a total value of 640, while 5 respondents, representing 1% and a value of 40 disagree. At the other side, 20 respondents representing 5% and a value of 40 disagree while 25 respondents representing 6% and a value of 25 strongly disagree. These responses give a mean score of 4.13 which is greater than 2.5 criterion mean. This implies that respondents agree that those that contested for political positions shared money in exchange for votes.

The second item in the same table shows that 130 respondents representing 34% and a value of 650 out of the total value of 1480 strongly agree that Politicians shared such items as; rice, tomatoes, magi, cloths etc. to

electorates in exchange for votes, 160 representing 42% and a value of 640 agree while 20 respondents representing 5% and a value of 60 are undecided while 60 respondents representing 15% and a value of 120 disagree and 10 respondents representing 3% and a value of 10 strongly disagree. This gives a mean score of 3.89 which is by far greater than the criterion mean of 2.5. This therefore implies that respondents agree that politicians shared food items such as, rice, tomatoes, magi, cloths etc. during the general elections.

Responses on item three show that 140 respondents representing 37% and a value of 700 strongly agree that those that contested for political positions shared Motorcycles, Tricycles and buses to electorates in exchange for votes, 150 respondents representing 39% and a value of 600 of the respondents agree while 20 respondents representing 5% and a value of 60 were undecided. 40 respondents representing 11% and a value of 80 respondents disagree while 30 respondents representing 8% and a value of 30 strongly disagree. This gives a mean score of 3.86 which is greater than 2.5 criterion mean. The implication of this result is that respondents agree that automobiles such as motorcycles, tricycles and buses were given to electorates in exchange for votes during the 2019 general election in the study areas.

Responses to item four show that 150 representing 40% and a value of 750 strongly agree that promises of political appointments and employments were made to the electorates in exchange for their votes during the campaigns of the 2019 general elections, 165 representing 43% and a value of 660 agree to this while 15 respondents, representing 4% and a value of 45 are undecided. 30 respondents representing 8% and a value of 60 disagree while 20 respondents representing 5% and a value of 20 strongly disagree. This gives a mean score of 4.03 which is greater than the criterion mean of 2.5. This implies that respondents agree that politicians used the promises of political appointments and employment to influence electorates to vote for them in the 2019 general elections in the study areas.

The responses of the respondents above give a grand mean of 3.97 which is far above the criterion mean of 2.5. This shows that there were voting selling during the 2019 general election in the study areas and by implication, Ebonyi State in general, as indicated by the measured indices of vote selling in the above table and questionnaire items.

Table 2. Research Question Two: Was vote selling in Ebonyi State as a result of poverty?

Questionnaire	Responses/ Percentage					Total	Mean Score
	SA 5	A 4	UND 3	D 2	SD 1		
(v) Vote selling by electorates was to enable them take care of their immediate needs? 4.09	140 (37%) 700	190 (50%) 760	5 (1%) 15	35 (9%) 70	10 (3%) 10	380 (100 were %) 1555	
(vi) Acceptance of food items such rice, garri, magi cubes, tomatoes etc.by electorates was as a result of hunger?	150 (40%) 750	130 (34%) 520	20 (5%) 60	50 (13%) 100	30 (8%) 30	380 (100%) 1460	3.84
(vii) Sharing of Motorcycles, Tricycles and Buses by contestants was opportunity for the poor electorates to own automobile?	170 (45%) 850	120 (30%) 480	50 (13%) 150	20 (6%) 40	20 (6%) 20	380 (100%) 1540	4.05
(viii) Unemployment rate and promises of Political appointments shaped the electorates voting pattern?	140 (37%) 700	180 (47%) 720	20 (5%) 60	30 (8%) 60	10 (3%) 10	380 (100%) 1550	4.07
Grand Mean							**4.01**

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table two above shows the responses of respondents on research question two which centers on finding out if vote selling during the 2019 general elections in the study areas were as a result of poverty with four questionnaire items designed to address the issue.

Item one in table two sort to find out if vote selling by electorates was to enable them take care of their immediate needs. Their responses show that 140 respondents representing 37% and a value of 700 strongly agree, 190 representing 50% and a value of 760 agree while 5 respondents representing 1% and a value of 15 are undecided. On the other side, 35 respondents representing 9% and a value of 70 disagree while 10 respondents representing 3% and a value of 10 strongly disagree. These responses give a mean score 4.09. Comparing this number with the criterion mean of 2.5, it then implies that respondents to this question agree that electorates sold their votes to enable them take care of their immediate needs.

On item two to determine if the acceptance of food items such as rice, garri, magi cubes, tomatoes etc. by the electorates were as a result of hunger. In finding out this, 150 respondents representing 40% and a value of 750 strongly agree, 130 respondents representing 34% and a value of 520 agree while 20 respondents representing 5% and a value of 60 are undecided. On the other side, 50 respondents representing 13% and a value of 100 disagree while 30 representing 8% and a value of 30 strongly disagree. This gives the mean score of 3.84 which is greater than 2.5 criterion mean. The implication of this result is that the respondents agree that hunger was responsible for the selling of votes by electorates in exchange for food items.

The questionnaire item three in table two is to determine if sharing of Motorcycles. Tricycles and Buses by contestants were opportunity for the poor electorates to own automobiles. In response to this, 170 respondents representing 45% and a value of 850 strongly agree, 120 respondents representing 30% and a value of480 agree while 50 representing 13% and a value of 150 are undecided. On the disagree side, 20 respondents representing 6% and a value of 40 disagree with this assertion while 20 respondents representing 6% and a value of 20 strongly disagree. These responses give a mean score of 4.05 which is greater than the criterion mean on 2.5. This shows that respondents agree that sharing of motorcycles, tricycles and buses were opportunity for the electorates to own automobile.

On the last questionnaire item on this research question to determine if unemployment and promises of political appointment influenced the

electorates' choice of contestants. In finding out this, 140 representing 37% and a value of 700 strongly agree, 180 representing 47% and a value of 729 agree while 20 respondents representing 5% and a value of 60 are undecided. At the other side, 30 respondents representing 8% and a value of 60 disagree while 10 respondents representing 3% and a value of 10 strongly disagree. This gives a mean score of 4.07 which is greater than 2.5 criterion mean. The implication of this result is that respondents agree that unemployment and promises of political appointment influenced the electorates' choice of contestants in the 2019 general elections in Ebonyi State.

The responses of the respondents above give a grand mean of 4.01 which is very far above the criterion mean of 2.5. This indicates that vote selling in Ebonyi State during the 2019 general election was as a result of poverty.

Table 3. Research Question Three: Has vote selling in Ebonyi State any implication for quality governance?

Questionnaire Score	Responses/ Percentage					Total	Mean
	SA5	A4	UND3	D2	SD1		
1. Electorates voted based on candidates that paid them and not on credibility?	100 (26%) 500	220 (58%) 880	20 (5%) 60	30 (8%) 60	10 (3%) 10	380 (100%) 1510	3.97
2. Level of vote bought by contestants determined the winners of 2019 elections	120 (32%) 600	190 (50%) 760	30 (8%) 90	20 (5%) 40	20 (5%) 20	380 (100%) 1510	3.97
3. Those voted to power through vote buying do not show concern to the needs of the electorates when they assume power?	160 (42%) 800	180 (47%) 720	20 (5%) 60	10 (3%) 20	10 (3%) 10	380 (100%) 16 10	4.23
4. Electorates lack moral justification to request for accountability from their political leaders after selling their votes to them?	170 (45%) 850	127 (33%) 508	40 (11%) 120	20 (5%) 40	23 (6%) 23	380 (100%) 1541	4.04
Grand Mean							**4.05**

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

Table three above shows the responses of respondents on research question three which sort to find out if vote selling in Ebonyi State has any implication for good governance
Nigeria.

In raising questionnaire items to address this, questionnaire item one in table three sort to know if electorates voted based on the candidates that paid them and not on credibility. Responding to this, 100 respondents representing 26% and a value of 500 strongly agree, 220 respondents representing 58% and a value of 880 agree while 20 respondents, representing 5% with a value of 60 are undecided. Following this, is 30 respondents representing 8% and a value of 60 that disagree to this, while 10 respondents representing 3% and a value of 10 strongly disagree. These responses give a mean score of 3.97. The implication of this result is that respondents agree that the electorates voted based on those that paid them and not on the credibility of the candidates. The second item shows that 120 respondents, representing 32% and a value of 600 strongly agree that the level of vote buying determined the rate of winning in the 2019 general election in Ebonyi State. 190 respondents representing 50% and a value of 760 agree while 30 respondents representing 8% and a value of 90 are undecided. On the other side, 20 respondents representing 5% and a value of 40 disagree while 20 respondents representing 5% and a value of 20 strongly disagree. The mean score of responses in this questionnaire item is 3.97 which is greater than criterion mean of 2.5. This shows that respondents agree that the level of vote buying determined the winners of the elections.

On the third item on table 3, to ascertain if those voted to power after buying votes still show commitment to the needs of the people when they assume office. In this area, 160 respondents, representing 42% and a value of 800 strongly agree to this, 180 respondents representing 47% and a value of720 agree while 20 respondents representing 5% and a value of 60 are undecided. In the same vein, 10 respondents representing 3% and a value of 20 disagree while 10 respondents representing 3% and a value of 10 strongly disagree. The responses to this questionnaire item give a mean score of 4.23 which is greater than the criterion mean of 2.5. The implication of this result is that the respondents agree that those voted to power through vote buying do not show concern to the needs of the electorates when they assume office.

On the fourth item on this table, 170 respondents representing 45% and a value of 850 strongly agree electorates lack moral justification to demand for

accountability and good governance from their political leaders after selling their votes to them. 127 respondents representing 33% and a value of 508 agree while 40 respondents representing 11% and a value of 120 are undecided. On the other side, 20 respondents representing 5% and a value of 40 disagree while 23 respondents representing 6% and a value of 23 strongly disagree. These responses give a mean score of 4.04 which is greater that the criterion mean of 2.5.

The responses of respondents in this table give a grand mean of 4.05 which is far greater than the criterion mean of 2.5. The implication of this result is that the respondents agree that their leaders abandon them and their communities after winning elections and not accountable to them.

Conclusion

The study tends to capture the impact and the main causes of vote-selling and vote buying in Nigeria and identified poverty as the main constraint or threat of the effectiveness of democracy which is seen as a phenomenon that must be addressed for democracy to thrive or be sustained in Nigeria.

From the above view, the study moved further to ascertain whether there was vote selling and buying in the study areas during the 2019 general election, which the various data collected confirmed. This shows that vote selling was as a result of the people's level of poverty, since the poor electorates consider their immediate interest and condition of choice making, and thus loose since of judgement in their choice of credible candidates during elections.

Therefore, monetary and material values have long role to play in Nigeria in every given election as the voters consider their immediate benefit without considering the implication of vote selling and buying to quality governance, as candidates that win elections through vote buying lacks accountability and effective representation to his people since they sees it as economic exchange between the seller and buyer.

Recommendations

1. There should be adequate voter's education and national orientation to enlighten the voters on the need to stop exchanging their votes for monetary and material things.

2. There should be laws to prohibit politicians from making promises of political appointments to electorates during political campaigns.
3. The federal government should come up with social security policies to guarantees access of the electorates to basic needs of life such as food, clothing, housing, healthcare, transport system among others to curb the quest for basic needs that push the electorates into selling of their votes.
4. Government at all levels should create job opportunities for the teeming unemployed ones to enable them take care of their needs.
5. An independent body charged with responsibility of monitoring both candidates and voters from selling or buying of votes in any election should be created while those caught in the act should be prosecuted.
6. The electorates should be made to know that it is their rights to hold their political office holders to be accountable to them.
7. Independent Electoral Commission should sit-up to their responsibility of monitoring and restricting the amount of money candidates or political parties spend in elections as stipulated in the relevant electoral laws.

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EMPIRICAL REFLECTIONS ON ELECTORAL VIOLENCE AND DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN TWO NIGERIAN STATES: RIVERS AND OYO STATES (2011-2019)

Hassan Saliu
Department of Political Science
University of Ilorin, Ilorin

Tunde Agara
Department of Political Science
Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma
&
Kunle Ajisebiyawo
Department of Political Science and Public Admin.
Igbinedion University, Okada

Abstract

The focus of this paper is on electoral violence in the fourth republic. However, as an empirical study, the paper adopted a case study approach by looking specifically at two of the states of the federation that had hitherto been prone to violence since the inception of the ongoing democratic experiment. The states are Oyo and Rivers States. This study emanates from a more extensive study that is currently ongoing. Questionnaire and reports from focus group discussion and interviews conducted were used as sources for data analysis. The methodology adopted here for the choice of these two states is the Most Different Systems Design (MDSD) and Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD). MDSD entails comparing very different political systems or cases, all of which however have in common the same dependent variable, so that any other circumstance, which is present in all the cases, can be regarded as the independent variable.

On the other hand, the MSSD seeks to compare political systems or case due to commonality of recurrences of violence during elections. The study results showed that although there was a prevalence of electoral violence in these two states across the period under study (2007, 2011 and 2015), however, the scale of persistence of violence witnessed during these periods was relatively higher in Rivers than in Oyo states. When compared with the 2019 elections, findings reveal that while violence was on the decline for Oyo state, it is on the

increase in Rivers state due to continual empowerment of the perpetrators by the gladiators.

Introduction

Essentially, Nigeria is a democracy with a peculiar history of electoral violence. The violent nature of her elections cannot be disconnected from the nature of its evolution as a colonial state. To histories briefly, since the 1922 Constitution provided the legal framework for elections in Nigeria, pockets of political violence along ethnic and sometimes along religious lines have dotted the political landscape of the country. The first was in 1952 when Chief Azikwe was defeated in the Western Regional House of Assembly, and he eventually rushed back to the East where he displaced Chief Eyo Ita and became the premier of the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroun later known as the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC). In the 1959 general elections, cases of electoral violence where lives were lost and properties were destroyed were also recorded. However, the consensus among scholars is that the real political violence emerged in 1964 federal elections and subsequent elections, particularly 1965 were equally characterized by widespread complaints of fraud, violence and intimidation (Osaghe, 1998). The high rate of electoral violence (pre and post) following the 1964 and 1965 elections were said to have contributed in no small measure to the collapse of the First Republic (Osaghae 1998; Akinwumi 2004) and the First Military coup of January 15, 1966. This coup marked the end of the First Republic.

The electoral process of the second republic (1979-1983) was equally fraught with much electoral violence across the whole country. The most important one was the second election that was conducted after the first administration in 1983. The structure of politics, despite the alteration in the structure of the federation from three (and later four) regions of the First Republic, to nineteen states, was still driven mainly by ethnoreligious forces, where each party maintained its stronghold in a given regional/ethnic domain (Omotola, 2007). In the 1983 elections, the then ruling party, (NPN) attempted to extend its reach to other regions, particularly, the Western region. This attempt was underscored by massive rigging which resulted in an unprecedented outbreak of violence in the Western region, where the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), AG'S successor, had held sway (Omotola, 2007). The result was that two traditionally UPN states, the then Oyo and Ondo States, were declared for the NPN. This announcement led to unprecedented violence,

which a scholar had simply described as 'the house of war' (Babarinsa 2002). Although Ondo state was later returned to UPN at the Election Tribunal, series of violence that accompanied the disputed election results following various cases of alleged irregularities in the conduct of the election led to the collapse of the second republic; thus allowing the military to seize power on December 31 1983. The annulment of the June 12, 1993, Presidential election caused series of crises, especially in the Western part of Nigeria, championed by some groups such as NADECO among others. The post-electoral violence which followed was what forced Gen. Ibrahim Babangida to form an Interim National Government (ING) headed by Ernest Shonekan, and was subsequently overthrown in what was regarded as a peaceful coup on November 17, 1993, by General Sani Abacha. This development made the Third Republic an aborted republic (Abimbola and Adesote, 2012).

The conduct of free, fair and credible periodic elections by the unbiased electoral body including its umpire as well as other electoral officials and the adherence to democratic principles of governance remain major factors responsible for the avoidance of electoral violence in any democratic society. These two major factors were the challenges, which the fourth republic had been contending with since its birth in 1999 up to recent elections of 2019. Since the birth of the fourth republic in 1999, three general elections were said to have been conducted under a civilian administration in the country in which one can say that democracy was consolidated. In other words, the years between 2003 and 2011 witnessed the successful transition of one civilian administration to another. For instance, in 2003, a presidential election was conducted, and the incumbent President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo of the PDP was declared the winner by INEC. In 2007, Late Alhaji Umaru Yar'Adua of the same PDP was also declared by INEC as the President elect. In April 2011, another presidential election was conducted by INEC in which Dr Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP, who was also declared the winner of the election by INEC.

Although it could be said that democracy was consolidated in the periods from 2003 to 2011, basically because there was no interruption as before, however, the various elections conducted during this same period were not devoid of different kinds of electoral malpractices which led to a number of electoral violence culminating in the killings and displacement of many innocent lives and destruction of properties worth billions of Naira. It has always been argued that one of the fundamental problems facing the majority

of post-colonial African states is that of how to sustain and consolidate their democracy through credible elections (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 1989). Pieces of evidence abound to show that in Africa, only a few states could lay claim to have genuinely conducted free and fair elections that were so universally perceived. Thus, election administration that will achieve governmental legitimacy and as well prevent electoral violence after polls have always been a major serious concern to not only electoral scholars (Kolawole, 2007) but also many lovers of democracy.

The first major general election to be conducted by a civilian administration in Nigeria's fourth republic was in 2003 under the administration of President Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. The 2003 general election was not only said to have been one of the most corrupt and fraudulent elections to be conducted in postcolonial Nigeria (Kurfi, 2005). The election was also characterized by different types of electoral frauds which range from ballot stuffing, intimidation, killing, and assassination among others. The election was a triumph of violence. Several people have argued that there were no elections in 2003, but merely the intimidation of voters and the selection of already decided winners by elites and caucuses (Abimbola and Adesote, 2012). This could be further corroborated by Agbaje and Adejumobi (2006), who argued that the electoral fraud that was staged in 2003 general elections was more sophisticated than that of 1983 general elections.

In 2007, the second election under the fourth republic was conducted. Rather than getting better, despite a series of negative reports by both internal and external observers against the 2003 general elections, the 2007 general elections turned out to be the worst election to have been conducted in the post-colonial Nigeria. In the run-up to the elections, there were several incidences of pre-electoral violence leading to political killings, bombings and armed clashes between supporters of rival political parties. Pieces of evidence showed that between June and August 2006, about three gubernatorial candidates were assassinated (Omotosho, 2007). Animashaun (2008), argued that there were massive irregularities in the 2007 general elections and it was characterized by inflation of voting figures, declaration of result where elections were never held or not conclusive, intimidation of voters as well as manipulation of the security services. Without doubt, the 2007 elections were evidence that the cub of election rigging which was born in 1964 had now become a wild rampaging lion, consuming all it saw and leaving a shaking

democracy in its wake (Egohueze 2013). Late President UmaruYar'Adua also at his inaugural speech admitted that the 2007 general elections were flawed (Abimbola and Adesote, 2012). The evidence of this was seen in the various steps he took subsequently after its assumption. First, he inaugurated twenty-one members of Electoral Reform Committee, headed by justice Uwais to see to the problem of the electoral process in the country. Second, he ensured the Independence of Judiciary, which was noticeable in the various judgements dispensed at both Tribunal and Appeal courts over electoral irregularities. Examples of this were the loss of Edo, Ekiti, Osun and Ondo States to Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) and Labour Party respectively (LP), which were initially declared to have been won by PDP according to INEC (Aniekwe and Kushie, 2011).

Although the 2011 general elections were generally accepted by both local and foreign observers to be partially fair when compared with the two previous ones (2003 and 2007), the election witnessed two major stages of electoral violence, the pre-election period (that is, period of registration, campaign, election day) and the post-election period (that is, after the announcement of results). At the national level, the announcement of the April 2011 Presidential election result by INEC in which President Dr.Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP was declared the winner led to violence (post-electoral violence) especially in some parts of Northern Nigeria, such as Bauchi, Yobe, Maiduguri, Kaduna among others. The post-electoral violence that accompanied the 2011 general election resulted in the killing of about ten corps members in Bauchi state (Abimbola and Adesote, 2012). Besides this, there were other cases of electoral violence over the 2011 election. It was a result of the magnitude of the pre-election violence in Akwa Ibom State and the mayhem that had rocked several parts of the country before and after the April 2011 general elections that compelled President Goodluck Jonathan to set up a 22-man panel under the chairmanship of Sheikh Ahmed Lemu to look into the various crises. Specifically, the Panel was mandated to identify those responsible for the pre-election violence in Akwa Ibom State as well as the other electoral violence that greeted the election, especially in some Northern states in the country. The 2015 general elections were bedevilled with apprehension and atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. The general election was shifted from the original date of February 14 to March 28, 2015, in clear apprehension of violence. Although the elections were not violence-free, much

of the apprehension of war and post-election hostilities was averted by the commendable gesture of the incumbent President to concede defeat.

The focus of this paper is on electoral violence in the fourth republic. However, as an empirical study, the paper adopted a case study approach by looking specifically at two of the states of the federation that had hitherto been prone to violence since the inception of the ongoing democratic experiment. The states are Oyo and Rivers States. This study emanates from a more extensive study that is ongoing. Questionnaire and reports from focus group discussion and interviews conducted that would be used here are excerpts from the more extensive study. The methodology adopted here for the choice of these two states is the Most Different Systems Design (MDSD) and Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD). MDSD entails comparing very different political systems or cases, all of which however have in common the same dependent variable, so that any other circumstance, which is present in all the cases, can be regarded as the independent variable.

On the other hand, the MSSD seeks to compare political systems or cases that share a host of common features to neutralize some differences while highlighting others. MSSD seeks to identify the key features that are different among similar cases and which account for the observed political outcome. MDSD differs from MSSD with focus and the fact that it does not take a strict variable application. MDSD uses differences between cases instead of similarities between cases as variables because social scientists have found that differences between countries do not explain their possible similarities if they have any. A more basic idea of MDSD is that it takes subjects with different variables within them and tries to figure out why the outcomes between them are similar in the end. When using MDSD as a comparative research method, scientists look at changing interactions between systems in countries and then after all data is collected, the results are compared between the different systems. If the results obtained from this research differ between each other, the researcher must move up to the system level and switch to the MSSD method. When using MSSD as a comparative research approach, there is the independent and dependent variables that are introduced, specifically the dependent variable being common in all the research subjects and the independent variable, which would be the differing characteristic between the research subjects. MSSD is more precise and strict at finding the differing point along with similarities, but MDSD does not have

so many variables and only focuses on finding one similarity or difference between selections of systems.

Table 4.1 Most similar systems design (MSSD) and most different systems design (MDSD)

	MSSD Difference[†]			MDSD Agreement[†]		
	Country 1	Country 2	Country Φ	Country 1	Country 2	Country Φ
Features	a	a	a	a	d	g
	b	b	b	b	e	h
	c	c	c	c	f	i
Key explanatory factor(s)	x	x	not x	x	x	x
Outcome to be explained	y	y	not y	y	y	y

Source: Adapted from Skocpol and Somers (1980:184)
Note: [†] Based on J.S. Mill's (1843) method

Some Review of Related Literature
The literature reviewed focus on four related areas; conflict, electoral conflict, democracy and the linkage between electoral conflict and democratic consolidation.

Violence and Conflict
     In his analysis of rebellion, Gurr (1970) limited his definition of violence to justify violence against the state. He classified this type of violence into three typologies; turmoil or mass-based, relatively unorganized and spontaneous political violence (demonstrations, strikes, localized rebellion and riots); and conspiracy. The third he further classified as organized political violence with limited participation such as assassination, coups d'etat and small-scale guerrilla war and internal war, and organized political violence involving mass participation such as terrorism, large scale guerrilla warfare and revolution. It is against this backdrop that Tilly (1978) argued that the concept 'violence' often serves as a catchword for every variety of protests, militancy, coercion, destruction or muscle-flexing which a given observer happens to fear or condemn. However, in the field of political science, violence is usually defined and analyzed in relation to the state (Krasner,

1978; Skocpol, 1985; Nordlinger, 1988). This has made the major focus on violence to be on revolution, internal war, political conflicts, civil strife and rebellion (Skocpol, 1976).

However, Gurr (1970) encapsulated both political violence and force and described violence as the use of threat by any party or institution to attain ends within or outside political order. Hibbs (1973:8) also combined both means and ends, when he defined violence as implying the use of physical force generally evinced by the destruction of property, the killing or wounding of people or the use of riot control equipment. Similarly, Van Soest and Bryant (1995*)* posited that violence is any act or situation in which a person injures another, including both direct attacks on a person's physical or psychological integrity and destructive actions that do not involve a direct relationship between the victims and the perpetrators. This view of violence, broadened the traditional behavioural science perspectives about violence in four ways: (1) It emphasizes the consequences of violence from the victim's perspective; (2) it treats all types of violence equally, regardless of whether the perpetrators are individuals, groups, institutions, or society; (3) it permits examination of the manifestations of violence without excluding socially sanctioned violence, unintended violence*,* violence causing nonphysical harm, subtle or covert violence*,* and violence causing long-term consequences; and (4) it includes any avoidable action that violates a human right in the broadest sense or that prevents the fulfilment of a basic human need. Anifowose's (1982:4) definition of political violence aptly captures it as;

> The use of threat or physical act carried out by an individual or individuals within a political system against another individual or individuals, or damage or destruction to property; and whose objective, choice of targets or victims, surrounding circumstances, implementation, and effects have political significance, that tends to modify the behaviour of others in the existing arrangement of the power structure that has some consequence for the political system.

More often than none, there are usually distortions arising from the legitimacy of political uses of violence. This distortion has led to confusion in trying to determine the legitimacy or otherwise of violence. In most cases, when the government as an instrument of authority of the state applies force for the protection of the state, then violence is justified and adjudged legitimate. On

the other hand, when non-state actors or groups carry it out, it is adjudged illegitimate and a violation of the norms and values of the state. This idea aligns with Weber's view of the state and the legitimacy of force. According to Max Weber, the state is the exclusive source of the right to use violence, and all other individuals or associations may use it only to the degree permitted by the authorities (Anifowose, 1982:3). However, if the state, according to Max Weber, is the exclusive source of violence and has the legitimacy of its application, the questions that then needs answers are as to when, where, how and at what scale of application of such force or violence is considered legitimate. Failure to resolve this question generally leads to tyranny, especially in the less developed countries where the instrument of justice is still fragile. Such state-orchestrated violence includes and importantly so, electoral violence. There are other manifestations or typology of violence which may induce or transform into politically related albeit electoral violence. Put differently, politically related violence can take the form of either or all of the following;

States against States
Violence initiated by a state against another state usually takes the form of a conventional war, two opposing regular armies confronting each other. In cases of this type, strategists have differentiated between regular and irregular wars (Gray, 2007, p. 245). The history of the world societies is replete of violence of this type. In the violence of this type between states, a plethora of means have been used to prosecute such wars, and this had led to more and more mechanization of war, what Gray (2007, p. 115) had called "the technical development of armies, air forces and navies." However, violence between states have not always been through regular conventional wars, other lower levels of violence such as limited airstrikes, command raids, or even assassination of enemy agents have been employed. However, in all instances of violence between states, these acts are characterized by being organized, planned, and they reflect the capability of large bureaucracies. Among the issues identified as causing this type of violence that the world has witnessed from 1648 to 2003 were territorial disputes, which had become the single most common reason since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Second, are the wars of decolonization following the aftermath of the Second World War. Prominent examples are the Netherlands in Indonesia (1945-1949), France in Vietnam (1946-1954), Tunisia (1952-1956), Morocco (1953-1956), and

Algeria (1954-1962) and by Britain in Palestine (1946-1948), the Malay Archipelago (1948-1960) and Cyprus (1955-1960) and by Portugal in Guinea (1962-1974), Mozambique (1965-1975) and Angola (1968-1974). Third, are wars related to economic issues, involving commercial navigation, access to resources, colonial competition and protection of commercial interests, such as the Anglo-Dutch war (1665-1667). Finally, are those wars fought because of differences in ideas and ideology. This type of violence became prominent after the Second World War. Other forms of violence, which are not discussed here, are the diplomatic ones such as blockades, economic sanctions, trade embargoes and freezing of a nation's and its' nationals' foreign accounts.

States against Citizens
The manifestation of violence by the state against its citizens can be at two levels. The first is through the overt legal process by which the state enforces its laws and ensures its citizens' compliance with them. By this, the state is merely asserting its internal sovereignty and power over its citizens. The power of the state in this regard includes statutory processes for sanctioning and punishing erring citizens who may infringe on any of the laws. The second means of exercising violence against the citizen is through the clandestine use of illegal violence designed to intimidate and terrorize citizens to prevent them from opposing the government and disobeying or contravening the state's laws. Two ways have been used by states to perpetuate this kind of violence. The first is by enacting draconian laws aimed at subjecting and conditioning the citizens psychologically and physically to succumb and cajole them. The second way is by physically annihilating or assassinating opposition through the use of special security forces.

Citizens against Citizens
Apart from petty crimes, the major manifestation of this type of violence is vigilante violence and ethnic or tribal violence and hostilities. Over 80% of conflicts experienced in the world today are located within Asia and Africa, and most often, the violence has always taken the form of ethnic conflict. The vigilante type emerged primarily because of the inability of the police to control crime and these vigilante groups, at least in Nigeria, later metamorphosed into armed vanguards of their different ethnic groups. However, the most popular form of citizens' violence against citizens takes the form of ethnic violence, which can be further complicated by religious bigotry

as in Nigeria. The Rwandan genocide is history's tragic illustration of the extreme brutality of unchecked ethnic conflict. Many instances of Nigeria's religious riots have also acquired the characteristics of this type of insurgency (Albert, 2004; Ukanah, 2011).

Citizens against States

This is a form of citizens' expression of discontent against the state's policies or its leadership and maybe organized or spontaneous, having neither clear political goals nor organized leadership. In its organized form, this type of violence falls under the category of insurgency aimed at overthrowing the government. The violence of this nature occur within states but also contain within it the possibility of provoking conflicts between states. For instance, the success of the French Revolution brought fear to other monarchs in Europe, and their resentment eventually led to France declaring war against Austria in 1792. In Nigeria, the citizens' resentment of the state of the nation led to the Biafran War from May 1967 to January 1970.

Electoral Violence

Conceptualized from the above discussion, electoral violence can, therefore, according to Lehoucq (2003:233) be seen as 'clandestine efforts to shape election results'. This can be masterminded both by the political office holders trying to avoid defeat and by opposition parties by seeking to seize power from the ruling party. In some instances, electoral violence is directed at electoral stakeholders such as political aspirants, the electorate, party agents, well-wishers, supporters, godfathers, security operatives and the likes. The perpetrators usually target electoral information such as registration data, results, ballot paper and boxes; campaign materials, (Höglund, 2006:8). Seen from another perspective, electoral violence is a kind of political violence "differentiated by timing, perpetrators and victims, motives, and instruments" (Bekoe, 2012: 2). Laakso (2007: 227) had equally defined electoral violence as; "an activity motivated by an attempt to affect the results of the elections – either by manipulating the electoral procedures and participation or by contesting the legitimacy of the results." Frazer (2011) found that electoral violence occurs at three levels. These include pre-electoral, intra-election and post-electoral. Pre-election violence is typified by thuggery, shooting and arson, voter intimidation and the likes and usually takes place during party primaries where political aspirants from the same party jostle for the ticket to

become the party's flag bearer. The second category is the violence that takes place at the poll and involves snatching of ballot boxes, the kidnapping of electoral officers and forcing electoral officers to inflate the final results. The final category is the post-election violence which occurs after the polls have been held and a winner emerged. According to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), electoral violence is acts or threats of intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that arise in the context of electoral competition (Khadiagala, 2010:94). Sisk (2008:5-6) has described it as;

> acts or threats of coercion, intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that arises in the context of electoral competition. When perpetrated to affect an electoral process, violence be employed to influence the process of elections – such as efforts to delay, disrupt, or derail a poll – and to   influence the outcomes: the determining of winners in competitive races for political office or to secure approval or disapproval of referendum questions.

Accordingly, Höglund (2006) has posited electoral violence as the ultimate kind of electoral fraud.

Election-related violence may be directed at political candidates, party supporters, election authorities, voters, or any other actor/stakeholders. It usually occurs during an electoral process as a spontaneous or organized activity, which can take place any time from the date of voter registration to the date of inauguration of a new government; using physical harm, intimidation, blackmail, verbal abuse, violent demonstrations, psychological manipulation, or other coercive tactics aimed at exploiting, disrupting, determining, hastening, delaying, reversing, or otherwise influencing an electoral process and its outcome, (Fischer, 2002:15). Majekodunmi and Adejuwon (2012) described electoral violence as any organized act by political aspirants, party followers, electoral officers, electorate or any other people, which occurs before, during and after the election. It includes physical harm, voter intimidation, demonstrations, manipulation of results, or other coercive tactics aimed at exploiting, disrupting, determining, hastening, delaying, reversing, or otherwise influencing an electoral process and its outcome. Likewise, Igbuzor (2010) has defined it as an act of violence perpetuated in the course of political activities, including pre, during and post-

election periods. The acts may include any of the following: thuggery, use of force to disrupt political meetings or voting at polling stations, or the use of dangerous weapons to intimidate voters and other electoral process or to cause bodily harm or injury to any person connected with electoral processes. Finally, Albert (2007) has seen it as "all forms of organized acts or threats – psychological physical, psychological, and structural – aimed at intimidating, harming, blackmailing a political stakeholder before, during and after an election to determine, delay, or otherwise influencing an electoral process."

As to the reasons for electoral violence and its incessant occurrence in Africa, Khadiagala (2010:17) has opined that this can be traced to broader political conflicts, especially in countries that are beset by communal, ethnoreligious and sectarian conflict. At another level, he stated that electoral violence results from imperfect electoral laws; this imperfection allows some parties to manipulate polls through vote-buying, electoral fraud, multiple votes, printing fake electoral papers and inflating final results. Hence, elections can sometimes be violent undermining 'the principle of the democratic ideal that essentially relies on freedom of expression and choice' (Chaturvedi and Mukherji, 2005: 8). Khadiagala (2010:5) opines that violence during elections occurs in a situation where there is a lack of transparency and credibility of electoral laws. Höglund (2009:2) contends that electoral violence is triggered by the interactions of three factors namely: (a) the nature of politics in a conflict region, (b) the nature of competitive elections, and (c) the incentives created by the electoral body. Violence is then used to influence the *process* of elections in order to delay, disrupt, or derail the election and to influence the outcomes; the determining of winners in competitive races for political office or to secure approval or disapproval of referendum questions.

Democracy

Huntington (1991:6) has conceptualized democracy in three interrelated spectrums: first as "the sources of power", second as "the motive of the government", and lastly "the process of organizing government". Thus, Huntington (1991:7) sees democracy as a political structure where its leaders or decision-makers are selected through free, fair and credible polls in which all qualified adults vote. In this regard, democracy can be argued to be made out of two dimensions – contestation and participation. Przeworski et al., (2000) have also focused on contestation as the essential feature of democracy

and Collier (2009:15) has submitted that elections are known not only as the most observable attribute of democracy but its defining characteristics.

The essential feature of democracy which lies in its concern for the participation of the members in the process by which the community is governed, equally gives to each citizen a public office, a place in the sovereign tribunal. The citizen in his political capacity, therefore, becomes a public agent, thereby making government not a tool for impulsiveness but the instrument of collective deliberation. Democracy, therefore, is the substitution of the method of mutual consultation and voluntary agreement for the method of subordination of the many to the few enforced from above. Inherent in this is that any form of exclusion from participation becomes a subtle form of suppression. Despite the attractiveness of democracy in contrast to autocratic and authoritarian forms of government, scholars are not agreed as to how best to define the concept. The widespread popularity and the highly normative content that democracy has acquired had made many political leaders lay claim to practising democracy (Agara, 2007: 29). However, democracy as a concept must be understood from two dimensions – structural and behavioural dimensions. The structural dimension stipulates that a democratic government must include a constitution and political parties as well as structures of government that incorporate the three arms made up of an independent judiciary, legislature and an executive. On the other hand, the behavioural dimension includes the critical attitudes and qualities found in the people but which underpins the proper conduct of a democratic political system. This has been referred to as the "civic culture".

Apart from the elements of tolerance of opposition and compromise that made up the civic culture, democracy of the Western liberal bourgeois type also has certain salutary effects. First is that it increases the probability that the government will follow or be guided by the general interest. This is because, "how governments acts are affected by the constitutional systems through which they emerge…and democracies will ensure that governments pursue policies in the general interest or for the common good" (Lively, 1975; 111). Thus, the dictates of the democratic system, therefore, requires that the government should submit itself to periodic assessment and renewal of the mandate. Within the framework of choices, this implies that the government in power and which wishes to retain power must be responsive to the wish of the governed. Second, the liberal democratic form of government also imposes some restraint on the state. The state's right is limited by certain constitutional

provisions that assure the rights of individuals and groups in society. Thus, in this regard, the "temptation of the political leadership to wield absolute power is restricted by the competitive nature of democracy" (Perry, 1969; 145). This probably provides one of the reasons that endeared liberal democracy to the bourgeoisie, and this is that it protects them from arbitrary state interference in their pursuit of and acquisition of wealth. Third is that competitive democratic system compels attention not just to the form of government but also to the substance of politics in as much as political parties compete based on what they have to offer to the electorates. A fourth one is that democracy provides the citizenry with more opportunities to get involved in political decisions. The literature on mass society and political participation suggest that citizens' participation in a decision can be either as individuals or members of groups. It is only in this sense that representative democracy encourages "a belief by the masses that they exercise ultimate self-determination within the existing social order… credence in the democratic equality of all citizens in the government of the nation" (Anderson, 1977:30). Finally, the primary concern of democracy with the formal political equality of all citizens, majority of whom are economically disadvantaged, provides for the economically advantaged and powerful groups to dominate and often hijack the system thereby undermining the notion of political equality. Perhaps more than any other reason, this particular advantage made democracy quite attractive to the bourgeois. As Nairn, (1977:13) has rightly observed; "the representative mechanism converted real class inequality into the abstract egalitarianism of citizens, individual egoisms into an impersonal collective will, what would otherwise be chaos into a new state legitimacy". However, the institutionalization of mass participation in politics has thrown up what Przeworski (1986) has called the "institutionalization of uncertainty".

In order not to join in the definitional crisis plaguing the term 'democracy', it may be necessary to distinguish between two types of conceptualizations of democracy – the minimal and the more elaborate definitions. The minimal definition alludes to the fact that all modern and complex democracies are ruled by the elites (Verba et al., 1971, and Barnes et al., 1979). The implication of this is that government by the people is anachronistic, that the making of effective policy decisions is confined to a narrow segment of the population and that only a small fraction of the total population of modern political system possesses the requisite skills, knowledge, basic information and interest required for effective participation

in the political process and decision making. Lijphart (1984:1) has also argued that a nation is democratic to the extent that it acts "in accord with the people's preferences". Combining these two minimal definitions, democracy can then be conceptualized in terms of elite responsiveness to the needs and demands of the people.

Schumpeter's (1950:269) definition of democracy is that "institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote". In explaining further, Schumpeter sets out four explicit conditions for the success of democracy in any country. These are (1) that the human material of politics (that is, the elite) should be of sufficiently high quality, (2) the effective range of political decision should not be extended too far, (3) government should be able to command the services of a well-trained bureaucracy of good standing and tradition, and (4) there should be democratic self-control (that is, the competing elite should tolerate each other's rule and should resist the offerings of crook and cranks while the electorate, having made its choice, should refrain from interfering incessantly in the political actions of its representatives). Following the Schumpeterian tradition, therefore, Diamond et al. (1988: xvi, and 1995: 1-57) have argued that for a political system to be genuinely democratic, it must exhibit certain features which include (1) periodic competition among individuals and organized groups, (that is, political parties) for effective government positions, (2) a highly inclusive level of political participation in the process of leadership selection through an electoral process that does not exclude any social group, and (3) a level of civil and political liberties such as freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations, sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation.

Essentially, democracy is the institutionalization of anti-autocratic tendencies. One of the mechanisms for ensuring that is existence of viable and effective opposition to the government in a democratic polity. The ability of opposition parties to challenge ruling regimes is integral to representative democracy. A viable opposition is important not just because competitive elections are a necessary condition of most definitions of democracy (e.g., Schumpeter 1954) but because the opposition is, in fact, a critical check on a country's rulers. Writing in the Schumpeterian tradition, scholars such as Downs (1957) and Schlesinger (1991) opined that in order to get elected, parties are drawn to reflect the public's will. In competing with each other for

votes, parties are vying to represent the public better. Where one party is dominant, there is little competition, and, as a result, the dominant party need not be very responsive. Party competition forces political elites and voters alike to consider alterations to the existing political agenda; examine alternative ideological, cultural, or policy ideas; and re-evaluate which social groups should be represented by the government and how. Most of all, the presence of a viable opposition and party competition provide the ultimate check against unrestrained power. As long as a party fears a loss of office, it will be much less likely to act arbitrarily. However, if, as Schattschneider (1942) suggests, democracy needs parties in order to function, a system made up of nonresponsive parties suggests problems in democracy's functioning because democracy can be conceived of as based on competition. In addition to the normal roles and function which all political parties play in every democratic society, Kiiza's (2005) has also submitted that opposition parties promote national conversation and push democratic discussion to a higher level of political development and maturity. They hold the government and the ruling party accountable for its policies by promoting national conversation and discussion on issues that are salient and important. As a 'shadow government', opposition parties present alternatives to the incumbent government and party by providing the people with alternative ideas of how government should be run and the policies that should be made. By constituting their own 'shadow cabinet', opposition parties provide a veritable training ground for future leaders and members of the cabinet. The existence of opposition parties strengthens the culture of democracy and tolerance of opposition by promoting open debates and discussions of issues, policies and government's action or inaction.

The interface between Electoral Violence and Democratic Consolidation

The interface between election, electoral violence and democratization are complicated. The prevailing assumption is that democracy enhances peace, and the two are mutually reinforcing (Adekanye, 2000) with elections serving as a mediator between them. Elections do not only give room for political competition, legitimacy and participation but also allow a peaceful transition of power, making it possible for leaders to be accountable to the electorates. Accordingly, Hoglund (2006:4) contended that elections serve as channels of communication between the rulers and the ruled. Democracy is consolidated when it is free from interruption, termination, neutralizing, or degrading some

actors, and it is measured by regime continuity (Schedler, 1998). Schedler (2001) has identified three cardinal elements as necessary foundations of democratic consolidation – structural, behavioural and attitudinal. The structural foundation stresses issues relating to socio-economic prosperity where poverty is reduced to barest minimum with institutional indicators like periodic, competitive, free and fair elections, a multiparty structure and the rule of law. The behavioural foundations have to do with the capacity of the 'democrats' to tackle head-on anti-democratic shortcomings. This requires that 'no major political player flout fundamental democratic laws again' by having recourse to electoral violence, the rejection of poll results, thereby putting democracy at risk. On the other hands, attitudinal foundations emphasize what he regarded as the fundamental 'normative, strategic and cognitive' elements required to consolidate democracy. The normative structure refers to democratic legitimacy, which is described as the genuine, non-instrumental, intrinsic support for democracy by the political class as well as citizens. The strategic structure concerns the capability to intervene and change the nature of conflicting interactions between the democrats and anti-democrats in a consensual way so that all can work to entrench democratic system.

Linz and Stepan (1996) opine that a consolidated democracy is one in which vast majority of the people recognized democracy as the only system and believe that any political change must be within the parameters of democratic procedure. Therefore, Przeworski (1991) had proposed that democracy is consolidated when in the main the political actors recognize a common interest in setting up electoral guidelines and convinced that their interest in adhering to the laws and principle of the game outweigh the cost. Lipset, Przeworski, and Dahl cited in (Osei, 2012) have agreed that a country with rapid socio-economic progress would be more likely to consolidate democracy than a country with relatively low socio-economic development, thereby tying democratic consolidation with socio-economic development. Contending this assertion, Zakaria (1997) has contended that rapid democratic progress brings about "a plague of illiberal democracy," and Mansfield and Snyder (1995) have maintained that a country that is experiencing democratic progress is more vulnerable to violence than stable autocratic regimes. Linz and Stepan (1996) have argued that democracy is consolidated when its tenets become internalized behaviourally, attitudinally and constitutionally. Behaviourally, democracy can be said to be consolidated when no political actor or group of actors attempt to achieve their objectives by creating a non-

democratic regime or by seceding from the state. Attitudinally, a democracy is consolidated when the majority, no matter the level of opposition or dissatisfaction against the incumbent government, still holds on to the belief in democratic institutions and procedures as the best way to govern a nation. By constitutionally, a democracy is consolidated when both governmental and non-governmental forces are all agreed that conflict should be settled within the parameter and bounds as set down by laws, procedures and institutions established by the constitution.

They further elaborated on their submission by specifying five conditions that must be on the ground before democracy can be said to be consolidated. First is the existence of a virile and free civil society. Within this context, the civil society provides groups, movements and individuals the necessary arena to articulate values, create associations and advance various interests. Second is that there must be an independent or autonomous political society in which every political actors or group have the legitimate right and can compete for power within laid down rules. The third is every major political actors of the state must be subjected to the rule of law that not only guarantees and protects individual freedom but also ensure that the elected government officials and administrators are subject to transparency and accountability. Fourth is that there must be in place a state bureaucracy which is empowered and allotted the responsibility to protect the rights of citizens and deliver essential services. Finally, an institutionalized economic society must exist; an economic society made up of norms, regulations, policies and institutions that can sustain a mixed economic system.

However, when assessed against Huntington's "two turns over test" recipe and indicator of democratic consolidation, which posits that democracy can be said to be consolidated if the party or group that takes over power in the initial election loses the subsequent election and peacefully hands over power to the in-coming winner, the democratic experiment in Nigeria cannot be said to be consolidated. Since 1999, and not until 2015, PDP has turned Nigeria into a one-party state by rigging and muddling with the electoral process and the election results. There is a need to break away from the "frontier" character of periodic elections (Joseph, 2008:96). The façade of a periodic election but which only entrenched one party as the ruling party has not only weakened opposition substantially but also discredits them as the bearer of the hopes and aspirations of the people for change. The opposition has not enjoyed a level playing ground with the incumbents against whom

they are contesting using every state apparatus and institutions to either harass them or fractionize them, the prospects and life in the opposition party do not look so promising. This was one of the reasons that led to the extinction of the only viable opposition party, the AD, after the 2003 elections. The result is mass defection and carpet-crossing of members from the opposition to the ruling party, a move calculated to include them in the largesse that emanates from controlling power. This reinforces Dudley's (1973:3) observations that; in Nigeria,

> The shortest cut to affluence is through politics. Politics means money and money means politics… To be a member of the government party means open avenue to government patronage, contract deals and the like. However, once having known the profitability of having power, the (and the individual members) naturally uses the same governmental machinery to stay in power. The leadership becomes a self-recruiting oligarchy, and no self-recruiting (oligarchy) has been known to tolerate opposition to it.

Finally, to highlight the difference between democratization and consolidated democracy, Fernandez (2006:7) has noted that while the democratization process could lead to a nation with a democratic system, a consolidated democracy entails the comprehension of the system and the formal and informal acceptance of its citizens in respect to institutional, political and societal obedience to democratic rules and practices. The most widely known conceptualization of consolidation according to Schedler (2001), O'Donnell (1996) and Valenzuela (1992) is that democracy is consolidated when it is likely to endure and expected to last well into the future.

Meanwhile, most scholars recognized three major challenges while trying to conceptualize democratic consolidation. The first problem relates to behavioural foundations of stability, for instance, Schedler (2001:68) has maintained that democracy is neither a natural gift nor a side effect of societal factors; it is the work of political actors. The second challenge relates to the attitudinal structure of democratic governance where it is argued that democracy is always under risk unless all major political actors develop a

normative objective, strategic rationality and cognitive perceptions in order to consolidate a regime of liberal democracy (Schedler, 2001:85). Linz and Stepan (1996:5) have also affirmed that a civil rule is sustained when democratic procedures and institutions become *"the only game in town"*, and this only occurs when stakeholders resolve to play the game by the norms. The third challenge is evaluative orientation; for instance, when people are feeling safe, feeling safe concur that consolidation only occurs when the socio-economic environment and its institutional settings appear promising for the continuity of democracy.

Electoral violence can affect democratic consolidation as violent elections are unlikely to create faith in democratic institutions and the desirability of the electoral project. Such violence may also provide both a motive and a pretext for security forces and militaries to become more involved in daily politics. First Republic (1960-1966) and second republic (1979 – 1983) in Nigeria are accurate instances. According to Schedler (2001:73), one of the widely cited parameters of measuring democratic consolidation and its extent provided is the "one-turnover test". The test contends that democratic sustainability happens when the willingness of embracing democracy originates from stakeholders' determination not only as a way of winning more power but also where "parties lose elections". Essentially, electoral violence can undermine representation; build coercion and brutality into everyday political practice, shape regime- and state-building, and fuel insurgencies, local private armies and politicization of security apparatus. Electoral violence poses dilemmas for policymaking. Violent elections and their aftermaths in Egypt, Iraq, and Afghanistan, among others, make it clear that elections provide no guarantee of stability or legitimacy, even as internationally supported democratization in other countries has scored impressive successes. A regime of electoral conflicts is likely to trigger large-scale warfare or less dramatic, but sustained, violence around electoral contestation. Politicians and citizens trying to balance the virtues of democratic representation against the risk of spiralling violence face the same problem. Elections have been witnessed to exacerbate tensions by further polarizing warring groups/societies, especially when the incumbent regimes manipulate the electoral process to suit themselves (Diamond, 1995).

Analysis and Discussion of Findings

One thousand two hundred copies of the questionnaire were administered, out of which a total of 1156 copies were retrieved. The impressive number of questionnaires retrieved was due to concise and relatively fewer questions asked. On the other hand, for the more extensive study, a total of forty-six (46) key stakeholders were interviewed based on twenty-three in each state (Oyo and Rivers). See Table 1 below.

Table 1. **Analysis of copies of the Questionnaire Administered and Retrieved**

State	Copies Administered	Copies Retrieved	Percentage
Rivers	600	569	95.0
Oyo	600	587	98.0
Total	**1200**	**1156**	**96.0**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

Table 2 presents the other bio-social backgrounds of the respondents.

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents based on Sex, Age, Marital status and Religious affiliation.

		Rivers state		Oyo State	
Variable	Response category	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	277	48.7	279	47.5
	Female	292	51.3	308	52.5
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**
Age	18 - 30	121	21.3	104	17.7
	31 - 40	116	20.4	97	16.5
	41 - 50	201	35.3	210	35.8
	51 - above	131	23.0	176	30.0
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**
Marital status	Single	203	35.7	155	26.4
	Married	348	61.2	384	65.4

	Divorced/ Widowed	18	3.1	48	8.2
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**
Religion	Christianity	355	62.4	193	32.9
	Muslim	111	19.5	294	50.1
	Traditional	88	15.5	100	17.0
	Others	15	2.6	0	0
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

Other data that were gathered through the questionnaire administered were level of education, employment status, working experience, and distribution of the respondents based on participation in general elections. The section on substantive data opens with an enquiry to ascertain respondents' knowledge or experience with electoral violence, the form which the electoral violence took and the year of an election when the respondents have witnessed the highest occurrence of such malpractices. Table 3 below reflects their responses.

Table 3: Manifestations of electoral violence in Rivers and Oyo States (2007 – 2015)

		River state		Oyo state	
	Response category	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Electoral violence and malpractices had occurred in your area at every election	Yes	468	82.2	411	70.0
	No	101	17.8	176	30.0
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**
Types and pattern of electoral violence and malpractices perpetrated in your area during the elections you	Voting buying	83	14.6	249	42.4
	Snatching of ballot boxes	109	19.2	56	9.5
	Disruption of the voting process by thugs	73	12.8	51	8.7

have witnessed between 2007 and 2015	Manipulation of results	32	5.6	34	5.8
	Killings and destructions	171	30.1	21	3.6
	None occurred	101	17.8	176	30.0
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**
The highest level of electoral violence and malpractices witnessed by the respondents at general elections	2007	114	20.0	207	35.3
	2011	81	14.2	119	20.3
	2015	273	48.0	85	14.5
	None	101	17.8	176	30.0
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

The next sets of questions wanted to ascertain the form and nature of violence, the magnitude and types of weapon commonly used in such violence. Table 4 is a reflection of the responses.

Table 4: Patterns and intensity of post-election violence in Rivers and Oyo States

		Rivers state		Oyo state	
	Response category	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Types and kind of post-election violence witnessed	Case of arson	269	47.3	104	17.7
	Case of murder	138	24.3	166	28.3
	Destruction of property	61	10.7	141	24.0
	None	101	17.8	176	30.0
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**
Rate the magnitude of election violence you have witnessed after elections	Extremely high	218	38.3	81	13.8
	High	83	14.6	76	12.9
	Minimal	121	21.3	182	31.0
	Minor	46	8.1	72	12.3

	None	101	17.8	176	30.0
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**
Weapon commonly use in perpetration of post-election violence	High calibre weapons/ Guns	133	40.9	35	6.0
	Light weapons	218	38.6	106	18.0
	Machetes and Clubs	117	20.5	270	46.0
	None	101	17.8	176	30.0
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

It, therefore, became pertinent to inquire about the factors that may have gingered electoral violence in our two states of study. The responses captured by Table 5 below showed that ethnic mobilization and differences accounted for the highest factor of causes with 42.7% and the lowest being as a result of the struggle for power (5.4%) in Rivers state. This is ironic because the election is a reflection of the power struggle. It is noteworthy that in Oyo state, the highest factor that caused electoral violence is the presence, manipulation and incitement of godfathers (49.2%), while ethnic mobilization and feelings of past electoral injustices accounted for less at 5.3% each.

Table 5: Factors propelling electoral violence in Rivers and Oyo States

	River state		Oyo state	
Causes of electoral violence ↓	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Per cent
Political godfathers	58	10.2	289	49.2
Ethnic mobilization	243	42.7	31	5.3
Economic deprivation/ poverty	106	18.6	109	18.6
Struggle for power	31	5.4	58	9.9
Past electoral injustices	44	7.8	31	5.3
I do not know	87	15.3	69	11.7
Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

The study further seeks to know the possible impacts which electoral violence may have had on democratic consolidation. Table 6 below presents the findings.

Table 6: The impacts of electoral violence on democratic consolidation in Nigeria

Questions	Responses	Rivers state		Oyo state	
		Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Perceived levels of political apathy in areas where violence was perpetrated	High	423	74.3	382	65.1
	Low	111	19.5	141	24.0
	I do not know	35	6.2	64	10.9
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**
Do you consider election-related violence as capable of truncating democracy in Nigeria	Yes	438	76.9	417	71.0
	No	88	15.5	105	17.9
	I do not know	43	7.6	65	11.1
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**
Do you feel that the electorates are determined to protect democracy or defend it with their lives if there is a threat of failure of democracy in Nigeria?	Yes	119	20.9	185	31.5
	No	440	77.3	371	63.2
	I do not know	10	1.8	31	5.3
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**
Do you think democracy is now permanent in Nigeria despite repeated violence at elections?	Yes	138	24.3	187	31.9
	No	338	59.4	328	55.9
	I do not know	93	16.3	72	12.2
	Total	**569**	**100**	**587**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

Respondents were asked to identify the various challenges faced in curbing or bringing under control the incessant spates of electoral violence. Table 7 summarises the findings.

Table 7: Challenges faced in managing electoral violence in Rivers and Oyo states

	River state		Oyo state	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Per cent
Challenges of identifying and arrest of perpetrators	145	25.5	151	25.7
The limited powers of INEC over internal party democracy	100	17.5	123	21.0
Overriding influence of Godfatherism and primordial sentiments	265	46.6	281	47.9
The perception of police neutrality in the deployment of police in managing violence	45	7.9	20	3.4
Absence of legal prosecution after the apprehension of electoral offenders	14	2.5	12	2.0
Total	569	100	587	100

Source: Field Work, (2019).

From the above analysis, we can deduce that River State happened to be at the core of manifestation of electoral violence in recent times. As a 'superpower' in the South-South region of Nigeria; being the unofficial capital of Nigeria's magnified oil industry, had made the state the wealthiest in Nigeria, with a steady increase in annual budget from 183.38 billion Naira in 2007 to 307 billion Naira in 2015 (FOS, 2016). Rivers state's relative wealth has exacerbated rather than resolves conflict around the contest for power in the State. Not least, the state's wealth has led to high-stakes political competition and a resulting level of political cum violence that considerably exceeds its immediate jurisdiction, affecting national politics and threatening stability, the worst of which was recorded during the 2015 general elections. Due to its oil wealth, it has amazed corrupt political gladiators who use the state as an instrument for development and sustenance of political self-interest. 2007 and 2011 elections in Rivers were both violent and more brazenly rigged than in other parts of the country.

On the other hand, Oyo state, despite its early contact with political civilization and literacy, had its politics historically dictated by less educated political godfathers whose strategy for the electoral contest was largely violence. From the then Western region to old Oyo state and the current configuration since August 27, 1991, following the incision of Osun state from it, the state has been renowned for producing powerful political godfathers such as Chiefs Adisa Akinloye, Adegoke Adelabu (Penkelemesi), and whose grandson is a contender for the governorship seat in the 2019 elections, to Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu, former Governor Rashidi Ladoja and the incumbent, Abiola Ajimobi. The politics of the state was and is dominated by politics of godfatherism, hooliganism, violence and moneybags. Elections in Oyo state have also been fraught with violence and arson from time immemorial; from the first republic popular "operation were" to the bloody NPN/UPN post-1983 general elections violence to the incessant hostilities in the fourth republic, the worst of which was witnessed during 2007 elections. The peculiarity of the violent nature of politics and election n Oyo state is the politicization of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and its conversion to a political thuggery outfit in the services of the political godfathers. Incidentally, the developments that culminated in the collapse of the first republic in 1966 and the second republic in 1983 were the orchestrated violence in the old western region/Oyo state. Igwe (2012) has agreed that campaign strategies feature material inducement of the people to disrupt an opponent's campaign train. On the day of the election, other experts observed electoral manipulations, such as vote-buying, the use of party agents or contestant loyalists for unconventional actions like the snatching of ballot boxes and violent attacks on electoral officials, and violent attacks on voters and many more in Oyo state alone.

From the above analysis, it is evident that the post-election period often witnessed violence and distortion of peace in both states. Evidence from Rivers State shows fragrant access to weapons and other armful pieces of equipment used in perpetrating heinous act at election periods. According to Egobueze an Ojirika (2017), explosives and guns were used by recalcitrant rented youths to destabilize elections in Rivers State, sometimes targeting security personnel and political opponents. In a similar vein, Akingbade, (2011) reported that parties are involved in power tussle, unhealthy rivalry for political power over who gets what, when and how using Harold Lasswell's felicitous term. Party stalwarts perpetuate physical fighting, use dangerous

weapons like guns, and engage in the assassination of opponents all in pursuing political power. Party chiefs and hierarchies display brazen disobedience to judicial verdicts as an intense level of politicking play out in association with violence and squabble over party offices. These and other reasons have been responsible for political parties' instability in Oyo State in the fourth republic.

Political violence is seen as an instrument for fighting their political opponent and those criticizing the parties for their inability not to perform their expected roles (Peil, 1976). The nature of the dirty practice of party politics played by political parties in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, no doubt, gave room for political violence to ensue. Since political parties in Oyo State in the present dispensation believed so much in employing violence to achieve their set goals and thereby failing to perform the expected functions for which they are voted to political offices, good governance and democratic order becomes undesirable and thereby violated legitimacy of the electoral value in the state. Onyeoziri cited in Akingbade, (2011) supported this by saying the only way to achieve stability in any given political system is for political parties to perform the roles for which they promise the electorates before they were voted to political offices. Reliance on violence rather than popularity at elections enables political actors to deviate from the norm and convention of providing dividends of democracy.

Conclusion

In concluding, we are quick to submit that the 2019 general elections have not been a departure from the past experiences of violence during and after elections. Violence was exacerbated by intra and inter-parties hostilities and apprehension around losing elections in a free and fair manner. A member of federal House of Representatives representing Lagelu/Akinyele federal constituency, Chief Olatoye Temitope (a.k.a Sugar) was murdered as the aftermath of the governorship election in Oyo state on March 9 2019. Several manifestations of violence were recorded across the federation, particularly in Rivers and the Oyo States. The widespread violence in River state led to the suspension of collation and announcement of election results indefinitely by INEC.

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THE NORTH KOREA-UNITED STATES OF AMERICA NUCLEAR DEBACLE: SOME LESSONS FOR AFRICAN SECURITY

Franklins A. Sanubi & Nneka O. Ilochi

Department of Political Science

Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

Abstract

The continuing intransigence of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea depicted by its unending test of nuclear weapons (the recent being September, 2017) in defiance of extant United Nations resolutions has resulted in a nuclear debacle between it and the United States of America –a phenomenon that has generated significant concerns not only for global security but also for academic interest in contemporary International Relations. This study uses a historical research approach and a combination of Political Realism and Constructivism as theoretical framework to analyse the issues in the US-North Korea diplomatic logjam and specified some lessons that this debacle creates for African Security. It notes among other things, that the current difficult North Korea-US relations complimented by the latter's objective of total denuclearization of the former; and the accompanying international sanctions which has put North Korea on a tight economic and political jacket, only creates difficulty for African policymakers in cautiously selecting the relevant foreign policy alternatives that would help to meet their domestic economic and security interests if they are to avoid unfavourable backlash at home. The study suggests among other things that African policymakers should align with global initiatives in condemning North Korean nuclear tests and supporting denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula while strongly urging North Korea to return to the Six-party Talks as a way to resolving the volatile North Korean wanton nuclear intoxications.

Keywords: North Korea-US Relations, Global Security, African Security, African Foreign Policy.

Introduction

The international media purveyance of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea indicates how brutal this small country in the Far East Asia appears from a global and particularly a United States of America's perspective. Daily discussions in Washington, Moscow, Tokyo, Beijing and all over the world show the degree of interest on the subject matter of international security as there is a global focus on Pyongyang's Nuclear romance. This subject matter presents some concerned research interests in contemporary international politics.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has an area of 46.541 square miles, a population of 25,490,965 million and has Pyongyang as its capital (World Bank, 2017). North Korea is bordered on the north of Asia by the People's Republic of China and on the south by Russia and South Korea. North Korea occupies a significant geo-strategic and political position being located between the South China Sea, with the Strait of Malacca forming the main transport route between the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and the East China Sea serving as the main shipping route from the South China Sea to Japanese and other North Pacific ports.

The continuing global searchlight on Pyongyang emanates from its recent wanton intoxication over its development of nuclear programmes capable of exacerbating the already-tensed global security. The fear over the destructive capacity of nuclear weapons technology on human and material resources has even been given a fillip by the advancement in Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Wyk, et al (2007) notes that the development of nuclear weapons in contemporary weapons technology has ignited profound "images of destruction, power and security" –a phenomenon which has rendered all revolutions known in history obsolete. The Pyongyang government continues to commit vast amount of its state resources in the development of nuclear missiles as pivot for providing deterrence against

attacks by major powers. This move has jeopardized relations with neighbouring countries and major powers (Milani, 2018).

Successive governments in Washington especially from Bill Clinton's, George Bush to Barack Obama's have shared common desires to confront North Korea over her nuclear weapons acquisition programme which potentially enhances its military capability and promotes a proliferation of nuclear weapons or device to a third party –both   capable of inducing a conflagration on or outside the Peninsula. All three aforementioned US administrations came to the same realization that the North Korea's strategic weapons programme is a complex and difficult issue with no simple solution. The current Donald Trump's administration has not deviated from this objective judging by the direction it is presently headed. Yet none of these tactics have so far proved sufficiently effective in dealing with the Pyongyang's intransigence.

Tensions over the nuclear weapon programme of North Korea continues to escalate and the United Nations Security Council's issued Resolution 1695 of 15 July 2006, which   condemned North Korea's 2006 launch of ballistic missiles and imposed sanctions against it. Yet North Korea took a series of provocative steps which raised the spectre of military conflict with the United States of America and South Korea (United Nations, 2014). The period between 2003 and 2009, several multilaterial attempts to initiate meaningful negotiations with North Korea were made in what has become known as the Six-Party Talks for which North Korea and five other major powers namely China, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the United States of America are signatories. It was hoped, by the ensuing joint statement by the signatories, that the talks would help denuclearize the peninsula generally and North Korea's nuclear program in particular (Davenport, 2018a).

Current US-North Korean bilateral relations appear perhaps the most difficult in contemporary international relations. To those who lived and grew up during the Cold War era following the Second World War, the current tensions are a reminder that the conflict which occurred several years ago, left legacies and enmities that have not yet gone away and which still poses a real threat to global security. Earlier diplomatic efforts especially during the Cold

War era to achieve this objective have failed owing to the fact that, the traditional interpretation of North Korea's nuclear program emphasizes the military security aspect, considered as a guarantee for regime survival from external attacks (Goodby, 2003).

Over the years, successive US administrations have used a combination of carrots and sticks to induce Pyongyang to stop and, now, roll back its nuclear weapons and long-range missile capabilities. These include the establishment of diplomatic relations; the relaxation of sanctions especially economic, energy and humanitarian aid; and a seemingly unrealistic flurry of peace treaty moves, while on the other hand threatening the use of force as a last alternative to destroying its nuclear and missile capabilities (Rennack, 2006).

Of significance also it the highly committal USA-South Korean alliance which has emphasized deterring conflict on the Peninsula, preventing Pyongyang from developing nuclear weapons and delivery systems. For its part, Pyongyang has sought the removal of the USA forces from South Korea, as well as the lifting of the strict sanctions against it, the removal of its name from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, its recognition as a nuclear state, and the conclusion of the peace treaty alongside the fulfilment of the food and energy assistance. Since the end of the Second World War, the concern has been on the continuous absence of a meaningful bilateral treaty or understanding between these two states –United States of America and North Korea.

Statement of the Problem

Lessons of history teach us that the Cold War has ended in 1991. Yet the relationship typical right now in Asia shows clear reminiscence of a contemporary Cold War; where regional powers have engaged in a strategic and economic competition that is gradually enveloping the rest of the world. As long as North Korean regime continues to exist, arm itself and expressly

develop its nuclear programs, regardless of the consequences, the Cold War of Northeast Asia's history will not show signs of ending too soon (Kaplan, 2016).

Since the Armistice Agreement of the Korean War in 1953, the United States of America has been fully engaged in the region supporting economically and militarily, the Republic of South Korea a move that therein balances the Chinese influence in the Korean Peninsula. China has remained a continuous threat to United States of America's strategic economic and political and even military interests in the area being closely positioned geographically, and with Russia and Japan in the neighbourhood often reacting to Pyongyang's actions, the North Korean nuclear weapons intransigence becomes a very potent factor in the international security discourse.

On the other hand, a modest position has been adopted by the United Nations in response to North Korea's provocations. This is represented by the Security Council's adoption of nine major resolutions since 2006 that imposed and strengthened sanctions on Pyongyang for continuing build nuclear weapons. The resolutions demanded it to refrain from ballistic missile tests as such actions violate international law while urging North Korea to rejoin the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which it acceded to in 1985 but withdrew from in 2003 after the United States of America's allegations that the North Korea was pursuing an illegal uranium enrichment programme. They include Resolution 1718 of 2006, Resolution 1874 of 2009, Resolution 2087 of 2013, Resolution 2094 of 2013, Resolution 2270 of 2016, Resolution 2321 of 2016, Resolution 2371 of 2017, Resolution 2375 of 2017 and Resolution 2379 of 2017. The Security Council also advised North Korea to return to negotiations table in the Six Party Talks (Davenport, 2018b).

It has become phenomenal to see North Korea's actions as a violation of the United Nations resolutions and international law, threatening as a result, regional and international peace and stability. Yet, the efforts to keep under control the North Korean threat over the last decades and particularly after the accession to power of Kim Jon-un in December 2011, have been unsuccessful in preventing his regime from advancing its programmes. There is therefore, a global concern about the growing nuclear capability of North Korea on international security against the background of a burgeoning momentum on the part of the young Korean ruler to unleash a nuclear holocaust on human population.

This paper evaluates the turbulent history of the relations between the United States of America and North Korea, from the latter's effort and determinism to develop nuclear and missile programs; the former's efforts to stop them, the implications of these relations on current global security and a number of lessons and specifically identifying the major lessons that African policymakers can take from the ongoing imbroglio.

Theoretical Framework

This paper uses Political Realism and Constructivism as theoretical prisms for exploring the North Korean nuclear issue and how it has evolved over time. First, the North Korean nuclear issue can be explicated on the platform of the classical concepts of political realism as espoused by earliest writers on the subject of state survival, self-help and balance of power. Realism thus, helps us to intuitively understand the logic in the policies of the major power bastions (particularly the United States of America) to decipher their respective stance in this difficult bilateral relationship they have found themselves in the Korean Peninsula. On the other hand, we apply Constructivism to extend the vision in this relationship further beyond the borders of political realism and provide a more articulate and robust discourse on this United States of America-Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear imbroglio.

Realism emphasises states as the most important actors in international system, the anarchical nature of the international system and the pursuit of power to secure state's interests. Its proponents include; Max Weber, Alan Ball, Harold Lasswell, Morton Kaplan, Joseph Frankel, Hans Morgenthau, Niccolo Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes among others. Of these, Hans J. Morgenthau remained chief advocate of the Realist approach creating a better understanding of the workings of the international system. Often regarded as father of modern realist thought, his classic text, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace,* published shortly after World War II, carefully defines the realist perspectives that most scholars later applied. Because of this dominant position, in many ways, all of the other theoretical perspectives for understanding global politics are reactions to and criticisms of realism. Specifically, Morgenthau's six fundamental principles of political realism

provide the underlining framework under which we can dilate on the motives of the power brokers in this critical US-North Korean interstate relations namely among others, that;

> "politics like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature... the main signposts that helps political realism to find its ways through the landscape of international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power..."(Morgenthau, 1962: 13)

States are governments that exercise supreme, or sovereign, authority over a defined territory, Sovereignty means that states are legally the ultimate authority over these defined territories and therefore their dealings with other states must be in the main, within the self-interests of the particular states in question –a kind of *realpolitik*. While Pyongyang considers its new-found-love (nukes) as a strategy for expressing itself in a congested atmosphere of international sanctions, it does not consider the position of the United States of America or any other international actor as significant in defining its own objective reality. All it wants to achieve is its own objective to be considered even if the whole world is right or wrong –an idea which highlights further the meaning of the legal term *fiat justitia pere mundus* which seeks justice for self even if the rest of the world crumbles.

The maximization of its power is primary elements in a state's interest. Thus, everything a state does can be explained by its desire to maintain, safeguard, or increase its power in relation to other states (Mearsheimer, 2001). For instance, the reaction of the United States of America and its decision to lead a military effort to oust Iraq from Kuwait was also about interests and the maximization of power. The United States' power and economic interests in the region were threatened by the Iraqi invasion, thus the United States of America-led Operation Desert Storm had to do with maintaining its power in the region.

In the realist thought, the defining feature of global politics is that the international system exists as anarchy (Mearsheimer, 2001) and the goal of every state to achieve survival within this anarchic environment is to protect

its territorial integrity (albeit its citizens as well) in a conflict-ridden international system. Typically, such 'protection' translates into military forces. In a dangerous world, states seek greater security by building up their military forces, by making military alliances, and, if necessary, by the prudent use of military force.

As Morgenthau (1965) puts it, states pursue their national interests defined in terms of power and capabilities. To put it simply, according to realists, power rules in world politics. States seek and wield it. Its distribution affects how states act and likelihood of conflict. For realists, power in world politics is both an instrument and a goal (that is, states seek it as both a means and an end) and its acquisition and use is part of the basic fabric of state behaviour and interactions. As Morgenthau (1965) puts it, the realist concept of power is that states must seek it to secure themselves and their interests in anarchic world. Since power is relative and ultimately based on military strength, states cannot ever really have enough or trust others to be satisfied in an environment where conflict is the norm.

Building on their emphasis on relative gains, realists tend to argue that virtually all scenarios result in a winner and a loser, so that a gain by one state necessarily means a loss by another. As a realist theorist, Mearsheimer (2001) argues, in this context, the central aim of powerful states is to dominate at least their region and potentially more. According to realists, which states and particularly, how many of them, have power greatly shapes the general patterns of world politics. Some distributions of power contribute to more conflict and war, some to less, while all distributions are subject to change as those out of power seek more of it and those in power seek to preserve it. In sum, realism directs our attention to the pursuit of power and security in an anarchic and conflict-ridden world, highlighting the role of states and their national interests.

Carr (1946) argues that there is no authority above the state capable of imposing behaviour on it. The reality of international politics is anarchy. Waltz (1982) contends that in this anarchic reality a state must take self-help measures to ensure its security by all security means because its security cannot be guaranteed by any other state. In other words, individual sovereign states will increase their security assurance capability through enhancing military forces and establish diplomatic relations with other states to effectively deter external threats and to create a favourable external security

environment. The realist view provides the most intuitive understanding of the US-North Korean nuclear issue.

The basis of the conflict on the Korean Peninsula is the confrontation between the two Koreas - North & South, which has continued since the Korean War in 1950. The two have threatened the survival of each other for more than sixty years. Each has strengthened its military capabilities and maintained alliances with powerful states, the South aligning with the United States of America and the north aligning with China. In this seemingly tight–bipolar context, North Korea attempts to overcome the tremendous difference in conventional forces with the United States of America-South Korean alliance by attempting to balance power between them (these alliance parties) through its acquisition of relative weapons of nuclear status to secure its survival.

Mearsheimer (2001) argues that once a superpower becomes a hegemon in its region, it acts as an offshore balancer to maintain balance of power in the region. It is the relic of the Cold War era that American troops are still stationed in South Korea in furtherance of Washington's continued active intervention in the conflict situation on the Korean Peninsula as well as its desire to keep China on check as the latter continues its rapid economic growth. China strategically intends to defend North Korea, which acts as a buffer between it and the United States of America and also in return wants to check the United States of America in order to ensure its position of supremacy in the region is not threatened by the American presence there.

Realism has maintained theoretical hegemony to explain international relations until recently (Hopf, 1998). Realists contend that the overriding characteristic of the international states-system is anarchy and that states therefore are most interested in obtaining power to ensure their security in a system that lacks an overarching order. However, within this system, if a state attempts to acquire too much power, other states will perceive this as a threat and attempt to neutralize this gain in power that leads to the classical security-dilemma (Davis, 1993).

Further, realists contend that states can never be completely certain of other state's intentions; they seek their own security, and act as rational agents to ensure their survival (Wendt, 1995). This is because their intention to

acquire nuclear-weapons can most easily be explained through realist theory which is primarily concerned with the security-seeking behaviour of states.

Realism thus provides the majority of explanation in examining the North Korea nuclear debacle with the United States of America. North Korea sought and maintains its nuclear weapons to alleviate its security fears. The foremost duty of states is to assure the survival and safety of their people. States assure their survival by optimizing national security. Nothing has the ability to challenge the very existence of a state the way nuclear weapons do, and as a result, countries that may be very willing to comply with other international norms will be more hesitant to comply with norms surrounding the non-proliferation regime.

Since its inception, North Korea has felt that its security was severely threatened by the presence of a superpower such as the United States of America. A failed reunification attempt resulted in North Korea being pushed north of the 38th parallel by the United States of America. The Armistice Agreement was signed between the two countries in 1953 which has never been replaced with a formal peace treaty; technically, the two countries are still at war (Moxley, 2004). United States of America's troops have remained on the Peninsula since the Armistice Agreement was signed and only on July 15, 1957 United States of America's Army officials suggested that American forces would be able to wage an atomic war from South Korea (Moxley, 2004). This was not the end of the United States of American nuclear activity in South Korea. The US Nuclear weapons were brought into South Korea in January 1958 –a direct violation of the Armistice Agreement thus exacerbating North Korean fears. The United States of America and South Korea conducted joint exercises that involved moving these nuclear weapons to the edge of demilitarized zone (DMZ). These weapons were finally removed from South Korea in the early 1990s (Bleiker, 2003). Adding to North Korea's security fears is its inability to challenge South Korea.

Rather than consider how societal forces, complex governments and processes, different regime times or different political parties and individual leaders affect states, many realists prefer to treat the state as a unitary actor (that is like a billiard board, a single moving part) that responds rationally to

the structures and dynamics of the international system. Acting as single rational entities, North Korea 'decides' the United States of America 'negotiates', the two countries 'threaten'. These rational actors calculate their national interests and goals and take action accordingly. In the anarchic system of sovereign states, realists stress the importance of power capabilities.

Constructivism however emerged as a contending theory of International Relations immediately after the end of the Cold war through the efforts of such thinkers as Nicholas Greenwood Onuf (1989), Alexander Wendt (1992), Emmanuel Adler, Friedrich Kratochwil (1989), John Gerard Ruggie and Peter Katzenstein. Yet constructivism holds many of the same tenets as realism especially in its quest for power as a dominant factor in determining relationships in the international arena. Yet, it sees Realism, by projecting the state more than the individuals that make the state, as lacking in defining the very source of this power. Constructivism sees the world as a product of social constructions. The constructions are made in the mind of people –actors or policymakers whose individual interests shape the nature of states' behaviour. The role of the man as an important "agent" in the creation of reality in the state is very crucial to the Constructivist. Man is an agent who creates the structure. The structure is therefore influenced by the agent just as the agent is later on influenced by the structure. There is therefore the argument by Constructivists of a "mutual constitution between man as the agent and State as the structure (Theys, 2018). The state is an extension of reality constructed by man. The statement by Alexander Wendt that:"five hundred British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the United States of America than five North Korean nuclear weapons" (Wendt, 1995) provides a popular reference by constructivists to show the primary agency role of the individual in shaping international reality. To assume that five hundred, perhaps more potent British missiles are less threatening to international security than just five North Korean missiles is to construct international reality in terms of the global expectation of British and North Korean policymakers at their possession of dangerous weapons. While one is expected to be cautiously mindful of global security in its application of nuclear technology while attempting to attain its national interests, the other is widely "thought" to be likely unreasonable in its use. Constructivists acknowledges

the centrality of social norms –defined as 'a standard of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity' (Katzenstein 1996, 5) in their construction of international reality.

How does constructivism represent a challenge to realism? If realism is purportedly based on what is 'real', then constructivism confronts realism by questioning 'reality'. Realists tend to objectify the world by asserting that there is no certain, permanent, factual reality, and even if there were, physical truth matter less than social constructions. Thus, constructivism questions some of the basic claims of realism. Take the concept of a 'state'. Recall that states are the central actors according to a realist perspective, and it is the pursuit of state power that drives international relations. Indeed, realists contend that all states are the same in that they are actors pursuing their objective self-interests. But, what is a 'state'? A realist would answer that it is a government that exercises sovereign authority over a defined territory. But then, what is a 'government', and what is 'sovereign authority'? Certainly, the notion of government varies from society to society, as do conceptions between sovereignty and authority. Moreover, a constructivist might ask what these 'objective interests' are that realists espouse; these things are not facts in the sense that they truly exist somewhere. Rather, they are constructed from various understandings associated with different societies and cultures. Thus, it becomes important to understand how a state or a society conceives of itself and its interests, rather than simply asserting that all states are the same. Furthermore, constructivists want to know what the shared understanding of state and sovereignty is in the international society as this is what provides meaning for state actions. Constructivists are more interested in understanding shared subjective meanings than the objective.

Constructivists apply the same logic to the concept of anarchy, which is central to realism. Realists look at anarchy as the most important characteristics of the international system, because each state must then fend for itself rather than appeal to some higher authority. But can we really say that anarchy is a universal truth viewed and responded to in the same fashion by the world across all time? Wendt (1994) suggested that identities within a state interact with each other in constructing the interest of the states yet they are not independent of, and are constructed by the social context. Thus, when realists take as a starting point, the self interested nature of states, and only then consider how they will interact with one another, they are presupposing

something. They are, in effect, treating interests as given, and then trying to determine how states will interact. They might say that because states are self-interested, they will use force to maximize power when they interact in an anarchical system. But a constructivist will say that interests are not given and that a state will have different interests depending on its interactions. Indeed, the notion of anarchy itself is not universal but rather is constructed based on the social context. The social context in this instance is the actual interactions of states (an international society). Thus, anarchy (like thieves and murderers) will be defined differently depending on how states interact. Anarchy is just what states make of it.

Constructivists argue that states' constructions of the international system influence global politics more than any objective conditions. One important type of social construction, international norms, can have powerful effects on how states act and understand international relations (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). Norms against slave trade, norms against the use of war for offensive purposes and norms condoning the interference in internal affairs for human rights have, according to constructivists, been socially constructed and reinforced by states' behaviour and now act as serious constraints on what states perceive as acceptable behaviour.

Constructivists have been interested in how the physical forces are perceived, while realists emphasize the logic of power in international relations. From the constructivist view, what matters in the interactions of states in international relations are not material elements such as military power, but the ideological elements such as culture and identity. Ideological elements define the manner in which the actor perceives the other and acts on the other. Therefore, interstate acts in international relations need to be analysed not only by the logic of power, but also by various factors that define perceptions of one another. By focusing on the identity of North Korea, identity tells me who I am, tells the other who I am, and tells me who the other is (Tajfel, 1981). In International Relations, a state perceives its own identity and the other's identity and then establishes relations and implements policies based on the relations. And the act of one state again affects the act of another. The identity formed through the constant interaction among states in international relations provides a deeper understanding of the relations between states than the material elements do. Thus, the United States of America perceives the identity of North Korea as a conflict inducer while North Korea recognizes the United States of America as an infringer of

sovereignty and an invader of the Korean Peninsula for decades and this cannot be changed overnight. The United States of America is a power maximizer and a security maximizer. A power maximizer seeks to get more than it has now, but a security maximizer seeks not to lose what it has. Thus, a power maximizer can refrain from aggressive behaviours unless the expected benefit is higher than the cost (Mearsheimer, 2001). To the United States of America, North Korea is a force of evil and an unreliable state, so the process of denuclearization must be monitored very strictly.

However, it is not just material capabilities alone that explain North Korea's behaviour. Constructivism adds more depth to the realist argument by highlighting the shared history of extreme mistrust between the United States of America and North Korea which means that any attempts at reconciliation between the two countries will not be taken at face value. This delineation of acceptable nuclear behaviour made it easier to create a coalition that was willing to support punitive actions against North Korea when it violated the codes of acceptable behaviour.

A purely realist explanation of international relations does not adequately explain the remarkable examples of nuclear forbearance and nuclear roll back that have occurred. Constructivism adds needed context to explaining and augmenting both theories. North Korea feels threatened by the United States of America, the lack of resolution to the Korean War coupled with the United States of America's new policy of pre-emption, heightens this sense of insecurity. Unlike individuals, sovereign states are not willing to give up their independence for a global security guarantee; and since there is no overruling power, North Korea is able to pursue dangerous means, such as creating nuclear weapons to serve its national interests because it feels that the international community would otherwise try to impede its sovereignty and try to westernize its cultural traditions.

While realism predominantly focuses on material factors for explaining states' behaviour, constructivism adds ideational factors as influential factors. North Korea is not a democratic nation where a sequence of approval is passed before a country decides to use its nuclear weapon. North Korea with the social character of its leader has repeatedly tested its short and long range missiles. This abuse of weapons has been a threat to world peace

and security. This is why the United States of America keeps pushing for the destruction of the North Korean weapons. The social constructed realities of North Korea society are very different to that of the outside world. This theory explains why North Korean policy revolves around the promotion of a constructed image of a strong-reliant nation built through the Juche philosophy of self reliance and militarist attitude instilled by the country's founder, Kim Il-Sung. Also, the theory of constructivism demonstrates the dishonest actions of past United States of America's leaders and Kim Jong-Un, like the backing out of agreements or nuclear proliferation as demonstrated by Pyongyang against all other state decisions to non-proliferation.

Global response and some lessons for African Security

On a global level, the international community appears clearly limited in options to handle the situation in North Korea. The continued use of economic sanctions against North Korea has yielded minimal, if any, impact on the global objective in question –the issue of denuclearization of the state. On the part of China, nothing can be more pleasing than for the United States to resolve the current crisis by providing North Korea the carrot it so desperately seeks, security guarantees. China also provides food and energy aid that is an essential lifeline for the regime in Pyongyang. China's overriding priority appears to be to prevent the collapse of North Korea. China's threat perception of North Korea nuclear weapon is low; however, it fears nuclear proliferation in the region, especially the implications of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan going nuclear. China fears that North Korea may provoke a pre-emptive attack from the United States of America that would trigger massive refugee flows into China and result in a unified Korea under South Korean control with the America's alliance intact. China thus, seeks to achieve three major objectives: no nuclear weapons, no war, and no North Korean collapse. North Korea, however, has built some of its infrastructure near the border with China. The United States thus, is extremely cautious in conducting operations near China's border with North Korea. China in the long run, does not expect any physical collateral damage to its property; but, the economic impacts of war, tens of thousands of refugees, and United States-South Korea forces near its border remains China's primary concerns. Although, China publicly supports

Korean reunification, this support assumes the resulting Korean state is not anti-Chinese. In addition, China does not want the entire Korean Peninsula converted to capitalism, nor would it like to have American troops near its border. China's ability to influence American policy stems from factors that go beyond its military strength. In 1991, the United States trade deficit with China was $12.6 billion. Twelve years later, it was ten times that amount, reaching $124 billion in 2003. After China established trade offices in Beijing and Seoul in October 1990 and it established full diplomatic relations with South Korea in August 1992, bilateral trade steadily increased. Hitting $41.2 billion in 2002, China actually replaced the United States as South Korea's number one trading partner. In comparison even though one-half of North Korea's entire trade volume is with China, it totalled only $1.05 billion (Xiaoxiong, 2002).

In contrast to China, Japan perceives North Korean nuclear weapons, its ballistic missiles and the United States' use of force on the Peninsula as a direct, credible threat. Even though incentive based policies would also benefit Japan, it is not likely to trust North Korean compliance. Extensive drug trafficking, admitted kidnappings, threats to turn Tokyo into a sea of fire, and lobbing a 3-stage missile over mainland Japan have left a lasting negative impression of North Korea on the Japanese psyche. Although in the past, there has been little public support to change Japan's "peace constitution," in April 2003, the Japanese Defense Agency (JDA) revised its policy of, "possessing the minimum defense capability necessary for an independent country" to, "coping with new threats" (Sebata, 2010). In response to the 1998 Taepo Dong launch, Japan launched two spy satellites in March 2003, in a calculated move to be less reliant upon American intelligence sources. Other military defense measures include more active support of United States missile defense operations, consideration of procuring new PAC-3 missile systems around critical infrastructure, and mounting ship-based missile defense systems on Aegis-class destroyers. In addition to considering military posture changes, Japan has withheld humanitarian assistance to North Korea during the current crisis. They have also begun to consider policy options in the event of the failure of the incentive-based diplomacy. For example, during the 1994 crisis, Japan estimated that it might be able to reduce some of the approximately

$600 million per year inflows into North Korea from Korean sympathizers living in Japan (Sebata, 2010).

Even though Japan would be the only regional partner not to oppose military force, it is not eager to consider its use. Japan, in close range of North Korean ballistic missiles and clandestine special-forces insertions, is the likely target in a North Korean attempt to divide the American-Japanese alliance. Based upon decades of mistrust and disputes such as the Japanese colonization of Korea and North Korea kidnappings, drug trafficking, and naval skirmishes, Japan expects a strike by North Korea. The debate is on what and how bad the damage would be. Notwithstanding the economic boost that the United States military build-up would create for the Japanese economy, a major war on the Korean peninsula would have disastrous effects on the region's economies. "The road from Washington to Pyongyang must pass through Seoul," an aphorism that indicates the precarious position of the United States-South Korea alliance become germane. Even though North Korea's record of aggression against the South is replete with outrageous examples of unconstrained aggression, some current South Korean leaders do not appear to believe that North Korea will employ nuclear weapons against the South. Similar to the Chinese reaction, an incentive-based approach conforms nicely with South Korea's Sunshine Policy of engagement through dialogue and exchanges. Although difficult for American diplomats to comprehend in light of past violence, many South Koreans feel a kinship with North Korea and actually view the United States as the key obstacle to peaceful reunification of the Peninsula and the true target of North Korean nuclear weapons. President Roh's inexperience in national politics and international crisis was evident at the outset of his administration. Any of Roh's comments viewed as too supportive of the American hard-line approach toward North Korea met angry domestic resistance. Eventually, Roh's administration settled on a policy of not tolerating North Korean nuclear weapons, but resolving the situation peacefully. He appears unwilling to even consider what steps should be taken if diplomacy fails, referring to the situation as an issue, not a crisis. This unwillingness to even consider military strikes against North Korea negatively impacts the perception of the America-South Korean alliance; limits the chance for coercive diplomacy to succeed, and could cripple potential military operations by denying American forces to operate from South Korea.

South Korea strongly opposes even the consideration of military force to disarm a nuclear North Korea. Not only do younger South Koreans view the

conduct of the United States of America as an obstacle to reunification and the target of North Korean aggression, but also they understand the devastation that a Peninsula-wide war would cause. "The hub of Northeast Asia" is tough to market abroad if the entire Peninsula is a war zone. In addition, war would obliterate South Korea's goal of becoming a top ten economic power.

In another wider regional dimension, China and South Korea seems very apparently in favour of an incentive-based policy approach instead of coercive options, and explicitly object to any discussion of the use of military force. Japan, would also prefer an incentive-based policy approach, but has similar views to most American diplomats that the prospects for success are not good.

In defiance of international rules, North Korean North Korea conducted a nuclear weapons test in early 2016 –its fourth in overall and the first time that North Koreans claimed a hydrogen or thermonuclear explosive. The recent missile tests by North Korea have provided insights into the advanced level of technology that is at its disposal. North Korea's newest missile, the KN-14 has been estimated to have a range between five thousand (5,000) to six thousand (6,000) miles, causing concerns in not only the United States, but internationally as well (Snyder, 2017).

The United States, Japan, and (to a lesser extent) South Korea have deployed Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) systems to protect their territories and military forces from the threat of North Korean attacks. Japan deployed Patriot interceptor batteries around Tokyo and on its south-western islands, in the event of an errant missile or debris headed toward Japanese territory. Aegis BMD ships deployed to the area as well. In response to the heightened tensions in spring of 2013, the American military accelerated deployment of a ground-based Terminal High Altitude Air Defense (THAAD) BMD system to Guam, two years ahead of schedule (Snyder, 2017).

North Korea continues to present a growing threat to global security. The continued spate of North Korean nuclear tests has increased tension in the Peninsula. These tests may have been interpreted differently as Tan EnWin (2009) presents four possible perspectives namely; that North Korean may be doing so for fear of Seoul; DPRK's way of communicating to Washington its own resolve; the expression of some internal politicking within Pyongyang or a clear statement of intent to develop its own nuclear weapons (En Win: 2009).Yet whatever the argument, in addition to sanctions in the Security Council, both the United States and Japan, together with South Korea are

looking at unilateral as well as bilateral and trilateral cooperation. South Korea allies are taking their own measures as a response to the September 2016 North Korean nuclear test. For example, Angola has suspended all commercial trade with Pyongyang, banning North Korean companies from operating in Angola since the United Nations toughed sanctions in March, 2016 (Park & Monroe, 2016). Also, Singapore that previously allowed North Korea to travel to their country without visas now implements a visa system. Poland, which hosted as many as eight hundred North Korean workers have stopped renewing visas, so has Malta.

As tensions between Washington and Pyongyang continue to rise, African states are under increased pressure from the United Nations efforts (that are mainly dominated by the United States of American) to severe links with North Korea. North Korea-Africa relations date back to the Cold War with Pyongyang having providing substantial financial and military support to independence movements across Africa. Yet military and security links between North-Korea and Africa (primarily centred on munitions, training and maintenance) persists till date regardless of UN sanctions thereby increasing the proliferation of light arms and weapons and the heightening the dangers of these weapons falling into the hands of terrorists (Harris, 2018). North Korea in spite of all these was however able to maintain relationships with some African staes seeling arms and providing military training support for states like Benin, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, , Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe

Despite ongoing United Nations investigations into possible sanctions violations by some African countries (Angola, Uganda, DR Congo, Eritrea, Mozambique, Tanzania and Namibia), only fifteen percent of African UN members have been in full compliance with the reporting requirements (Demirel, 2017).Uganda was purported to have severed its military ties as Japan has recently froze Namibia's assets for continuing to do business with North Korea.

In order to counteract North Korea from having a leeway into Africa, the United Nations and United States of America are finding ways to incentivize African countries' compliance with the sanctions, specifically by reducing dependence on North Korea and demonstrating America's dedication to the continent's future. The American campaign, however, has had some breakthroughs as Uganda purportedly ejected the military experts from North Korea out of its territory – a vital setback to the latter's test of ballistic

missiles in its violation of strong prohibitions by the United Nations. South Africa does not have an embassy in North Korea, though South Africa's embassy is in Beijing.

African decolonization opened up the continent for direct official contacts with the rest of the world. After independence, foreign policy rhetoric and, to some extent, actions in the new African states favoured increasing diversification of external contacts away from the former colonial metropolises. Invariably, African states who wished to extend their horizons in the bipolar international environment of that era, and at the same time, and also be equidistant from the two centres of the Cold War rivalry- Washington and Moscow- found it attractive to relate with the non-superpower communist and capitalist states on the Korean Peninsula.

More importantly, the new African states were also being absorbed into the United Nations at a time when the Korean question had been tabled before the world body. With the arrival of the African states, the United Nations was already undergoing a metamorphosis that appeared to favour North Korean interests. This was considering that, prior to 1960, the United Nations membership was characterized by an American-led majority running roughshod over a recalcitrant "communist minority". Indeed, African membership in the United Nations increased about seven fold from 1945 to 1961 (Park, 1976). Thus, the desire to win Africa's voting support in the United Nations prompted North Korea's inroads into Africa with a view to further destabilising Seoul's position on the continent (Owoeye, 1991).

Thus, North Korea, a country that is resilient and built on the basis of self-reliance –Juche idea, based on a mishmash of ideologies borrowed from Mao's China and Stalinist policy, all designed to cement Kim Il Sung's position as an unparallel genius and spur a Korean-centred revolution has two slogans at its core namely; "man is the author of his destiny" and then possessing "the spirit of self-reliance".

In terms of domestic capability for nuclear weapons production, South Africa especially in the Apartheid era, possesses a large and inventive arms industry and abundant deposits of uranium ore also known as yellow cake. As South Africa grew more isolated in the international community as a result of the apartheid regime, its leaders decided that building the bomb was crucial for its survival If South Africa faced imminent threat from its neighbours or the Soviet Union in the second phase, allies like the United States of America would be secretly informed of the nuclear deterrent. If after the secret is

revealed to the United States of America and its allies failed to help South Africa, a demonstration detonation of the weapons would take place. Unmentioned is phase four: the field use of nuclear weapons on military target (Weintz, 2018).

The collapse of apartheid in South Africa meant its dismantling of its nuclear programme altogether. Following the election of Nelson Mandela as President, the whole program was dismantled, made public and South Africa became a leader in the anti-proliferation movement. These efforts culminated with the April 11, 1996 Treaty of Pelindaba, signed by forty seven of Africa's fifty-three countries in Cairo at the time, which declared an "African Nuclear-Weapon Free Zone".

Gaddafi who was an African revolutionary with the capability to develop nuclear weapons, but in 2003, announced a dismantling of all of his regime's programs on weapons capable of mass destruction, after more than three decades of extensive efforts to develop not only nuclear, chemical and biological weapons but also their capable delivery-systems. Gaddafi's government cooperated with American, British and French governments to completely dismantle its nuclear program a move that was clearly verified by the international body - the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 2004. Kim Jong-Un has learned from the lessons of Libya and Iraq. In Iraq, Saddam Hussein was toppled under the claims that he had weapons of mass destructions.

What has Africa learned from North Korea? Does this mean that Africa should develop its own nuclear weapons? North Korea has no choice but to develop a minimal deterrence –a nuclear weapon; with the traditional interpretation of its nuclear program which emphasizes the state security aspect, considered as a guarantee for regime survival from external attacks in order not to become like Libya and Iraq. On the other hand, Iran is not like Libya, South Africa or even Iraq.

What then, about Africa? Should Africa develop the nuclear energy-especially since Africa has enough oil and solar energy? Africa during the Cold War was a battle ground for military and ideological confrontations between the United States of America and the Soviet Union. Africa must not allow a repetition of this act. African leaders must develop strategies for independence from the West. African leaders can achieve this by reaching an agreement to get rid of foreign military bases and carefully choosing their political, economic and military alliances. There is an intricate network that

links Africa's defense forces with the United States' Africa Command and African Partner Outbreak Response Alliance 2018 (Payne, 2018). Africa is not fully independent.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

The continuing tests of nuclear weapons by North Korea (including its sixth in 2017) in defiance of United Nations resolutions mean that global peace and security remains under serious threat. Clear messages that this imbroglio have sent to African policy makers indicate that the issue is still very sensitive and intricate as it has been construed. This fact has made many African policymakers to be cautious in their pronouncements and strictly guided by the progress of international diplomacy on the nervous debacle in the Korean Peninsula.

They may perhaps be reminiscing on the legacy of North Korea's military support for African liberation movements and the contemporary political and economic relations that many states still have with North Korea. North Korea has paid attention to Africa's nuclear story- Libya. Having witnessed the destruction of Gaddafi regime and Libya's descent into a failed state, North Korea links this downfall to the roll back of the Libyan nuclear weapons program in 2003. North Korea offers many lessons; however, you can lead a regime to water, but cannot make it drink.

The lessons of great power relations which African states can learn from the Korean imbroglio with the United States of America are enormous. This is particularly so in light of its entangling economic and political circumstances created by the policies of international actors which North Korea has found itself and its military confrontation with its regional neighbours. North Korea's role in the international economic system has rapidly increased in importance since 1960s. The policy choices of the North Korean leader and its implementation rest on the strategies it designed to boost its political legitimacy, strengthen its power and guarantee regime survival. This paper asides giving an x-ray of the nuclear debacle between the United States of America and the North Korea, has also, shown the strategy adopted by the North Korean state and what Africa countries can learn from this leadership experiences in terms of its development path. Furthermore, transplanting North Korea's political system- all encompassing ideology- *Juche*, is the key to unlocking the potential of African nations.

Hinged on the existential realities, it is possible to imagine still:

1. A return to Six-Party Talks, the United States-North Korea-China.These talks still remain a long-term framework for resolving the intricate nuclear debacle. An enhanced cooperation and coordination among these three nations could lead to a more effective diplomatic approach to negotiating the denuclearisation of North Korea.

2. Any attempt at imposing Iran-like sanctions on North Korea is likely to hit a brick wall in Beijing, and secondary sanctions on China are almost certain to provoke retaliation rather than capitulation. Thus, the United States of America should calibrate an escalation of sanctions with the success or failure of new diplomatic initiatives and North Korean provocations. Already in 2019, President Donald Trump of the United States of America has made historic efforts to reach North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un even through the efforts have not yielded the required dividends. Arms control negotiation are technical even from history, one does not expect that the North Korean talks will be easy therefore. James Fiske, head of American delegation to a Geneva arms control talks with the defunct Soviet Union once observed that the "technical content of arms control negotiations is likely to be very high but experience ... has shown that technical and political arguments cannot be separated completely or for long" (Haas, 2008) said Diplomacy still holds the cards to a continued global security guarantee under these circumstances. The United States will have to work with other countries, particularly the Korean neighbouring countries to generate international support as well as maintain power equity in the Peninsula.

3. To address North Korea's fear that the United States of America is a threat to its security, negotiations will also need to deal with issues of war and peace. The starting point should be a declaration by the relevant parties that the Korean War is officially over and that negotiations would begin immediately to replace the temporary armistice with a peace agreement.

4. Africa governments need to implement a developmental state with strong executive power, a technocratic and competent bureaucracy and growth-oriented economic policies. Likewise, for national development to be achieved, African leaders must have growth-oriented vision politically supported by a strong local coalition. The relevance of a cohesive African unity in condemning the North Korean

threat of nuclear tests cannot be overstressed here as the old saying goes: "when two elephants fight, the grasses suffer"

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THE POLITICS OF ELECTORAL (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2018 AND THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA: MATTERS ARISING

Umaru Ibrahim Yakubu
Department of Political Science, Federal University Dutse
&
Hassan Muritala Babatunde

Department of Political Science, Federal University Dutse

Abstract

Election, undoubtedly, remains an important hallmark of representative democracy. Democracy, in itself, is hinged on the principles of constitutionalism and rule of law. Be that as it should, election, as a foundational element of representative democracy, must be guided by a law (electoral act) which must not only be enacted through adherence to the constitutionally prescribed procedures but also be seen by all stakeholders as a fair rule of the game. Electoral act, however, remains a big clog in the wheel of the electoral process in Nigeria. The initiation and enactment of electoral bills into acts have always been characterized by power play between the executive and legislative organs with disastrous consequences on the electoral process. The fact that the politics of Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018 assumed a worrisome dimension with President Muhammadu Buhari's refusal of assent to the bill for the fourth time is uncontestable. What is contestable was the condemnation and commendation trailing the decline of assent by the President. It is based on the controversies surrounding the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018 that this paper examines the implications of its non-enactment into law on the conduct of the 2019 general elections. Using descriptive-content-analysis, the paper examines the background to the bill and its major provisions which are believed would have impacted positively on the Nigerian electoral process. Given numerous innovations the bill intends to introduce, the paper submits that the failure of the National Assembly and the Presidency to work harmoniously to ensure that the bill is passed into law before the 2019 elections was a missed opportunity to build on the gains of the

2015 general elections. Since Nigeria operates presidential democracy with the principles of separation of powers and checks and balances, it is often difficult for the National Assembly to make new laws or amend existing ones without the Presidency's input, we submit that there is the need for cooperation and coordination between the two arms of government.

Introduction

Election is a major element of democracy as it is almost impossible to conceive of democracy without it. The evolution and sustainability of democracy rest on competitive elections which must be seen to be free, fair and credible (Samuel, Chidozie & Godwyns, 2013). Regular and competitive elections are fundamental elements of democracy and are used to assess other forms of government (Heywood, 2002). Democracy is largely concerned with the rules and institutions that allow for open competition and participation in government (Bangura, 1992). However, as with other concepts in Political Science, democracy has an assortment of meanings including whether it should be defined on the basis of its processes of selecting people into public offices through election or as a form of government that assures civil liberty (Kesselman, Krieger, and Joseph, 2013).Despite different opinions about democracy, there are common elements of the concept to which scholars generally agreed to; including free and fair elections guided by clearly defined laws, the existence of political parties and civil liberty. Other elements include rule of law, independent judiciary as well as transparency and accountability (Kesselman, Krieger, and Joseph, 2013).

Although election is considered the fulcrum of democracy, it requires a sound legal framework to regulate its administration as well as the establishment and operations of the election management body and other stakeholders in the polity (Alayinde, 2016). This is more so as the credibility of an electoral process is partly determined by the existence of a clearly defined legal framework that regulates the conducts of all stakeholders in the

electoral process. Thus, electoral rules and regulations are major elements of an effective electoral process (Lawal and Olukayode, 2012). In Nigeria, the administration of elections from the 1960s has been characterized by controversies. The conduct of free and fair elections has remained a major challenge in the country's electoral history (Samuel, Chidozie and Godwyns, 2013). Generally, these controversies emanate from anomalies that often characterize the conduct of elections in the country as well as debates over the credibility of the legal guidelines for election administration. Currently, the legal framework for election administration in Nigeria consists of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) and the 2010 Electoral Act (as amended) (Alayinde, 2016). However, the National Assembly introduced the 2018 Electoral Act Amendment Bill which was meant to address the controversies that trailed the 2015 elections, especially the place of technology in the country's election and to improve the electoral process generally (*Daily Post*, 10 December 2018). The bill was characterized by controversies especially the section that attempted to change the sequence of the 2019 elections which INEC had already scheduled before its introduction.

Consequently, the President declined assent to the bill on four consecutive times due to disagreement between the Presidency and the National Assembly over certain sections of the bill (*The Sun*, 18 September 2018). As a result of this, the opposition parties, especially the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) accused the Presidency and the ruling All Progressive Congress (APC) of an attempt to manipulate the electoral process by working on the weaknesses of the 2010 Electoral Act (as amended). On the other hand, the APC accused the PDP of an attempt to change the electoral laws midway in the process leading up to the 2019 elections (*Vanguard*, 12 December 2018). These horse-trading, accusations and counter-accusations that followed the president's refusal to assent the Electoral (Amendment) Bill,2018 largely demonstrated the politicization of the process and the deep-seated animosity between the Presidency and the leadership of the National Assembly. It is against this background that the paper analyses the politics of the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018 couched in the executive-legislative relationship and its implications on the conduct of 2019 general elections.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Like most concepts in Political Science, democracy has many different meanings and it is viewed differently from various ideological perspectives. It has its origin in ancient Greece and was considered then as the direct participation of all citizens in decision making (McLean, 1996). With the reinvention of democracy in the 18th century, it became an indirect system where voters elected representatives who took decisions on their behalf. Thus, extensive population growth which made direct democracy no longer practicable necessitated the emergence of representative democracy. In this sense, democracy in modern times has come to be associated with popular sovereignty, civil liberty, accountability, equality, and representative government, etc. (Fage and Alabi, 2019).

Robert Dahl cited in Diamond (2002), views democracy as a system that does not only require free, fair and competitive elections, but also the freedoms that make them truly meaningful. In this sense, a democratic state must ensure the freedoms of association and of expression. To Merriam (1941) democracy is a form of political association in which decision-making involves majority of the community in accordance with procedures provided for popular participation and consent. Odusote (2014) believes democracy has three major features; healthy competition among political parties, political participation and a credible electoral process. Away from the procedural conception of democracy that focuses on election as one of its major elements, Munick (2014) notes that democracy is about more than elections. It describes a political system that embodies the value of political freedom and equality. Also, Kesselman, Krieger, and Joseph, (2013) maintain that in addition to the procedural conception, democracy is viewed as a form of government that assures civil liberty. Generally, a common feature in most conceptions of representative democracy is that it allows for competitive elections (Nwogu, 2015).

Competitive election is central to the survival and sustenance of representative democracy (Samuel, Chidozie and Godwyns, 2013). More so,

regular and competitive elections that allow for universal franchise are seen as one of the fundamental elements of democracy as it is highly unmanageable to conceive representative democracy without elections. Election is a process that allows for filling an office or position through choices made by the electorate (Heywood, 2002). It allows the people to choose who governs them periodically as determined by the laws of a state. Elections also enable the electorates to be educated about the political process, political parties and government policies through the process of campaign and it confers legitimacy on a government that emerges through it.

The survival of democracy is not only rooted in competitive elections, the quality of elections is also important. Concerns about the credibility, fairness and openness of elections in developing countries such as Nigeria have been raised (Diamond, 2002). Such concerns are usually based on the notion of election that is obtainable in Western democracies. This notion is based on the assumption that if elections are considered as the bedrock of representative democracy, they must be seen to be credible, free and fair. Thus, one way of assuring the credibility of elections in developing countries is the institutionalization of sound electoral laws to regulate the electoral process. This is necessary because sound electoral laws that are properly implemented may determine the effectiveness of the electoral process (Lawal and Olukayode, 2012).

Electoral laws vary from one country to another and may determine the nature and procedures in each country's electoral process. Generally, they are rules and regulations that guide the electoral process including the registration of political parties, voters and the establishment and operations of the election management body among other things. In Nigeria, the electoral laws comprise the 2010 Electoral Act (as amended) and the 1999 Constitution (as amended). These laws regulate the conducts of all election stakeholders including the election management body as well as the electoral process, courts and tribunals (Alayinde, 2016). However, the provisions in the Constitution are superior to all other laws in the country as specifies in section 1 (3) that if any law is inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution, such laws shall be

void to the extent of the inconsistency. To this end, the authority of the other laws including the 2010 Electoral Act is derived from the Constitution.

The 2010 Electoral Act which embodies the laws that regulate the electoral process in Nigeria is built on the provisions of the 2006 Electoral Act which it repealed (Alayinde, 2016).The 2010 Electoral Act emerged from a legal process that involved legislative procedures and the assent of the President. This shows that electoral laws in Nigeria are derived mainly from processes that involved both the legislative and executive branches of government without disregarding the role of the judiciary. Therefore, to fully understand the processes that result in electoral laws in Nigeria and the politics therein, it is important to understand the role of each branch of government in relations to the other. In this regard, the paper uses the doctrine of separation of powers as conceived by Montesquieu to analyze the controversies surrounding the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018.

Separation of powers presupposes that political power should be divided among several bodies as a precaution against tyranny (McLean, 1996). In modern democracies, the common standard is that political power is shared among three distinct branches of government; the legislature, executive and judiciary. In simplistic terms, while the legislature has the power to make laws, the executive implements the laws and the judiciary interprets same. Each branch derives its powers from the constitution and in theory is not meant to interfere in the functions of the other branches. Montesquieu (1949) believes that the concentration of too much power in one agency or person could lead to absolutism. To prevent this, political power is shared among the three branches of government and they serve as checks to one another. Thus, the principle of checks and balances is instituted to maintain the system of separation of powers keeping each branch of government in its place. The idea is that no branch of government should be too powerful to override the other. This way, Montesquieu (1949) believes that political liberty will be assured.

In Nigeria, the 1999 Constitution (as amended) specifies the powers of the three branches of government. However, the powers as provided in the Constitution are not totally separate as there are various areas of convergence. For example, section 5 (4) of the Constitution provides that the President can

only declare war on another state only with the approval of the National Assembly. Also, section 81 (1) of the Constitution provides that the President cannot spend money from the Consolidated Revenue Fund without the approval of the National Assembly. The Constitution is replete with many instances that invoke complementarity between the executive and legislative branches of government. In most cases as specifies in section 58 of the Constitution, the President must give assent to bills passed by the National Assembly before they become laws. However, should the President decide to withhold assent after 30 days, section 58 (5) provides that the National Assembly can override the president's veto and pass such bills into laws with two-third majority.

The areas of convergence in the powers of the executive and legislature as contained in the Constitution are meant to ensure checks and balances as well as encourage complementarity. However, in practice, politics has crept into the exercise of these powers by both branches of government in Nigeria. Thus, there is always a tendency that the President may withhold assent to bills that are perceived by him to be against national interests. Also, political feud between the National Assembly and the Presidency may unnecessarily delay or stop the passage of bills into laws as demonstrated in the President's refusal to give assent to the Electoral (Amendment) Bill,2018 passed by the National Assembly.

The Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill, 2018: Background, Presidential Vetoes, and Main Amendments.

The need for the accommodation of the reforms introduced by Prof. Attahiru Jega-led INEC after the 2011 general elections, led to the amendment of the 2010 Electoral Act by the 7th National Assembly and assented to by President Goodluck Jonathan on 26th March 2015, for the conduct of 2015 general elections. Compared to the previous elections in Nigeria, the 2015 elections were adjudged to be better in terms of management, violence, and credibility. However, the conduct of the elections raised a number of key issues which bore significant impact on their outcomes. In particular, the introduction of Permanent Voters Card (PVC) and Smart Card Reader (SCR)

marked a laudable step forward for improving electoral process in Nigeria, but their invention was not without challenges. Technical hitches were recorded in the use of card reader to authenticate and accredit voters. Of particular notice was the failure of the card reader to accredit President Goodluck Jonathan. This prompted the reversal to the use of incidence forms in the poling units experiencing card reading challenges in line with INEC's guideline.

This, however, allegedly opened the flood gates for electoral frauds. There were allegations of voters' list mark-ups, ghost voting, and underage voting. Card reader challenge also played a major part in accentuating the levels of figure tampering during collation at various levels. It is believed that a record of accredited voters, authenticated by INEC's smart card reading system, would have been a deterrent to marking-up of accredited voters' list. It is also believed that electronic collation and transmission of results from poling units would have eliminated distortion of results that characterized manual collation. The 2015 Electoral (Amendment) Act, does not, however, recognize the use of Smart Card Reader (SCR) and electronic transmission of results. This, among other factors, necessitates the need for further amendment of the 2010 Electoral Act.

The 8th National Assembly thus took the amendment of the 2010 Electoral Act as a priority. The two chambers of the National Assembly (Senate and House of Representatives) commenced the amendment in 2016 and 2017 respectively and sent the first version to President Muhammadu Buhari for assent in February 2018. The President, however, declined assent on March 13, 2018 based majorly on the sequence of elections in Section 25 of the Principal Act which, according to him, may infringe upon the constitutionally guaranteed discretion of the INEC to organize, undertake, and supervise elections. This, among other observations made by the President, forced the National Assembly to rework the bill and passed it to the President on June 27, 2018 for assent. The bill also suffered dissent from the President, who claimed that it contains some drafting issues which may cause interpretation problems. He also submitted that, if signed into law as presented by the National Assembly, the amendment will put burden on the INEC and political parties as regard the conduct of primary elections.

Following this, the National Assembly revised the bill on July 24, 2018 and transmitted the new version to the President on August 3, 2018. The President still withheld his assent in September 2018 requesting that some clauses be amended and some errors corrected. Thus, the National Assembly went for another round of amendment, considering the President's observations and forwarded the revised bill to the President for assent on November 7, 2018. But the President, for the fourth time, declined his assent. In his letter sent to the National Assembly on December 6, 2018, the President asserts that:

> I am declining assent to the bill principally because I am concerned that passing a new electoral bill this far into the electoral process for the 2019 general elections, which commenced under the 2015 Electoral Act, could create some uncertainty about the applicable legislation to govern the process.
>
> Any real or apparent change to the rules this close to election may provide an opportunity for disruption and confusion in respect to which law governs the electoral process.
>
> This leads me to believe that it is in the best interest of the country and our democracy for the National Assembly to specifically state in the Bill, that the Electoral Act will come into effect and be applicable to elections commencing after the 2019 General Elections (President Muhammadu Buhari, 2018, p. 1).

In addition, the President also made some observations on some technicalities contained in the bill.

The refusal of the President to sign the bill into law and the inability of the National Assembly to muster the constitutionally required two-third vote to override the President's veto is believed by many to constitute a major setback in the conduct of the 2019 General Elections. This is because the bill contains many provisions that are intended to address the challenges against the conduct of free and fair elections in Nigeria. The bill has about 42 clauses. The critical issues that the bill tries to address, which makes it different from

the Electoral (Amendment) Act, 2015 include deepening the integrity and neutrality of INEC, formalization of the legal basis for the use of electronic technologies for elections, improving access to elections materials and electoral data, establishing limit on the nomination fees to be imposed by political parties on candidates seeking election into various offices, making provisionsfor substitution of candidate by political parties in the case of death after commencement of election, and expanding campaign expenditure limit by candidates seeking elections into various offices (*Daily Trust*, 16 December 2018; *The Nation*, 17 December 2018; Itodo, 2017).

The National Assembly amended several sections of the Principal Act to *deepen the integrity and impartiality of INEC as a non-partisan arbiter*. This is to boost stakeholders' confidence in the electoral process thereby promoting the acceptability of electoral outcomes. For instance, the insertion of a new Subsection (5) after Subsection 4 of Section 8 of the Principal Act deters INEC officials from partisanship. It prescribes 5 years' imprisonment or a fine of at least ₦5,000,000, or both as penalty for any person with affiliation, connection or membership of a political party who refuses to disclose such status in a bid to secure appointment with INEC. This amendment is in line with Section 156 (1a) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) which forbids members of INEC to belong to political parties.

The core of the amendment centres on the *formalization of legal basis for the use of electronic technology for the conduct of elections* in Nigeria. This is exemplified by the plethora of amendments aimed at mainstreaming electronic gadgets in the administration of elections in the country. Section 9 (1) of the Principal Act was amended by inserting Subsection (a) mandating INEC to keep the Voters Register in an electronic format in its central database, as well as in manual, printed or hard copy format. The bill provides for the introduction of electronic register of voters which must be published on INEC website as well as a national electronic register of election results as a distinct database or repository of polling unit by polling unit results for all elections conducted by INEC. The amendment of Section 49 with insertion of Subsections (1) and (2) enshrines the use of smart card reader (SCR) and other technological devices in elections. SCR, as stated above, was used during the

2015 General Elections and elections conducted by INEC between 2015 and 2019. However, the Supreme Court, in its ruling on the Abia, Delta, Rivers, and Zamfara governorship elections petitions, held that INEC's directive on the use of SCR for voters' authentication has not invalidated manual accreditation. The implication of this is that a petitioner cannot prove a case of over-voting in an election on the basis of total accredited voters (TAVs)using SCR is less than total votes cast (TVC); rather total voters registered (TVR) in the affected polling units (PU). As it is not backed by law, the SCR is believed not to be an authentic instrument of judging electoral cases. It is only when the National Assembly amends the Electoral Act, 2010 to provide for its use that it would be relevant in nullifying elections.

It is in attempt to bridge this gap that Section 49 (1) of the Electoral (Amendment) Act, 2018 provides that: "A person intending to vote in an election shall present himself with his voter's card to a Presiding Officer for accreditation at the polling unit in the constituency in which his name registered". Subsection (2) provides that: "the Presiding Officer shall use a Smart Card Reader or any other technological device that may be prescribed by the Commission, for the accreditation of voters, to verify, confirm or authenticate the particulars of the voter in the manner prescribed by the Commission". In anticipation of technical failure, Subsection (4) provides that: "where a Smart Card Reader deployed for accreditation of voters fails to function in any unit and a fresh Smart Card Reader is not deployed three hours before the close of election in that unit, the election shall not hold, but be rescheduled and conducted within 24 hours thereafter". However, a proviso under the same Subsection states that: "provided that where the total possible votes from all the affected card readers in the unit or units does not affect the overall result in the constituency or election concerned, the Commission shall notwithstanding the fact that a fresh card reader is not deployed as stipulated, announce the final results and declare winner". These provisions seek to respond to the weakness in the Electoral (Amendment) Act, 2015, which crystallized in election petition decisions arising from the 2015 general elections.

Another provision of the bill is the instant transmission of accreditation data and results from polling units to various collation centres. To many, a major setback in the Nigerian electoral process is manual collation and transmission of results. Manual transmission, apart from slowing down the collation and returning process, has been found to be fraud-accommodating as records are susceptible to manipulation between polling units and collation centres. Section 67 of the Principal Acts is amended by inserting a new Subsection (a). This new insertion mandates the Collation Officer or Returning Officer to collate and announce the result of an election after verifying and confirming that the number of accredited voters stated on the collated result corresponds with the number of accredited voters recorded and transmitted from the polling units. It further states that where during the collation of results, there is a dispute regarding a collated result or the result of an election from any polling unit, the Collation Officer or Returning Officer shall use inter alia, the SCR or any other technological device used for accreditation of voters in each polling unit where the election is disputed for the purpose of obtaining accreditation data direct from the SCR or technology device. The provision prescribes a 5 years' imprisonment penalty without option of fine for a Collation Officer of Returning Officer who collates or announces false results.

The Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018 also seeks to *improve access to elections materials and electoral data*. A common complaint during election petition tribunals is the difficulties in accessing and assembling the needed materials and evidence required to file their petitions (Okeke, 2019). The bill tries to address this problem. A new Subsection (3) is added to Section 151 of the Principal Act. This Subsection mandates all staff and officials of the Commission to comply with Court orders or Tribunals with regard to inspection and production of electoral materials. Staff that fail to obey Court orders under this proposal shall be liable, upon summary conviction, to at least 2 years imprisonment without the option of fine. In an attempt to promote openness and transparency, Section 43 of the Principal Act was amended to create additional observation privileges for polling agents and accredited observers by allowing inspection of election materials, as well as making written and audio-visual recordings of their inspections before commencement

of elections. Section 44 of the bill requires INEC to invite political parties 20 days to an election to inspect their identity on samples of election materials to be used for an election and confirm within 2 days of their invitation by the Commission as to whether they approve or disapprove of their identity as appears on the samples. It further seeks to preclude any political party so invited and who has failed to raise an issue here from complaining of unlawful exclusion afterwards.

The Bill also tries to *abolish arbitrary fees for nomination forms fixed by political parties*. Amended Section 87 prescribes limits for each elective office as follows: ₦150,000 for a Ward Councillorship aspirant in the FCT; ₦250,000 for an Area Council Chairmanship aspirant in the FCT; ₦500,000 for a House of Assembly aspirant; ₦1,000,000 for a House of Representatives aspirant; ₦2,000,000 for a Senatorial aspirant; ₦5,000,000 for a Governorship aspirant; and ₦10,000,000 for a Presidential aspirant. In addition, the Section restricts political parties from imposing nomination qualification and disqualification criteria, measures or conditions on aspirants except as provided by Sections 65, 66, 106, 107, 131, 137, 177 and 187 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended). To fill the lacuna in the law as was revealed in the 2015 Kogi State governorship election where the APC candidate, Prince Abubakar Audu, died after the commencement of poll but before the declaration of election result, a new Subsection (3) is added to Section 36 of the Principal Act which empowers INEC to suspend elections in cases where a nominated candidate dies after commencement of an election but before the declaration of the final resultfor a period not exceeding 21 days upon being satisfied of the death. The amendment further allows the affected political party a period of 14 days from the death of its candidate to conduct new primaries to replace the deceased. These amendments seek to deepen internal democracy through open, inclusive and transparent candidate selection process.

The Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018 also seeks to expand campaign expenditure limit by candidates seeking elections into various offices. Section 91 of the 2010 Electoral Act pegs the maximum limit on election expenses that can be incurred by candidates as follows: Presidential election,

₦1,000,000,000; Governorship election, ₦200,000,000; Senatorial seat in at an election to National Assembly, ₦40,000,000; Federal House of Representatives, ₦20,000,000; State Assembly Election, ₦10,000,000; Chairmanship election to an Area Council, ₦10,000,000; Councillorship election to an Area Council, ₦1,000,000. Section 91(9) prohibits any individual or entity from donating more than ₦1,000,000 to any candidate. This provision is amended to expand the campaign expenditure limit as follows: Presidential election, ₦5,000,000,000; Governorship election, ₦1,000,000,000; Senatorial seat at an election to National Assembly, ₦100,000,000; Federal House of Representatives, ₦70,000,000; State Assembly Election, ₦30,000,000; Chairmanship election to an Area Council, ₦30,000,000; Councillorship election to an Area Council, ₦5,000,000. It also expands from individuals to any candidate from ₦1,000,000 to ₦10,000,000.

These are some of the provisions of Electoral Amendment Bill which are believed would improve electoral process in Nigeria if applied. These provisions are a vindication of the Uwaiz Electoral Reform Committee's report and public campaign for digitalizing electoral process in Nigeria. It should also be recalled that Prof. Attahiru Jega, as INEC Chairman, pushed electoral reforms through the National Assembly and called for many of the new provisions especially on e-voting, e-register, and the regulation of arbitrary nomination fees charged by political parties. The hope raised by these provisions was, however, dashed by the refusal of the president to assent the amendment bill. Thought the president is empowered by the constitution to refuse assent to any bill which, in his opinion, is not in the national interest, but opposition parties and civil society organizations are of the belief that the decision of the president to consistently decline assent to the bill was motivated by political motive rather than the claimed national interest. Of concern to this paper, however, is how the refusal of the president to sign the bill impacted on the conduct of the 2019 general elections. In other words, how does the president's veto of the bill and the inability of the National Assembly to mobilize the required two-third vote to override the president's veto, represent a missed opportunity to improve on the gains of 2015 electoral process?

Presidential Veto of Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018: Matters Arising from the Conduct of 2019 General Elections

Having a credible and transparent election partly depends on the enactment of relevant laws that guide the electoral process. As the compass of election, electoral act guides the conducts of the stakeholders before, during, and after elections. An enhanced electoral law will guarantee free and fair poll; it is the only guarantee that the sovereign will of the people determines political leadership. The lapses identified during the 2015 general elections are partly attributed to the lack of comprehensive legal framework. Since the National Assembly was desirous of amending the Electoral Act, 2010 before the 2019 general elections, INEC's preparations towards the elections were somehow guided by the provisions of the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018. The refusal of the President to sign the Bill (for the fourth time and eleven weeks to the elections) not only stifled INEC's preparation for the elections but also created confusion on the modality of managing the elections. As of December 6, 2018, INEC was not sure of which law would eventually guide the process, though the Commission had been operating with the Electoral Act, 2010 (as amended). On this basis, one can submit that the refusal of the President to sign the bill was a rational one. It he did, it would have really created "uncertainty about the applicable legislation to govern the process" (President Muhammadu Buhari, 2018, p. 1) and put INEC under intense pressure to adjust to the new law. For instance, the most fundamental innovation which the bill intends to introduce is the electronic transmission of results. This would have been very difficult for INEC to implement across Nigeria as most parts of the country, especially rural areas, do not have access to Internet facilities.

On the other hand, it must also be stated that the refusal of the President to assent the bill also created uncertainty which stifled INEC's preparation for the elections. Preparation is believed to be a key to success; as there was no certainty on the law to guide the process, INEC could not fully prepare and embark on early preparation for the polls. Doubts were rife on INEC's readiness to conduct elections on February 16 and March 2, 2018.

These were dismissed by the Commission with its persistent assurances that it was fully ready to conduct the elections using the Electoral Act, 2010 (as amended). However, the postponement of the Presidential and National Assembly, and Governorship and House of Assembly elections from February 16 and March 2 to February 23 and March 9 respectively showed that the Commission was ill-prepared for the elections. INEC's excuse that logistic problems were responsible for the shift of the elections was a confirmation of the fact that the uncertainty of the legal framework through which the process would be regulated adversely affected its preparation for the elections. Though, this was not the first time that the Commission would postpone poll due to logistic problems but unlike the previous experiences (i.e. 2011 and 2015), the 2019 electoral process was characterized by an atmosphere of uncertainty which to some extent affected the preparation of the Commission. For instance, the uncertainty on the fate of the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018 prevented INEC from making early decision on method of election result collation and transmission. This affected the recruitment and training of Collation and Returning Officers. In Jigawa State, for instance, as of 12 a.m. on February 16, 2018 before the announcement of postponement of elections, the list of the Collation and Returning Officers for the Presidential and National Assembly elections had not been released.

Most notably, the President's veto of the Bill aggravated the opposition parties' suspicion and apprehension. This was manifested in their reactions to some issues such as the released Regulations and Guidelines for the conduct of the elections. INEC officially published the Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of 2019 general elections on January 14, 2019, in pursuant of the powers conferred on the Commission by Section 153 of the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended). INEC had earlier released a Draft Guidelines for the conduct of the 2019 elections to the 91 registered political parties, civil society groups and organizations, the media, professional groups and organizations, security agencies and other critical stakeholders in the electoral process for their input. The voting procedure for the conduct of all elections covered by the Regulations and Guidelines is the Continuous Accreditation and Voting as provided in Section 8(a) of the Guidelines; the mandatory use of the Smart Card Reader in accordance with Section 8(b) of the Regulations and

Guidelines; the use of Tendered Ballot, consistent with the provision of Section 60 of the Electoral Act, 2010 (as amended). Also, voters whose fingerprints are not authenticated or for whom wrong picture pops up, both due to technical hitches but whose names appear in the voter register, would still vote. Several reactions trailed the release of the Regulations and Guidelines. The opposition political parties raised a number of issues with the guidelines. In a letter to the Commission, dated January 11, 2019,the group under the auspices of Chairmen of Nigeria Political Parties stated their nine-point grouse with the Regulations and Guidelines. Most prominent among them is the demand for separate accreditation and voting as was the case in the last two general elections in 2011 and 2015.

Prof. Attahiru Jega, as INEC Chairman, introduced the separate accreditation from voting in 2011 in order to prevent multiple voting given the fact that the Commission, having just carried out a nationwide voter registration in February 2011 ahead of the April polls, has not completed running Automatic Fingerprint Identification System software to identify and remove multiple registrants from the database. The belief in INEC then was that having accreditation between 8am and 12:00 noon and forming a queue of voters nationwide between 12 noon and 12:30pm will prevent electoral fraud as no one with multiple registrations will be able to vote in more than one place. In 2015, INEC retained this voting method due to the introduction and non-piloting of the use of Smart Card Reader (Ojo, 2019a). Separate accreditation and voting was, however, noted to have caused voter apathy because of the inconvenience it subjects the voters to. INEC reports that in 2015 there were approximately 2.3 million voters who were accredited with their PVCs in the morning on March 28, 2015 but who did not actually cast their ballot in the afternoon (EUEOM, 2019).

The adoption of continuous accreditation and voting during the 2019 election was, however, characterized by inconsistencies. For example, since it is simultaneous accreditation and voting, it is expected that the total number of accredited voters (TAVs) would be the same with the total votes cast (TVC). This was not the case. For instance, the presidential election results as announced by INEC show that 29,364,209 voters were accredited while

28,614,190 voters actually cast their votes (INEC, 2019). 750,019 voters were accredited without voting. This was observed by the PDP agent, Chief Osita Chidoka and demanded explanation from the INEC. The Commission's Chairman however said that the discrepancy in the figure was an issue with no substantial impact on the outcome of the election. As participants in the election, we observed that the configuration of the SCRs of the polling units (PUs) with voting points (VPs) allowed multiple accreditations. Under the guidelines, a voter can only cast a ballot if its PVC is read by the SCR in a polling unit. But there are polling units (PUs) with more than 500 registered voters from which voting points (VPs) are created. The SCRs for the PUs and VPs were configured as same. With this a voter whose name is in VP's voter register that goes to PU would be accredited in the PU but he cannot vote in the PU as his name is not in the PU's voter register. Also, despite the insistence of INEC that no voter would without biometric verification through SCR, there were reported cases of deliberate refusal to use the SCRs. Manual voting was reported in locations like Kazawa Primary School Polling Unit in Kazawa Ward of Kano Central Senatorial District and Unwanar Ganji Open Space Ward in Rimi Gado of Kano North Senatorial District (CDD, 2019; EUEOM, 2019). Meanwhile INEC was persistent in assuring Nigerians that despite the president's veto of the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018, the 2019 elections would be conducted with the Electoral Act, 2010 (as amended) and the released Regulations and Guidelines, even when it also said that the rejected bill would have addressed the controversies that trailed the elections.

The implications of the presidential veto of the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018 are quite obvious. For instance, since the Supreme Court had cast doubts about the legality of the use of SCR as it was not provided for in the Electoral (Amendment) Act, 2015, the refusal of the President to sign the bill into law paved way for flagrant violation of the INEC directives on its usage. It thus follows that the high number of cancelled votes due to over-voting and non-adherence to the use of SCRs would have been avoided if the use of SCRs is backed by law as envisaged by the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018. Be that as it may, the 2019 general election is singled out for producing many inconclusive elections. The high number of cancelled votes brought about 7 inconclusive governorship elections, 24 inconclusive House of

Representatives election, and 3 inconclusive Area Council Chairmanship polls in the Federal Capital Territory. Supplementary elections in the polling units where elections were cancelled in the affected states were held on March 23, 2019. It is also believed that Section 67 of the bill (which mandates the Collation Officer or Returning Officer to collate and announce the result of an election after verifying and confirming that the number of accredited voters stated on the collated result corresponds with the number of accredited voters recorded and transmitted from the polling units) would have prevented the situation in Imo Senatorial West Election, where the Returning Officer, Prof. Innocent Ibeawuchi, alleged that he was forced to declare Governor Okorocha the winner of the poll by the APC supporters. It is also believed that electronic transmission of results would have also saved the situation in Bauchi and Rivers States during the Governorship election where armed gangs attacked collation centres and destroyed results sheets (Ojo, 2019b; EUEOM, 2019).

A notable feature of the 2019 electoral process is the catalogue of pre and post-election legal cases. As reported by the EUEOM (2019), there were 640 pre-election legal cases, mainly from the 2018 party primaries. Some of them were not resolved before Election Day, creating uncertainty. Theoffice of the Chief Registrar, Election Petitions Tribunal at the Court of Appeal in Abuja disclosed that 736 election petitions was filed by aggrieved politicians to challenge the outcome of the 2019 general elections at various levels. The State House of Assembly elections attracted 381 petitions, the Federal House of Representatives 101, Senatorial elections 207, 43 to challenge outcomes of Governorship elections, and 4 sought to upturn the victory of President Muhammadu Buhari (Olawunmi, 2019). However, the relatively high number of petitions that followed the election is not a new development in electoral process in Nigeria. This has been a trend since the 2007 elections which attracted 3,000 petitions. Even, despite the fact that 2015 general elections were adjudged to be credible, it attracted 730 petitions, out of which 179 were filed against House of Representatives seats, 79 for Senatorial seats and 380 for House of Assembly seats (Olawunmi, 2019). The recurring high number of petitions that continues to trail elections in the country not only indicates the disagreement of candidates with electoral procedures and results, it also brings to the fore issues bordering on the integrity of the electoral process. It also

serves as a reminder that there is the need for urgent electoral reforms that will accommodate electronic voting in Nigeria.

It is, however, unfortunate that, in spite of commencement of the amendment of the Electoral (Amendment) Act, 2015 since 2016, the process could not be completed before the 2019 general elections. What is obvious from the 'back-and-front' movement of the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018 between the legislature and executive was that there was no love lost between the two arms of government. The antagonistic relationship between the National Assembly and the Presidency prevented harmony of interest and purpose that is needed for the quick completion of the process. Starting from the inauguration of the 8th National Assembly, the relationship between the leadership of the Assembly and the Presidency remains fragile and this affected many issues among which the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018 is a notable one. One can therefore see the controversy surrounding the bill as a clear test of power between legislative and executive arms of government. As observed by Abati (2018), both arms of government (even when the ruling APC had a majority in the National Assembly) have not been able to work together harmoniously due to ego conflicts, conflict over leadership, and the absence of guiding, all-inclusive, shared vision and mission.

Consequently, few weeks to the 2019 general elections, the National Assembly and the Presidency remained locked in a disruptive battle that culminated in the latter's rejection of the electoral amendment bill for the fourth time. The foot-dragging between the legislature and the executive on the bill from February 2018 to December 2018 made it practically impossible, if signed by the President, to apply the recommended amendments to the 2019 elections as reasoned by the President. Though by the provisions of the 1999 Constitution (as amended), the National Assembly has the power to override the President's veto by mustering a two-third majority in both chambers, but because the issue was politicized, it became an APC versus PDP battle, it was impossible for the National Assembly to get the endorsement of 73 Senators and 240 House of Representatives members to override the presidential veto. It can therefore be said that the blemishes that doted the 2019 general elections were partly due to the frosty relationship between the 8th National Assembly

and President Muhammadu Buhari-led executive which prevented the successful amendment of Electoral Act, 2010.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this paper, attempt has been made to examine the controversies surrounding the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2018. It examines the background to the bill and its major provisions. Given numerous innovations the bill intends to introduce into electoral process in Nigeria, we submit that the failure of the National Assembly and the Presidency to work harmoniously to ensure that the bill is passed into law before the 2019 elections was a missed opportunity to build on the gains of the 2015 general elections. The importance of an enhanced electoral law in conducting free and credible elections cannot be over-emphasized in any democratic state. In the contemporary digital world, nation-states exploit the advantage of technology not only in governance but especially in election administration. In Nigeria, the recurring high number of petitions that usually trail elections (both party primary and general elections) not only indicates the disagreement of candidates with electoral procedure and results, it also puts question mark on the integrity of the electoral process. This brings to the fore the need for electoral law which entrench the use of technology in the country's electoral processes. The attempt by the 8th National Assembly to amend the Electoral (Amendment) Act, 2015 was in anticipation of giving legal backing to the use of SCRs and other electronic devices in electoral process. However, in spite of the early commencement of the amendment process, the Amendment Bill could not be passed into law due to mainly to lack of harmony of interest and purpose between the legislative and executive arms of government coupled with the polarization of the National Assembly along party line which made it difficult for the legislature to override the presidential veto.

Based on the foregoing analysis, we submit that there is the need for cooperation between the executive and legislative arms for an effective law amendment process in Nigeria. As far as law making and amendment is concerned, it is almost impossible for the legislature to perform this function

without the cooperation of the executive. Just as the organs of human body work harmoniously for a healthy living, so is the cooperation among these organs of government vital in enacting new legislation, amending existing ones to meet current needs, and repealing obsolete and irrelevant ones. This is the essence of separation of powers and checks and balances as essential features of presidential democracy. Cooperation and proper coordination between organs of government is, however, important for effective governance given the complementary nature of their powers and functions. This would pave way for constructive relationships among them, which are vital for good governance. Legislature as the symbol of representation must be depoliticized when it comes to issues of national importance as electoral laws. The politicization of the legislature (most especially the 8th National Assembly) on the grounds of party affiliation, internal party bickering, and ethnicity constituted a serious threat to national progress. Having been elected for second term, President Muhammadu Buhari and the APC need to learn from the ugly experience of the first term and build harmonious relationship with the 9th National Assembly.

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1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended)

THE NIGERIAN STATE AND THE MANAGEMENT OF NIGERIAN SEA PORTS: INTERROGATING THE ISSUES AND PROSPECTS AS IMPERATIVES FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Offor, E. Ogbonnaya & Nwobashi Humphrey N.
Department of Political Science, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki.
&
Abidde Victoria Kilegha
Department of Public Administration, Bayelsa State Polytechnic, Aleibiri

Abstract

The Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) is wholly owned by the Nigerian state under the supervision of the Federal Ministry of Transport. It has the responsibility of providing specific seaport and harbour services for the country's Maritime industry. Albeit, the problematique of this discourse stems from the fact that the Nigerian state has very few functional ports relying heavily on imports. Hence, the slow pace of inspections and offloading of shipping arrivals means that congestion and bottlenecks are nearly perpetual in Nigeria's biggest port in Apapa, Lagos. The ports' inefficiencies have for years enabled and incentivized corruption from official and unofficial middle men promising to clear goods for a 'fee'. Again, Turn-around-time for ships is too long, and usually calculated in weeks, sometimes months, depending on the cargo being loaded or discharged. Dwell-time for goods in ports is also prolonged due to poor port management. The study is anchored on the theory of structural functionalism, and hinged on qualitative data through causal research design. The study deciphers amongst others that the Nigerian state has continually failed to develop and make viable the sea ports of other regions in order to unburden the over-stressed Apapa port in Lagos for both economic/national development. The study recommends amongst others that government should take measures to fully equip other seaports outside of Lagos, such as Warri, Koko, Calabar, Port-Harcourt, and Onne sea ports which are grossly under-utilized.

Keywords: Nigerian Port Authority (NPA); Maritime Industry; Structural Functionalism; Economic Development; and National Integration.

Introduction

Essentially, Nigerian Ports Authority is wholly owned by the Federal Government of Nigeria under the supervision of the Federal Ministry of Transport. It has the responsibility of providing specific sea-port and harbour services for the country's Maritime industry. The statutory functions of the Authority according to National Bureau of Statistics (2017) are as follows:

- Provision and operation of cargo handling and quay facilities
- Pilotage and sewage services
- Supply of water and fuel to vessels at anchorage or mooring buoys
- Repair and maintenance of vessels
- Dredging and contact dredging of water ways
- Navigation lighting of the ports and
- Other ancillary services

Since the inception of seaports in Nigeria by the colonial masters in 1921, no systematic process for their re-development had been put in place until the current concession programme of port reforms started in 2000. This programme brought into existence the current set of private port operators in Nigeria. Moreover, this process of concession gained global credibility with the involvement of the World Bank, CPCS Transcom (of Canada) and Royal Haskoning (of Holland) as project monitors, concession bid managers and consultants, respectively. They worked with the National Council on Privatization (via the Bureau of Public Enterprises, BPE) to birth the new seaport re-development agenda. This advertorial is a brief expose of developments at the Ro-Ro Terminal at Tin Can Island Port Lagos since it was handed over to Five Star Logistics Ltd in May 2006 at the conclusion of the concession exercise.

As the nation's mass media duly informed Nigerians, about 86 local and foreign shipping companies and marine interests were pre-qualified from an even longer list of applicants to enter the initial bid for the concession programme. The 86 firms started by writing an expression of interest to the Bureau of Public Enterprises in 2004. The entire process culminated in the emergence of private port operators for all the concessions declared by the Nigerian Ports Authority through a widely circulated Memorandum of Information. This was the actualization of a Federal Government policy of urgently needed seaport reform agenda. Port operation has played a significant role in the growth, development and the current transformational changes in the life and national economic revival of Nigeria (Ndikom, 2013).

As at the last count, more than 2000 vessels were still stranded on the high seas of Nigeria's territorial waters due to their inability to berth at Lagos sea ports. This is not the first time importers and exporters are being made to go through a lot of pain to clear their goods at the nation's sea ports. Annoyingly, it also appears this would not be the last. As a matter of fact, congestion at the ports has become a chronic problem. It has been identified as one of the factors responsible for the diversion of Nigerian-bound goods to the ports of Benin Republic and Togo by Nigerian businessmen. No one can blame the importers, because even during non-crisis periods, it is still cheaper and faster to clear goods at the ports of these neighbouring countries than at Nigerian ports, which explains why imported goods from Cotonou and Togo are cheaper than similar goods in Nigeria (Salau, 2018; Kazeem, 2018).

It is expected that the federal government through the ministries of transport and finance to conduct an independent investigation into the problem of congestion at Nigerian ports so as to objectively identify the true causes of the congestion. A stakeholders' forum which brings together customs officials and clearing agents cannot achieve anything. You cannot expect clearing agents registered by customs to openly criticize the customs. Over the years, the port system has witnessed a lot of challenges occasioned by government policy inconsistency and other major factors that have ignited a lot of delays in ports operational modalities resulting to inefficiency and lack of productivity and also reflecting in some form of negative infectiveness of the port's industry.

Also, in the post-concession era the private companies who are leased to various terminals in the port lack legislative backing to invest fully in the ports, in as much as they operate on a Build, Operate and Transfer plan (BOT), there is need to provide a legislative backing on its investment owing to policy inconsistencies. From the foregoing, it will be noted that port productivity of Nigerian ports are occasioned by delay factors as succinctly captured by Ndikom (2013):

- Government policy problem
- Lack of infrastructural facilities
- Port managerial problems
- Poor planning
- Poor dredging of channels
- Dock-workers, concessionaire problems.

Also the post concession era, has brought about positive developments in our ports which has in many ways enhanced the productivity of Nigerian ports. But the existent structure of most Government agencies at the ports do not conform to post concession era, these structures are obsolete, therefore the need to reframe the system and structure of those agencies to conform to current situation at the port. Other delay factors stated by Emeghara (2008) are viz.:

5. Inadequacies of berth
6. Lack of cargo handling equipment
7. Lack of manpower
8. Administrative bottleneck
9. Insufficient depth of the entry channels
10. Too many public holidays and strikes.

Successive administrations in Nigeria have repeatedly given the impression of attempting to address this issue. But none have gone beyond lip service. It is therefore understandable that most observers saw a recent stakeholders' forum to address the issue of port congestion in Nigeria as another attempt by government to buy time. Many who received the news believed that the game of deceiving Nigerians was about to be repeated. Forum of various types have become a deceitful way of doing things at government ministries in this country. In the end, the only purpose such forum serve is to achieve publicity for government officials by forming part of news items on television and radio network news. It is against this backdrop that the study seeks to bring to the fore the management of Nigerian sea ports by interrogating the issues and prospects as imperatives for national development.

2. Conceptual Clarification
Nigerian Sea Ports

Sea ports are the gateway to trade, and are important route in the global supply chain. No country can produce everything that its citizens need, but by opening its sea ports/borders to international trade a country gains far more than basic resources and exotic luxuries. A port (sea port) is a coastal shore location where ships can dock in order to transfer cargo (or people) to or from land.

Interestingly, the Nigerian Ports Authority started operations in April 1955 following the implementation of the Ports Act of 1954. In the beginning,

the public corporation managed only the Lagos and Port Harcourt sea ports while some private companies managed the remaining Nigerian ports. In addition to managing cargo handling, quay and berthing facilities at the Lagos and Port Harcourt ports, the initial law also gave it the responsibility of managing harbours and approaches to all ports in the country (Ekpo, 2012; NBS, 2017).

From 1962 - 1968, under the Nigerian Development plan, the length of the quays was expanded and additional warehouses and cargo handling equipment were added. During the Nigerian Civil War that lasted from 1967-1969, only the Lagos Port was functioning and some parts of the port in Port Harcourt was damaged. In 1969, a new decree added Burutu, Calabar and Warri ports to its jurisdiction. The firm took control of the Warri port from John Holt and Burutu from UAC. However, by the early 1970s, the Lagos port was battling congestion. In 1973, the corporation entered into an agreement with the World Bank to finance expansion of facilities within the ports (Kazeem, 2018; Eleagu & Akonye, 2018).

Part II of the Third Schedule of the NPA Act recognizes the following functions of a port:

(ix) berthing, towing, mooring, moving or dry-docking of ships, in entering or leaving a port or its approaches;
(x) the loading and unloading of goods or embarking or disembarking of passengers in or from a ship;
(xi) the lighterage or the sorting, weighing, warehousing and handling of goods; and
(xii) the carriage of passengers and/or goods (NBS, 2017).

Sea Port Locations in Nigeria
Lagos Port Complex
The Apapa in Lagos, together with the Tin Can Island Port, serve Lagos and western Nigeria. The economic door to the nation is Lagos Port Complex.

Tin Can Island Port
Tin Can Island Port at Lagos was formed by a merger of the port facilities at Roro and Tin Can Island in 2006.

Calabar Port

Located in the southeast corner of the country in Cross River State, Calabar is the home of the Eastern Naval Command of the Nigerian Navy. Port facilities are located 55 nautical miles up the Calabar River.

Delta Port

Delta Port, Rivers Port and Onne Port are located in the petroleum and natural gas producing Niger River Delta region of Nigeria. Delta Port in Delta State includes the ports of Warri, Burutu, Sapele and petroleum terminals at Escravos and Forcados.

Rivers Port/Port Harcourt

The Rivers Port Complex in coastal Rivers State comprises Ports of Port Harcourt, Okrika Refined Petroleum Oil Jetty, Haastrup/Eagle Bulk Cement Jetty, Kidney Island Jetty, Ibeto Jetty, Macobar Jetty and Bitumen Jetty. Management of port operations at Port Harcourt itself has been commissioned out to two port operators, Ports and Terminal Operators and BUA Ports and Terminal, it is not operated by the NPA. Like Delta State, Rivers State is a principal petroleum-producing region of Nigeria.

Onne Port

Onne is located in Rivers State on Ogu Creek near the Bonny River, 19 kilometres from Port Harcourt; the port area is located in three Local Government Areas of Rivers State, Eleme LGA, Ogu-Bolo LGA and Bonny LGA. The port consists of two major facilities, the Federal Ocean Terminal and the Federal Lighter Terminal. Onne Port has been designated as an Oil and Gas Free Zone by the government of Nigeria; currently over 100 companies have licenses to work at Onne Port; as an economic free zone it serves as a hub port for oil and gas operations throughout West Africa and Central Africa.

Economic Development

Essentially, economic development can be defined as passage from lower to higher stage which implies change. Kindleberger & Herrick (1958, p. 67) cited in Ruttan (2006, p. 38), pointed out that:

> …economic development is generally defined to include improvements in material welfare especially for persons with the lowest incomes, the eradication of mass poverty with its correlates of illiteracy, disease and early death, changes in the

composition of inputs and output that generally include shifts in the underlying structure of production away from agricultural towards industrial activities, the organization of the economy in such a way that productive employment is general among working age population rather than the situation of a privileged minority, and the correspondingly greater participation of broad based groups in making decision about the direction, economic and otherwise, in which they should move their welfare.

According to the International Economic Development Council IEDC (2000), no single definition fits in all of the different strands of economic development. Essentially, economic development can be described in terms of objectives. These are most commonly described as the creation of jobs and wealth, and the improvement of quality of life. Economic development can also be conceptualised as a process that influences growth and restructuring of an economy to improve the economic wellbeing of a state. In a more encompassing sense, economic development touches three major areas:

8. Policies that government undertakes to meet broad economic objectives including inflation control, high employment, and sustainable growth.
9. Policies and programmes to provide services including building highways, managing parks, and providing medical access to the disadvantaged.
10. Policies and programs explicitly directed at improving the business climate through specific efforts, business finance, marketing, neighbourhood development, business retention and expansion, technology transfer, real estate development and others (IEDC, 2000).

However, the main aim of economic development is to enhance the economic wellbeing of a people (state) through concerted efforts that entail job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements and quality of life. As there is no single definition for economic development, there is no single strategy, policy, or program for achieving successful economic development. States are variant in their geographic and political strengths and weaknesses. Thus, every state will therefore have a unique set of challenges for economic development (IEDC, 2000).

From the forgoing, economic development requires collective action and large-scale, long-horizon investment. Economic development addresses the basic conditions necessary for the microeconomic functioning of the economy, which is within the purview of state and government. Economic development creates the conditions that enable long-run economic growth. Jobs are a main concern of policy. Economic development therefore focuses on wages, career advancement opportunities, and working conditions.

3. Theoretical Underpinning of the Study

This study adopted structural-functional framework which is a focal theory of the background or General System theory of political analysis as propounded by Almond & Powell (1966). Although the theory has its origin from sociology, in the writings of anthropologists like August Comte, Herbert Spencer, Malinowski and Radeliffe-Brown, and adopted in political science, especially in comparative politics by Gabriel Almond. Other prominent proponents of the theory are Parsons (1937, 1961); Merton (1957); Davis (1959); Evans-Pritchard (1940); Meyer Fortes (1945); etc. Structural functional analysis is basically concerned with the phenomenon of system maintenance and regulation. The basic theoretical proposition of this approach is that all systems exist to perform functions through their structures.

According to Almond, & Powell (1966) structural-functionalism revolves around two main concepts namely; functions and structures on the basis of which Varma raised three basic questions – (1) What basic functions are fulfilled in any given political system? (2) By what structures? (3) Under what conditions? He stresses that while functions deals with the consequences (i.e. involving objectives as well as processes) of patterns of actions, structures refers to arrangements within the systems, which performs the functions.

The Fundamental Assumptions of the Theory

According to Almond, & Powell (1966), the basic assumptions of the structural-functional derivative of the systems approach are:

iv. That the society is a single inter-connected system in which each of its elements performs a specific function and whose basic goal is the maintenance of the systemic equilibrium;

v. That the society, being a system as a whole, consists of its numerous parts which are inter-related;

vi. That the dominant tendency of the social system is towards stability which is maintained by its own in-built mechanism;

vii. That the system's ability to resolve internal conflicts is usually an admitted fact;

viii. That Changes in the system are natural, but they are neither sudden nor revolutionary, but are always gradual and adaptive as well as adjustive;

ix. That the system has its own structure, with its own aims, principles and functions.

The structural-functional derivative speaks of the political system as composed of several structures as patterns of action and resultant institutions with their assigned functions. A function, in this context, means, what Plato (quoted by Almond, & Powell, 1966) says, 'some purpose served with respect to the maintenance or perpetuation of the system', and a structure could be related to any set of related roles, including such concrete organisational structures such as federal states. So the structural-functional analysis, involves the identification of a set of requisite or at least recurring functions in the kind of system under investigation. This is coupled with an attempt to determine the kinds of structures and their interrelations through which those functions are performed.

According to Almond & Powell (1966), the functioning of any political system may also be viewed in terms of its capabilities, which is the way it performs as a unit in its environment. The concepts of regulative, extractive, distributive, symbolic and responsive capabilities are employed as criteria to assess how a system is performing within its environment, how it is shaping its environment, and how it is being shaped by the environment as well.

The theory stresses that all systems have structures which can be identified, and those structures perform specific set of tasks if they are to remain in existence and maintain their relevance to the system. Political systems are compared in terms of the manner in which structures perform the expected functions in society. Structural-functionalism is anchored on two basic concepts: structures and functions. While structures are arrangement within the system which performs the functions which could either be diffused or diffracted, functions are the objective consequences emanating from the workings of the system or what the system does (Lowi, 1964).

All political systems are therefore perceived to perform two basic functions –input and output functions. Input functions are political

socialization, recruitment, interest articulation; interest aggregation; and political communication. While the output functions are rule making, rule application and rule adjudication. Structural-functional analysis will enable us to establish the relevance of the structures created by government to help maintain order in the whole system.

Structural-Functionalism as a theoretical framework is intended to explain the basis for the maintenance of order and stability in society and the relevant arrangement within the society, which maintain the social order and stability. In our formation of a structural functional framework, social processes and social mechanisms are the intervening variables. A complete description of a social system would include therefore, a treatment of the social structures, and various functions of these structures; and of the social processes and mechanisms that must be in operation if the structures are to satisfy certain functions (Almond & Powell, 1966). According to Almond & Powell, (1966) structural functional analysis:

> …is a distinguishable approach primarily because of the selective aspects of social reality that it seeks to describe largely in terms of structures, processes, mechanisms and functions. These four concepts are of particular importance to the laws and theories that are developed (Almond & Powell, 1966, p. 112).

Application of the Theory to the Study
The theory is apt and suitable for this study because it explicitly defines the level of functionalities in the institutions in-charge of port administration and development. And these institutions can be referred to as systems with structures with various functions. The underperformances of the port authorities, ministry of transport and successive administrations towards the maritime industry in Nigeria points to the systemic failure as espoused by the system theory in rule making, rule application and rule adjudication as the structural functionalities of other Nigerian sea ports have been underutilised save for Apapa port that has been over burden with activities.

4. Findings and Analytical Discussions
The State of Nigerian Sea Ports
As stated earlier, Part II of the Third Schedule of the NPA act recognizes the following functions of a port:

8. berthing, towing, mooring, moving or dry-docking of ships, in entering or leaving a port or its approaches;
9. the loading and unloading of goods or embarking or disembarking of passengers in or from a ship;
10. the lighterage or the sorting, weighing, warehousing and handling of goods; and
11. the carriage of passengers or goods (Ekpo, 2012; NBC, 2017).

Based on the aforesaid, it is imperative to define a non-functional port as one that has fallen out of use and no longer serving the purpose of transferring cargo or people) as designed. A non-functional port is thus expected to record low or zero operational activities. A functional port is able to perform its regular function, and report visible statistics as evidence of operations.

It is thus established that Nigeria has more than one port in existence. The important question that readily comes to bear is: Are these ports functional? In order to establish the functionality or otherwise of the existing ports, we took a pip at the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) website. Official information is available on the site for six (6) functional ports. We analysed the activities of these ports, using the total Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) of all ocean going vessels for Q3, 2014, and Cargo Traffic / Throughput for Q1, 2016. In the same vein, a news report obtained from Salau (2018) in Guardian Newspaper, cited a statement issued by the then Assistant General Manager (Public Relations) of NPA, Iliya Musa provided the GRT details for full year 2013 and 2014.

Table 1: Activities in Nigeria Ports based on Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) of all Ocean going Vessels for 2013 and Q3, 2014

Nigeria ports	Gross Registered Tonnage 2013	Gross Registered Tonnage % 2013	Gross Registered Tonnage Q 3 2014	Gross Registered Tonnage % Q 3 2014	Gross Registered Tonnage 2014	Gross Registered Tonnage % 2014
Lagos Port Complex (LPC)	34,466,291	27%	10,105,002	27%	36,969,456	25%

Lagos Port: Tin Can Island Port	42,758,161	34%	13.076,324	34%	50,011,289	34%
Calabar Port Complex	2,792,488	2%	1,053,435	3%	4,085,903	3%
Rivers Port Complex	6,394,270	5%	1,890,944	5%	7,304,591	5%
Onne Port Complex	38,967,131	31%	10,396,120	27%	41,854,687	28%
Delta Port Complex	6,295,995	5%	1,525,800	4%	7,676,944	5%
TOTAL	**125,378,341**	**100%**	**38,047,705**	**100%**	**147,852,920**	**100%**

Source: Iliya (2017) cited by Salau (2018), modified by the Authors.

The above table shows the level of activities in Nigeria sea ports in percentage as the gross activities of the two ports in Lagos have over 61% in 2013 and 59% in 2014 respectively of the entire and/or gross registered tonnage inflow, while the other sea ports share the remaining percentages of 39% in 2013 and 41% in 2014 respectively.

Table 2: Ship Traffic: Number and Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) of Ocean going Vessels (2012-2017)

PORT	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	No	GRT	No	GRT	No	GRT	No	GRT	No	GRT	No	GRT
APAPA	1,445	32,072,798	1,510	34,189,172	1,503	37,046,879	1,410	36,290,502	1,194	33,612,42	1,151	31,932,78
TIN CAN ISLAND	1,508	32,636,886	1,615	40,096,754	1,692	47,231,548	1,656	45,864,565	1,559	45,229,402	1,350	41,477,915
RIVERS	499	7,210,520	439	6,207,092	430	6,632,480	373	5,423,002	319	4,951,913	312	5,277,722
ONNE	859	42,910,262	823	38,612,995	836	45,543,000	741	44,053,589	659	40,091,36	681	42,818,94
CALABA	159	2,767,531	373	2,834,884	269	4,008,361	306	3,796,652	453	4,207,733	174	3,880,058
DELTA	367	3,220,686	609	8,687,160	603	7,860,797	528	5,822,393	438	6,120,242	507	6,182,396
TOTAL	4,837	120,818,683	5,369	130,628,057	5,333	148,323,065	5,014	141,250,703	4,622	134,213,06	4,175	131,569,81

Source: Nigeria Bureau of Statistics, (2017).

The above table shows the number of gross registered tonnage of ocean going vessels ranging from 2012 to 2017. It succinctly captured the

increase in activities in the two ports in Lagos alone, while other ports in the South-south and South-east have relatively low vessel patronage.

Table 3: Vehicle Traffic (Units) (2012-2017)

PORT	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
APAPA	17,121	14,397	9,611	6,955	346	507
TIN CAN ISLAND	251,322	265,209	237,904	124,841	104,571	180,753
RIVERS	-	-	-	-	-	141
ONNE	285	260	106	196	272	3
CALABAR	-	-	-	-	-	-
DELTA	658	360	311	2	-	-
TOTAL	269,386	280,226	247,932	131,994	105,189	181,404

Source: Nigeria Bureau of Statistics, (2017).

The above table also shows the lopsided utilisation of the ports in terms of vehicles imported into Nigeria. Where the two ports in Lagos recorded the highest vehicle traffic; whereas, all the ports in the South-south locations recorded nil some years except for Onne port that recorded little number of activities from 2012 - 2017.

The Cost of Shipping Goods into Nigerian Sea Port: A Comparative Perspective

According to Kazeem (2018), it is costly to ship goods to Nigeria from the United States than any other destination. Shipping goods to Nigeria by sea from the United States can leave a big hole in your pocket. Analysis on overseas cargo and freight costs by Mover DB, an online resource for international shipping, shows that the cost of shipping both 20-foot and 40-foot containers to Lagos ports from New York is the most expensive globally. The report covers the shipping costs from New York and Los Angeles to 47 port cities globally. The high costs of shipping to Nigeria do not correlate with distance. For instance, shipping from New York to Nigeria is nearly double the cost of shipping to South Africa even though Nigeria is closer, by nautical miles, to New York compared to South Africa.

Table 2: The Cost of Shipping goods into Nigerian Sea Port and other Countries

Port City	20-foot container (from New York) amount in Pounds $	40-foot container (from New York) amount in Pounds $
Zayed (United Arab Emirates)	$1,723	$2,572
Haifa (Israel)	$1729	$2581
Montevideo (Uruguay)	$1816	$2711
Beirut (Lebanon)	$1943	$2900
Buenos Aires (Argentina)	$1993	$2975
Cape Town (South Africa)	$2542	$3795
Auckland (New Zealand)	$2645	$3949
Sydney (Australia)	$2797	$4175
Jeddah (Saudi Arabia)	$3086	$4606
Apapa, Lagos (Nigeria)	$4982	$7436

Source: Kazeem (2018), modified by the Authors.

The result in the table above on the high costs of shipping to Nigeria is not unconnected to entrenched inefficiency at its local ports. For starters, Nigeria has very few functional ports even though its economy—Africa's largest—continues to rely heavily on imports. The slow pace of inspections and offloading of shipping arrivals means that congestion and bottlenecks are nearly perpetual in Nigeria's biggest port in Apapa, Lagos. The ports' inefficiencies have for years enabled and incentivized corruption from official and unofficial middle men promising to clear goods for a 'fee' (Badejo, & Solaja, 2014; Kazeem, 2018).

In 2017, in a bid to ease import and export flow, the government launched reforms at the ports. The government worked to clear the ports of local touts who extort bribes and also mandated that the Apapa port run 24-hour operations. Yet, despite a federal executive order, neither measure has been fully implemented, according to a regular user of the port (NBC, 2017).

While the shipping prices in MoverDB's report are accurate as of early 2017, anecdotal evidence suggests the reality has not changed much since the

reforms were introduced. Indeed, inefficiencies at the ports remained primed to allow clearing agents continue to play a key role in processing goods for importers while likely in cahoots with local customs officers. Kazeem (2018), has it that clearing your container yourself is herculean as the problem is that customs will frustrate you. Hence, you have to go through an agent.

According to the President, National Association of Government Approved Freight Forwarders (NAGAFF) Mr. Uche, Quoted by Salau (2018, p. 4)

> …Only a few months ago haulage of a 1,400 feet container was for N120,000.00 while that for a 20 feet container was transported for N80,000.00 within Lagos. But the prices have shot up to between N555,000.00 and N600,000.00 for the 40 feet container.

Speaking further he observed that the cost of moving the 40 feet container up country is now around N1.2 million which he sees as "unjustifiable". In another vein, over 6,000 imported vehicles with a combined value of about N25 billion may have been abandoned at the same Lagos ports by their importers, as a result of a slack in import duty operations by the Nigerian Customs Service. The vehicles have remained abandoned due to the failure of their importers to clear the respective import fees, which go at the rates of 70% duty and 70% levy brand new vehicles, as well as 35% duty for used vehicles.

The situation has discouraged importers from patronising Nigerian ports. According to an importer, Mr Samson Benjamin quoted by Kazeem (2018), stressed that "while Nigerian importers are desirous to patronize Nigerian ports the various agencies in charge of administering the ports are not helping matters." Where the problem is not in poor infrastructure, it rears its head in outrageous charges and administration all of which translate into avoidable business losses for the importers. To corroborate the messy state of affairs at the country's ports the House of Representatives engaged in a comprehensive probe of the state of affairs at the country's ports and activities of terminal managers and their sub-contractors. The probe which is by the House Committee on Ports, Harbours and Waterways is driven by serial complaints and petitions over serial infractions at the country's various terminals. We expect that this legislative probe and investigation will yield favourable outcome in the coming years.

The Management of the Nigerian Sea Ports and the Declining Fortunes

According to Salau (2018), the Nigerian ports are currently experiencing dwindling fortunes, and recorded about 8.6 per cent increase in cargo throughput, while ship traffic slides 2.3 per cent and container traffic decreased by 7.1 per cent in the first quarter (Q1) of 2018 against the fourth quarter 2017.

Again, Salau (2018) captured that in the first quarter 2018 performance report released by the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), through the Nigerian Port Consultative Council (PCC) at a meeting in Lagos, the ports recorded 18,729,889 metric tonnes of goods in the first quarter of 2018 against the 17,250,334 metric tonnes of cargo the seaports received previous quarter. The inward traffic stood at 10,617,318 metric tonnes, representing 56.7 per cent of cargo throughput at the ports in 2018 while the outward cargo traffic was 8,112,671 metric tonnes representing 46.3 per cent of the total cargo traffic. However, container traffic dropped in the period under review, as it stood at 387,016 Total Equivalent Unit (TEUs) indicating a decrease of 7.1 per cent from 416,806 TEUs handled by the same ports in the fourth quarter of 2017 (NBC, 2017).

Based on the aforesaid, it is interesting to note that ship traffic was also affected with a downward slide on the volume with 985 ships showing a decrease of 2.3 per cent from 1,008 that called in fourth quarter of 2017. This shows a gross tonnage of ship 31,693,650 against 32,598,477 recorded in the 4th quarter of 2017, showing a decline of 2.8 per cent. The turn-around time of vessels stood at 3.8 days when compared with 4.1 day in 4th quarter of 2017. Statistics also showed that berth occupancy rate was 32.8 per cent as against 33.8 per cent in 2017.

Conversely, there was an improvement in the turn-around time of vessels. This increase according to the report, is as a result of concerted effort of the management of NPA to improve port infrastructure and aid implementation of Federal Government's Executive Order on Ease of Doing Business.

On the underutilisation of the Eastern Sea Ports, the Managing Director, NPA, Hadiza Bala Usman, quoted by Salau (2018) stated that the reason why the Eastern sea ports are underutilised is because of poor infrastructure. She stressed that for the Eastern ports to attract cargo and much shipping activities, there must be improvement on infrastructure that would

aid port transaction in the zone. In her own words, as captured in Salau (2018, p. 5) she stressed that:

> There is no need for shippers to en route their cargoes to places where they will find it difficult to reach their warehouses and end users. There has been this issue of restiveness in the area, and no investor will like to toy with his or her goods, hence they prefer Lagos ports where security is guaranteed unlike in the eastern ports. Calabar port is strategically located to be able to service the North-East and the North-West, but the link roads to the area from Calabar is bad. Articulated vehicles cannot ply the route.

The NPA boss therefore appealed to the relevant government agencies responsible for infrastructure-related development to assist the authority in the provision of the needed infrastructure for smooth cargo operations in the zone. She also called on the coastal communities to ensure security and less restiveness among the youths in order to attract investment in their area. Usman assured investors that the authority was working in partnership with the Nigerian Navy and the Marine Police to restore sanity on Nigerian waters.

The Issues and Challenges to Effective/Efficient Ports Management in Nigeria

Beyond the current challenge of traffic gridlock around the country's two most important seaports of Apapa and Tincan Island, all in Lagos, other factors are also militating against import business in the country. In one vein the grid lock has spawned a geometric increase in the cost of moving freight from any of the affected ports to any other part of Lagos by as much as 600% in some cases (Bamidele, & Oludele, 2017; Okwedy, 2018).

In a related development Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics in its March 2018 Report recorded a drop of Nigerian ports in global rating basically because of dilapidated infrastructure. Against the copious volume of resources ploughed into the country's maritime sector over the years, the situation there constitutes oscillating forward and backward movement that captures little or no progress. The ultimate consequence is the current state of congestion and associated traffic grid lock on Lagos roads and related

malpractices that drive importation business and attendant revenue out of the country (Okwedy, 2018).

In the context of the country's maritime development aspirations the situation remains unacceptable as there are other seaports that are presently idle and are calling for attention and business. Such ports located in Port Harcourt, Calabar, Warri and Koko are left to wallow, in a state of distorted ports management regime by the Federal Ministry of Transportation and its subsidiary the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA).

For a country trying to diversify its exports and foreign exchange earnings, Nigeria's seaports are seriously deficient. According to the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), the country has six seaports: Apapa and Tin Can in Lagos, the Onne and Port-Harcourt ports in Rivers State, the Warri Port, and the Calabar Port. But, by many accounts, only the Lagos ports are operating anywhere near full capacity (Ekpo, 2012; Badejo & Solaja, 2014).

The Apapa and Tin Can Ports account for 70% of imports on average. NPA data shows that the Onne port handled about 80% of Nigeria's export cargos between 2012 and 2017 – but this is because the Onne port is located in an Oil & Gas Free Zone and most of Nigeria's exports are oil & gas products. Thus, the dispersion of imports across the ports paints a fairer picture of the performance of each one. A quick visit to the Port Harcourt port would reveal a surprising level of inactivity. A few people are milling about, but most of them are security personnel, one of whom disclosed that the number of ships docking at the port had decreased over the years. In the past, ships waited for days for space to dock, but now, there are days when no vessels dock at all (Bamidele, & Oludele, 2017).

It is not immediately clear what happened to the Port Harcourt port. Some have blamed the poor functionality of the ports in the South on insecurity, as militancy and piracy increase the cost and risk associated with transporting goods through these areas. This is a view sometimes pushed by the federal government, and it has some merit. At the height of a militant uprising driven by frustration at perceived exploitation by the government and international oil companies, kidnapping expatriates was a popular and lucrative activity and remains a moderate threat to this day. This has greatly discouraged foreign investment in the area. Although amnesty was granted to the militants in 2009, latent insecurity clouds the region.

Others peddle the narrative that the Lagos ports are most active because it is the economic capital of the country. While this is true, and many

importers would prefer to receive their goods in Lagos, some of Nigeria's largest markets are in the East, which makes it bizarre that such little activity is directed to ports closer to the region. Part of the problem may be structural. Petroleum imports account for roughly 20% of Nigeria's imports, and most of this comes in through the Lagos ports (Eleagu, & Akonye, 2018). The absence of a strong network of pipelines for transport and depots for storage have effectively rendered the other ports useless in this situation.

But this is Nigeria, and ethnic politics is never far away as a reason to the current port utilisation as opposed to other ports in south-south and south-east regions. Unsurprisingly, one conspiracy theory suggests that the ports in the South-South have been allowed to deteriorate as part of a ploy between Yoruba and Hausa leaders to weaken the region's economy. The deterioration of the Southern ports dates back several years, spanning different presidencies, governors, and leaders at the Nigeria Port Authority (NPA). It is unlikely that any single individual or group could coordinate a joint venture of neglect here.

In 2006, the Obasanjo administration introduced a port reform which forced the NPA to relinquish its active cargo holding responsibilities to private operators. The part-privatization permitted the NPA to retain its responsibility for infrastructure, regulation, and monitoring, but handed duties such as cargo handling, maintenance, and security to port terminal operators (Ekpo, 2012).

The concession was supposed to make the ports more efficient, but the opposite has happened. In 2015, during a performance review of the Nigerian Ports, the Chairman of Seaport Terminal Operators Association of Nigeria, Vicky Hasstrup, pointed out some of the successes and failures of the port reform. She noted that while the reform had increased productivity due to strict monitoring of labour, control of extortion and reduction of damages to cargo, it had led to weaker vessel security and longer customs delays (Bamidele, & Oludele, 2018).

Not having efficient seaports is a more significant problem than you would think. Essentially, roughly 99% of Nigeria's trade goes through its sea borders, meaning the fate of the country's trade and economic development rest on port efficiency. Also, inefficient port activity has an impact on the surrounding area for resident people who have to deal with traffic gridlock in Apapa (Lagos) where shipping trucks line side by side on the road.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Regrettably, the degenerated state of Nigerian ports in comparison with those of neighbouring countries with respect to infrastructure and operations is alarming. The pivotal significance of viable seaports in the development of the country's maritime industry which is yet to attain the desired and expected status of becoming the hub for international freight movement and trade in the West African sub region. In the light of the undeserved agony of Nigerians from the incipient state of affairs in the country's ports administration a total overhaul of the sector is highly recommended.

The study recommends thus:
5. There is need for consistency in government policies in the port which has greatly altered the potentials of Nigerian ports.
6. Government should take measures to fully equip other seaports outside of Lagos, such as Warri, Koko, Calabar, Port-Harcourt, and Onne sea ports which are grossly under-utilized.
7. There is need for managerial improvement, adequate dredging of channels, and proper planning of port services while also legally empowering the concessionaires in infrastructural facilities.
8. The Apapa problem and gridlock can partly be addressed by diverting more cargo to the ports in the South-south and South-east. Apapa may be congested, but as the security guard would tell you, there is plenty of room in Port-Harcourt and other Nigerian ports.

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AFRICAN MIGRANTS TO EUROPE AND ITS SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EFFECTS ON AFRICA'S LEADERSHIP

Fidelis Ikaade Ochim
Department of Political Science
Federal University Lafia, Nasarawa State

Abstract

Migration is as old as humans. Throughout man's sojourn on planetary earth, there has been movement from one geographical location to another in search for either a safe abode free from intrusion, attacks or conflict, or for economic sustainability, cultural affinities, or movements arising from political crisis or conflicts, which may be summed up into human needs and wants. While the advancing societies are almost out of it but for natural causes, that of the third world specifically African state's citizens migrate to Europe in quest for better ways of life to fulfill their life existence that is seemingly lacking, or inadequate or arising from artificial scarcity of goods, services and resources deliberately created by malnourished and visionless leadership. This indeed raises the question whether leadership and or states exist in Africa. Then, the issue of citizen and citizenship is doubtful even as enshrined in state's constitutions or grand laws. The blatant disrespect for the laws of the land by the framers is one of the major causes of African crises. This is seen in the quality of leadership and service delivery that is considered a luxury even when it has to do with the basic necessities of life. Even then, when so provided by some states, the cost of advertorials attracts much premium than the projects that sometimes do not survive the vagaries of a year's weather arising from the use of fake materials, and not excluding 10 percenters or kick backs. This is the crux of bad leadership that produces bad followership. The paper made use of secondary sources of data: Books, journals, newspapers, magazines and electronic media. Findings show that, the structures of most African states are fashioned in favour of minority rich, while the majority of the population suffers in abject want and needs. This is the poverty of agenda of most African states. The paper recommends among others that, the earlier African leadership realize that public office is public trust, and for service

delivery for the good of all, then a sure way to stem the tide of Africans fleeing to Europe in search of good life conditions.

Key words: Migration, Africa, Leadership, Citizenship, Europe

Introduction

One of the fundamental rights enshrined in the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1979 ECOWAS Protocol Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment; and the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, is the freedom of movement of persons and their wares. None of these provisions however sanctions irregular emigration of Africans to Europe.

Records show that Nigeria tops the countries with highest penchant for emigration to Europe through unofficial routes. For example, the top 10 nationalities of irregular migrants disembarked in Italy in 2016 were Nigerian (21%), Eritrean (11%), Guinean (7%), Ivorian (7%), Gambian (7%), Senegalese (6%), Malian (6%), Sudanese (5%), Bangladeshi (4%) and Somalian (4%) (European Commission, 2017b; Italian Ministry of the Interior, 2017).

The European Commission posits that "although migration has always taken place, there appears to be a structural movement from Sub-Saharan Africa and there is no indication these trends could change until the economic and political/security situation in the countries of origin improves". The records also indicate a notable increase in the number of migrants in vulnerable situations, especially women and minors.

For example, among the 181,000 migrants who arrived in Italy in 2016 alone, around 24,000 (13% – almost half of them from Nigeria) were women, and around 28,000 (15%) were minors, of whom the vast majority (91%) were unaccompanied. This represents an increased share of 10 per cent from 2015, with a growing proportion of unaccompanied minors (+75%). The top five nationalities of unaccompanied minors were Eritrean (15%), Gambian (13%), Nigerian (12%), Egyptian (10%) and Guinean (10%) (Italian Ministry of the Interior, 2017).

The thrust of this paper is to x-ray the etiology, historicity and lethality of the mass movement of Africans from Africa to Europe, and how this toxic trend is helping to define the leadership of the continent and member-states in

a very sordid light. It also looks at the ontology and typology of migration, with specific emphasis on illegal or unofficial migration. It examines the pull and push factors, and situates the rising tides of this dismal reality within the poverty of empathetic political leadership on the continent.

The paper is divided into eight parts, with each of the parts delving into the other in a sequential order so as to guarantee order and logicality.

Etymology, Ontology and Typology of Migration

Migration is as old as man himself. Man has had cause to migrate, move from place to place in search for better means of livelihoods and the securitization of his being and wares. Man's movement is also at the heart of civilization, re-civilization, and transference of new habits; enculturation and trans-border, trans-generational socialization as well as the destruction of attitudinal standards considered anachronistic and counter-productive to a people. Migration is thus inherent in man's social existentialism. It is on this basis that this paper agrees with the position of Ban Ki-moon, United Nations' Secretary-General (2007-2016). He had noted at the 2013 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development that "migration is an expression of the human aspiration for dignity, safety and a better future. It is part of the social fabric, part of our very make-up as a human family".

Again, according to the Gallup World Poll data from 2013 to 2016, the desire to migrate has grown since the 2010-2012 period. Nearly 710 million people (14% of the world's adult population) would like to move to another country if they had the opportunity. At least three in 10 adults in 31 countries and areas worldwide intend to move permanently to another country. These include nations in every region except North America, Asia and Oceania. The Syrian civil war, high rates of unemployment in countries like Italy and Albania, and the Ebola virus outbreak in Sierra Leone are some of the major contributors to the increased desire to migrate in these populations (Esipova, &Pugliese, 2017).

According to the poll, potential migrants aspire to move to the United States the most. Nearly 147 million adults, or 21% of the adult population worldwide, designated the United States as their desired future residence. Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Australia and Saudi Arabia are each attractive to at least 25 million adults, and have been choice

destinations for the past decade. Just 20 countries attract 65% of all potential migrants across the world (Esipova, &Pugliese, 2017).

What then is migration, and to what extent is the exodus or mass movement of Africans to Europe through unofficial or illegal routes plunging the continent into a web of brain-drain, early death, mass murder, governance failure, de-development, neo-slavery and diverse trends of man's inhumanity to man?

Migration according to the World Bank (2011, p.2) means "the movement of people from one location to another and widely associated with change of permanent place of residence". This means that migration is geographical in nature, a permanent or semi-permanent shift of residence from one spatial settlement that is less favourable to another considered favourable in economic, political, social or cultural terms.

Many people choose to migrate;these are voluntary migrants. Many others are economic migrants. Other voluntary migrants include older dependants who want to live somewhere warm and sunny in their retirement. However many other people have no choice and are forced to leave their homes. These are involuntary migrants. Their lives and homes may be in danger due to war or a natural disaster. They flee from their natural habitatsfor survival. These people are also called refugees. Still, they are others that take the risks to Europe out of pride and competition from peers and parents as a sign of (my child or children, I, we) are in Europe. This set the pace for the un-fortold circumstances.

In the same vein, the United Nations Population Division defines migrants as persons outside their country of birth or citizenship for at least 12 months. This means that anybody that has not stayed up 12 months is still considered a visitor to the country or place of destination. In the case of the ECOWAS Protocol on free movements, it allows for just 90 days of free movement, although subject to renewal as the case may be.

Strictly speaking, it is necessary to state that migration is closely associated with occupational shifts of one kind or another. The principal directions of migration are thus illustrated by more or less continuous movements from rural areas towards the city, from areas of stable population towards centers of industrial or commercial opportunity, from densely settled countries to less densely settled countries and from the centers of the cities to their suburbs.

Migration is not only geographic, political, economic or sociological; more importantly, it is also driven by psychological crave for self-satisfaction and comfort.

Globally, there have three phases of migration. The first age of mass migration was during the 19th and early 20th centuries, when 55 to 60 million Europeans migrated to the Americas. Even though many of the migrants were birds of passage seeking higher wages in the New World to finance upward mobility at home, most settled in the New World, and a combination of rapid population growth and displacement from agriculture in Europe, as well as a need for labor in the New World and the evolution of networks linking settled immigrants abroad to their communities of origin facilitated migration. The major sources of migrants changed from northern and western Europe to southern and Eastern Europe by the end of the 19th century, and war and later quotas prevented a resumption of migration across the Atlantic in the 1920s.

The second age of mass migration began during and after World War II, when the United States and European countries recruited guest workers, some of whom settled. Canada and the US in the mid-1960s switched from national origins systems that gave preference to the entry of immigrants from Western Europe to selection systems that favored the arrival of foreigners who had settled family members willing to sponsor their admission, and to foreigners requested by employers. The result was a change in the origins of immigrants: the Iron Curtain limited migration from the east and as southern Europeans moved north within Europe, Latin America and Asia became the primary sources of immigrants to traditional immigration destinations such as Canada and the United States. The sources and destinations of migrants diversified on both sides of the Atlantic in the past several decades, and migrants moving from one developing country to another became more noticeable, as from Indonesia to Malaysia, Mali to Ivory Coast, or Bolivia to Argentina.

The third phase is the mass movement of Africans, Indians and South Americans to Europe and the United States of America (USA). But, it is not so much the fact that there is mass movement of people that worries one, than the fact that most of the movements especially as it relates to the third phase are characterized by irregularities or irregular transitions. This now brings us to looking at the typology of migration.

One of the foremost writers on migration is Ernest George Ravenstein (1834-1913), an inductive empiricist.

Being the empiricist who formulated laws concerning migration stream, Ravensteinposits that "the laws of population and economic laws generally have not the rigidity of physical laws". Ravenstein implicitly noted that the main laws or hypotheses of migration are as follows:

11. Most of the migrants move only a short distance. Because of this drift nearby areas are only affected and not far off places. Long distance shift is characterized by a special case like a specialized job, technical education etc.

12. The direction of migration is from agricultural to industrial areas. Rural and urban areas are specialized in different economic activities. Rural areas are dominated by the primary sectors whereas urban areas are specialized in secondary and tertiary occupations and because of this reason these two areas have distinct socioeconomic conditions.

13. Most of the long distance migration is due to the major industrial and commercial centre. Because major industrial and commercial establishments need skilled labour and professionals, since they are not available locally, these persons travel from distant places.

14. Migration occurs in a series of stages. A group of people residing very near to the developed area will enter into it and thus the gap created by them at rural area will be filled by people from more remote areas.

15. Females are more migratory over short distances than males. There is predominance of males over long distance migration. Families rarely migrate over long distances.

16. Internal migration is predominated by females whereas males dominate international migration.

It may be instructive to note that, some scholars are of the view that Ravenstein's positions are not universally applicable. For example, he emphasized on predominance of short distance migration but now-a-days because of the development of the transport facilities; long distance migration is being encouraged. Again, he stressed upon the fact that migration increases with the development of industries and commerce but this relationship is not linear.

Regardless of all these criticisms, Ravenstein's laws of migration have proved to be considerably reliable. Furthermore, there are different types of migration such as counter-urbanization, emigration, immigration, internal

migration, international migration and rural-urban migration. Others are: transit, intercontinental, seasonal and irregular migrations.

Our major concern here is irregular migration as it relates to Africa. The other types are important but not sufficiently of concern to the study.

Theoretical Framework: Theory of Failed States

An independent state in the works of Weber is conceived as a political organization that wields exclusive power over a large area and group of people, which power it uses to tax, maintain internal order and *cohesion*, make war, peacefully engage other states, (i.e practice diplomacy), deliver social services, and protect property rights. Thus, the state is seen as an instrument of social control, but mainly for itself among others. (Weber, 1978). So following, the basic functions of the state to Weber are: the enactment of (legislative function); protection of personal safety and public order (police); the protection of vested rights (administrative justice). Others include social welfare service, and other cultural interests (the various branches of administration plus the organized armed protection of against external aggression (military administration or the armed forces of the state). (in Gros, 1996)

Thus, when a state fails to provide the above, then, it is said to be a failed state with various degree of crises and conflict that the state may not have the moral authority to control at the center and even more grievous at the periphery of the state or the sub-national units. To Weber, these basic functions as mentioned above are either totally lacking under primitive conditions they lack any form of rational order. Rather, they are performed instead by amorphous ad hoc groups. (Weber, 1978)(in Gros 1996).

Failed state theory starts from the premise that domestic anarchy which results to a failed state poses a real security threat to global peace. (Aan 2012, p.91). Consequently, a failed state lacks the authority and indeed the institutional capacity to effectively deal with the domestic disorder. The functionalists assumptions in the failed state theory is that, 'state failure is fundamentally a consequence of internal failings, corruption, ethnic rivalry, lack of respect for rules and regulations,' (Aan, 2012, p.91)

However at the above, Turner (1978) cited in Aan (2011, p.98) asserts that a failed state is defined differently using various concepts…   for example, some scholars define failed state as 'state in anarchy' Rotberg (2004),. Whereas, some define failed state as 'lack of political will to declare,

implement and enforce public policy domestically and internationally.' (Jackson, 1990). Others define it as 'the inability to maintain law and order.' (Herbst, 2005). Equally, some see it as 'one whose government is so weak and ineffective that it has no little control over its territory, cannot provide public services, has widespread corruption and criminality, has refugees and involuntary movement of population, whose economy has sharply declined and has no respect for human rights or one that is illegitimate.' (Ignatief, 2002) and (Kranse, 2003). 'These definitions are made up labels, concepts with variables that are measuring different indices.' (in Aan,2011,p.98). Accordingly, different countries are labeled as failed state for different reasons or degree of failure. (Aan, 2011). For, instance, Liberia is labeled a failed state for her prolonged civil war, Nigeria is labeled a failed state for corruption incorporated, weak institutions but strong individuals,, weak economy, infrastructural decay, coupled with the inability of the Nigerian state to have effective control over part of her territory in the North East with Boko Haram menace, the Niger Delta militants in the south- south, and IPOB in the south East are reminiscent of a failed state. Other failed state (s) include Sudan and South Sudan, Sierrea-Leone, Zimbabwe, Arab Spring states . Beyond Africa include Yemen, Syria to mention a few.

The failed state theory can adequately explain why African citizens are migrating in continuum to Europe in search of greener pastures or better conditions of living. They take the risks in spite and despite the high risks involved. For instance, some sold into slavery in Libya, a greater percentage in hundreds of thousands drowned in the Mediterranean sea, some suffer disdained rejection by some European countries. This is authenticated by BBC News report on 26/11/2017, that '160,000 Africans migrate to Europe and over 32,0000drown in the Mediterranean sea., with Libya as the transit hub and slave trade centre where a migrant is sold for 400 US dollars. This led to demonstrations in France and Germany.' As seen, African migrants are posing a burden on receiving European countries especially across the Mediterranean of Italy, Belgium, Spain, Germany, France, among others.

Irregular Migration

To Guild (2004), the concept of illegal migration covers a number of rather deferent issues; it entails a foreigner arriving clandestinely on the territory of a state; a foreigner staying beyond his or her permitted period of

entry and/or residence; a foreigner working when not permitted to do so or in a manner inconsistent with his or her immigration status.

In the above light, Morehouse and Blomfield (2011) submit that there are eight principal ways in which non-nationals become unauthorized or irregular migrants. These include:

(xiii) illegal entry (illegal border crossing);

(xiv) entry using false documents

(xv) entry using legal documents, but providing false information in those documents

(xvi) overstaying a visa-free travel period or temporary residence permit

(xvii) loss of status arising from non-renewal of a permit, failure to meet residency requirements or breaching conditions of residency

(xviii) being born into irregularity

(xix) absconding during the asylum procedure or failing to leave a host-state after a negative decision

(xx) failure of a state to enforce are turn decision for legal or practical reasons.

To be sure, the following concepts are used interchangeably. These are illegal immigrants, irregular immigrants, undocumented immigrants, persons without papers (French sans *papiers*), and clandestine immigrants (Spanish *clandestinos*).

To the International Organization on Migration (IOM), an irregular migrant is a "person who, owing to unauthorized entry, breach of a condition of entry, or expiry of his or her visa, lacks legal status in a transit or host country. The definition covers inter alia those persons who have entered a transit or host country lawfully but have stayed for a longer period than authorized or subsequently taken up unauthorized employment (also called clandestine/undocumented migrant or migrant in an irregular situation). The term 'irregular' is preferable to 'illegal' because the latter carries a criminal connotation and is seen as denying migrants' 'humanity'".

It may be necessary to state that this concept originated from the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3449 on Measures to assure the human rights and dignity of all migrant workers (9 December 1975). The General Assembly "requests the United Nations organs and specialized agencies concerned to utilize in all official documents the term 'non-

documented or irregular migrant workers' to define those workers that illegally and/or surreptitiously enter another country to obtain work".

In any case, the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) frowns at an attempt to call "irregular" migrants as "illegal" migrants, noting that such act is evil and unwarranted because:

9. it creates stereotypes, fear, and resentment;
10. it suggests criminality, but most irregular migrants are not breaking the law; being in a country without the required papers is most times (depending on the country) the result of an administrative error, not a criminal offence.
11. it denies their humanity; defining an individual or group as "illegal" risks violating their human right to recognition as a person before the law.
12. it is simplistic; people can find themselves in an undocumented or irregular status for all sorts of reasons, and many migrants arbitrarily fall from "regular" to "irregular" due to issues over which they have little or no control. For example, over-bureaucratic and deterring residence and work permit applications, as well as inefficient renewal procedures, are frequently reported; – it exacerbates the vulnerability of migrants, who often find themselves in very vulnerable positions and are often excluded from all forms of social and legal protection;
13. it can jeopardise the asylum claims of people fleeing repressive states where their rights are denied; asylum seekers are often wrongly perceived as irregular migrants, but it is not illegal nor irregular to enter a country and claim asylum, because applicants for asylum receive a temporary residence permit; calling any migrant who finds themselves in an irregular situation "illegal" encourages intolerance towards asylum seekers too.
14. no international legal text or treaty, from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the Geneva Convention refers to 'illegal' migrants; they do, on the other hand, say that our governments have a duty to treat all migrants with dignity and humanity.

Etiology of Africans' Irregular Migration to Europe

The causes of migration generally, and irregular migration in particular are many. It has been internationally established that the factors or forces that

determine why a person migrates are related to the place of residence from where migration starts, also known as the origin, and the place of new settlement, or where migration ends either completely or temporarily, also known as the destination. Both the origin and destination are characterized by factors that support (enable), reject (deter) or are neutral (neither support nor oppose migration).

In this vein, the favourable attributes of a location are pull factors, which attract a person. The unfavourable attributes operating at a location are the push factors, which force or compel a person to move away. Both pull and push factors can apply simultaneously at the place of origin as well as at the destination.

DIMENSIONS	PULL FACORS	PUSH FACTORS
Economic Causes: these relate to the labour market of a place, the employment situation and the overall state of the economy. Favourable economic conditions at the destination – the prospect of higher wages, better employment opportunities and prospects for wealth creation – and the desire to escape the domestic social and political situation of their home region can draw migrants to their destination. Likewise, if economic conditions are unfavourable at the place of origin, poor and unemployed individuals would be compelled to migrate to sustain their livelihood	Job opportunities; better income and prospects for wealth creation; industrial innovation and technical know-how for a new industry, and pursuit of specialized education	Unemployment or lack of employment opportunities and unsustainable livelihood
Socio-cultural cum Political Causes: These include family conflicts and unification; the quest for independence; ethnic, religious, racial and cultural parameters; warfare, or the threat of conflict, among other factors that contribute to migration.	Political instability; Safety and security concerns (ethnic, religious, racial or cultural persecution); Conflicts or threat of a conflict; Slavery or bonded labour; Inadequate or limited urban services and infrastructure (including healthcare, education, utilities, transport and water), etc.	Family reunification; Independence and freedom; Integration and social cohesion; Food security; Affordable and accessible urban services (including healthcare, education, utilities and transport).
Geographical Causes: These include environmental factors, such as climate change and the availability of natural resources, that cause individuals to migrate in search of more favourable ecological conditions.	Abundance of natural resources and minerals (e.g. water, oil, uranium) and favourable climate.	Climate change (including extreme weather events)n and crop failure and scarcity of food.

Again, it is estimated that every minute, nearly 20 people are forcibly displaced due to conflict or persecution (UNHCR, 2017, "Figures at a glance"). In fact, 65.6 million people were forcibly displaced as of June 2017. Of these, 22.5 million are refugees, more than half are under the age of 18 and have originated from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), such as from Syria (5.5 million) and South Sudan (1.4 million), as well as from Afghanistan (2.5 million). More than 35% of the refugees are hosted in six countries –

Turkey (2.9 million), Pakistan (1.4 million), Lebanon (1 million), Iran (980,000), Uganda (940,000) and Ethiopia (790,000).

In 2015, mass migration affected nations that were grappling with becoming transit points, smugglers' routes or desired end points for migrants. The routes cut paths through Central America and Mexico, the Horn of Africa, countries such as Bangladesh, Myanmar and Malaysia, and through East Africa and the Mediterranean Sea (Conant, Chwastyk& Williams, 2015). Furthermore, there are three major routes of irregular migration. These are:

- Central Mediterranean: 'This route refers to the migratory flow coming from Northern Africa towards Italy and Malta through the Mediterranean Sea.'
- Eastern Mediterranean: 'The Eastern Mediterranean route is defined as the passage used by migrants crossing through Turkey to the European Union via Greece, southern Bulgaria or Cyprus.'
- Western Balkans: 'The Western Balkan route describes two main migratory flows: from the Western Balkan countries themselves, and the secondary movements of mainly Asian migrants who originally entered the European Union through the Bulgarian-Turkish or Greek-Turkish land or sea borders and then proceed, through the Western Balkans, into Hungary.' (Frontex, 2015b SO-2)

Historically, patterns of emigration from North African countries can be divided into two main groups: migration from the Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia) to Europe; and migration from Egypt, mainly to the Gulf States (Kassar et al., 2014). By 2014 Morocco had become an important transit country for migration from North Africa to Europe, with France as the primary destination, followed by Italy and Spain (Kassar et al., 2014). Sub-Saharan Africans have increasingly joined Maghreb migrants in their attempts to cross the Mediterranean irregularly (Collyer and de Haas, 2012). This has meant that several North African countries have gradually become countries of settlement and transit, representing a structural change in this traditional pattern of migration.

While Libya has a history of immigration from other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa and the Horn, the political instability caused by the collapse of Gaddafi's regime has seen large numbers of people from countries such as Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, and Chad leave the country for Italy, Malta, Egypt, Tunisia, or Algeria. In recent years, especially since the beginning of 2013,

many Syrians have also passed through Libya in an attempt to enter Europe via irregular means.

There are numerous reasons why people currently living as irregular migrants in Libya may choose to migrate across the Mediterranean. Firstly, conditions in Libya are in violation of international standards: Libya is not a signatory to the 1951 Convention, UNHCR has no official status, and migrants may be arrested if found to be in the country irregularly. In addition to arbitrary arrest and prolonged detention, migrants also face risks such as labour exploitation. Syrians and Palestinians, as well as religious minorities, are vulnerable to attacks by militia groups, while Sub-Saharan Africans in general may experience racism or exploitation. Finally, migrants may be at risk of human trafficking for forced labour or sexual exploitation, in which smugglers may be working in collusion with the authorities.

Lethality of Africans' Irregular Migration to Europe

The effects of African migration on the continent and continent's leadership are enormous. They cut across socio-economic, political, environmental and military consequences. Africans states as seen above are increasingly depopulated, this negatively affects her in terms of the politics of population internally and externally. Africas' work force is at bay, especially with the young ones and children migrating to Europe in droves. In the process lives are lost, some taken into slavery in the 21st century is a big shame to the black and African continent. This calls to question sovereignty issues, citizen and citizenship, governance within and her perception and dealings with the continent and peoples.

Conclusions

As seen above, it has been established that migration is as old as man. The reason(s) nationals of countries from less developed societies to Europe and other climes are caused by political and economic cum social factors - bad governance, mis-placement of priorities, resource curse, where goods and services are essentially and or artificially scarce. They flee home for safety and for greener pastures. In the process migrants pass through untold consequences such as loss of lives in the deserts and the Mediterranean Sea, slavery among others. These are facts about the consequences of mis-rule by Africa's leadership overtime. This clearly adumbrates the fact that states in Africa are failing and can best be classified as failed states.

Recommendations

The paper recommends among others that, the earlier African leadership realize that public office is public trust, and for service delivery for the good of all, then a sure way to stem the tide of Africans fleeing to Europe in search of good life conditions.

Also, the issue of citizenship should be placed at the front burner. This is the crux of governance the world over. Africa's leadership should have a re-think consciously on the core issue of the functions of the state. This is critical because the world over, the issue of welfare, economy and security of citizens is paramount and strategic to governance, but when leadership deviates from this, then, the whole essence of statehood and sovereignty becomes a laughing stock within and without.

Thus, leadership in Africa should de-emphasize the high premium paid to acquisition of political power and retention of same, rather should concentrate more on service delivery to the people. Also, leadership should extol confidence on the citizenry in terms of galvanizing their energy, and intellect towards innovation for service. In doing so, the emphasis on paper qualification be discarded for education for service. The curriculum of institutions from the lower rungs to the universities, colleges and polytechnics among others be reviewed to face squarely the challenges and prospects of the 21st century agenda or agendas of science, technology, humanity and development.

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INFLUENCE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE ON CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE SUSTENANCE OF ELECTORAL PROCESS IN NIGERIA

Ndukwe Onyinyechi Kelechi
Department of Political Science
University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria

Abstract

This paper examined the extent to which the influence of good governance enhances citizen's participation and sustenance of electoral process in Nigeria. Low citizen's participation in electoral process is occasioned by lack of confidence on electoral management institution charged with the responsibility of ensuring a credible election. This is attributed to lack of good governance and has a great implication on the sustainability of our electoral process. The paper adopts a qualitative method using secondary data and the theory of liberal democracy is used as its framework. It is revealed that good governance and a true independent institutional framework free from undue interference from either government in power or erstwhile is a panacea to citizen's participation in the art of governance. Several cases of political violence, riots, uprising during and after elections are attributes of bad governance and this constitute a major challenge to our democratic development. The paper recommends that citizen's participation in electoral process depends on government ability to entrench democratic ethos of transparency, fairness, justice, primacy of rule of law, guaranteeing the right of the people to choose and change their governments without intimidation. Also, the institutional electoral body should discharge their duties without bias.

Keywords: Influence, Good Governance, Citizen Participation, Sustenance, Electoral Process

Introduction

Influence of good governance as a determining factor to citizens' participation in the art of governance is very important to political process and development of every society. Citizens' participation in electoral process connotes involvement of citizens' in the decision making process, contribution

to public debate on national issues, voting and many others. It requires trust, belief and wholeness trust in their co-participants, belief that participation can make a difference and feeling socially included. For democracy to evolve good governance, Linz and Stepan (1999) suggest five inter-related conditions that must exist which include; the rule of law to guarantee citizens' freedom and independent associational life, functional state bureaucracy which can be used by the democratic government to deliver public good, free and lively civil society, a relatively autonomous and valued political society and institutionalized economic society.

In Africa and Nigeria in particular, the sustainability of electoral process and citizens' participation in the art of governance depends on functional and unbiased electoral management body that would reassure confidence in the electorates by making sure that their votes count in every electoral process.   The politics of electoral process in Nigeria has often operates in 'absolute' denial of the rights of the electorates who are supposed to choose those who rule them. Good governance and citizen's participation play every important role in the sustenance of electoral process since it provides a democratic space for participation and facilitates outcomes that enrich the quality of life for citizenry. There is no accountability and development programmes without citizen's participation. (Aref and Marof, 2009)

However, the influence of good governance has impacted so much on electoral process with regard to involvement of citizens' in the art of governance as John Stuart Mills in his work on utilitarianism, liberty and representative claimed that the good form of government is representative government because it promotes liberty, equity and fraternity, made man to look beyond their immediate interest and recognize the just demand of other men, promote political education, participation and communication. Good governance is a prime element of democracy. Good governance offers widespread consultation and participation. It functions to bring about democracy and to provide opportunities for political participation to the citizenry as well as educate and socialize them politically. Governance has been a constant obstacle for countries trying to bring about electoral sustainability (political), economic and social changes desired for their development. Across different countries, lack of good governance affects citizens' participation in the electoral process, hampered even development and as well make institution ineffective and ineffectual. For example, Low

citizens' participation in the art of governance and voters apathy witnessed in the past and present election in Nigeria can be attributed to lack of confidence in the electoral management institution and poor governance. For example in 2011 general election, the Independent National Electoral Commission noted that Nigerians participation during that election was low. Only 35% of the 70 million registered voters took part in the election. In the same vein, Friedrich Elbert Stiffing report on 2011 election identified lack of transparent elections, election violence and politician's non committal to their campaign promises as major reasons for citizens' low turnout (Odebode, 2011). Also, 2007 general election was adjudged to lack credibility by both local and international observers as the election was characterized by electoral malpractices and irregularities. However, irrespective that there are other factors that determines citizens' participation in electoral process in Nigeria such as cultural, economic, political and religion, the fact remained that there is absence of good governance and less citizens' input in decision making in electoral process in Nigeria. The political stability and development of any political system is a function of the awareness and positive involvement of the citizens' in civic and political matters. This is the reason why Appadorai (2004), opined that democracy demands from the common man a certain level of ability and character, rational conduct and active participation in the government. It is against this backdrop that the paper interrogates the following; the perspective on good governance, theoretical framework to the study, the nexus of good governance and citizen's participation in electoral process, challenges of governance and factors affecting citizen's participation in electoral process in Nigeria, need for good governance and electoral sustainability in Nigeria, conclusion and recommendations on how good governance would strengthen our democratic process, encourages participation and sustainability.

Perspectives on Good Governance

Development will be a mirage in the absence of good governance. Therefore good governance has been perceived as the most significant factor to promoting social and economic development, eradicating poverty, inequality and creating a stable society (Khan, 2007). The concept of governance has created a parameter to measure between 'good and bad' and this has given a greater attention within and amongst societies with democratic administrations. However, governance as a concept refers to several ways by which social life is coordinated. It is a process of social engagement between

the rulers and the ruled in the society which implies that governance is predicated on the relationship between the ruling class and the ruled class in the society (Iyoha, et al 2015; Nyewusira, 2007). Governance in Nigeria as correctly observed is about creating affluence for a few and not about eradicating affliction for the many (Ibeanu,2008). That is why, it has been argued that the bane of Nigeria's development is that crucial institutions of government administered by a ruling class that lacks governance capability and contract management culture (Nyewusira, 2007).   According to Adamolekun (2002), governance is viewed as a process of exercising political power to manage the affairs of a nation. He listed the main elements of governance as; rule of law, freedom of speech and association, free and fair election, accountability, probity and transparency and result oriented leadership.   Afegbua (2012), further posits that governance relates to the quality of relationship between the government and citizens whom it serves and protects. Good governance is a key instrument that oils a sustained peaceful, secured and overall development of society as it likely to breed peace and provide for security of lives and property, which will in turn create the enabling environment for sustainable development to thrive. Good governance is a system of government based on good leadership, respect for the rule of law and due process, accountability of the political leadership to the electorate as well as transparency in the operation of government. (Odock,2006; cited in George-Genyi, 2013:57)

Good governance is indispensible for institutional growth and effectiveness. According to Akanbi (2004), good governance is the capability of a government to sustain social peace, guarantee law and order, promote conditions needed for generating economic growth and ascertain a minimum level of social security. Good governance is hinged on the capacity to exercise power and to make sound decisions over a period of time in economic, social and environmental areas (World Bank, 2005).   Good governance is a mechanism through which citizen's and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights and meet their obligations to mediate their differences. The tenets of good governance are broad; participation, inclusiveness, decentralization of power and popular empowerment based on legitimacy, rule of law, due process and respect for human rights, managing the collective will of the people associated with qualities of leadership. (Pryor, 2000)

Good governance is the management of socio-economic development in an environment devoid of rancor, ill will, strife, struggle and disdain; it is a sine qua non to achieving selected goal (Davis, 2003:1, Madhav,2007:33). Lack of good governance is a major impediment to national development and political stability in most African states and Nigeria in particular. The quality of governance is a major determinant to country's economic development, political stability and influence on citizens' participation in the art of governance. A society of good governance is prone to those negative vices that would impede national growth and democratic development such as lack of free and fair elections, absence of rule of law, lack of freedom of expression, lack of accountability, electoral violence, impartial institutions especially electoral bodies that would help to ensure electoral sustainability, insecurity, infrastructural decay and many others. Reiterating the words of Dickson (2011), 'if the sectors (power, education, health, manufacturing, etc) in Nigeria are expected to work, then Nigeria needs good governance so as to be able to actualize its potentials and improve the wellbeing of the citizen's and development in geo-political terms.'' Good governance in the words of Boeninger (1992) has to do with the capacities of a political system to exercise authority, will legitimacy, adjudicate conflicts as well as carry out effective programme implementation. This definition implies that good governance is the effective process of leading the society, with the capacity for efficient service delivery in terms of policy implementation. In the same vein, Kukah (1998), maintained that good governance is governance that is responsible, accountable and transparent in policy formulation and implementation. He further stated that as a policy framework, good governance imposes demand on policy makers in their exercise of power. It encompasses an effective state that is a state that has enabling political environment for effective distribution of resources to improve the living condition of the ordinary people. According to Jega (1994), good governance has to do with policy making and policy implementation by systems of laws and guidelines which are segregated into specific operations to achieve the overall development of the society. He further describes good governance as a desirable social and political process involving the following basic elements;

i.   responsibility and responsiveness in leadership and in public service
ii.   accountability in the mobilization as well as in the utilization of resources
iii. selflessness and impartial service to the people

iv.   popular participation and empowerment of the people in the conduct and management of their own affairs.

Good governance is a state fulfillment of expectations and the achievement of societal well being by the mandated authority (African Leadership Forum, 2000:4)

More so, good governance encapsulate issues of equity, equality, justice and fair play in the distribution of goods, and services so as to promote and enhance the quality of life of the people irrespective of their class, status, religion or other parochial consideration.

Theoretical Framework

In this discourse, the paper adopts the Liberal theory of democracy as the tool of our analysis. Although, there are other theories such as Classical theory of Democracy, Plural theory of Democracy, Post-Modern theory, Elites theory of Democracy and many others. The Liberal Democratic theory according to Graham et' al (1997) could be traced to the works of scholars like John Locke, Jean Jacque Rousseau, John Stuart Mill, Jeremy Bentham and David Ricardo among others who acquired their philosophies from liberalism. The theory according to Oddih (2007) and Obasi (1988) is common among capitalist and peripheral capitalist nations. The notion of democracy emerged when capitalism became the dominant mode of production in Europe and North America. This theory advocates for popular participation of the people in the decision making process to chose representatives or leaders. This grants express and outright liberty to the electorate to express their franchise through free and fair elections to determine the majority interests allowed for the formation of government. Democracy involves the opportunity to participate in decision making in the political process. It repudiates arbitrariness and authoritarianism. It extols the consent of the governed and it protects human personality and values (Ake, 1991). For democracy to evolve good governance, it must be liberal and participatory. In this sense, liberal democracy entails not only free and fair elections in terms of voting administration, it requires a more comprehensive fairness of political competition embodied in the concept of a just and open competition. The main features of liberal theory of democracy are;
- Acceptance of Capitalism
- Free and Periodic elections based on universal franchise

- Existence of rule of law
- Emphasis on civil liberties or individual rights such as freedom of speech, assembly, press and religion
- Competitive party system as opposed to one party system
- Separation of powers, checks and balances
- Abhorrence of revolutionary approach to change of government

The justification of the use of this theory is manifestation of clear deviation from the fundamental underlying principles of democracy in electoral process in Nigeria. In line with democratic principles, good governance is a key indicator to economic growth, development, strong institution, political participation and political stability. Unfortunately, this has not been achieved in our political culture and democratic governance. Most elections in Nigeria conducted in the past and present are not without electoral malpractices. Outcome from electoral process most time, has failed to reflect the wishes of the majority. At state and national level, there exist widespread of electoral malpractices. This has resulted of electoral violence as elections are characterized with democratic failure which has eroded the confidence of the electorate. Low turnout of voters, rigging, vote buying, and ballot snatching which characterize most elections in Nigeria are manifestation of non democratic principles, lack of good governance and leadership failure. Those occupying elective offices see it as an opportunity for self enrichment. Also, in other for them to remain in power, they forget the ethos of democracy which is to serve and use all forms of instrument of power to dethrone democratic principles. For example, the case of Osun gubernatorial election where government deployed heavy security machinery to assist independent national electoral commission in the conduct of election had a great implication to citizens' participation in electoral process. Voter's apathy, intimidation and fear were alleged to have characterized the electoral process (international monitoring election observers, 2018). Also, the role of these security men in collaboration with some independent national electoral commission officials creates a bad signal to our democratic process and lack of trust in the electoral institutional body charged with the responsibility of conducting election. This has implication on electoral sustainability and participation of citizens' in every electoral process. Given the above circumstance, the liberal democratic theory is relevant to this paper because of its underlying principles of popular participation and good governance culture

which is very cardinal to democratic governance. However, under review, the rules for good democratic governance and consolidation were vehemently not seen in the Nigerian democratic system due to the perception of not only governance but the resources surrounding it. This, which the political class or majorly politicians use to subvert electoral process and continuously manipulates elections at their own advantage. This has resulted to widespread of electoral violence.

Critics to this theory such as some Marxists Socialist and left Anarchists, argue that liberal democracy is an integral part of the capitalist system. Therefore, it is class based and not democratic participatory. Also, liberal democracy is accused of being expensive under a representative democracies and the cost of political campaign only favors the rich in the society (Morton,2004). Furthermore, that liberal democracy does not respect absolute majority rule except when electing representatives. The liberty of majority rule is restricted by the constitution or precedent decided by previous generations. Also, the real power is held by a relatively small representative. Thus, 'liberal democracy' is merely a decoration over an oligarchy. However, irrespective of the criticisms, no theory was sufficient in extricating democracy more than the liberal democratic theory used in this context.

Good Governance and Citizen Participation in Electoral Process: The Nexus

The importance of good governance cannot be over emphasize for it plays a role of redefining the society towards producing results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal. Good governance ensures consensus oriented, accountable, responsive, effective and efficient, inclusive, participatory and adherence to rule of law. Citizen participation in the art of governance requires trust and belief that participation can make a difference. Good governance is a platform through which this desired trust can be attained. Engaging citizens in governance improves accountability, creates more inclusive and cohesive communities and increases the number and quality of initiatives made by communities. In a political system, the citizens' can be involved in the political process and decision making by joining political party, voting during election, participating in electoral campaign, community affairs and other political activities. The level and pattern of political participation of the citizen's determine to some extent,

the success of the political system and this cannot be achieved without good governance. Citizen's participation is one of the fundamental requirements of democratic governance. This is the reason why Adelekan (2010) emphasized that ideally, democracy means individual participation in the decisions that involves one's life. He further stated that in a democratic system, there is the necessity for the citizenry to be fully involved in the democratic procedures of the choice of rulers and effective communication of the public policies and attitudes. Consequently, citizen participation particularly in electoral process is a fundamental requirement of representative democracy. Appadorai (2004) argued that where on account of an atmosphere of fear and coercion, people do not feel free to discuss or vote, democracy cannot be said to exist even though the other political rights are enjoyed by the people. In Nigeria for example, politics is seen by a number of people as a dirty game which must be avoided. This is as a result of the undemocratic tendencies, deception, violence and uncertainties that characterize the political system. Falade and Orungbemi (2010), argued that true democratic and good governance is absent in Nigeria and many parts of Africa. The political culture in Nigeria is characterized by intolerance, intimidation, thuggery, assassination, bitterness, apathy, indolence, money and ethnic politics. As a result of this, the ingredients of democracy have not been able to thrive after many years of political independence in Nigeria. Many Nigerians are of the opinion that good governance is the only assurance to peace, progress, stability, free and fair elections; actually, it is seen as the only means to delivering the dividend of democracy. Thus, the confidence of the citizens in the electoral system and their participation in the electoral process is hinged on good governance. According to Dickson (2011), the word 'good' is one fundamental thing that is absent in the governance of Nigeria.   Furthermore, he opines that good governance in relation to a popular democracy ought to be hinged on two basic things; the first is a constitution fit to the distinct needs and circumstances of Nigeria as ethno-religious, multi-dimensional, and political economic structure. Secondly, a leadership fit not only to the pressing needs of Nigeria but the exact needs of its citizen's. He reiterated that good governance does not call for ordinary type of leadership but it requires tolerance, breadth of outlook, intellectual comprehension, hard work, selfless devotion, statesmanship, a burning sense of mission. However, good governance is the effective process of leading the society with the capacity for efficient service delivery and citizen participation in governance is regarded as crucial for

promoting and sustaining democracy and development. In the words of Kweit (1981), participation in government improved public service delivery and increased the trust of citizen's in government.

Challenges of Governance and factors affecting Citizen's Participation in Electoral Process in Nigeria

The quality of governance is the major determinant of a country's economic development. After fifty eight years of independence, Nigeria is still bedeviled with the challenges of good governance. In Nigeria, the exhilaration generated by widespread poverty and underdevelopment, insecurity, corruption, mass illiteracy, rigorous procedure, weak institutions, leadership failure, lack of accountability and transparency , lack of rule of law, insincerity of purpose, poor electoral system and electoral malpractice, lack of no confidence in the electoral management body, electoral violence, lack of confidence in political leaders, lack of confidence in the electoral process and political culture in Nigeria, ethnic and religious divide amongst others has affected governance and citizen's participation. Citizen's no longer have confidence and trust in the system due to the inability of government to translate good governance. In a true democracy, the will of the people is the basis of authority of government. Therefore, the government should be responsive to the yearnings and aspirations of her citizenry. This aspiration has remained elusive due to many challenges mentioned above which have continued to undermine good governance in Nigeria.

Challenges of Governance
(I) **Security challenge** – insecurity is the greatest challenge facing governance in Nigeria. Traditional security threats such as violent conflicts, militancy, armed robbery and kidnapping have assumed worrisome dimensions in Nigeria. Evolving threats such as insurgency and terrorism have further complicated the situation. The outbreak of violent conflict has become a major source of insecurity in Nigeria. For example, clashes between farmers and pastoralists have increased in frequency in recent times, resulting in the death of about 3,732 persons between 1998 and 2014 (Kale, 2013). The spate of violent crimes is alarming as people no longer feel safe in their places of abode. This also affects citizens' participation due to the fact that citizens' within the volatile areas where conflict is predominantly found are afraid of being killed with regard to exercising their franchise during election. Beyond

the tragic loss of lives, terrorism had created a climate of insecurity with devastating economic impact on Nigeria.

 (ii) **Leadership Failure** – Leadership failure has been one of the great challenges facing Nigeria. The inability of our leaders to manage and utilize our resources to the best interest of all has affected political, economic and infrastructural development. Leading a country involves making policies and finding solutions to problems, ensuring stability of the polity, and guiding the society to prosperity. Unfortunately, most political leaders in Nigeria at local, state and national level care less on socio economic development of Nigeria and more in private enrichment. In respect to this, Onigbinde (2007), stated that:

> Poor leadership performance has remained with us despite
> years of complaints and grumbling. We have acquiesced in
> our own progressive destruction by submitting ourselves to
> the leadership of political misfits. It is surprising that the so
> much expected dividends of democracy eluded the mass of
> the people, while the leadership has remained unaccountable
> to them.

In the same vein, Odekunle (2007), maintained that most of the problems Nigeria is facing today particularly in terms of development are caused by sharp practices of our past and present leaders. In terms of accountability, transparency and service delivery, our leaders have not been at their best as people's expectations of a better hope and opportunities have long been dashed, with governance ingredients still at its elusive stage to Nigerians. Also, considering Nigeria endowment with many natural and human resources, the country ought not to be where it is now. Leadership and good governance remain a major challenge. Nigeria performance in most index rankings such as transparency international, M O Ibrahim (IIAG) reflects the failure of our successive governments to see governance as a human enterprise that should be focused on meeting the needs of the people and ensuring the overall development of the country.

Table 1: Top ten countries that have seen a change in Leadership and Governance in Africa between 2007 to 2016 (M O Ibrahim Index Ranking)

Countries	2016 Score

Mauritus	81.4
Seychelles	73.4
Botswana	72.7
Cabo Verde	72.2
Namibia	71.2
South Africa	70.1
Tunisia	65.5
Ghana	65.0
Rwanda	63.9
Senegal	61.6

Source: IIGA, 2016

Table 2: Governance Index (Last 5 Years: 2012-2016) Improved Countries

Country	2016 Score	Trend	Annual average trend
Cote d' Ivoire	54.2	+ 8.2	+ 2.05
Zimbabwe	45.4	+ 5.8	+ 1.45
Togo	51.7	+ 5.1	+ 1.28
Kenya	59.3	+ 4.9	+ 1.23
Morocco	60.1	+ 4.9	+ 1.23
Namibia	71.2	+ 4.0	+ 1.00
Tunisia	65.5	+ 3.6	+ 0.90
Seychelles	73.4	+ 3.4	+ 0.85
Madagascar	49.3	+ 3.3	+ 0.83
Nigeria	48.1	+ 3.3	+ 0.83

Source: IIGA, 2016

From the two tables above, it is apparent that Nigeria has leadership and governance challenge. Although, the 2016 and 2017 index of African governance, the 11th in the series says that Nigeria improved in governance in the last five years, it still scored the country 48.1 out of a possible 100 marks. This score is still lower than the African average of 50.8 and the West African regional average of 53.8 percent. What this means is that governance did not make much impact on the lives of Nigerians. The poor rating also indicates that government needs to do much more than it is doing now particularly in the areas that the country is deficient.

(iii) **Absence of accountability and transparency**- Governance in Nigeria has a problem with regard to accountability and transparency. Our leaders are not accountable and because of this, they are not responsive to the demands of the citizen. The system has made it so difficult for the citizenry to hold them accountable even in some instances where public office holders were found wanting in their practices, ethnicity and whose party he or she belongs to has been a determining factor in prosecution. Accountability is best enforced through the instrument of rule of law and independent judiciary but this is not much obtainable in Nigeria. However, apart from few occasions presently where government has shown a resilient effort, nothing much was done in the past. A case of Babachir Lawal, former secretary to government of federation to be mentioned but a few is a critical example.

(iv) **Corruption** - Corruption is at the root of many of Nigeria's problems. It has permeated through public and private life in Nigeria, with degenerative effect on national value, institutions of governance and rule of law. The countless reforms and lack of genuity and integrity of our leaders have left Nigeria corrupt as ever. Also, with regard to corruption arising from democratic governance in Nigeria, Azinge (2004) maintained that the electoral process and political party system are all corruption ridden and not sufficiently participatory. Consequently, Nigeria has consistently ranked low in Transparency International Corruption Index over the years. For instance, in 2013, Transparency International rated Nigeria the 35th most corrupt nation in the world, a result of poor governance. And in 2012, it ranked Nigeria 139 out of 176 surveyed countries. (The Sun Nigeria, M O Ibrahim Index, 2017)

(v) **Ethnic and Religious Divides**: Since the colonial era and after independence, ethnic, regional and religious communities engaged one another in violent confrontations. Scholars like Nnoli (1978), Plotnicov (1971) in their studies on ethnic relations in Nigeria presented that inter-group clashes, years of violent confrontations by some communal groups in Nigeria have eroded trust and social capital existing in the communities, making the communities vulnerable to political manipulation. In Nigeria, people who live outside their state of origin are most times excluded from participating in governance and political life of their place of residence because they are perceived as non indigenes (Bach, 1997, Ostein, 2009). In the past, attempts by non indigenes to resist their exclusion from politics and governance have resulted in highly contested elections and violence.

Factors affecting Citizen's Participation in Electoral Process in Nigeria
(i) Poor Electoral System and Electoral Malpractice - Conducting free and fair election has become a major problem in Nigeria. Election is the most acceptable means of changing leadership in any political system. It is the conduct of a free and fair electoral process that justifies a representative government to be referred to as democracy because the authority of government is derived solely from the consent of the governed. The integrity of the electoral system is a major issue affecting electoral process in Nigeria. Historically, most turbulent elections have been a source of political crisis in Nigeria and controversies surrounding elections at times undermine legitimacy and affect citizen participation in every electoral process. Sell of voting cards in exchange for money, coercion, intimidation, killing and maiming of people in the name of election are not good for electoral sustainability and democratic governance.

(ii) Electoral violence- However, since the return to democracy in 1999 after a long period of the military in governance, elections in Nigeria till date have continued to recycle in a vicious violence and unimaginable manipulation especially from the political elites. This has attracted the attention of local and international community (Onu, 2005, Suberu, 2007). The high handedness in manipulating election has continued to ridicule the conduct of our electoral process and brought non credibility in the system (Ayoade, 2008). Non transparency and fairness of the electoral process, lack of credibility of the electoral body, lack of confidence in the electoral body, and rigging play a

major role in instigating electoral violence. The integrity of elections can create frustration among stakeholders in the electoral process and this can transform into violence (Barnes, 2006)

(iii) Lack of confidence in the electoral process and the political culture of Nigeria- A political culture characterized by violence, intimidation, manipulation and deception are reflected in the electorates shunning the ballot. Amdi (2014) identifies the institutional arrangement of the Nigerian state as a major factor for low voter turnout. He maintains that the democratic process and political participation in Nigeria is a learning one and this is so because the democratic structures and institutions are very fragile and coupled with low level of democratic culture of the citizen's resulting from long years of military dictatorship. These fragile democratic structures have affected the political processes thereby reducing the measure of confidence in the political process by the citizen's. This has greatly affected the extent to which they participate in a political system

(iv) Rigorous Voting Procedure- Rigorous voting procedures affects citizen's participation in electoral process. Procedure which required the citizen's to go through the process of accreditation and other technical processes will have low turnout. This is because of high level of illiteracy in our society. Majority of the citizen's resides in the rural areas and they had no formal education nor understand the systematic process. Therefore, they care less in participating in the art of governance. The rural populace constitutes the bulk of the population and they have little knowledge about moral and ethical values of democratic governance. Thus, subjecting them to rigorous process would not encourage participation.

(v) Poverty- The level of poverty especially in the rural areas is one that cannot be overemphasized as a factor for citizen not participating in electoral process. The poverty situation since democratic governance included a dimension of powerlessness, this is characterized by dependence on others and lack of voice and options. However, poor people lack information about and access to government and they see the state as ineffective, irrelevant and corrupt (Mattes, et al cited in Ngara, etal, 2014)

(vi) Lack of confidence in the political leaders- Politicians in Nigeria lack sincerity and purpose. They hardly fulfill their campaign promises made during campaigns. As a result of this, the electorates found it difficult to participate in the electoral process to vote for the parties fielding the

candidates or electing the candidates since they have lost confidence in the whole process.

Need for good governance and Sustenance of Electoral Process in Nigeria

The success and sustenance of electoral process in a democratic system is determined by the quality of governance in place. Good governance extols the virtues of democratic principles which entrench democratic maturity, stability and consolidation. Nigeria as a country has attained mature and productive age of fifty eight years, thus expected to be at par with its contemporaries in terms of socio-economic and political developments. Its progress in these areas has been stunted by lack of good governance which has affected credible electoral process. Scholars of electoral credibility and sustenance such as Ajayi (2007), has maintained that for Nigeria to have electoral sustainability and credibility, there is need to guarantee Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) credibility by modifying the mode of appointing and composing its members. The current practice is not desirable where the president appoints the members with the approval of the senate. By this method, the president has the power to appoint members of his party to the commission thereby eroding the desired non-partisanship character of the body. In line with the view of Lindberg (2000), democratic elections that have elements of good governance are elections conducted according to the provisions of the electoral law and constitution with transparency, fairness, justice and equity without the interference of the incumbent leadership. Examining the electoral history of Nigeria, there is a general line of thought that the integrity of electoral process has been on the decline since 1959 till date. This has great implication on sustenance of electoral process as election built on false hood, intimidation and coercion, corruption, exclusionary and pervasion affects democratic culture. Election build on the foundation of good governance is prone from violence and crisis, ensure equity and justice with less litigation, reflects the wishes and aspiration of the people, and encourages democratic participation and trust. Election in Nigeria falls short of the standard of democratic norms and virtuous of good governance. It has been characterized by threats to statehood based on the manipulation of ethnicity as divisive mechanism for the acquisition of political power by political actors (Omodia and Egwemi, 2011)

According to Adegboyega (1981), the electoral process in first and second republic was terminated with coup d'état from the military juntas. This

tied good governance in the stagnant hands of political leaders and the saboteurs from the opposition parties on the basis of government in power to reconcile cracks in statehood due to electoral contest (Azelama,2010) Nigeria has witnessed six general elections in this fourth republic from 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and currently 2019, it appears that incumbency factor from the holders of power is a stumbling block to good governance. The high handedness in manipulating some of these elections by both ruling party in the past and presently is alarming; this has led to electoral corruption which characterize the 2019 general elections. Conversely, a government that was established through a fraudulent and violent electoral process usually lacks such vital ingredient of democracy and good governance. Also, government that is instituted through questionable electoral process, in bid to hold on to power tends to be high handed and repressive in nature. This considerable way, explains why most African states are gross abusers of human rights and why they cannot tolerate dissenting positions and groups (Paki and Inokoba, 2006:183). The implication of bad governance on electoral process and sustainability is that it could lead to 'government inversion'' that is, a situation where government institutions cease to function and instead end up turning inward towards themselves rather than outward towards society. This means that the state institutions become progressively irrelevant for society. This position best explains the apathy Nigerians exhibit towards the political system and the electoral process. Therefore, this becomes a problem to sustenance of electoral process and democratic stability.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The peaceful, prosperous and developed Nigeria could be achieved once there is good governance. There is low level of citizens' participation in the act of governance in Nigeria. Many Nigerians are not committed to the electoral process and other political engagements due to lack of trust and confidence in government, and bad governance. In the history of electoral process in Nigeria, electoral body has not achieved so much credibility and transparency in the conduct of election in Nigeria. Nigerian political system do not encourage citizens' participation due to political culture of violence, intimidation, manipulation, sentiments, money politics, ignorance, corruption and apathy that characterize the political system. However, it is pertinent to say that democratic principles and good governance have not been entrenched into the Nigerian political system. Thus, the paper recommends that for

electoral sustainability and citizen's participation, the electoral body should reinvent ethical values of democracy in the conduct of every electoral process. Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should be impartial and transparent, and make sure that every electoral process should be devoid of sentiments, intimidation and violence. This would install sanity and confidence in the electoral process and thereby enhance citizen participation. Also, for the sustenance of electoral process and democratic governance, improvement of economic and social condition and the reduction of endemic poverty and deprivation should be seriously pursued and addressed. It is revealed that the electorates who are the masses are poor and as a result of this, the politicians induce them with money or other gratification which has resulted to sell of their votes or voters card for money or food. This is widely noticed in the recent election conducted by Independent National Electoral Commission which was characterized with vote buying. A case of Ekiti, Osun 2018 gubernatorial and 2019 general election is a concrete example to this ugly trend in our democratic experience. More so, electoral malpractice should be discouraged in Nigerian electoral and political system. The electoral body should ensure that every vote count and the outcome should reflect the wishes of the people. By doing this, citizens' will have confidence in the electoral process and participate vigorously in the art of governance. To achieve this, the need to sign the electoral bill into law is necessary to address those challenges that are militating against the effectiveness of our electoral system. Also, there is need for political education. Both formal and informal approaches should be adopted to orientate the citizen's on the need for active participation in the political system. Mass political enlightenments through the media, civil association to conscientise the public about the danger of their apathy to electoral process and participation in art of governance should be carried out. With this, the citizens' will have indebt knowledge that taking part in any government decision means involving in what will determine their future. In addition, the government should make sure that literate society is attained. This can be achieved through government policies and programmes on educating every Nigerian child and making sure that level of illiteracy is reduced. Political will and commitment is needed to achieve this drive. With this, the ignorant mind would be liberated and the need to be involved in government decision and political consciousness would be achieved. With a sincere implementation of these suggested measures, there is much hope for

good governance and citizen's participation for the sustenance of electoral process in Nigeria.

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SECURITY AGENCIES AND 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Nwaigwe Hope Chinenyenwa
Department of Political Science,
Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike Ikwo

Abstract

The study examined the role of security agencies in the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria. It adopted the goal-based approach as the theoretical framework, relied on documentary method of data collection and made use of qualitative-descriptive tool and content analysis. It observed that elections, though, considered as a requirement for good governance. However, mere elections without ensuring credibility are equivalent to authoritarianism. It further contended that an election cannot be judged as credible, free and fair without the proper performance of the constitutional role by the agents of democracy, most especially the security agencies. Thus, a secured electoral environment is very crucial to ensuring the overall integrity of the process in the areas of electioneering, voting, collection, counting and announcing of results. The findings indicated that established that there is a strong connection between the influence of party in power and the roles played by the security agencies on ground during the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria. The study recommended inter alia that security agencies should avoid interference and display the highest level of professionalism in discharging their duties for overall integrity of the process.

Keywords: security agencies, election, democracy, political party, Nigeria.

Introduction

The crises arising from elections appear to be the major problem confronting the development of Nigeria's democracy. Notably, although Nigeria comprises 36 states, and FCT, not all the states in the country are able to organize credible, free and fair elections. Oboh (2016**)** noted that development history bears credence to the maxim that, any democratic state cannot conduct free and fair elections unless if security officers, media practitioners and civil society organisations adequately perform their roles. It

is quite unequivocal that developed countries are what they are today simply because everybody or agents in the polity perform their constitutional role to sustain democracy. Has any state developed without institutionalising ways of conducting free and fair elections? In other words, failed states are often known through their inability to choose competent leaders in credible, free and fair elections (Osezua, 2018).

There are two aspects, however, that can pose a challenge in terms of security. On the one hand, it is necessary to establish or maintain a secure and peaceful electoral environment and to preserve law and order, including bringing anyone aiming to disrupt the process to justice. On the other hand, it is necessary to ensure that security-related provisions or actions do not interfere with or undermine the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms or challenge the legitimacy of the electoral process. This entails an absence of harm or threats of harm, as well as support for an environment conducive to holding democratic elections.

The importance of security in an electoral process is considerable. Public security providers can have an impact on the conduct of an election through involvement in a number of its elements. This includes their relationship with and as stakeholders, as well as their roles and responsibilities in various activities and processes. Those agencies responsible for security can have an influence on these and a number of other stages in any electoral process. Indeed, elections held in Nigeria had shown the impact, both positive and negative influence, which security providers can have on an electoral environment. These had informed the study to examine the role of security agencies in the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

Elections

Election is a process and procedure through which the eligible citizens of a particular state choose their political representatives whom are expected to solve on their behalf the collective problems of the masses. It is a process through which representatives are emerged to direct the affair of the state. Put differently, election is considered to be the process of choosing the representatives of the people who are to be saddled with the clearly defined responsibilities of governance through the voting exercise. Election consists of

all prerequisite exercises involved both pre and post. Benjamin (2009) defines election as a method that permits members of an organisation or community to select representatives who will occupy positions of authority within it. Nwolise, (2007) and Bamgbose (2012) describe election to be a process of choosing the officers or representatives of an association or group relying on the votes of its authorised members. Anifowose (2003) stated that election is the procedure of leaders' selection by the mass of the populace in any given political system.

Thus, the most important function of any credible elections is to provide the people opportunity to select the leaders of local, states, and national governments. The participation in chosen the leaders at all levels serve as golden opportunity for the public to make choices about the policies, programs, and future directions of their government. At the same time, elections promote accountability. The threat of defeat at the polls exerts pressure on those in power to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and take account of popular interests and wishes when they make their decisions (Osezua, 2018). Electoral process in the history of Nigeria's democratic governance have continued to be marred by extraordinary display of rigging, dodgy, "do or die" affair, ballot snatching at gun points, violence and acrimony, thuggery, boycotts, threats and criminal manipulations of voters list, brazen falsification of election results, the use of security agencies against political opponents, and intimidation of voters (Nnadozie, 2007; Adigbuo, 2008; Omotola, 2010; Bekoe, 2011 in Saliu & Ifejika, 2017)

Security Agencies in Nigeria

Verjee, Kwaja, and Onubogu, (2018) noted that Nigeria's many federal security agencies include, the Police Force, the Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps, the Department of State Services Intelligence Agency, the Army, Navy and Air Force. In addition, some states have established their own auxiliary agencies. Of these, the police, through the Inspector General of Police, is officially the lead agency for election security.

To effect coordination of security agencies during elections, in 2010, the Inter-agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) was

established at the federal level, with state-level ICCES bodies in each of the thirty-six states (Jega, 2013).The ICCES brings together the INEC, the police, and other security agencies, and is the primary forum for election security planning. Different security forces, all of which are accountable to the government, may be tasked with responsibility for various aspects. Potential threats may be multifaceted, complex and may shift over time. Protection can be undertaken though a combination of prevention, mitigation, and responds, definitions of electoral security have been developed. For these guidelines, the term is used broadly and refers to the protection of all stakeholders, activities and processes, election facilities and materials, and information within the pre-electoral, electoral, and post-electoral periods from harm or threat of harm to facilitate peaceful and democratic elections.

Theoretical Framework

The goal agency theory is adopted to navigate the study's discourse. The goal base theory is a management oriented theory geared towards stimulating employee motivation within an organisational context and for the purpose of increasing performance. But given its basic tenets, it can actually sever a useful purpose even in people's personal lives and other general circumstances, (Odum, 2016). The theory took its root from Locke, (1968) discourse on the assumption that people's behaviours are motivated by their conscious goals or objective. Rollinson (2008) noted that the idea that motivated behaviour is a function of a person's conscious goals and intention. According to Sapru (2013), the theory emphasises that specific and challenging goal with feedback leads to higher performance.

Some of the concepts associated with the theory which are worth noting include, goal specificity, goal directed effort, goal acceptance, goal commitment, and performance. Goal specificity deals with how explicit the objectives to be achieved are. The idea is that when the intended goals are explicitly and clearly stated, it will make for an easier understanding and create the motivation for goal directed efforts. Which means it is easier for

people to pursue a goal when they have a clear picture of what the goal entails, one may not know what it would require to get the task ahead accomplish and neither could the person foretell when it is likely to be completed (Odum, 2016). Goal directed effort relates to the action taken towards performing the necessary tasks that would lead to the accomplishment of a goal. This is influenced by goal acceptance and goal commitment, (Rollinson, 2008; Odum, 2016). While the former stands for the extent to which a goal is accepted as legitimate and appropriate, the latter represents a person's vested interest in achieving the goal. On the other hand performance is an indication of whether, and to what extent, the goal is actually achieved, (Odum, 2016).

Within the context of this study, one can stand on this framework to construct questions like, what goals were the security agencies during 2019 General Election in Nigeria pursued? To what extent can one say that there are clear specifications for them to direct their efforts towards actualising, free, fair and credible 2019 election? Assuming, that there are the existences of goal/ role specification directed towards security agencies helping to actualise credible election, does the influence of the current politicians and political parties permit the various security agencies to strive towards actualising such goals/roles.

It is necessary therefore to ascertain the goals/roles being pursued by security agencies, if for instance there are interference concerning how to actualise, free, fair and credible 2019 General Election through the roles perform by security agencies, if such exist, there may be little or no motivation to act in the direction of actualising the genuine roles. But if there are such specified goals and role and whereupon the current politicians and political parties permits for its actualisation, the emphasis of the various security agencies would shift from unproductivity, of actualising the goal of the interferers and dwell on making positive goal direct efforts to the free, fair and credible election at large. Thus performance will be rated in terms of the ability of each agency to contribute positively to credible, free and fair 2019 election. But as it appears, the current goals/roles of the security agencies revolves around how to expand the space for attracting increased incentives "tips" from the politicians and specifically from the ruling party and in doing

this they employ certain unproductive strategies that will mar free and fair election. It does not appear in some quarters that the efforts directed towards actualisation of these goals can promote, free, fair and credibility in election.

Roles for Security Agencies in a Democratic Election

This segment is to critically analyse the pertinent roles of the security, to the conduct of credible elections which in turn may beget true democracy. Igbuzor (2004) argued that the success or failure of any election is a function of the stakeholders executing their duties. He contended that the security agencies can make a positive impression in the elections outcome if they display the highest level of integrity, neutrality, professionalism and sense of duty. Thus, safety of human life, voters, electoral materials, officials and the safeguarding of lawful and orderly electoral processes are essential for reliable, free and fair elections.

Olurode (2013) averred that security is vital to the conduct of free, fair and credible election. Starting from ensuring basic security to voters at party rallies and campaigns to making sure that result forms are safeguarded, the whole electoral procedure is delimited by security contemplation. Thus, without adequate security, there cannot be credible, free and fair elections.

Some of the roles of security agencies in elections are *inter alia* highlighted as follows. Providing security for candidates during rallies, congresses, conventions, electioneering campaigns and elections; safeguarding the lives and properties of citizens during the electoral process; ensuring and preserving a free, fair, safe and lawful atmosphere for campaigning by all parties and candidates without discrimination; maintaining peaceful conditions, law and order around the polling and collation; providing security for electoral officials at the voting and counting centers, ensuring the security of election materials at the voting centres and during transportation; ensuring the security of all electoral material, personnel and citizens during registration of voters, update, revision and any other electoral event (Mediayanose, 2018; Olutola, 2019).

However, while the formal structures for responding to conflict exist, in many states there are concerns that security agencies are not doing enough to work together during 2019 Nigeria General Election. As observed from Rivers, Bayelsa, Lagos states respectively among others, it appeared that due to insincerity, ego, and interest, each security institution protects its own territory. There is reluctance among security agencies to recognise the comparative strengths of other agencies. This portends a real risk to their ability to coordinate.

With specific regard to ICCES, in Abuja the level of representation, from such agencies as the office of the national security advisor, was now less than it had been in the past, potentially affecting the committee's decision-making authority. At the state level, a variety of practices were observed (Verjee, Kwaja & Onubogu, 2018).. In some states, ICCES meetings was conducted, detailed election security planning, whereas elsewhere the process was not conducted. While INEC's state offices generally report good cooperation with the police, it seems apparent that there are still gaps, and that in some areas planning was left to the last minute, potentially compromising the quality of implementation (Verjee, Kwaja & Onubogu, 2018). More broadly, given the experience of poor performance by the police, in many of the states, questions are trilling about the neutrality and professionalism of the police. Some question the police's leadership (Duru, & Okutu, 2018). Many perceive the police as a willing tool of the ruling APC and point to a long history of police corruption and co-option; include the use of force in favor of an individual political party or politician for pay. In sum, the role of security is to ensure safety of electorate, electoral materials and electoral officers before, during and after elections.

An Overview of the Performance of Security Agencies in the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria

It is not possible to organise democratic elections in a context where stakeholders are fearful of the consequences of their participation or choices. However, the mere absence of threats or violence is insufficient to ensure an environment in which electoral choices can be expressed freely. Security

providers need to take action to enable a fair and open election campaign, as electoral security should be viewed as more than simply an absence of a threat or of fear. A peaceful electoral environment is crucial to enabling an open and fair campaign and calm conditions that allow the exercise of fundamental freedoms.

Depending on the specific circumstances, a range of consequences may result from an insufficient level of security provided during an election, e.g., an inadequate level of security may discourage or inhibit participation. In addition, compromised trust in the electoral process could lead to contentious elections, which in some cases has been identified as a factor in causing or increasing broader instability.

Conversely, a potential overabundance of security may have an adverse impact and threaten the integrity of the electoral process. A robust security presence could limit overall incidences of violence. However, such a situation may influence aspects such as campaigning or voter turnout by heightening the risk of intimidation and potentially posing a challenge to fundamental freedoms. In some circumstances, law enforcement may be viewed as an instrument of the state and may contribute to the perception or the reality that they are not acting independently in the execution of their duties. Elections held in conflict or post-conflict environments represent a more challenging environment in which to conduct such a complex event and to ensure sufficient and balanced levels of security.

The constitutional roles of security men in Nigeria during 2019 General Election are quite germane. Electoral security in Nigeria is primarily handled by police. In other words, the police are primarily saddled with the responsibility of making sure that people exercise their voting rights in an orderly manner with the help of other paramilitary organisations.

Also, it has been observed that the philosophy governing the operations of the police organisation in the whole world is basically similar. In this regard, Alderson (1979) identified a set of governing principles which he said are basic to the functioning of any police organisation. These include, the desire to reconcile freedom with security, the desire to achieve better understanding and mutual trust with members of the public, the need to ensure security of persons and their property, the desire to investigate, detect, and activate the prosecution of offenders within the law, to facilitate free passage and movement on highways, roads, streets and other places open to members

of the public; and the need to provide leadership and participate in dispelling criminogenic social conditions through co-operative social action.

In line with the foregoing universal principles, CAP 359 the Nigerian Police Act of 1990, provides that the responsibilities of the Nigerian Police Force include: the prevention, detection of crimes and the apprehension of offenders; the preservation of law and order; the protection of lives and property; the enforcement of all laws and regulations with which they are directly charged. It has been contended that the ability or inability of the police to conform to the universal governing principles as enunciated by Alderson (1979) and as specified by the Nigeria Police Act forms the central focus of academic research on the police in Nigeria and the role they play to discharge these duties during 2019 General Election.

The police have enormous decision making discretions in the course of their job which include the decision to interfere with the freedom of another person (Reid 2000). In this vein, Roberg and Kuykendall (1993) argued that police officers are very powerful individuals who are very often exposed to situations in which the decisions they make can have a positive or negative consequences on individual's freedom or well-being.

Complicity in Election Rigging

The participation of security men in election now is becoming more alarming. Security personnel have continued to exploit their indispensability in the conduct of election in Nigeria to the detriment of free and fair and election integrity (Ajayi, 2006; *Punch Editorial Board*, 2018). Security men generally, except few, have made themselves available for election rigging (Mediayanose. 2018). Security personnel that are expected to maintain laws are breaching them with impunity. In most of the previous elections, it has been discovered that security men could not exonerate themselves from common scourge of corruption. One can even contend that police and others security officers can be easily pocketed by the politicians and most especially government in power. Thus, No wonder, it is popularly held that "he who plays the piper dictates the tune". In short, corruption has been used to characterise the role of security men in 2019 General Elections in Nigeria (Olutola, 2019).

Issue of Partisanship Role

As corollary from the foregoing, the issue of partisanship regarding the role of security forces has been noticeable (Mediayanose, 2018). The security men have been blamed for their partisanship involvement in the past elections in Nigeria for associating with government in power or the opposition who can pay their price or being willing tools employed by one or more political parties against others. The alleged "sophisticated and professional rigging" that ensued in some states, for example, in Ekiti state July 14, 2018 governorship, has emboldened some analysts to construe that security men are not but the accomplice of the ruling party and had corroborated partisanship of security men (Mediayanose, 2018, p.138; Omilusi, 2019). Thus, in the 2019 General Elections, the state security network was again alleged of partisanship (Onapajo & Babalola, 2020).

Intimidation of Electorate and Opposition Parties

In most cases, security men are perceived to intimidate both electorates and the opposition parties during elections. To the extent that the people perceived the large presence of the security agencies during the 2019 General Elections as a calculated attempt to instill fear in voters (Onapajo & Babalola, 2020). Thus, in some areas, the electorates were reported being afraid of the security men and debarring some voters from exercising their civic rights resulting to low turn-out of the electorates; especially at the areas where supporters of the opposition party were numerous.

Poor Inter-Agency Co-ordination and Conduct

Part of the of security roles in election is to provide security for election materials, electorates, candidates, and the INEC officials. These have been their normal routine since the inception of democracy in 1999. However, the coordination of the security personnel election by security agencies has been very poor due to the fact that there has been poor interconnectivity between the agencies as a result of gratification they receive from politicians. The very fact that most of the securities receive bribe these bribes affects the

coordination of the programme, and this had marred the credibility of the process. There are many instances where by securities overlooked cases of violence and election malpractices even vote buying. Thus, bribery and corruption have negatively affected performance of the security agencies in elections in Nigeria (Abdullahi, Baba, & Musa, 2016).

During the 2019 General Election, INEC protested the heavy involvement of military personnel and adding and abetting of election rigging in Rivers, Bayelsa, Lagos and many parts of the country (Amaize, 2019). In Rivers State, the INEC decried the unnecessary deployment of heavy personnel during the March 9 governorship and state assembly elections. The INEC National Commissioner and Chairman, Information and Voter Education Committee, Festus Okoye, regretted that collation centres were invaded by some soldiers and armed gangs resulting in the intimidation and unlawful arrest of elections officials, thereby disrupting the collation process (Ebiri, Akubo, Umeh, Ityokura & Agboluaje, 2019). Thus, the contentions were a powerful federal official used the Nigerian Army to violate electoral rules, including ballot snatching and intimidation of opponents, while another powerful official of the state government, recruited fake soldiers to overawe his opponents and security agents on polling day (Amaize, 2019).

The Army set off its crackdown on the Rivers PDP actually before the elections as the party chieftains in various locations, including their homes, hotels and hangouts were invaded by marauding military men, who left destruction and fear in their wake, as several persons were whisked to the 6 Division Headquarters in Port Harcourt. Most prominent of the pre-elections military offensives against the Rivers PDP was the arrest of the state Commissioner for Education, Dr. Tamunosisi Gogo-Jaja during invasion of his Port Harcourt, GRA residence, on March 6, four days before the governorship election.

Also, invaded and ransacked was the palace ex-militant leader-turned monarch, King Ateke Tom of Okochiri Kingdom, Okrika Local Government Area of Balyesa state (Amaize, 2019). Aside the prominent federal might working in favour of the APC, key actors also had the backing of desperate thugs to prosecute their quest for victory. The fatal tone to the Rivers election

drama actually resulted from the conflict generated in flash points where the agents of federal might, security operatives worked at cross-purpose with resistant thugs, (Amaize, 2019).   In Akuku Toru, precisely Abonema, where the Army lost three men over the election period, Prince Eminent Bob-Manuel, noted, the Presidential Election Day shooting, which left an Army Lieutenant dead, began as a gun battle between APC and PDP supporters. Later on, army came with overwhelming firepower. The army killed several persons, shooting directly at the crowd. When the PDP supporters realised that soldiers have had total control, they tried to escape. However, the Army shot ceaselessly from Jack's compound to Manuel's compound which became the end theatre of the war (Amaize, 2019). Many among those who retreated ran with bullet wounds to their death in the surrounding river and swamps. They shot so many people, aside those who died right at the Manuel's Square on the spur of the moment (Amaize, 2019). Bayelsa Elders Council also decried what it described as the militarisation of communities in the state during the elections. In a communique issued at the end of an emergency meeting held in Yenagoa, the Forum condemned the loss of lives in some parts of the state during the exercise and the role played by some security operatives (Amaize, 2019).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study found that although the security agencies tried in Nigeria to ensure safety of lives, properties and peaceful conduct during the 2019 General Elections. However, it also discovered that part of the inability of security agencies to achieve the objective could be attributed to connivance with the politicians, especially with the governments in power at national and state levels. Thus, truncating the efforts of Nigerians to choose good leaders and to let the results of the polls reflect the wishes of the voters.

It is therefore recommended that legislators and those working in the public security sector should ensure that the framework pertaining to the roles of, and activities by, security providers are well established and widely understood. It is crucial that such activities be viewed as impartial and not for the benefit of the authorities or an incumbent or biased for or against any particular group. Also, it is recommend that security agencies should be well motivated in all areas for effective role performance and are given more

autonomy to perform their constitutional duties without being induced by candidates, political parties, and government in power to ensure more credible, free and fair elections. Security men should also be civil and professional in discharging their duties during elections while continuous serious retraining towards attitudinal change and professional efficiency and proficiency among both the rank and file and other officer cadre of all the security agencies should be undertaken.

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POST-2019 ELECTION VIOLENCE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA

Nwaorgu, Humphrey Chinedu
Department of Political Science
Federal University Wukari, Taraba State Nigeria

Abstract

The study examined the implications of post-2019 election violence on Nigeria's national security. The study made use of documentary and survey methods of data collection which involved data from books, journals, national dailies and interview respectively. It also made use of personal observation. Data collected were contently analysed and frustration-aggression theory was employed as a framework of analysis. It observed that post-election violence has been a recurrent threat to Nigeria's national security since political independence in 1960 and has generated concerns over its manifestations in the reign of thugs, wanton destructions of property, sporadic shootings and killings, kidnapping, banditry and criminality. It further observed that political actors' mentality about politics as an avenue for primitive accumulation of wealth rather than public service and winners-take-all attitude fuel post-election violence. Thus, politicians therefore recruit thugs for violence in pursuit of elective positions and when frustrated and resolve to post-election violence. The findings indicated several factors such as militarisation of polls, non-prosecution of electoral offenders, mentality of politicians, the character and nature of Nigerian state and the glorious nature of political offices were identified among others as being responsible for post-2019 election violence. The implications of the foregoing on Nigeria's national security have manifested in the militarisation of Nigerian society, untold economic hardship, hunger and poverty, underdevelopment and depletion of Nigeria's international image among others. The study submitted that so long as politics is perceived as avenue for primitive accumulation of wealth and not service to nation-building, post-election violence remains an issue in Nigerian political development. It therefore recommended non-deployment of the military in elections, inclusive partnership of INEC with other stakeholders, prosecution of electoral offenders, INEC upgrading to latest ICT and constant sensitisation and political education for Nigerian electorates among others to curb post-election violence in the country.

Keywords: post-2019 elections, national security, political thugs, political parties

Introduction

No doubt, Nigeria has conducted six successive General Elections which include the 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and the just concluded 2019 General Elections which depict the hallmark of democratisation process. Upon this giant stride of Nigeria's democratisation process, electoral violence has become a recurrent phenomenon since the return of Nigeria to constitutional democracy in 1999. Electoral violence represents threat to Nigeria's national security hence to vote or to be voted for in an election means the use of force or forces, threats, intimidation, thuggery, indiscriminate destruction of election materials, arson, killing, kidnapping, do or die affairs, zero-sum game or winner-takes-it-all syndrome, unlawful militarization of polls, biasness by electoral umpires, rigging, paradigm shift from issues based electioneering campaign to blackmail and hate speeches, assassin, street protest, flaunting of the electoral laws and so on by political parties/candidates and incumbents. However, in 1999 general elections, Nigerian electorates were eager to have a breakaway from military rule. The 1999 General Elections witnessed high turnout of Nigerian electorates and thus, there was relatively low electoral fraud and violence.

Besides, in 2003, Nigeria conducted another General Elections but the elections were marred by many irregularities and malpractices including brazen desperation of political parties/candidates to rig the elections and win by all means, lack of preparedness by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), late arrival of election materials, intimidation of political opponents by the ruling parties, announcement of results from polling areas where elections never hold, barring of agents of opposition parties from collation centres, the use of security agencies with impunity and so on. Consequently, the announcement of the election results plunged post-election violence in states like Anambra, Benue, Delta, Plateau, Bauchi, Taraba, Yobe, Kebbi, Katsina, Zamfara, Kaduna and Rivers. Report indicates that eight protesters were killed in Benue state, 15 persons including a deputy commissioner of police killed in Kogi state, 16 protesters in Osun state and several killings and arson in Edo state (Aondowase, 2015). Likewise, Human Rights Watch reported that 100 lives feared dead in post-election violence of the 2003 General Elections (Bekoe, 2011).

Again, the 2007 General Elections were not devoid of electoral violence. The elections were adjudged to be short of basic international and regional standards for democratic election, massively rigged, marred by egregious irregularities and malpractices, corruption, falsification of results and broad day robbery to democracy (Seyllou 2011; European Union Election Observation Mission, 2007). Nigerian electorates witnessed widespread of small arms and light weapons among political parties, candidates and their thugs ready to win the elections by all means. The climax was the declaration of the 2007 General Elections, a-do-or- die affair by the former President Olusegun Obasanjo. Nigerians witnessed the height of impunity among the ruling party, the whereby the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and security agencies made the electoral process fraudulent. The announcement of the 2007 election results in favour of the ruling party PDP triggered post-election violence which claimed the lives of 300 persons and destroyed property worth Billions of Naira across some Nigerian states (Campbell, 2019).

In the same vein, the 2011 General Elections were not violent-free though adjudged to be relatively best run and organised of all the Nigerian elections (Bekoe, 2011). Upon the announcement of the Presidential election result which saw Mr. Goodluck Jonathan emerged as the winner of the election, the pro-Buhari supporters took to the streets to engage in massive destruction of lives and property in 12 northern states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Niger, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara(Campbell, 2019).   For instance, Human Rights Watch Report indicates that post-election violence killed 800 lives in which 700 of them were from Kaduna and 65,000 persons displaced from their homes to other close-by states and other neighboring countries (Campbell, 2019). Besides, Churches, Mosques, shops, homes, the commission offices, police stations and ruling party's offices were razed down in state like Kaduna. The killings and destruction recorded in the 2011 General Elections represent threat to national security.

The 2015 General Elections were enmeshed in cases of electoral violence in most states like Gombe where gunmen opened fire on voters in polling units and Rivers states over alleged killings of campaigners and voting irregularities. For instance, the National Security Tracker documented that 106 persons died in election-related cases which 62 people died in pre-election violence, while 44 others died in post-election violence (Campbell, 2019). In

general, there were low incidences of post-election violence in 2015 General Election compare to 2007 and 2011 General Elections which represented an improvement in the conduct of election in Nigeria.

Despites the little improvement in the conduct of election in Nigeria, the 2019 General Elections were not immune from electoral violence. The elections though adjudged by the domestic and international observers and monitors to be relatively peaceful with several irregularities however were characterised with hallmark of electoral violence before, during and after elections in most states of the federation. Reports indicated the reign of political thugs in the 2019 General Elections who embarked on unwanted destruction and burning of INEC offices and materials and shootings in most states likes; Abia, Imo, Anambra, Oyo, Lagos, Rivers, Taraba, Benue, Kogi and so on before, during and after elections (Inyang, 2019). There were unsettled cases of parallel primaries and candidates, inter-party campaign clashes, propagation of hate speeches, shooting, killings and intimidation of voters and INEC ad-hoc staff during elections and collation of results, militarisation of polls and use of security agencies with impunity. Election processes in states like Rivers, Adamawa, Bauchi, Sokoto, Benue, Plateau and Kano were disrupted that the process was declared inconclusive in the affected states (Inyang, 2019).

Consequently, the inherent irregularities and misconduct which characterised the 2019 General Elections have elicited several petitions from political parties and politicians against the INEC challenging the conduct of the elections. For instance, between April 4 and April 16, the Appeal Court Spokesperson, Mrs. Sa'adatu Musa Kachalla reported that 77 Elections Tribunals have been inaugurated to hear a total of 766 petitions filed by politicians aggrieved over the outcome of the 2019 general elections (*Business Day Editor*, 2019). Besides, Nigeria is currently experiencing the reign of bandits and banditry since the 2019 General Elections. Most states like Zamfara, Rivers, Kaduna, Taraba, Katsina among others are currently witnessing election-related crises which have caused several lives maimed, killed or displaced and much property destroyed with numerous kidnapping cases trading the affected states since the 2019 General Elections. This is consequent upon proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the hands of many recruited thugs for violence in the 2019 General Elections.

Based on the foregoing, the study examined post-2019 election violence and its implications for national security in Nigeria. To this effect,

this study is divided into four segments which encompass the introduction in the preceding section, conceptual clarification, second section reviews relevant literature and focuses on theoretical underpinning, the third segment contains instances of post-2019 elections violence and factors responsible for it while the last section is on post-2019 General Elections violence on national security, conclusion and recommendations.

Conceptual Clarification
Electoral Violence

Different scholars have conceptualised electoral violence differently based on their various ideological perspectives. Some authors like Jegede and Ledan in Onwuaroh (2014) view electoral violence as an act which has both physical and psychological connotations. Others   like Fischer (2002) conceptualised it as an act which has inclusively physical, psychological and structural connotations. However, the point of agreement between the various perspectives of electoral violence is viewed as action carried out by people, group or groups, communities and so on to influence the outcome of an electoral process. The first perspective of electoral violence is supported by Nweke in Onwuaroh (2014) who defined electoral violence as any form of physical force applied to the end of disorganising the electoral process, which involves destruction of electoral materials to the intimidating of the electorates to vote against their wish. Similarly, Jegede in Onwuaroh (2014) maintains that there are different manifestations of electoral violence which include murder, arson, abduction, assault, and violent seizure and destruction of electoral materials which are acts perpetuated by individuals and groups with the intention of influencing the outcome of elections or deterring elected officials from consolidating their positions after elections. While supporting this view, Ladan in Onwuaroh (2014) posits that electoral violence is any act of violence perpetrated in the course of political activities which include thuggery, use of force to disrupt political meetings or voting at polling stations, or the use of dangerous weapons to intimidate voters and other electoral process, or to cause bodily harm or injury to any person connected with electoral process.

On the second view, Fischer (2002) defines electoral violence as any random or organised act or threat to intimidate, physically harm, blackmail, or abuse a political stakeholder in seeking to determine, delay, or to otherwise influence an electoral process. Albert (cited in Onwuaroh, 2014) was of the

view that electoral violence is all forms of organised act or threats including physical, psychological and structural targeted at intimidating, harming, blackmailing political stakeholders before, during and after an election with a view to determine, delay or otherwise influence an electoral process. For this study, Albert's conceptualisation of electoral violence is relevant which states that electoral violence is aimed at deterring the electoral process which may invariably represents threat to national security of the state.

National Security

The term national security has undergone transformation over time. It has been conceptualised in two perspectives including traditional and non-traditional. Traditionally, national security is viewed as a nation's military capabilities to overcome internal and external aggression. (Aliyu 2012) argues that a nation is secured once it is free from military threats or political coercion. Buzan (2007) opines that national security is about the survival of the state against military threats posed by other states. Imobigbe (2001) defines it as the defence and survival of the state. Also, Osisanya (2014) sees national security as the ability of a state to cater for the protection and defence of its citizens.

The above conceptions depict state–centric position of security without adherence to other components of the state. All efforts centre on the survival and defence of the state. The military is seen as an exclusive custodian for security and survival of the state. However, it is pertinent to note that most states have not witnessed any external threats in their existence rather internal threat. So defining national security in terms of territorial protection and defence of the state without consideration to other areas like human, energy, environment and so on, complimenting the survival of the state may be misleading. Based on this development, attention has been given to other areas and this has led to other dimensions and conceptions of national security.

From another perspective, national security is the requirement to maintain the survival of the state through the use of economic, diplomacy, power projection and political power. National security is the aggregate of the security interest of all individuals, communities, ethnic groups, political entities and institutions which inhabit the territory of a state (Obasanjo cited in Dambazau, 2009). It is about safeguarding the interest of the citizenry and providing the type of atmosphere that is free of threats that could inhibit the pursuit of the good of all. It is about the processes and measures required to

preserve law and other (Aliyu cited in Dambazau, 2009). National security involves the maintenance and protection of the core values, interests and socio-economic order of state in the face of threats from within or without. It is a condition where the most cherished values, ideas, beliefs, ways of life, institutions of governance and the well-being of a nation are protected and continuously strengthened (Ojata & Udoh 2012).

Accordingly, national security includes a network of armed and civil forces that secure the citizens not only from external attacks but also from devastating internal disturbances, starvation, diseases, homelessness, environmental degradation and socio-economic injustices. Buttressing on national security, the United Nations Development Programmes Human Development Report of 1994 broadened the spectrum of national security to include economic security; food security, health security; environmental security; personal security; community security and political security (Osakwe, 2013). Most importantly, national security is achieved when a state ensure that its territorial borders and citizens are saved and secured from both internal and external threats through adherence of law and order. The concern of this study is to ensure that electoral violence does not pose threats to Nigeria's national security

Stages of Violence in Election

Elections revolve into three major circles including pre-election stage, election stage and post-election stage and any election violence within these three stages appears as pre-election violence, election violence and post-election violence respectively (Fischer, 2002). The pre-election violence can be seen as violence which occurs between the registration periods to campaign period. Onwuaroh (2014) argues that pre-election violence can occur during registration period and can lead to massive disenfranchisement of voters due to psychological fear. Ladan (cited in Onwuaroh, 2014) captures pre-election violence as violence which involves intra-party and inter-party clashes arising from struggles over party nomination and access to the electorates. Pre-election violence often takes the form of inflammatory rhetoric, hate speeches, attacks on politicians, and party supporters (Orji & Uzodi, 2012).

Election violence involves acts of violence at the Election Day including voter intimidation, snatching of ballot boxes or ballot papers, ballot stuffing, and attack on election officials and observers (Orji & Uzodi 2012). Accordingly, the post-election circle encompasses the periods of collation and

announcement of election results to litigation and settlement of election disputes. Therefore, any act of violence within this period is attributed as post-election violence. Post-election violence can be to involve attacks on rival candidates, party officials/supporters as well as violent street protests. Adoke (2011) identifies acts of post-election violence to include shooting, killings, arson, wanton destruction of property, usually perpetrated by officials and/or supporters of different political parties. Post-election violence includes any act of violence which occur beginning from collation of results, announcement of results, litigations in courts to settlement of election petition cases.

Theoretical Framework

The frustration-aggression theory of violence is adopted in this work by this researcher against other theories like social conflict theory, relative deprivation theory, class theory which can also be used to explain and describe such social phenomenon under investigation in this study. The frustration-aggression theory was propounded by Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mower and Sears in 1939. These theorists postulate that aggression is always a consequence of frustration and when the source of frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression gets displaced onto an innocent target (Mbah, 2014). Frustration is the feeling of irritation and annoyance when something blocks you from achieving a goal whereas aggression is a malicious behavior or attitude towards someone or something usually triggered by frustration (Karin, n.d). Aggression is also said to be an action with the intent to harm and can be physical and non-physical whereas frustration is the condition which exists when a goal-response suffers interference (Mbah, 2014)

The frustration-aggression theory is the most appropriate theory for this study because it attempts to explain the cause of electoral violence. Upon the proposition that post-election violence represents threat to national security, if the electoral process is frustratingly marred by fraud, it will thwart the expectations of the electorates or voters by making their votes not count as well as frustrating their selection of their choice candidate or candidates as witnessed in the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria. The goals of blocking or thwarting the expectations of the voters against their choicest candidates necessitate to aggressive behaviour such as post-election violence in attempt to recover their stolen mandate. Post-election violence is embarked upon by the revolution of the rising frustration due to the revolution of rising expectations.

Causes of Electoral Violence in Nigeria

Numerous factors are responsible for electoral violence in Nigeria. These factors have helped in sustaining violence before, during or after elections. While speaking on election violence, It has been observed that electoral violence in Nigeria is primarily due to the perception of politics and political office as investment and an avenue for the acquisition of extraordinary wealth through corruption, which is otherwise not possible through any other form of legitimate vocation and enterprise (Salau, 2016). Thus, Nigerian politicians turn electioneering campaigns and elections into warfare in which violence and ethnic, religious and other forms of primordial sentiments and prejudices are employed. While buttressing further on the causes of electoral violence in the country, it has been attributed to the actions and inactions of several actors, who are determined to secure or retain political power without adhering to the rules of democratic competitive elections, and consideration for the long term negative effects of electoral fraud and violence on national integration, security and development (Salau, 2016).

Thus, the cause of electoral violence has been attributed to consequences of the Nigerian civil war with the type of social formation, humans, military men and war contractors it produced. The war produced social deviants who made up the society today and they are the human beings who are managing our affairs today, they are deformed citizens, who have no values of what nation building is all about (Salau, 2016). In essence, these same citizens made politics a very expensive venture, where you are in politics only to make money. One can buy and sell, if one can pay for the office, one gets it. Hence, politics is now an economic venture; they invest money with the intention to recoup the money. It then means to recoup the money spent for election is to recruit militants and thugs, who fight to ensure victory, which means election, must be won, so that they can now recover the money invested.

Instances of Post-2019 Elections Violence

Despite the national peace accord signed by the political parties and their candidates before the 2019 general elections to remain resolute to the spirit of sportsmanship during and after voting, collation of results, announcement of results and so on, there were few instances of violence in states like Rivers, Plateau, Bauchi, Benue, Lagos, Anambra, Adamawa, Kano,

Kaduna, Imo, Oyo and Taraba (Editor, 2019). Voting and collation of results during the 2019 General Elections especially gubernatorial and state assembly elections were marred by violence such as burning of thumb printed ballot papers and ballot boxes, intimidation of INEC collation officers by security agencies, shootings and killings of staff and voters by thugs as reported by the EUEOM (Editor, 2019). For instance, report indicates that in some parts of Lagos state especially Oshodi, shops were burnt down and the owners of those shops were beaten up by thugs after the February 23rd 2019 Presidential election (Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room, 2019). Similarly, in Isiala Mbano Local Government of Imo state, the office of the INEC was set ablaze after the collated results from Okigwe Federal Constituency were moved to Owerri, the state capital. Likewise, report indicates that out of 39 lives killed, 16 feared dead on the Presidential and National Assembly elections of 23rd February 2019 across eight states including Rivers, Ebonyi, Bayelsa, Yobe, Borno, Lagos, Kogi, and Zamfara, 23 lost their lives in post-election related violence with abductions of political party stalwarts and Corps members in most places across the country (Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room, 2019).

In Taraba state there were several incidence of post-election violence in the 2019 general elections. For instance, in Jalingo, collation of results witnessed sporadic shootings and intimidation of INEC/Ad-hoc staff by thugs suspected to be working for the APC candidate which led to suspension of the process and imposition of curfew for few days in the state capital (*Channels Television* 2019). Similarly, upon announcement of results and declaration of Governor Isaku as re-elected to the office of Taraba state governor, the thugs resonated in their unresisting shootings in the state capital. Besides, in an interview with a Senior Lecturer with Federal University Wukari, who served as Collation Officer in Bali Local Government of Taraba state, narrated his ordeal of how he was kidnapped by group of thugs who forced him to re-write the already collated results of the local government. After arguing with the kidnappers for several hours on the reason why he will not alter or rewrite any result, they released him and allowed him to go (Odoh, 2019). Again, another Lecturer with the Federal University Wukari who served as a Collation Officer in Ussa Local Government of Taraba transmitted his ordeal through ASSU-FUW WhatsApp Platform that:

> he and other INEC staff were siege by political thugs while collating results in the collation Centre. The thugs set the generator set on fire and the entire   centre was overtaken by

darkness. They were ordered by the thugs to submit the collated results and get ready to be killed. As this was going on, the military suddenly stormed the center and whisked them out of the center to INEC office in Jalingo, (Agu, 2019).

Again, while sharing their experiences on their way from Taraba State to Abuja upon waiting for the Presidential election results, have this to say that:

some pro-Buhari groups in possession of bowls, arrows and other instrument of force, took over the major high ways to harass and intimidate non-supporters of Buhari As vehicles move by, they shout said Baba with their two hands showing 4 over 4 in order to know those that are anti-Buhari. While responding Sai Baba, you will be allowed to pass but those who refused to respond Sai Baba with hands indicating 4 over 4 were asked to stop and upon stopping were attacked with intimidation and harassment,(Ayuba & Iliya, 2019).

Besides, there were other cases of post-election violence in most states across Nigeria in the 2019 general elections. Instances of post-2019 election violence cannot be over-emphasized. Hence cases of post-election violence have continued to unfold daily.   For instance, report indicates that three (3) persons involved in a victory celebration of President Mohammadu Buhari re-election were shot dead by a military personnel in Yola, the capital of Adamawa state. Their death came when the celebration victory turned to clash between the armed military men and the jubilant pro-Buhari supporters the state (Hindi, 2019).

Factors Responsible for Post 2019 Elections Violence in Nigeria
        A lot of factors were responsible for the post-2019 election violence in Nigeria. Two major factors were identified in this study which includes immediate and pre-meditated factors. Prominent among the immediate factors is INEC ill-preparedness and inefficiency in the 2019 General Elections. This culminated into postponing the Presidential and National Assembly as well as state governorship and assembly elections of February 16th and March 2nd to February 23rd and March 9th even when Nigerians have been assured that elections will hold. Report indicates that with the rescheduled date, election materials were not delivered in time to some polling centers in most states

until midday into the elections (*Business Day Editor*, 2019). As parts of INEC lack of preparedness was the inconsistency and delay associated with results collation and announcement. In fact, most political oppositions thought INEC conspired with the ruling APC to rig them out of the elections. In line with the fact that frustration often lead to aggressive behaviour and consequently metamorphose into violence as seen in the post-2019 election phase.

Another immediate factor of post-2019 election violence was Mr. President's order to the military to shoot on sight ballot box snatchers (*ThisDay* March 2, 2019). The order of Mr. President can be likened to what happened in the Hobbesian state of nature where life become very brutish, nasty, shot and slippery and everybody was at liberty to take one's life. In a democratic society like Nigeria, all actions are taken within the ambiance of the rule of law and not with brute force and the law must take its course at all time. Likewise, the militarization of the 2019 General Elections was another straw that broke the camels' back. Thus, the 2019 General Elections witnessed massive deployment of security agents like the Nigerian Army, Department of State Security (DSS), Nigerian Police, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and so on, who succeeded in intimidating and harassing voters cum disrupting the election process. Though, one may ask if the military were not deployed in most flashpoint states, could elections hold in such states? The same military sent to ensure peaceful and orderly conduct of the 2019 elections, were seen defiling the rule of the game.

It is important to understand that the military are not vanguard for democratic election coupled with the fact that they are novice in matters of election, therefore have no business in election. It is like giving meat to the dog or yam to goat to keep, the two cannot be. In the 2019 General Elections, the military were accused in most states like Rivers aiding and abetting election fraud and intimidating INEC collation officers. They were struggling with INEC for collation of results. The questions agitating for answers include "since the era of deployment of the military in elections in Nigeria, has there been a violent-free election? And when did the military become collation officers, who made them collation officers and whose interest are they protecting in the very act they were accused for?

Prominent among the premeditated factors responsible for post-2019 election violence is the winner-take-it all mentality of politics in Nigeria. Nigerian politicians see politics as a game for accumulation of wealth rather than service oriented therefore a winner in an election exclusively selects party

supporters and exclude political opponents from being part of the government (Salau, 2016). Therefore, election is seen not as sportsmanship rather a do or die affair which can be won at all courses without adherence to the extant laws. Upon this, political thugs are recruited to help to actualise this intention and where it cannot be achieved, violence becomes the order of the day. It is pertinent to understand that so long as the zero-sum attitude remains the culture of politics/ formation of government, violence will remain a cog in the wheel of electoral process in Nigeria.

Another factor responsible for post-2019 election violence is the character and nature of the Nigerian state. It can be said that the Nigerian state is an end in itself rather than a means to an end such that the state is the sole employer of labour as well as owner of resources. The state becomes the be all and end all as well can make and unmake life therefore being in power gives one access to manage and control resources of the state. In fact, the concentration of resources in the state makes the possession of state powers a means to the end of controlling state resources (Sesan & AbdulRahman, 2018). Consequently, people go into power not for the purpose to serve rather to have access to state resources. They employ all manner of means to ensure they win in an election but if the expectation of winning election is refuted, therefore they become frustrated and aggressive and consequently embark on post-election violence as means to seek redress.

Similarly, the accrued glory that revolves around political offices is another premeditated factor responsible for election violence in Nigeria. When a person is elected to political position it give you access to make use of all the paraphernalia or entitlement surrounding that position like security, housing, cars, fat pay and allowances for the rest of one's life in terms of President, principal officers of the National Assembly and Governors (Salau, 2016). All these entitlements make political offices enticing, lucrative and attractive that people struggle themselves to be associated with. With this in mind, political contenders are anxious to win by all means either by hook or crook and when this fails they choose to stress the polity by means of aggressive behaviour.

Non-prosecution of previous election offenders is not left out in these factors for post-2019 election violence. INEC is saddled with the responsibility for prosecution of electoral offenders. It is obvious that there has been little or no prosecution of electoral offenders since Nigeria's Fourth Republic. Prosecution of electoral offenders will serves as deterrence to intended offenders in election. But if there is no deterrence, people flout

electoral laws with impunity and the belief that no punishment exists. Likewise, lack of sensitisation and political education was contributor for post 2019 election violence. It is important to understand that the uneducated minds are easily recruited as political thugs for violence in elections because they are ignorant of the universal best standard for election and democratic governance. It is obvious that election stakeholders like political parties, INEC, civil society organization; national orientation agency and so on did not do much in sensitising and educating the electorates especially the locales for the 2019 General Elections. There was a wide gap between the election stakeholders and electorates in matters of sensitisation and electoral education. Electoral education and sensitisation must not be thrown to the ground because the uneducated electorates can easily be recruited into political thugs for all forms of electoral violence.

Implications of Post 2019 Election Violence on National Security

No nation can boast of its national security amidst of post-election violence. The 2019 General Elections have been differently criticised by both citizens and foreign observers on the basis of irregularities, ill-preparedness and lack of transparency of INEC, violence, militarization of polls and what seemed like collaboration of security agents with the ruling APC party (Oyeyipo & Orizu 2019). Area of difference is the ability to capture the post-2019 election violence in most states of the country.

Be that as it may, post-2019 election violence left monumental footprints on Nigeria's national security. Prominent among the implication of post-2019 election violence is the militarisation of Nigerian society. The political thugs recruited for election violence were equipped with small arms and light weapons and hard drugs with empty promises to engage them into gainful employment by the politicians after elections. In fact, most of the politicians did not secure victory to fulfill the promises thus; these weapons are not retrieved from these political thugs.

Undoubtedly, these arms are used by these thugs as working instrument for armed robbery and other crimes. Again, these thugs are mostly youth who should have been engaged in the productive sector of the economy; now waste their youthfulness in anti-productive and drug-related additives. This is a minus to human security.

Another implication of post-2019 election violence is the reign of insecurity which is synonymous to militarization of the society. The 2019

General Elections witnessed influx of small arms and light weapons which were given to recruited thugs for violence during and after election. These weapons which were not recovered from the thugs are now useful in the hands of these thugs for robbery, kidnapping, banditry, cultism and relatively communal conflicts (Kabir, 2019). The situation after the 2019 General Elections is likened to the position of the human rights lawyer, Femi Falana that Nigeria has turned into a banana republic in the hand of the APC government consequent upon prevailing cases of banditry, insurgency and violence that beclouded the country (Kabir, 2019) The activities of these gangs and their syndicates have left many lives killed, maimed and displaced from their homes as currently seeing in most states like Katsina, Zamfara, Benue, Taraba, Kaduna and so on. Most developed countries like United States, United Kingdom among others have sent warning to their citizens against travelling to Nigeria after the 2019 elections because of widespread insecurity in the country (Kabir, 2019).

Besides, Nigeria's international image is painted black among the comity of nations for conducting elections devoid of universally accepted best standard. The 2019 General Elections lack tenets of democratic election based on use of forces, threats and violence in most states like Anambra, Lagos, Rivers, Adamawa, Bauchi, Plateau, Kano, Kaduna, Akwa Ibom, Taraba, Benue, Katsina, Kogi, Zamfara and so on, which affected collation of results and consequently lead to inconclusive elections in most of these states. Many lives feared dead and private and public property were destroyed. Countries like Togo has been rated high for conducting violent-free and fair elections at the same time Nigeria's 2019 General Elections were conducted which threatened the country's national security. Post-2019 election violence showcases the image of the country to the international arena on the country's inability to preserve its citizens against internal and external threats (Oyeyipo & Orizu 2019). The killings, shootings, destruction of property, hate speeches, kidnapping, assassination and banditry experienced before, during and after the 2019 general elections sent wrong signals to the international community that Nigeria is not ripe to protect her citizens.

Thus, economic hardship and structural poverty have been noticed after the Nigeria's General Elections. It is obvious that the violence hikes economic strain on the welfare of the people. No doubt that post-2019 election violence led and is leading to disturbances and destruction of property and other economic outlets in most states like Zamfara and Katsina where political

thugs have metamorphosed into bandits. There is proportionate surge in the number of beggars, thieves, kidnapping, prostitutes and so on, since the post-2019 election violence. The welfare of Nigeria is also strained by the number of litigations challenging the winners of the 2019 general elections in Tribunals. For instance, a total of 77 Election Tribunals have been set to consider over 766 election cases since the post 2019 election period (*ThisDay* April 16, 2019). The implication is that resources meant to pursue development strides are channeled in pursuant of litigations at the tribunals. Meanwhile, more troubles await the country upon the handling and settlement of these cases and whether the complainants accept the outcome.

Finally, post-2019 election violence has sent negative signals on the participation for the electorates in subsequent elections in Nigeria. With the inherent irregularities and non-transparency of the 2019 General Elections coupled with the post-2019 election violence, apathy and lack of trust in the electoral process will become the order of the day among Nigerian electorates. In fact, if voting will cause one's life, what is the essence of voting for leaders who cannot protect the lives of their citizens?

Conclusion/Recommendations

Based on the foregoing, the 2019 General Elections witnessed violence after its conclusion. The election was charactrised by irregularities such as vote-buying, poor logistics, lack of transparency by INEC, incumbency domination, security agents' intimidation and harassment of voters and INEC staff, reign of thugs and incumbency domination and intimidation of opponents in most states. These Irregularities were made possible by most politicians who were ready to use their resources to win election at all cost while the INEC personnel (permanent and ad-hoc) were not ready to play by the rules of the game. Thus, these occurrences during the 2019 General Election in Nigeria prepared grounds for post-election violence leading to the destruction of public and private property as well as killings in most states.

The following recommendations are therefore made essentially for violent-free and credible elections in Nigeria.

1. Partnership and Decentralisation of responsibilities
    The INEC cannot execute these responsibilities alone and achieve a violent-free, fair and credible election. There is need to partner with other stakeholders as well decentralise most of its responsibilities to these stakeholders in areas like registration of voters, registration and

deregistration of political parties, printing and issuance of voters cards, sensitisation and political education, prosecution of offender and so on. The INEC can concentrate only on the conduct of elections. This will enable the Commission build up the level of preparedness required to conduct a universal acceptable standard elections in subsequent elections in the country.

2. Introduction to E-voting and E-Election
    The Commission needs to upgrade to latest Information, Communication and Technologies that can enable the electorates to vote in elections irrespective of their locations as well get update as events unfold. This will boost the transparency of the Commission, the trust of the electorates in Nigeria's electoral process as well as reduce the height of violence inherent with elections in the country

3. De-militarisation of elections
    Election is an avenue where the electorates choose and select their leaders without compulsion, fear or favour or without prejudice or bias. The military is anti-democratic in character and has no business being in a democratic election. Therefore deploying the military in election for whatever reason is anti-democratic and an infringement on the rights of the electorates. If there should be presence of security agents in election, it must be the Nigerian Police Force and not the military. The police are the civil agent for law, order and prosecution of offenders. Law and order should be the guardian of Nigerian electorates and not intimidation and harassment as was the case of the military in the 2019 General Elections. Ordinarily, people will adhere to the extant laws and maintain orderliness when there is need to do so.

4. Embedding an all-inclusive politics in the political system
    An all-inclusive politics should be embedded in Nigeria's political system. Politicians should see politics as sportsmanship which requires collective efforts as well as a call for service rather than accumulation of wealth. This will help to reduce the wanton desire for recruitment of thugs for violence during and after election in Nigeria. Likewise, the reduction of undue incumbent dominance and intimidation of political opponents which contribute to atmosphere of violence; this scenario generates tensions which if not properly managed, may lead to violence prior, during and after election. Therefore to maintain an

atmosphere of sportsmanship, incumbents should see elections as game and not a do-or-die affair.

5. Further sensitisation and political education
The election stakeholders like INEC, political parties, civil society organisations and so on, should take further sensitisation and political education to all Nigerian electorates and those who may allow themselves to be recruited as thugs. The danger of election violence and the need to say no to rigging and election violence should be the content of the political education.

6. Prosecution of election offenders
The Commission should step up measures for continuous prosecution of election offenders, political thugs and all forms of thuggery. There should be punishment and penalty to deter perpetrators of violence in election if there must be violent-free election in Nigeria.

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ASSESSMENT OF THE PRFORMANCE OF ELECTION ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA: 2011 AND 2015 ELECTIONS EXPERIENCE

Adekola, Abdulazeez Alao
Department of Political Science and Public Administration
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin

Abstract

Since Nigeria independence, election administration has faced several challenges. The credibility and general acceptability of any election outcomes and the legitimacy of the elected government are a function of credible electoral process. The 2011 and 2015 general elections constitute the fourth and fifth since 1999 when the Fourth Republic commenced. The general perceptions and observation reports show that the administrations of those two elections were relatively improved. It is against this backdrop that the study set out to identify and explain those distinct parts of electoral cycles that influenced the performance and the credibility of the results of these elections. The study adopts theory of liberal democracy as a foundation upon which the arguments of the paper is based. Both the primary and secondary sources of data collection adopted. The primary data were sourced through interview conducted to relevant stakeholders in election administration. Thus, the paper identified and discussed some of the reforms on electoral process that influenced the performance of election administration of 2011 and 2015 elections. It is also discovered that 2015 elections are not without flaws; these challenges were identified and discussed. The paper concludes that 2011 and 2015 election administration were relatively improved compare to the previous elections. Finally, the paper provides policy options as a way of improving on future election administration in Nigeria.

Key Words: Election Administration, Electoral cycles, liberal democracy, General Elections

Introduction

Election is procedure that allows members of an organization or community to choose representatives who will hold positions of authority

within it. The most important election is to select the leaders of local, state, and national governments. Electoral providers and those entrusted with preparing elections are acutely aware the harm that poorly runs and administratively flawed elections can do to vulnerable new democracies. If there is a strong belief, whether among the press, the opposition, or the general public, that the elections were not conducted in an open, transparent and fair manner, then the likelihood of contested results and political instability dramatically increases.

In fact, democracies are all founded upon election for it is the process that confers legitimacy upon power. An electoral contest and context in which political parties compete for the votes of citizens at regular intervals have been viewed as the common defining property of democracy (Adigbuo, 2008, p. 22). In fact, the quality of elections is part of the criteria for assessing the level of consolidation of new democracies. Elections are therefore considered vital and indispensable for determining the democratic nature of a political system. When election is not managed quite satisfactorily, it can pave the way for deeper ethnic and regional divisions, loss of legitimacy of elected authorities, protest, contestation, social explosion, and doubt about institutions, violence, and instability or even threaten the entire democratisation process.

Elections in Nigeria from independence till date have continued to recycle in a vicious violence and unimaginable manipulations especially from the political elites; this has attracted the attention of local and international communities. The activities of most of the Election Management Bodies, (EMBs) since independence and most especially since the beginning of Nigeria's Fourth Republic had become synonymous with electoral fraud and injustice such that they represent no credible institution for facilitating the process of translating the true consent of citizenry into the legitimate representative authority of Nigeria (Adekola, 2018, p. xxi). However, in recent years, there are perceptions of commentators that attitude of EMB has relatively changed and there are noticeable improvements on the administration of some of the elections conducted, most especially, the 2011 and 2015 general elections.

The 2011 and 2015 elections were not only a contest for the popularity of political gladiators but also several perennial purposes, a test for the viability of the electoral commission and probity of its helmsmen. The outcomes of the 2015 general elections boosted Nigeria's democratic credentials in two major respects; firstly, since the country independence, the

incumbent political party at the centre was defeated in an election it superintended. Secondly, the inevitable legal tussles that have attended presidential elections did not ensue in the aftermath of the 2015 elections.

This assertion is corroborated by David (2015, p. 4) that the 2015 Presidential elections conducted by INEC were historic for two major reasons. First, the introduction of an electronic accreditation process, in spite of challenges encountered, seemed to have remarkably increased the credibility of the country's election administration process. Secondly, it was the first time in the history of the country that an incumbent President would lose elections and conceded defeat to the opposition. It is against this background that this study essentially attempts to examine and analyse the performance of election administration of 2011 and 2015 to justify the perception of commentators on the credibility of that elections. Consequently, the paper takes off by presenting a brief introduction; presents the concepts of election and election administration. In details, the article examines and analyses some of the innovations introduced on electoral process on some of the electoral cycles that made the administration of 2011 and 2015 elections to be relatively credible. This is done by examines and analyses some of the key aspects of electoral cycles to justify this perceptions. Furthermore, the paper articulates the challenges confronting the election administration of 2015 general elections. The paper finally concludes that election administration of 2011 and 2015 elections are relatively better and performance credible. However, the success recorded in 2015 elections is not without flaw. Therefore, recommendations are presented on way forward.

Methodology
The paper adopts both the primary and secondary sources of data collection. Qualitative and descriptive approaches adopted to analyse the data collected. The primary data were sourced through the administration of structured interview on purposively selected sample of 15 respondents. 6 staff of INEC, 4 respondents from University, 3 politicians and 1each from judiciary and police. The secondary data were sourced from reports of election observers, textbook, journal, newspapers and magazines, documents from INEC office and other relevant materials.

Objectives

To examine and analyse factors responsible for the credible performance of election administration of the 2011 and 2015elections in Nigeria
To identify the challenges confronted the administration of the 2015 elections in Nigeria

Theoretical Framework

The issue of election is central to the whole idea of democracy. Therefore, of all theories of democracy, only the liberal version emphasises a direct linkage between the quality of the election administrative process and the qualification of a regime as democratic (David, 2015, p.10). The issues raised in this paper are therefore interrogated within the context of liberal democratic theory. According to David (2015, p.10), the origin of liberal democratic ideas can be traced to, as far back as, the 17th century when the importance and dignity of man came to be recognised. Thomas Hobbes initiated the modern social contract theory which centers on the relationship of the individual to the state. This states that political authority is grounded in an agreement among individuals. Furthermore, John Locke also made his contribution to the theory of liberal democracy by regarding the consent of the people as the basis of political power. His contention was that political power was the trust of the people in the hands of government. These assertions indicate that the consent of the people must be the basis of forming a government. This process is translated to the conduct of election in which *one man one vote* principle must be realized. This can only be realized through a number of processes refers to as "Election Administration" which must be properly managed by a competent election management body.

Conceptual Clarifications

Election is a complex set of activities with different variables that act and feed on one another. These sets of activities involve the participation of the people in electing their leaders and their participation in government. It is a known fact that elections are synonymous to democracy. Bratton (1998, p.54) describes election as a fundamental element for installing democratic governance and general democratic consolidation. Elections form a core element of citizen's fundamental right in a democracy. Therefore, Mozaffar and Schedler (2002, P. 5-27) argued that a credible and competitive election forms a vital aspect of attitudinal change of the citizenry. Election Day activities are germane to democratic consolidation. However, elections

transcend the Election Day activities to include activities before, during and after elections. It encompasses the establishment of the Election Management Body, the legal and constitutional framework of elections, the registration of political parties, party campaigns, the party primaries, the role of print and electronic media, campaign finances, the activities of security agencies and government in power. It involves the authenticity and genuineness of the voter register, etc.

In describing the nexus between election and democracy (Nnadozie (2007, P.10) and Hounkpe & Gueye (2010, P.22) observe that:

> *Elections have been seen as the major feature of democracy to the extent that not only it is impossible to imagine a democratic regime without elections but also there is now a real risk of confusing the holding of regular, reasonably competitive and transparent elections with democracy.*

Omotola (2004, p.129) on the importance of election to democratic consolidation, shows how election plays indispensable roles in the democratization process. He observes that:

> *Election, be it "founding" or "consolidating", play some useful and indispensable roles in the democratization process. First, election helps to institutionalize the process of succession by creating a legal-administrative framework for handling inter-elite rivalries and providing a modicum for popular backing for the new ruler.*

Meanwhile, the meaning of election administration appears nebulous as a result of the complex set of activities inherent in the concept. Yet, a critical examination of its meaning firmly establishes it as an empirical category. Iwara (2010, p. 24) sees election administration as "organisation and conduct of elections to elective public (political) offices by an electoral body" it is on this note that Samuel (2013, p. 13) expatiate this meaning given by Iwara that subsumes election administration both are the structure and process.

> *By structure it "meant the bureaucracy that is set up or established to organize and conduct elections". The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Nigeria*

is a good example. By process is "meant the rules, procedures and activities relating among others, establishment of electoral bodies, and the appointment of their members. The registration of voters, the nomination of candidates, balloting, counting of the ballots, declaration of results, the selection and training of electoral officials, constituency delimitation, voters and education and, in some cases, registration of political parties and supervision of parties' nomination congress.

In election administration, the electoral process relates to the entire cycle ranging from the provision of voter education to the dissolution of the National Assembly and aspiration of tenure of elected executive officers. The electoral process is therefore a complex process that encompasses the good intentions and undesirable outcomes of election administration, particularly in emerging democracies where general elections are often marred by culturally hued electoral malpractices. In the Nigerian case, the truth remains that the electoral process is immensely characterised by a culture of electoral malpractices.

Reasons behind the Credible Performance of Election Administration of 2011 and 2015 Elections in Nigeria

It is undisputable fact that Nigerian elections are usually characterized by fierce competition and disputed results. In the present Nigerian Fourth Republic, prior to 2011 elections, the country had conducted three quadrennial general elections from 1999-2007. According to Adekola (2018, p.369) and in a comparative study of the 12 major steps in election administration process between 2003-2007 and 2011-2015 elections, it was established that the election administration of the last two elections-2011and 2015 elections were relatively improved than the first two elections. This perception was alluded to by Jega (2015, p. 3) that the modest effort at electoral reform following the submission of the report of the Justice Muhammadu Uwais Electoral Reform Committee (ERC), as represented by the introduction of a new legal and administrative reform measures, and the inauguration of a new Chairman and Commissioners, paved the way for remarkable improvements in the 2011 and especially the 2015 general elections. This paper identifies the following as

factors that responsible for the success recorded in the administration of the 2011 and 2015 elections, which made the results relatively credible:

Leadership of INEC: The unquestionable character of the leadership of INEC, most especially the Chairman, was a major factor that responsible for the success of 2011 and 2015 election administrations. The chairman of INEC (Professor Attairu Jega)'s stewardship and integrity that, less than a decade after the "charade" of 2007 elections was able to hold an election with results that every one accepted, including the incumbent. The way and manner by which the INEC conducted himself shown that the Commission demonstrated a high level of impartiality by ensuring that all political parties, candidates, civil societies,   electorates and other stakeholders in the administration of election were considerably treated equally and fairly.

　　　　Therefore, INEC managed the situation while letting popular choice triumph of over parochial interest. The INEC and its chair appeared heroic in the conduct of the 2011 and 2015 elections. The proven character and integrity of the leadership of INEC was a major factor that facilitated the successful conduct of the 2011 and 2015 elections, which made the elections relatively free, fair and credible. This position is supported by Jamie (2017, p.2), who asserts that:

> Domestic observers described Nigeria's 2003 and 2007 general election as "a charade" such was the prevalence of malfeasance and rigging. The economist neatly summarized the country's difficult transition to multi-party democracy in the headline, "Big men, big fraud and big trouble" this triad has not disappeared from the Nigerian political scene, but the 2015 polls produced the country first peaceful democratic handover of power between rival parties. The INEC, its credibility bolstered under the leadership of Professor Attahiru Jega, played a crucial role in ensuring that the elections offered the possibility of change, rather than merely validating the status-quo.

 Legal Framework: It is evident from the study that legal framework that regulated the conduct of 2011 and 2015 elections were adequate and relatively facilitated the success recorded in these elections. The 1999 Nigerian Constitution (as amended) and Electoral Act 2010, using the empirical reality

of what transpired between the periods before, during, and after the elections of 2011 and 2015 shown that INEC is far more autonomous and reliable institution than all other electoral institutions that conducted elections from 1999 to 2007. The administrative independence of INEC from executive is conformed to Section 160(1) of Nigerian Constitution, which states that: "in the case of independent National Electoral Commission, its powers to make its own rules or otherwise regulate its own procedure shall not be subject to the approval or control of the President".

The only factor responsible for this autonomy could be traced to some changes in the legal status. IRI (2011, p.8) states that Electoral Act 2010 made INEC a first-line budget item, guaranteeing that necessary funding would be made available in the Federal budget. This change drastically reduced INEC's financial dependency on the executive branch and, as a result, increased the institution's overall independence.

Interestingly, the legal frameworks that regulated the 2011 and 2015 elections provides deadlines for the determination of election petitions, which is put at 180 days and 60 days for appeal from the date of filing the petitions. This provision allows quick determination of election petitions and did not allow wrong persons unnecessarily be in office before the determination of election petitions. This development was confirmed by a Lawyer, that:

> All election petitions were heard and determined within the stipulated period immediately after the 2015 elections without much pronounced discrepancies. Furthermore, the legal framework of 2011 and 2015 elections also cover the pre-elections period. This is an indication that all electoral offences committed in pre and post election periods must be heard and determined by Election Tribunal and relevant Courts assigned to do so.

Institutional Reform (INEC):   The establishment of Electoral Reform Committee (ERC) chaired by Justice Uwais marked the start of a period of institutional reform. According to Jegal (2017, p.6), 80 percent of the proposal in the report were incorporated into the 2010 Electoral Act. As part of the reform measures, INEC staff strength which was a little over 9, 000 in 2007 was increased to about 13, 000 in 2011 and subsequently 16,000. Incentive mechanisms were also designed for the Commission's staff to go alongside

punishments for transgressions. All staff had life insurance and 13 months salaries were paid. Transparent disciplinary process was created.

At the institutional level, an unbundling of INEC's administrative functions was created. Management consultancy firm was brought in to review internal processes. From 53 Departments as at 2007, the Departments were fused to 19 based on specialization. The roles and responsibilities of each Department were clearly spelt out and shared across the organization to avoid duplication. INEC was fairly independent in its decision making process. Throughout the election, and especially when faced with challenges, the Commission widely consulted with political parties, civil society organizations and other stakeholders in an effort to promote inclusiveness of the decision making process and transparency of the elections (Jega, 2017, p.6).

The work of the RERC was followed by the articulation of INEC's strategic plan (2012–2016) through a process that involved many election stakeholders, including the Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room. The plan's broad objectives included providing electoral operations, systems and infrastructure to support the conduct of free, fair and credible elections; improving voter education, training and research; registering political parties and monitoring their operations; interacting nationally and internationally with relevant stakeholders; and reorganizing and repositioning INEC (situation Room, 2015, p. 25).

Based on its strategic plan, INEC implemented a comprehensive restructuring of its bureaucracy by reorganizing its departments from 26 to 9, recruited 1,500 new staff in 2012, expanded its existing personnel training programme, and updated its rewards and sanctions regimes to optimize the efficiency of its staff. It also developed a communications policy to ensure that communication was well co-ordinate, effectively managed, and responsive to the diverse information needs of the public. The major component of the policy was the establishment of the INEC Citizens Contact Centre (ICCC) responsible for direct, real-time contact with citizens on issues regarding the commission's work (Situation Room, 2015, p.26). The ICCC is a modified Situation Room designed to work as a channel of continuous communication with the electorate and other stakeholders.

Creation of Voting Points: In 2010, when Jega was appointed the chairman of the commission, the commission embarked on verification exercise of 120,000 Polling Units and the report confirmed that there were 119,973

verified Polling Units and 8,809 Registration Areas nationwide, a slight reduction in the number earlier recorded (INEC, 2011, p.7). Prior to the commencement of the voters registration exercise,Jega (2017, p. 4) observes that, as at 2015, the Commission was able to establish 158,000 Voting Points. As observes by an INEC staff:

> Some poling units were divided into two or even three, based on surnames, to make the whole operation more feasible. During voter registration in 2010, The Voting Points created enormously allowed millions of people accessible to the registration centers and have given them opportunity to be registered without stress. Furthermore, the voting points created alongside with the Polling Units greatly reduced crowd of voters in some of the polling stations where they registered more than 500, reduced stress and allowed a number of voters to exercise their civic rights conveniently. Thus, the creation of voting points has greatly facilitated the success recorded in election administration of 2011 and 215 elections.

Customizations of some Balloting Instruments: As remarked by a politician, when responding to an interview question on the reasons why the administration of the 2011 and 2015 elections were successful, he asserts that:

> One of the reasons that made the administration of the two elections successful is that the ballot papers were customized. In the 2011 and 2015 elections, ballot papers for each of the elections were printed in different colours. The ballot papers were further customized and coded for the respective polling units, wards, Local Governments and states such that it could not be used elsewhere other than where it is designed for. Similarly, the result forms were customized for each polling unit, including voting points where applicable. The ballot boxes were also colour-differentiated and coded. These innovations substantially minimized incident of ballot box snatching and stuffing.

According to Adekola (2018, p.167), in 2011 and 2015 elections, ballot papers were customized; logo of the Parties and candidates' pictures appeared on the ballots; candidates' pictures were not omitted on the ballots; parties' logo did

not appear where the parties did not have candidates and ballots for each election were different.

Innovation Introduced to the Electoral Process: Several innovations introduced by INEC to the electoral process in the conduct of 2011 and 2015 elections like Permanent Voter Card (PVC), Smart Card Reader (SCR), Re-Modified Open Secret Ballot System (RMOSBS) greatly enhanced the success and the credibility of these elections.   In 2015 elections, the used of Smart Card Reader to authenticate the ownership and the authenticity of the Permanent Voter Card (PVC)was a deterrent against manipulations. Lastly, the Re-Modified Open Secret Ballot System (RMOSBS) was adopted from an approach employed by the electoral commission in 1993 under the stewardship of Professor Humphrey Nwosu. On Election Day in 2011 and 2015, there were two phases involved in voting. Accreditation of voters on the register took place between 8.00am and 12pm. By12. 00pm, accredited voters formed queue to cast their ballots and by 12.30pm voting commenced. When everyone in the queue had voted, the polls closed.

According to Jega (2017, p. 8), what this system achieved was that by 12.30pm anybody accredited to vote would be in his/her polling unit. People were denied the opportunity to vote in one place and then move elsewhere to do so again. It also acted as a deterrent against ballot box stuffing. Politicians and thugs could no longer use periods of lull to stuff or snatch ballot boxes. If they wanted to do anything, it would have to be brazen and obvious, in full view of a queue of voters. This enhanced transparency at polling unit level. Therefore, these innovations immensely enhanced the success and the credibility of the elections.

Appointment of Ad hoc Staff: Decision of INEC to change the source and category of ad hoc staff used for the voters' registration and voting period from civil servants/ teachers to NYSC, students of tertiary institutions and University Lecturers was a welcome development and a factor that enhanced the success of the 2011 and 2015 elections. According to an INEC staff:

> For the 2011 and 2015 elections, the ad hoc staffs used for voter registration exercise and Elections Day were NYSC and students of tertiary institutions and University lecturers. This method totally removed the influence of politicians on the ad hoc staff for voter registration and elections; manipulation was

then difficult since these people were not known by the politicians. More so, INEC staffs that engaged for optimization and upgrading of voter registration and continuous registration exercised in preparation for 2015 elections were adequately equipped and well trained. This assessment is noticed on the credibility of the exercises and the elections conducted thereafter.

In support of this view, INEC (2011, p.7) states that the ad hoc recruitment policy of the Commission was reviewed through the formalization of INEC/NYSC partnership. Consequently, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Commission and NYSC Directorate with the latter pledging its Corps members as the main source of the Commission's ad hoc personnel requirements. Students of Federal Tertiary Institutions were to fill whatever gaps in ad hoc personel requirements should the need arise.

Counting and Tabulation of votes were procedurally followed: Another important and crucial reason for the success of recorded in the administration of elections of 2011 and 2015 is the regularity in the counting and tabulation of election procedures. As observes by an INEC staff and, a politician:

> In 2011 and 2015 elections, there were manageable cases of irregularities in counting and tabulation of election results. The processes and procedures for counting and collation of election results were followed in almost all the polling stations across the states and this greatly assisted the success of the administration of the two elections. This was possible because the INEC refined the process for managing results of elections by introducing a hybrid of manual and electronic procedures.

According to INEC(2015, P.32), the electronic procedure was developed in which excel spread sheet application was used to eliminate computation error. In order to prevent tampering with the manual copies of the results in transit, e-copies of the results were transmitted electronically from the State Collation Center to the Presidential Returning Officer using a secured email address. This process protected the integrity of the election results.

However, in many parts of the South-Sourth geo-political zone, especially Rivers state, there were reported cases of irregularities in the

counting and tabulation of election results. This development was confirmed by the judgments of the Electoral Tribunal upturned some of the national and state assembly election results in the affected areas and rerun later took place. This development could not dent the performance of election management body and its performance and even the credibility of the results across the nation.

Challenges Confronting the Election Administration of 2015 Elections
Legal Framework: When answering question on the challenges confronting the election administration of 2015 elections, a lawyer remarks that:

> Despite the success recorded in the administration of 2015 elections, the election was still challenged. On these challenges is inability of INEC and other stakeholders to address some of the identified shortcomings. Despite legal reform initiatives since the 2011 elections, the legal framework has not changed except for the passing of the Freedom Information Act in May 2011. Towards 2015 elections therefore, a number of fundamental shortcomings are still not addressed, with the legislative framework not fully in line with universal and regional standards for elections committed to by Nigeria. These include, inter alia, the lack of provision for independent candidacy, insufficient campaign finance regulations, an absence of provisions empowering INEC to sanction campaign violations, voters and civil society organizations unable to file application petitions against the results and weak transparency requirements for the publication of election results. These inadequacies and others seriously challenged the administration of 2015 elections.

Logistic Challenge: Logistic problem has always been the major problem encountered in election administration in Nigeria over the years. Delay in opening of polling and late arrival of materials. The findings of this study show that in the 2015 elections, this same problem was also identified in some parts of the country. An INEC officer and a University lecturer confirm this when they state that:

> The 2015 elections also greeted with delay in the opening of polling stations and materials arrived some

of the polling units late. The ad hoc INEC officers could not get to their polling units on time. This development was attributed to the Disappointment of commercial vehicles employed to transport those people and election materials to their respective stations.

This development is also reported in the IRI report (2015, p.8) that every one of IRI's election observation teams in each of eight states and the FCT witnessed difficulties with the accreditation process. A nearly ubiquitous occurrence was the late arrival of INEC officials, responsible for bringing all election materials and SCRs, at the polling stations. The tardiness of officials delayed accreditation in 60 percent of polling units that IRI observed. The worst delays were observed in Cross River, Kano and Rivers, where accreditation (scheduled to have begun at 8:00 a.m.) in some instances did not begin until 3:00 p.m. Furthermore, in some polling units, election materials such as results sheets, indelible ink and ballot papers were missing. However, it must also be noted that in 62 percent of polling units observed, INEC officials were following electoral procedures once the polling units were open. Of all the polling units visited during the accreditation period mandated in electoral law, 23 percent were either suspended or not open. Therefore, this challenge marred the smooth operation of the exercise in the affected areas but later overcome.

Malfunctioned Smart Card Readers: There were reported cases of malfunctioned Smart Card Readers (SCRs) in some parts of the country, most especially in the South-East and South-South geo-political zones.   From the information gathered from a Respondent, she is of the view that:

> The malfunction of Card Readers reported in some parts of the country during accreditations in 2015 elections, was an attempt to subvert the system by politicians so as to allow them perform their fraudulent act.

However, IRI report (2015, p. 9) states that the problems relating to the use of the SCRs included failure to verify voters' fingerprints (reported in 34 percent of polling units observed) or failure to implement proper back up procedures if the SCR failed. There were numerous accounts being reported on Election Day of voter identification processes being complicated by the failure of

election officials at polling units to remove the protective sticker that was covering the fingerprint scanner before administering accreditation protocol. Inconsistent use of the incident report from across polling units (and states) also indicated a lack of effective communication or training by INEC regarding contingency procedures if the SCR failed. In this respect, The Situation Room (2015, p. 27) reports that INEC later announced that polling would be repeated within 24 hours in approximately 300 polling units where card readers had malfunctioned. The Commission was concerned by reports of challenges with the accreditation process resulting in the suspension of the use of card readers and reversal to manual accreditation. This failure has undermined the full benefit anticipated by the use of biometric technology and imposed unnecessary hardship on Nigerians.

Electoral Violence: One of the factors that challenged the management of 2015 elections was the issue of violence. Violence occurred in Pre, Election Day and in the Post election periods. As contains in the report of Situation Room (2015, p.94) that the 2015 general elections are imperiled by threats of violence. A report by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) suggests over 58 persons have been killed in pre-election violence as at February 2015.

The Tell Magazine, (May 11, 2015, p.27) reported that a man called Chistopher Eneji who demanded from INEC officials to show the result sheets for the election at Aludo Unit 002 Ward 3, in Ogali, Eleme, Rivers state where they were to votes with his colleagues was shot dead. Another party agent also recounts his experience that he witnessed the killing of a voter by some political thugs, who belong to a different party with them at Unit 007, Ikwerre Local Government on March 28, 2015. According to Situation Room (2015, P. 108), there were reports of election-related murders in Lagos, Delta, Rivers, Ebonyi, Katsina, and Akwa Ibom States. These killings form part of a wider pattern of politically-motivated violence, arson, and hijacking of electoral materials that our observers have noted. The resort to violence may not be unrelated to the higher interests at stake in these State level elections. In Owerri North of Imo State, there are reports of rival party clashes and violence.

INEC (2015, P.78) reports the cases of violence in Rivers, Taraba, Kogi, Pleatue, Gombe, Oyo, Osun, and Ebonyi states. Just as there were a few

cases of Post election protest in Oyo, Osun, Enugu, Abia, Bauchi, Akwa-Ibon, plateau and Rivers states.

Delimitation of Constituencies: One of the fundamental core function of INEC as preserved in the Constitution is delimitation of the country into voting districts. Constituency Delimitation is a critical aspect of electoral cycle in the election administration. Thus, the role of INEC in this regard is preserved in the 1999 Constitution which assigns to the Commission the function of demarcating and reviewing the demarcation of electoral districts across the country for elections into the Senate, the House of Representatives and the State House of Assembly. Demarcation of constituencies is not required for elections into the executive arms of government since for the Presidential election, the whole country is one single constituency, while for the state Governorship election, and the whole state is the one single constituency. The universal standard stipulates that constituency delimitation be reviewed in every 10 years interval. The present one Nigeria is using was delimited in 1996, more than twenty years ago. It is observed by a University Lecturer interviewed that:

> Inability of INEC to delimit the constituencies since the inception of this democratic dispensation has contributed to the challenges confronted the election administration of 2015 elections. There are lots of lopsidedness in the constituencies presently in place and it has long overdue for review. Presently, representation is not proportionate to population.

According to Situation Room Report (2015, p. 16), INEC began the sensitization phase with extensive stakeholder consultations in 2012 on the delimitation of electoral constituency but could not proceed beyond that stage due to its inability to secure a consensus to carry on with the exercise before the 2015 elections. In addition, the Commission could not strictly follow through its own timelines which led to delays that made it impossible to implement the constituency delimitation exercise so close to the 2015 polls. In September 2014, INEC suspended its plan to delimit new constituencies and instead introduced a new scheme to create 30,000 new polling units to relieve the pressure on the existing approximately 120,000 units. As reported in the Tell Magazine September 29, 2014, P.27 that Jega announced the creation of new 30,027 polling units in the country ahead of 2015 elections. This figure

appears to have been carefully arrived at to bring the present 119, 973 polling units in the country to a round figure of 150,000. The criteria for the creation of the new polling units are based on 85 percent proportionality and 15 percent equality. This means that all the states in the country were assessed on equal 15 percent increase-additional 121 polling units to the existing number. The remaining 85 percent is based on the number of voters in each of the states and the Federal Capital Territory. The breakdown shows that out of 30,027 new polling units , North got 21, 615 additional polling units while South got only 8, 412. Based on the six geo-political zone configuration, the equation is as follows: North-West—7,906; Noth-Central—6, 318; North-East—5, 291; South-West—4, 160; South-South—3, 087; South-East—1167 and FCT—1, 200. INEC argument was that the present polling units were created in 1996 and it has long overdue for review.

However, INEC's polling unit reorganization plan was severely criticized based on allegations that the commission had disproportionally distributed the units in a way that favoured Northern constituencies. Because the exercise was introduced so close to the 2015 elections, efforts by INEC to sensitize the public about its plans could not convince many, forcing the commission to drop the plan altogether. The controversies surrounding this called INEC's technical capacity into question.

Campaign Violations: Campaign violation remained unaddressed and a challenge to the election administration of 2015 elections. There was evidence of disparities in the media coverage in the process of campaign in the 2015 elections .Section 100 (1-6) of Electoral Act 2010 states that "employing State apparatus including the media to the advantage or disadvantage of any political party or candidate at any election and unequal allocation of Media time among political parties or candidates" the Act provides a maximum of N500, 000 in the first instance and to a maximum fine of N1, 000, 000 for subsequent conviction. According to a Respondent, there were several cases of disparities in the media coverage during campaign in the 2015 elections but INEC and National Broadcasting Commission were unable to prosecute any. Federal as well as State government controlled media. Therefore, during the campaign, they were demonstrating clear bias in favour of incumbent parties on federal and state levels, instead of serving interest of general public; they rather serve as mouthpiece of government.

According to EU EOM (2015, p.51), it is evident that NBC lack independence from the government that is appointing its board and Director General. The Commission also lacks adequate capacity and methodology to monitor media, and while it facilitates the licensing process, its powers are limited as the authority to grant licenses for broadcasting is vested with President. Furthermore, lack of consistency in the terms and conditions of paid for campaign materials in the media risks inequality of access for contestants' political advertising and limited possibility to scrutinize campaign expenditure. There were disparities in the media coverage among the contestants and the political parties. Responding to the challenges confronted the election administration of 2015 election, a lawyer interviewed states that:

> There is no doubt that campaign violation challenged the administration of 2015 elections. On campaign finance, under the Electoral Act 2010, a ceiling for donations exists only for candidates, but not for political parties. Likewise, a ceiling for candidate election expenditures is foreseen, but not for political parties. Furthermore, the 2010 Electoral act is silent on the starting time for expenses of candidates to be taken into consideration. Reporting requirements for campaign expenditure are in place only for Political Parties. The financial sanctions prescribed in the Electoral Act 2010 for campaign expenditure violations are unreasonably low, thereby negating the effectiveness of the law.

Mode of Appointment of INEC Commissioners: The appointment of the chairman and 12 Federal INEC Commissioners and Resident Electoral Commissioners for the 36 states and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) which is constitutionally empowered by the President of Federal Republic of Nigeria to do subject to confirmation of National Assembly has been a serious challenge to the election administration of 2015 elections. Although, the chairman and other members had displayed very high maturity and transparency in their conduct, there would be some silence areas where they will show sign of sympathy for the course of those who appointed them. These could be seen from the action of INEC on the quick reversal from electronic to manual where the Card Readers was abandoned. This development mostly affected the stronghold of the President Jonathan who appointed them. Secondly, the postponement of elections on security issue, facilitated by the Presidency

through the National Security Adviser was seen by some respondents in this study as tactical way of influencing the decisions of the Commission. This mode of appointment of INEC Commissioners provides avenue for the Presidency to be influencing some of the decisions of the Commission. In support of this view, the EU EOM (2015, p.4) states that given the sufficient requirements for transparency and full public accountability as well as a lack of full institutional independence, the election administration remains vulnerable to partisan operations and /or weak delivery that risks exploitation by parties, the law overly-restricts INEC's power rendering it insufficiently effective in challenging inappropriate actions of political contenders.

Challenges of Prosecuting Electoral Offences: Part of the responsibilities of INEC is the prosecution of electoral offences. INEC is legally responsible for prosecuting those accused of electoral offences, but with a very small litigation team that is already fully preoccupied by election petitions, it is not in position to do so. According to Jega (2017, p.13):

> In 2010, there was no record of anyone in Nigeria having been prosecuted for an electoral offence. When I left office in 2015, more than 200 people had been held to account. But this was just a drop in the ocean. Looking at voters' registration irregularities alone, we have 870, 000 cases from 2011.

Electoral offences are with impunity and INEC does not have capacity to deal with it. Prosecution is very costly and time-consuming. It requires reports about offenders from police and other members of the security services and these reports often failed to materilise, which further hamstring the process.

Recommendations
On Legal Framework: INEC should promptly undertake reform of the electoral framework, taking into consideration the recommendations made by INEC in 2013, the recommendations made by the Electoral Reform Commission Report 2008, which have not yet been adopted, and the views of the Nigerian public. In particular, the study supported the recommendations of the IRI report (2015, P. 17), which states that: The legal framework should provide for the establishment of an Electoral Offences Commission with special prosecutorial powers to undertake timely prosecution of electoral offenders. The Constitution should be amended to bring RECs under the

control and direction of INEC Headquarters through the appointments of State Directors of elections to replace RECs. The executive and legislative arms of government should resolve the disagreement over proposed amendments to the Electoral Act 2010 and ensure that proposals seeking to improve the electoral process get the attention they deserve. There should be proposed amendments to the Constitution, which should include issues critical to the transparency, inclusiveness and accountability of the electoral process, such as allowing independent candidates to run for office, in conformity with international principles for democratic elections. The amendment should increase the amount of time in between the first and second rounds in the event of a presidential run-off election in order to provide INEC sufficient time to prepare.

Election Administration

Nigeria should establish a more inclusive parliamentary mechanism for cross-party involvement in the selection and approval of the INEC Chairperson and National Commissioners. There should be an institutional mechanisms and legal provisions that will defend and protect the Commission's legal autonomy. INEC Chairman and the 12 Commissioners should be appointed upon the recommendation of an independent panel; and the Commission should have the power to hire and fire the officials that work for it, including RECs because RECs appointed by the President are likely to have greater loyalty to the executive than to the Commission. Organisational and operational planning within INEC should be considerably strengthened, including training delivery, as well as its internal communication for two-way information flow between INEC headquarters, state and LGA offices.

Some of the current responsibilities of INEC need to be reassigned to other agencies and bodies as Uwais report recommended. The Uwais report proposed the creation of an Electoral Offices Commission which will take up the prosecution of all electoral offenders; Political Party Commission and Delimitation of Constituency Commission. These commissions, if created will reduce the heavy responsibilities presently on INEC.

Delimitation of Constituency

The legal framework for boundary delimitation should be developed to include provision for consultation and a complaints and appeals mechanism.

Also to include increased requirements for multi-party involvement and transparency in the parliamentary approval process should be maintained in order to avoid perceived or actual abuse by a ruling party. Ideally, delimitation is undertaken immediately after the publication of the latest country census results. Since Nigeria could not be able to conduct census in ten year interval as prescribed by the international standard, 2006 census should be used to carry out this assignment. All relevant stakeholders like political parties, Population Commission, judiciary, civil societies, University scholars, national and state legislature should be involved in the exercise. It would be better if special Commission is established for this purpose

Campaign Finance

The Electoral Act should make provision to regulate for INEC to establish reasonable and proportionate limits for donations to and expenditures of political parties and candidates, and for these to be established well in advance of the commencement of the election campaign with calculations for candidates starting from the time of purchase of expression of interest forms by aspirants during primaries. The Electoral Act should make provision for political parties and candidates to open dedicated bank accounts for campaign financing and to submit financial reports. Also to provide for effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions for violation of campaign finance provisions.

Media Coverage

Federal government-controlled broadcasters should be transformed into genuine public service broadcasters enjoying editorial and financial independence from government. Similarly, state government-controlled broadcast and print media should be provided with greater independence from governments. This will remove the disparities that usually exist in the media coverage between the incumbent parties and candidates and the opposition parties and candidates.

The independence of the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) should be strengthened including through legislative requirements for an open and transparent mechanism for appointment of NBC's board and director, free from control by any particular political party, involving the participation of

civil society and organizations of media professionals. This will allow the NBC perform its statutory role of regulating the media house and sanction erring media accordingly. Enabling framework should be established to ensure that the mass media provides equitable access to candidates and political parties for electioneering campaigns.

Electoral Violence

For a fair and credible election to take place in Nigeria, the Nigerian security agencies must be prepared because, the politicians in Nigeria over the years have become more desperate and daring in taking and abuse of power; more reckless and greedy in their use and abuse of power; and intolerant of opposition, criticism and efforts at replacing them. Therefore, security agents should be strengthened for providing adequate and appropriate security before, during and post election periods. Thuggry should be discouraged through adequate political education and empowerment of the youths. Sponsor of violence should be bond from participating in politics and appropriate mechanisms should be provided on the process of arresting and trial of thugs who are involved in violence during election process and stiff punishment should be provided for offenders.

Curbing Electoral Malpractices

The role of the civil society is critical in curbing electoral malpractices. It is therefore recommended that the civil society should also get involved in Electoral Reform. Community should form community monitoring teams to protect mandates. They should not wait for the police and other law enforcement agents; they should move around, observe what is going on and give the relevant authorities a call when necessary. Furthermore, the use of technology in monitoring and recording all activities during elections should be developed. Social media should also be used by recording all transactions that take place during elections; send it immediately to people and relevant bodies. Stringent punishment should be provided for anybody caught and indicted for electoral malpractices.

Strengthen Continuous Voter Registration

Voter registration is a crucial aspect of the electoral process. Rigging actually commences from this point. INEC should strengthen continuous voter registration exercise by making it more accessible to the electorates. It is then

suggested that the registration center for continuous voter registration be shifted from Local Government headquarters to electoral wards. INEC should also develop mechanisms to disallow under age people from getting registered. Furthermore, the Commission should make sure that all polling stations have a manageable number of registered voters. INEC should develop an on-line voter registration. This will take care of the educated elites; the face to face method should be maintained for those who are illiterates.

Dysfunctional Card Reader

The problem of malfunctioning of card reader in some parts of the country in the 2015 elections should be carefully addressed. The ad hoc staff handling these machines should be well trained. The issue of power needs to be addressed through the provision of adequate power backup and extra batteries for the card reader machines so as to address the problem of power to charge the batteries and other problems like the inability of the machines to see the fingerprint of voters. INEC subsidiary institute, the Electoral Institute, should institutionalize educational platforms for poll workers in order to create a pool of trainers at the local government level in order to train the NYSC in election processes.

Logistics

Logistics has always been the major problem of elections in Nigeria over the years. To address this problem, it needs the collective efforts of all those that are involved in election management. The Commission should increase its efforts in transporting election materials and poll workers including security agents to the polling units on time. It is recommended that INEC should make sure that election materials arrive the states at least two weeks to the elections and to the Local Government headquarters, three days to the elections. The Commission should make adequate arrangement with other private transport companies together with National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) that breach the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the 2015 elections.

Conclusion

The study has examined the perception of credible results on the election administration of 2011 and 2015 in Nigeria. The study further

identified some of the reasons why the election administration of 2011 and 2015 elections were successful. Parts of the factors are: leadership of INEC, adequate legal framework; institutional reform, innovations introduced to the electoral process, creation of voting points, appointment of ad hoc staff etc. finally, the study identifies the challenges confronted the election administration of the 2015 elections, which include: logistic, dysfunctional Card Readers, electoral violence, delimitation of electoral constituencies, campaign violation etc. It then concludes that despite the huge success recorded in the election administration of the 2015 elections, the conduct of the elections is not without flaws or hitches. Therefore, in the final chapter, the study provides solutions to those challenges for INEC and other stakeholders on election administration to improve on the subsequent elections in Nigeria.

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APPENDIX

Date: 20/01/2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

Research Project on Assessment of the performance of Election Administration in Nigeria: 2011 and 2015 Elections Experience

I am a lecturer in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin. I am conducting a personal research on the above titled research project for which I need your personal input. I assure you in advance that whatever answer(s) you provide me on this occasion would be used ananimously in any research only

Thanks in advance for your cooperation

Research Project on Assessment of the performance of Election Administration in Nigeria: 2011 and 2015 Elections Experience

1.   Sex---

2. Age--

3. Marital Status--

4. Place of Birth---

5. Occupation--

6. Resident Address--

7. Institutional Affiliation-----------------------------------

8. Level of Educational attainment:

    a. None

    b. Primary

    c.   Secondary

    d. Teachers College

    f.   College of Education

    g.   Polytechnic

    h.   University

9. Did you participate in the 2011 and 2015 elections?

10.   Do you think the performances of election administration of the 2011 and 2015 elections are credible?

11. Please give reasons that responsible for the credible performance of the election administrations of 211 and 2015 elections

12   What are the challenges confronted the election administration of 2015 elections?

Thank you.

NIGERIA'S ELECTION TRIBUNAL AND THE SUSTENANCE OF DEMOCRACY

Ndubuisi, Uchechukwu
Social Science Unit, School of General Studies
Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State, Nigeria.

Emma-Onyero, Chioma Chiti
Political Science Department
Abia State University, Uturu, Abia State, Nigeria

Abstract
This study examined the role of election tribunals in the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria. The Lockean theory on legitimacy was adopted as the theoretical guide for the paper. The paper relied on secondary sources of data. It observed that politics is the struggle for control of scarce resources among competing individuals and groups in the society. Elections have remained a legitimate process to ensure the emergence of individuals and group who control these scarce resources within a given period. Every election remains the search for power and legitimacy which are the principles of democracy. It further observed that in Nigeria, elections have remained controversial matters while the Tribunals are the first point of call in post-election matters. The findings revealed that Nigeria's democracy has been characterised by continuous disagreement after elections and the role of election tribunals towards stabilising the polity and sustaining Nigeria's democracy cannot be neglected. Thus, there has been an implied distrust in Nigeria's electoral system which has always raised questions on the credibility of the electoral system. This suggested that until the contending parties go through the courts, no clear winner(s) emerged. It recommended that the electoral management bodies should be able to build confidence among the contestants, political parties and the electorates and a rigorous process of constituting the election tribunals.

Introduction

Politics is the struggle for control over scarce resources among competing individuals and groups in a polity or society. Since politics have always been described as the authoritative allocation of values, the challenge has always been the process that would eventually allocate the authority to control or allocate such scarce resources; ensure equal access to power and perhaps the credibility of the process. Credible elections become an answer to the concern about who controls and allocates the States scarce resources and the political party, electorate and then the courts are major actors that cannot be neglected during the process and after the process. The successful conduct of an election serves as an avenue for measuring the nature, character and political strength or weakness of a political system/polity. According to Mbaegbu (2015), elections remain a normal democratic and civic responsibility that should not lead to unnecessary anxiety, loss of lives and wanton destruction of properties. In Nigeria, the electoral process is often characterized by trepidation, violence and bloodbath, thus raising a question on the credibility of the process (Ezeani & Agudiegwu, 2015). According to Nnoli (2003), elections involve competition among individuals and groups, it requires an umpire or referee that ensures that the rules and regulations of the competition are complied with irrespective of who is involved in the contest with the ultimate goal of objectively realising free, fair and credible elections. Elections in Nigeria since the First Republic till the present democratic dispensation have been acrimonious. It has been characterised with ethnic colourations, hate speech and trivial arguments on certificate, age, and other petty issues by the political parties; as pre-election and post election periods have always generated so much concern to the citizenry and thus over heating the polity. Since the return to democratic governance in 1999, Nigeria has witnessed six General Elections, four of which have generally been described as a charade even when there are still issues around the remaining manageable two. Odigbo (2015) argued that the number of elections in Nigeria may not be a parameter for democratic consolidation but rather the extent of non-manipulated electoral process which has significance to both the voters and the voted.

Considering the nature of Nigerian elections and politics, the role of courts and election tribunals towards restoring confidence on the electoral process and sustaining democracy cannot be overlooked. Attempting a perusal on the trend of increasing election petitions, we can say that what Nigeria practice is 'judiocracy' which is a deviation from democracy, as emphasis

have shifted from the electoral process proper to the pronouncements of the election tribunals and Courts. This highlights the role of the courts in Nigeria's election process as have been provided by our laws and statutes. There is a check and balance in place within the 1999 Constitution and Electoral Act making provisions for judicial review of the conduct of elections, if any party involved feels aggrieved and decides to seek redress. Election petitions complain about election or conducts of elections. Tensions begin immediately a party wins an election, the losing party rushes to the election tribunal to contend the said victory; whether there is merit or justification in such contention or not is really another ball game here as the driving force remain the control of power. Huge resources are committed to fighting such legal tussle in a bid to reclaim "stolen mandate" (Punch Newspaper, April, 12, 2019). The Tribunals are the first port of call in election matters, except in pre-election matters that begin with the State High Court and the Federal High Court as enacted under Electoral Act, 2010 and sections 272(3) and 251(4) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended). With the continuous increase of election cases, it is obvious that the electoral adjudication process in Nigeria is gradually becoming another process following elections and part of election process as each contestant and political party while preparing for the election proper also make provisions for election tribunal processes and further as the case may be. No wonder Otoforani comments thus:

> Every past Nigerian election has witnessed a spurt of litigations, followed by series of judicial upturns of election. This endemic state of affairs has spanned what may appropriately be described as an unqualified Nigerian electoral litigation industry with the judiciary dictating the winners and losers of political contests and filling state executive mansions with their favourite candidates by judicial facts that are not appealable and questioned by any one. (Otorofani, 2010)

Theoretical Analysis

Politics is the struggle for control over scarce resources among competing individuals and groups in a polity or society. Since this is so there must be a justification of power controlled and a level of acceptability. The justification and acceptability come in the form of periodic elections as stipulated in Laws and Statutes. Universally election is regarded as the heart of every representative democracy. Credible election does not only confer

legitimacy on political leadership but is also very important to the sustenance of democracy (Chiamogu & Chiamogu, 2017). The implied distrust on Nigeria's electoral system and institution has always raised questions on the credibility of the electoral system; until you go through the courts you don't know who has won and who has not.   For the Purpose of this study we adopted the Lockean theory on legitimacy as the theoretical guide for the paper.

Legitimacy according to Locke is derived from popular explicit and implicit consent of the governed (Farr, 2008). It is a conscious effort made by the governed to demonstrate their acceptance and submission to a political leadership. Since democracy have been described across decades as a system of rule by the people thus bringing to the centre the instrumentality and relevance of the people towards sustaining democracy, legitimacy becomes really necessary to reflect the peoples consent and at the same time justify each political leadership. Thus one vital element of every democracy is election which serves as an instrument of legitimization and accountability for the state and those who manage the reins of power. Considering the Lockean view on legitimacy, it is necessary to comment that the electoral process remain a vital component of every democracy. Nwabueze in Amaramiro and Okpara (2018) states thus:

> The electoral process is a more comprehensive form of a democratic system that entails the selection or election of people into positions of leaderships. The electoral process comprises all the constitutional procedures, arrangements and actions involved in the conduct of elections. It includes the suffrage, the registration, the right to contest elections, electoral competition between rival political parties, the body charged with conduct and supervision of election, the method of selection of candidates, methods of voting, the actual conduct of election, the determination of results, trials and determination of election, disputes, electoral malpractices and their consequences.

Locke used the claim that men are naturally free and equal as part of the justification for understanding legitimate political government as the result of a social contract where people in the state of nature conditionally transfer some of their rights to the government in order to better ensure the stable,

comfortable enjoyment of their lives, liberty, and property. Since governments exist by the consent of the people in order to protect the rights of the people and promote the public good, governments that fail to do so can be resisted and replaced with new governments.

Within this context, the electoral process in Nigeria remains a medium to garner the needed acceptance and legitimacy for political leadership. Through periodic elections, the Nigerian people enter into a social contract thereby conditionally transferring some of their rights to the government (political leadership) in order to ensure the stable, comfortable enjoyment of their lives, liberty, and property. Thus political leadership through legitimacy exist to protect the rights of the people and promote public good. Therefore in cases of defeat in elections, the affected parties resort to electoral adjudication processes in search of legitimate power (stolen mandate) (Amaramiro & Okpara, 2018). Both the winner and the loser are seriously involved in these electoral adjudication processes trying to justify their claims, as who the courts will pronounce winner eventually retains legitimacy to control power and allocate scarce state resources. The processes and procedures as contained in the Nigerian 1999 Constitution (as amended) and the Nigerian Electoral Act, 2010 are processes, steps and stages that must be complied with before the process of voting, collation and announcement of results is completed. Therefore, if the constitutional, legal or electoral framework of an electoral process is deemed faulty, controversial or manipulated, it may really become difficult for the electorate to accept such outcome.

Conceptual Analysis
Election

Election within the Nigerian context has become a reoccurring term, especially since Nigeria's transition from military to democratic rule in 1999. Though the concept has become complex considering its procedures and processes, one general idea has remained- the method of recruiting political leadership. Notwithstanding the controversy surrounding definitions of election, there are still notable definitions thereof. Election can be described as the formal process by which the electorate selects officials. It is a means by which a wider body of persons (population) chooses a smaller group of representatives to undertake specified task; this can be obtainable in a wide variety of organisation (Udu, Nkwede & Ezekwe, 2015).

According to Ejumudo (2013), elections are the technical means or instrument of ensuring popular participation in governance by citizens who choose their representatives in conformity with the dictates of modern democracies and hallmark of legitimacy. Elections symbolises the context of popular sovereignty and the expression of social pact between the state and the people, a channel for political accountability and responsibility between the governors and the governed (Adejumobi, 1998). Election is regarded as the heart of representative democracy and as such a credible election not only confers legitimacy on political leadership but also very crucial to the sustenance of democratic order (Chiamogu & Chiamogu, 2017). Elections solely do not constitute a complete electoral process, but is part of the electoral process which captures processes, steps and stages that must be complied with before the process of voting, collation and announcement of results is completed. Election remain a process which embraces the entire gamut of activities ranging from accreditation, voting, collation to recording on all relevant INEC forms and subsequently declaration of results (Ikoroha, 2017). For instance where there is absence of accreditation, the election will be challenged (see Fayemi v. Oni (2010) 17 NWLR (pt. 1222) 326 @ 393 paras.H.)

Election Tribunal

It is an undeniable fact that the tribunal and courts have played an active role in deepening, consolidating and sustaining Nigeria's democracy since the democratic transition in Nigeria. Electoral adjudication explains the role of the tribunals and courts in election matters, towards determining who legitimately controls power through periodic elections (Amaramiro & Okpara, 2018). According to Asein (2005), tribunals are an integral part of the entire adjudicatory system, created by statute to complement the traditional court system by exercising judicial or quasi judicial functions. Thus the tribunals have jurisdiction to entertain election matters and not pre-election matters.

The Tribunals are the first place of call in election matters, except in pre-election matters that begin with the State High Court and the Federal High Court as enacted under Electoral Act, 2010 and sections 272(3) and 251(4) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended). Section 285(1a) of 1999 Constitution makes provisions for the establishment of Election Tribunal, which shall, to the exclusion of any other court, have jurisdiction to hear and determine petitions as to whether any person has been validly elected as a member of the

National Assembly and 285(1d) a question or petition brought before the election tribunal has been properly or improperly brought. Section 285(2) 1999 constitution provides for Governors and Legislative Houses Election Tribunal which shall, to the exclusion of any court or tribunal, have original jurisdiction to hear and determine petitions as to whether any person has been validly elected to the office of Governor or Deputy Governor or as a member of any State Legislative House. The procedure for hearing in an election takes the same form with hearing in civil cases, as the petitioner must prove his case to the satisfaction of the court why he is entitled to the relief sought. Where an allegation of a crime is made in a petition then such allegation must be proved beyond reasonable doubt (Ojukwu & Ojukwu, 2009).

Democracy

The term democracy like most concepts in social sciences lacks a precise single definition rather it is a matter of general intellectual supposition. There are various meanings, opinions, perceptions and definitions of the subject by scholars and philosophers. Democracy as a system of government has a very long and far history, though what is practised in most countries today is a variant of the original idea of democracy as was first practised in Athens of the ancient Greece state, there is still the attribute of people's sovereignty (Ejiofor & Udeogu, 2017). Any meaningful attempt at understanding democracy must proceed from the ancient definition of democracy as peoples' rule. The Greek words demos and kratia mean people and rule or authority respectively can be argued to be the foundation of democratic practise. Thus, democracy refers to 'rule by the people'. This began in the first half of the 5th century B.C. among the Greeks thus beginning a transformation from rule by the few to rule by the many. In his Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln gave what has since become the most famous definition of democracy. Lincoln asserted that 'all men are created equal' and defined democracy as 'government of the people, by the people, for the people'. Thus, a democratic state is often said to be one wherein the citizens have equal access to justice, job, power, privilege, etc.

According to Oladipo (2016), democracy is government of the people, by the people, for the people, yet this mode of governance is hardly the same in any two countries. History of the country in question, the nature of the people, which differ from one place to another, and which is shaped by a people's belief system and orientation are the determining factor of democracy

across countries. Political ideologies, political culture as well as political actors also shape the nature of democracy in a polity. Huntington (1996) argued that a political system is democratic when it's most powerful collective decision makers are chosen through fair, honest and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote. Democracy is a system in which large members of the community participate or may participate directly or indirectly in making decisions which affect them. This means that democracy could be seen as any system of government that is rooted in the notion that ultimate authority in the governance of the people rightly belongs to the people; that everyone is entitled to an equitable participation and share in the equal rights; and where equitable social and economic justice are the inalienable rights of individual citizens in the society. Chafe (1994) contributing to the subject matter opined that democracy explains the involvement of the people in the running of the political, socio-economic and cultural affairs of their polity. Schumpeter cited in Ukase (2014) sees democracy as a method by which decision-making is transferred to individuals who have gained power in a competitive struggle for the votes of citizens. It is a situation in which people have the opportunity of accepting or rejecting the men who are to rule them.

Nigeria's Election Tribunals and Sustenance of Democracy

Election is the process of choosing a person or a group of people for a political position through the instrumentality of voting. It is an indispensable attribute of democracy in a functional society. Credible election remains a major attribute of democracy and has remained the plight of countries in Africa like Nigeria as the will of the electorate becomes really necessary to legitimise political leadership. Politics has been described as the struggle for control of scarce resources among competing individuals and groups in the society and the electoral process is an integral part of such struggle. Elections can be described as an institutional and legitimate process through which political leadership is recruited to control states scarce resources. Free and fair elections have been described as the cornerstone of every democracy and a medium for exercising the principles of sovereignty of the people. Through such elections, citizens participate in the governance of their country, by choosing those who govern in the quest for development. Considering this, questions have been raised in various forums as to what extent has Nigeria conducted elections devoid of consternations, fraud and agitation since

independence? To what extent has the country's electoral system permitted the citizens to participate and freely choose those to represent them at various levels; ward, local, state and national? To what extent has this process ushered in the desired socioeconomic and political development to the Nigerian state? (Nwagboso, 2011).

What substantiates every political leadership remains legitimacy reflecting the general will of the people. In Nigeria elections has remained a controversial matter, and the Tribunals are the first place of call in post election matters where electoral victory is contested. It is really arguable that since Nigeria's independence   and most especially since the transition to democracy in 1999, the subsequent elections till date has been characterized with continuous disagreement over political victory after elections; and the role of election tribunals towards stabilizing the polity and thus sustaining Nigeria's democracy cannot be neglected. The implied distrust on Nigeria's electoral system and institution has always raised questions on the credibility of the electoral system. Until you go through the courts you don't know who has won and who has not (Odigbo, 2015).

According to Mbaegbu (2015), a periodic election is an attribute of democracy required for the consolidation of democracy and necessarily should not lead to unnecessary anxiety, loss of lives and wanton destruction of properties. In Nigeria, the continuous nature of the electoral process which is often characterized by controversies, violence and sometimes bloodbath, thus raising a question on the credibility of the process have become an anomaly characterising Nigeria's political system (Ezeani & Agudiegwu, 2015). According to Nnoli (2003), elections involve competition among individuals and groups, it requires an umpire or referee that ensures that the rules and regulations of the competition are complied with irrespective of who is involved in the contest with the ultimate goal of objectively realising free, fair and credible elections. Huntington (1996) argued that a political system is democratic when it's most powerful collective decision makers are chosen through fair, honest and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote. Adopting the view of Huntington it can be argued that when a political leadership does not reflect the will of the people, impliedly suggesting an imposition by a few people against the peoples general will there is bound to be a rejection of such leadership and thus questioning its legitimacy.

According to Asein (2005), Election Tribunals are an integral part of the entire adjudicatory system, created by statute to complement the traditional court system by exercising judicial or quasi judicial functions. Thus the Tribunals have jurisdiction to entertain election matters and not pre-election matters. Election Tribunals in Nigeria are the direct creation of Section 285 of the nation's Constitution which provides for the establishment of the National Assembly, Governorship and Legislative Houses Election Tribunal. The Electoral Act made pursuant to the Constitution furnishes details pertaining to the establishment, membership, jurisdiction and proceedings of each Election Tribunal. Election Tribunals have original jurisdiction to hear and determine petitions as to whether a person has been validly elected into non-appointive offices under the government of Nigeria at the Federal and State levels. The offices which elections are subject to the tribunals include Senators, Members of House of Representatives, Governor and Deputy Governor of each of the 36 States of the Federation, and Members of the 36 State Houses of Assembly. Each Election Tribunal is established for the purposes of hearing and determining petitions as to whether any person through an undue election or return has been elected to an office/position and other related issue. The Electoral Act, 2010 also creates an Area Council Election Tribunal for the Federal Capital Territory. The decision of the Area Council Election Tribunals on Area Council Elections is final. The Electoral Act does not create the Election Tribunals to entertain disputes arising from Local Government Council Elections in any of the 36 states in recognition of Nigeria's federal structure. However, there are Local Government Election Tribunals established by the Law of States for this purpose. Procedurally, the Election Tribunals are neither criminal nor civil Courts. Though essentially civil in nature, they are usually described as "sui generis" which means "in a class of its own" According to the report from Appeal Court seven hundred and thirty six (736) petitions as at April 4th, 2019 against the conduct and outcome of the 2019 general elections have so far been received; thus this substantiates the argument that the election tribunal have gradually become part of Nigeria's electoral process as most elections would end at the judgements of such tribunals.

Credible election does not only confer legitimacy on political leadership but is also very important to the sustenance of democracy (Chiamogu & Chiamogu, 2017). The implied distrust on Nigeria's electoral system and institution has always raised questions on the credibility of the

electoral system. The Election Tribunal and the Courts becomes a torch light in the midst of the political darkness to give the people illumination and hope. Nwabueze in Amaramiro and Okpara (2018) explained that the electoral process comprises all the constitutional procedures, arrangements and actions involved in the conduct of elections, thus including suffrage, the registration, the right to contest elections, electoral competition between rival political parties, the body charged with conduct and supervision of election, the method of selection of candidates, methods of voting, the actual conduct of election, the determination of results, trials and determination of election, disputes, electoral malpractices and their consequences. As such considering these stipulated procedures and processes, any violation of any of them would imply a voidable and controversial election.

For an election petition to be worth hearing in an Election Tribunal it is expected to meet with the requirements of the provisions of the Electoral Act. In accordance with paragraph 4(1) First Schedule to the Electoral Act 2010, the election petition shall specify the parties interested in the election petition, the right of the petitioner to present the election petition, state the holding of the election, the scores of the candidates and the person returned as the winner of the election, and also state clearly the facts of the election petition and the grounds on which the petition is based and the relief sought by the petitioner. The quorum for an Election Tribunal constitute the Chairman of the Election Petition Tribunal and one member and anything short of this is null and void and also judgement or report of the Tribunal delivered by a panel whose member was not part of the hearing is also deemed void. An Election Tribunal in an election petition matter must deliver its judgement in writing within one hundred and eighty (180) days from the date the petition was filed and once the election tribunal fails to conclude hearing within this specified time frame as provided by section 285(6) of the 1999 constitution (as amended), the election tribunal no longer has jurisdiction to hear petition (also see ANPP v. Goni & Ors (2012), 7 NWLR (pt.1298) 147 @ page 180.

Emphasising the role of election tribunal in the sustenance of Nigeria's democracy, Bulkachuwa, JCA in Mark v. Abubakar (2009, 2 NWLR, pt. 1124, 79) explained the role of election tribunal as exclusive reviewer of declared election outcomes as he stated the provision of section 69(c) of the Electoral Act 2006, (now section 68(c) of the Electoral Act 2010). Therefore it is a settled practice to execute the judgement of election tribunals as there is a presumption of correctness in favour of such judgement and until the

presumption is proved otherwise and the judgement set aside, it subsists and must be obeyed. Electoral Tribunal is a mechanism fashioned to address the seemingly perceived deformities of the Nigeria's chequered electoral process. It is strategic in the quest to consolidate the country's democracy. With the increasing electoral petitions at the Election Tribunals after each election in Nigeria, the role of Election Tribunals in sustaining and consolidating Nigeria's democracy cannot be argued. The judgements of these Election Tribunals have at various times upheld the general will of the electorate and at some times really questioned the merit of such pronouncements as it lacks justification and may be described to reflect the bias of such pronouncements. The members of such tribunals have at various times been described as corrupt and unfit to correct the perceived anomalies identified with Nigeria's electoral process, thus questioning the criteria for constitution of the members of these Election Tribunals. Hence, if care is not taken this may truncate Nigeria's democracy instead of strengthening it. While some Nigerians have argued that the tribunals have performed creditably, others have frowned at their activities describing their judgements as reflecting personal interest, intra-personal war and personality clashes among members of the judiciary.

In most cases such constituted Election Tribunals have rashly given judgements which were later reversed by the Appeal Court. In the case of petition brought before the Election Tribunal about the 2007 Abia State Governorship Election, the Election Tribunal nullified the Governorship Election on the grounds that the Governor and his deputy were not qualified to stand for election, and that they did not resign their previous political appointments thirty days before election as stipulated by the Electoral Act, 2006. The Governor challenged the verdict at the Appeal Court sitting in Port Harcourt, River State. The Appellate Court quashed the decisions of Election Tribunal on February 11, 2009. The Chairman of the Appeal Court, relying on provisions of the constitution, held that Theodore Orji was not a public servant at the time he contested for the governorship election (Vanguard, February 13, 2009). Though this questions the position of the Election Tribunal in such petitions brought before it, at various times the stand of the Appellate Court quashing the judgements of the Tribunal are questioned by the electorate as it is argued that judicial technicalities have promoted the setting aside of the peoples will. It has also been argued that if care is not taken that the decision of these judges is capable of setting wrong judicial precedence in the country's journey toward credible election.

In Akeredolu v. Abraham & Ors (2018) LPELR- 44067 (SC), the Supreme Court speaking on the travesty of Justice stated thus:

> Technicality in the administration of justice shuts out justice. A man denied justice on any ground, much less a technical ground, grudges the administration of justice. It is therefore better to have a case heard and determined on its merits than to leave the court with a shield of victory obtained on mere technicalities.

It is argued that in most cases when the courts invoke the substantial judicial principle, they have at the back of their minds to create an opportunity which serves as an advantage to the adverse party who relies on this to drum down an otherwise meritorious case. In other words, they tenaciously hold unto the rules of the court with little or no regard to the justice of the matter. Much emphasis is given on the strict adherence to the rules, which must be followed to the last sentences, the last words and even the last letters without little or no regard to the injustice that will be caused to the opponent.

Reiterating the role of Nigeria's Election Tribunal in promoting confidence on the judiciary and sustenance of democracy, the President of the Court of Appeal, Justice Zainab Bulkachuwa representing the Acting Chief Justice of Nigeria, at the "2019 Workshop on Election Petitions for Justices and Judges", held in Abuja commented thus:

> Judges should handle election petitions without any external pressure or influence either by political parties, stake holders or economic interest groups...the judiciary must continue to take steps to ensure that it is not seen as being partisan but must always demonstrate manifest integrity in its adjudicatory process...consequently Judicial Officers serving on Election Petition Tribunal, must note that judgements must not be ambiguous and should be devoid of any form of external influence... (Punch Newspaper January, 29, 2019).

As such the Election Tribunal has the capacity to truncate or sustain Nigeria's democracy by restoring confidence on the electoral process, correcting the wrongs identifiable with the electoral process where such exist and commending the electoral process where it's necessary, as this would on the

long run encourage or whittle down citizen's participation in the democratic and electoral process of the country.

Conclusion

Each election in Nigeria come with its controversies and the challenge to restore confidence in Nigeria's electoral process has become really necessary to discourage political apathy. Credible election does not only ensure legitimate leadership but highlights the actual practice of democracy. The judiciary has often been described as the hope of the people, promoter of justice and restorer of justice. The role of the Election Tribunal towards sustaining Nigeria's democracy cannot be overlooked, as each election period highlights this. Whereas its has been argued that Nigeria's elections is gradually shifting to what the courts say and not actually what the people want, the interventions of the judiciary through the Election Tribunal in certain electoral controversies speak differently of this. The question of the merit of judgments churned out by Nigeria's Election Tribunal, whether it reflects the general will of the people exhibited during the electoral process or promotion of judicial technicalities have become a question asked at many quarters. There is need for the Judiciary and the Election Tribunal to standout to restore the hope of the majority Nigerian electorate population. In view of the relevance of credible elections as a prerequisite for democracy and role of election tribunals in the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria, we recommend that the electoral management bodies should be able to build confidence among the contestants, political parties and the electorates and a rigorous process of constituting the election tribunals, thereby ensuring that our democracy is sustained.

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NIGERIA AND ECOWAS: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS IN CONTEMPORARY TIMES

Ibrahim Baba Shatambya

Department of Political Science

Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto

Abstract

Nigeria has been at the center of the formation of ECOWAS. The organization has flourished as one of the formidable sub-regional platforms in Africa due mostly to the efforts of Nigeria in its formation and operations. Through this platform, most West African countries has benefitted from Nigeria in terms of either of finance, security, technical aid and even democratic enthronement/ sustenance or in all the categories. In the area of security, Nigeria has remained the champion of regional security with its ECOMOG sponsored peace keeping missions in many countries with Sierra Leone and Liberia being the most prominent. In the area of technical aid, Nigeria has for decades engaged in sending some of its skilled personnel in the area of health, education, engineering, judiciary and many other areas to many West African Countries to offer their technical expertise to those countries with a view to enhancing the capacity of benefiting countries to cope with their expectations of governance. The same could be said in the area of finance where Nigeria had assisted many ECOWAS members with financial support. Despite such commitment, Nigeria has been faced with lack of support in its times of need from other ECOWAS members. However, Nigeria could bank on its potentials particularly the good international image it is now enjoying, its fight against corruption, diversification of the economy and the use of its experts in international relations to turn the tides in its favour.

Keywords: International Relations, International Integration, ECOWAS, ECOMOG, Nigeria.

Introduction

There is no doubt that states have been and still remain the dominant actors in international relations (Adesola, 2004). This does not mean that states are the sole actors that engage in politics and other forms and patterns of relations internationally. Indeed, other actors like the multinational corporations, international organizations and even some individuals have over the years shaped the relations, behaviors and decisions of states at the international arena. However, the centrality of the state as the dominant actor owing to its possession and control of sovereignty and being the only actor that enjoys the right to maintain internationally recognized standing armed forces needs to be emphasized.

Proceeding from the foregoing, International Relations takes place in many forms and the most prominent of these forms is international integration. The enormous uneven distribution of global resources and balance of power within the context of International Relations and the needs and expectations of especially most political entities (states), necessitated the desire to look closely at other options to satisfy the needs of states which hitherto could not be satisfactorily addressed in the context of the broadly understood International Relations. This development soon gave birth to a growing rise in the emergence of Regional Integration as a new dimension to International Relations.

> One of the striking facts about modern global economic political economy is that it is organized so strongly on a regional basis. Economic and political activities increasingly cluster in regional patterns. Regional Integration is a widespread phenomenon that transpires in almost every part of the world" (Choi & Caparaso, 2001, p. 460).

From West Africa to North America, from Western Europe to Southern Africa, From Latin America to South East Asia, the story is the same about the existence of integrating blocs or regions. It is in this regard that international integration is seen "as the unification of political units that previously shared few or no political bonds" (Rosenau, 1979, p. 347). For Pevehouse (1995), International Integration is conceived to mean a supranational process bringing together states in larger structures and identities. The process obviously leads to an ongoing struggle between Nationalism and Supra-nationalism. International Integration could also be said to be the partial shifting of sovereignty from States towards Supranational Institutions. Today,

it is a common feature of international integration to hear of acronyms such as NAFTA (North Africa Free Trade Association), ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations), LAFTA (Latin America Free Trade Association), CARRICON (Caribbean Community), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) among others, representing attempts to address, first, economic concerns of member states and other social, political and cultural needs.

Experiences of international integration projects in the world have shown evidences of variants in terms of the influences of one or more countries over the others. Therefore, there are cases where one country is dominant in terms of finances, population etc, while in other cases, two Countries or more may appear to be dominant. In the case of LAFTA (Latin America Free Trade Area) for example, Brazil, Argentina and Chile are the dominant forces, but in ECOWAS, Nigeria seems to be the most influential Country (Rosenau, 1979). The influence of Nigeria in the ECOWAS sub-region is largely perceived within Africa and beyond owing to the glorious days of the Country's foreign policy. In the past, Nigeria has stamped its authority over the African region as the big brother of most African states. This it did by providing the necessary assistance and in some cases even championing the struggle for political independence of most African countries. In West Africa, in particular, Nigeria played a leading role in establishing the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with Lagos (now Abuja) serving as the headquarters of the organization while at the same time providing the necessary financial and technical assistance needed for the survival of the organization. In the area of security, Nigeria has dominated all other West African Countries through its control of ECOMOG in terms of personnel and finance to prosecute peace projects across the sub-region. However, in recent times there have been questions as to whether or not Nigeria have enjoyed the deserved benefit from its activities in Africa and particularly its role in the establishment and survival of ECOWAS.

It is on the basis of the foregoing that the paper seeks to explore the benefits accruing to Nigeria in its participation in ECOWAS, identify challenges and recommend solutions to them. The paper comprises of five (5) sections. Beginning with the introduction, the paper proceeded with the historical background of ECOWAS, the role of Nigeria in its existence, the prospects and challenges of Nigeria's participation in the regional integration process and finally a conclusion.

ECOWAS: A Historical Narration

The idea for a West African Community goes back to President William Tubman of Liberia who made the call in 1964. A subsequent agreement was signed between Cote D'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in February 1965, but this came to nothing. In April 1972, General Gowon of Nigeria and General Eyadema of Togo re-launched the idea, drew up proposals and toured 12 Countries to solicit support for their plan from July to August 1973. A meeting was then called at Lome-Togo from 10-15 December 1973, which studied a draft treaty. This was further examined at a meeting of experts and jurists in Accra in January 1974 and by a Ministerial Meeting in Monrovia Liberia in January 1975. Finally, 15 West African Countries signed the treaty for an Economic Community of West African States (Treaty of Lagos) on 28 May 1975 (Halidu&Ukhami, 2015; Omotosho, 2015). The protocols lunching ECOWAS were signed in Lome, Togo on 5 November 1976. In July 1993, a revised ECOWAS Treaty designed to accelerate economic integration and increase political cooperation was signed. Therefore, The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) as it is known today is a regional group of fifteen (15) West African Countries founded on 28th May 1975, with the signing of the Treaty of Lagos. Its mission is to promote economic integration across the West African sub-region. Considered one of the pillars of the African Economic Community, the organization was founded in order to achieve collective self-sufficiency for its member States by creating a single large trading block through an economic and trading union. It also serves as a peace keeping force (ECOMOG) saddled with the responsibility of restoring peace in the region. The organization operates officially in three co-equal languages-English, French and Portuguese. ECOWAS consist of two institutions to implement policies – the ECOWAS Commission and the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development, formerly known as the Fund for Cooperation until it was renamed in 2001 (Adegboroye, 2011).

ECOWAS is currently made up of fifteen members namely: BENIN, BUKINA FASO, CAPE VERDE, COTE D'IVOIRE, GAMBIA, GHANA, GUINEA, GUINEA-BISSAU, LIBERIA, MALI, NIGER, NIGERIA, SENEGAL, SIEARALEONE and TOGO. However, a few members of the organization have come and gone over the years. In 1976 Cape Verde joined ECOWAS and in December 2000 Mauritania withdrew its membership,

having announced its intention to do so in December 1999 (Halidu & Ukhami, 2015). The main institutions of ECOWAS are: The ECOWAS Commission, the Community Parliament, the Community Court of Justice and the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID). ECOWAS also has associated private sector organizations such as Ecobank and Ecomarine. Other specialized agencies of ECOWAS are: The West African Health Organization (WAHO), West African Military Agency (WAMA),ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre (EYSDC),ECOWAS Gender Development Centre (EGDC), Water Resources Coordination Unit (WRCU),ECOWAS Brown Card, West African Power Pool, the Inter-Governmental Power Group Against Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing in West Africa (GIABA), West African Regional Health Program (PRSAO), ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy Efficiency (ECREEE).However, the institutions of ECOWAS as contained in chapter III article 6 of the ECOWAS treaty stipulates the following: The Authority of Heads of States and Government, the Council of Ministers, the Community Parliament, the Economic and Social Council, the Community Court of Justice, the Executive Secretariat, the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development, Specialized Technical Commissions and any other institutions that may be established by the authority (ECOWAS, 2007).

Nigeria's Role in ECOWAS
In the onset it is important to start by noting some of the natural attributes that destined Nigeria to be a powerful regional actor. This is summarized by Saliu, (2010:162) thus:

> In terms of population, Nigeria with about 146 million people, parades the highest population (The World Fact book, 2008). In some quarters, Nigeria harbours one-fifth of the African population and with regard to the sub-region, her population is about half of the total population. In terms of strengths of the economy, even with the contraction of the national economy, Nigeria presents the most viable economic environment. Her oil is much sought after in sub-saharan region and beyond.

In further justifying the economic dominance of Nigeria over West Africa the following is worth noting:"…… Nigeria alone accounts for 60per cent of the

GDP of ECOWAS region……..”(Akinbobola, 2001).To the above must be added the country's leadership role in Africa in general and West Africa in particular. This earned Nigeria a place in the leadership position and control of affairs as far as ECOWAS is concerned.

The role of Nigeria in the establishment and running of ECOWAS as a sub-regional organization cannot be over emphasized. These roles could be seen in the plans and arrangements for the establishment of the community, and up until now. Nigeria was "the major initiator of the moves towards integration within the Economic Community of West African States" (Wright, 1979, p. 93). The central position of Nigeria in formation of ECOWAS is further elaborated in (Wright, 1979:95) as follows:

> The formation of ECOWAS in 1975 came largely as a result of Nigerian initiatives and its continuing progress in something to which the present government is committed. The goal of total regional integration is obviously a long term one, but this will be pursued because Nigeria stands to benefit greatly from the increased trade between partner states.

This explains why in the early years of the establishment of the sub-regional organization, Nigeria's powers over so many issues were unmatched. For example, Nigeria cajoled the other ECOWAS member states into agreeing to move its headquarters from Lome (Togo) to Lagos (Nigeria) by threatening to boycott the activities of the organization (Saliu, 2010).

Nigeria did not stop at only the level of establishing ECOWAS, it has been there throughout its existence and making countless contributions for the development of member states. Nigeria has offered aid in various respects to member countries. Taking the issue of Technical Aid Corps (TACs) through which Nigeria contributes and finance professionals from various field in Nigeria to travel to various West African Countries with a view to contributing to their national development (Oche, 2008). Nigeria has also been involved in provision of various social services in some West African countries such as roads construction and schools. Nigeria has constructed roads in West Africa to include Nigeria Benin Road etc. In addition, the cross border pipeline project (WAGP) to transport natural gas from Nigeria to three other ECOWAS Countries- Ghana, Togo and Benin is another handiwork in contribution to the ECOWAS project (Halidu & Ukhami, 2015, p. 180). It is therefore on record that Nigeria is the greatest financier of ECOWAS (Saliu, 2010).

Another area where Nigeria has played a leading role is on the issue of peace and security of the West African sub-region. The ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) is at best described as another Nigerian project since the bulk of its contingents that make up the peace keeping forces are from Nigeria and in many cases in the past most peace keeping missions are solely sponsored by Nigeria. This line of thought is in agreement with Saliu's where he noted that:

> Perhaps the greatest impact which the country has made in the sub-region is her deep involvement in the affairs of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), especially in the area of security functions. Not only is Nigeria the largest financier of ECOWAS, she is also the leader in troops' contribution to the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) pioneered in Liberia in 1990 (Saliu, 2010, p. 162).

Buttressing the import of ECOMOG, Halidu &Ukhami (2015:181) comments: "The formation of ECOWAS monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in 1990 was an immense achievement for ECOWAS in the area of peace keeping, in conflict riddle zone of West Africa". Adding to the debate on the centrality of Nigeria's role in ECOMOG and its major stake in peacekeeping activities within West Africa, Omotosho, (2015:418) avers:

> Nigeria engagement through ECOMOG, it has helped to resolve the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the conflict between Burkina Faso and Mali, Togo and Ghana. Nigeria has provided economic life wire to less economically resourceful countries, after the breakdown of social order in Liberia, Sierra Leone etc. Through its world acknowledged peace-keeping expertise (Omotosho, 2015, p. 418).

There is also the claim that Nigeria single handedly bore the cost of restoration of peace in Liberia and Sierra Leone. The nation is said to have expended over 12bn to restore peace in Liberia and Sierre Leone and lost thousands of soldiers and a few journalist in this struggle (Adegboroye, 2011). In addition, Nigeria has also offered training to cadet and officers from many West African Countries who come for one form of training or the other at

Nigerian military institutions like Nigerian Defense Academy (NDA) for cadet, National Defense College and National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPPS) for the officer cadre.

In the area of democracy, in most recent years, Nigeria has come in handy in ensuring the democratization of West Africa by distancing itself from democratically non-compliant countries. It has also ensured the return of civil rule in countries where the military have attempted to take over power from civilian governments from Sierra Leone to CapeVerde. In Coted'Ivoire, Liberia, Togo Nigeria has again ensured that results of elections does not lead to political crises and assisted in ensuring that the popular candidates are entrusted with responsibility of leadership in those countries. Thanks to Nigeria, ECOWAS members have been able to embrace and ensure democratization within the sub-region unlike in the past; we had incessant military coups and counter coups (Halidu & Ukhami, 2015). Indeed, the 2015 election in Nigeria which resulted in the emergence of an opposition candidate as the duly elected candidate in an election adjudged to be the freest and the fairest in the history of the country's democracy further strengthens the big brother role of Nigeria and expands its influence on the sub-region of West Africa on matters of democratization of member states.

Prospects, Benefits and Challenges of Nigeria's Fostering of ECOWAS

As noted in the previous section, Nigeria has given all the necessary support in human and material proportions towards ensuring not only the establishment but also the success of ECOWAS in promoting the economic development of West African states. Its giant strides in the area of finance; military, peace and security; infrastructural development, technical aid and democratization is unequalled. It is in view of Nigeria's effort at galvanizing countries predominantly oriented along two distinct colonial traditions (British and French), that ECOWAS is often referred to as the most successful case of international integration in Africa.

Indeed, Nigeria's efforts in West Africa have not gone unnoticed. This is why most articles (academic or otherwise) on ECOWAS, often begin and ends with the mention of Nigeria. This has enhanced the image of the country within the region, Africa and indeed the entire World. Little wonder Nigeria has been called upon to head United Nations Peacekeeping Missions especially in Africa (South Sudan for example). This is recognition in of Nigeria's resolve on regional peace. Nigeria has also enjoyed wide latitude of

power by having whatever it desires within the sub-region. The case of General Sani Abacha's commitment to return Teejan Kabah of Sierra Leone to Power after being overthrown is a case in point and the relocation of the permanent headquarters of ECOWAS from Lome to Lagos is another instance among others. Nigeria has also earned for its citizens respect, recognition and acceptance in most West African countries. This explains why Nigerian business men in many West African countries dominate most of the sectors in those countries. To say that the primary market for most of Dangote products is the West African market is to say the least. Nigerian products are patronized in most of the West African Countries and this promotes the businesses of Nigerian producers (Briggs, 2007). At a different front, Nigeria is now taking the lead from Ghana in terms of E-elections. The introduction of the card reader machine in the conduct of the 2015 elections marks an important step in the evolution of electoral process and electoral engineering in West Africa. In due course Nigeria will play significant roles in shaping and guiding conduct of elections in West Africa. Already, notable Nigerians (Gen. Abdul Salami Abubakar, President Olusegun Obasanjo, and now President Goodluck Jonathan) have been nominated on several occasions to either head or be part of election observation teams of especially the African Union in most African Elections especially in West African.

The West African spirit engendered by ECOWAS has provided opportunities for Nigerians to hold sensitive positions in national governments of other African States. In Benin Republic for instance there are some ministers who owe their origin to Nigeria. These and many more benefits are derived from the active role Nigeria plays in ECOWAS.

However, it must be noted that Nigeria has enjoyed wide influence over the West African region mostly in the past. Indeed the prospect of Nigeria is bleak in terms of achieving its objectives in ECOWAS safe for a radical shift in its focus and strategies that may culminate into its prosperity in material and non-material terms. For this to happen, there is need for the country to define its objectives and articulate clear means of achieving same in every decision and action as it relates to ECOWAS.

Despite the above, it could be argued that Nigeria has allowed itself to be shortchanged as a result of its careless approach to its national interest in international relations in general and the politics of ECOWAS in particular. For instance despite the huge investment in human and material support Nigeria commits to ECOWAS, it does so without a clearly defined position on

its gains. This represents the major challenge of Nigeria in relations with member states of ECOWAS (Adegboroye, 2011).The result of this is that Nigerian business men in most West African Countries are being unfairly treated and are discriminated against. In Ghana for example, Nigerians are prohibited from engaging in retail businesses in order to allow that sector to be dominated by Ghanians. Nigerians have also been meted with harsh and unfriendly reception especially by francophone members of ECOWAS. This is aimed at fighting against the perceived dominance of Nigeria over the region.

On the security front, Nigeria has not enjoyed a deserved collective support in its fight against terrorism safe for the recent Multinational Joint Task Force, an idea nurtured and spearheaded by Nigeria. This is highly disappointing considering the strides Nigeria has made to ensure peace and security across West Africa. In addition, the French liberated countries of especially Togo and Cote D'Ivoire have always been suspicious and envious of Nigeria. They have persistently refused to honour ECOWAS protocols and have refused to endorse the regions move to develop and adopt a single currency. Although France is behind these countries' behavior towards Nigeria, they should appreciate what Nigeria has done for the region in terms of military and financial support.

Another key area that has affected Nigeria's gains in ECOWAS has to do with the management of the country's resources vis-à-vis meeting the needs of its populace. It has long been a settled argument that the image and performance of a state in international politics whether at the regional, continental or other levels is contingent on its performance at the domestic front. Here, Nigeria has scored far below average. Indices of human development have worsened over the years from independence to date. The lack of basic infrastructure that makes life meaningful (Saliu, 2010) and the worsening poverty levels amidst abundant human and material resources explained only in terms of acute corruption and poor governance meant that Nigeria cannot effectively play the role of a ROLE MODEL in West Africa unless it tackles its domestic challenges with the most efficient and effective management of its vast pool of resources within a condensed period of time. If this does not happen, Nigeria may well fold it arms as countries in West Africa continue to pay limited attention to what happens to it.

In terms of prospects, Nigeria could leverage on the good international image that the country has enjoyed since the commencement of the Buhari led Administration in May 2015. The integrity of the president has earned the

country huge respect and some level of sincerity from Developed Countries in their relationship with Nigeria. If managed well the good will that Nigeria enjoys form external actors could place the country in a position to benefit immensely from its engagements in ECOWAS. Accordingly, the government could be more efficiently in its fight against corruption. Identify and prosecute perpetrators of corrupt activities, hand down judgements in record time and block all opportunities where government officials could engage in corruption. This will avail the government, the needed resources to develop its infrastructure which will in turn earn the country some respect atleast within the ECOWAS sub-region.

In addition, the diversification of the economy that have seen the agricultural and mineral resources sectors receive some serious attention from the government hold the prospect of revamping the economy and making Nigeria regains its lost glory from among West African Countries and beyond. Indeed, the vast pool of seasoned manpower that Nigeria possesses is another advantage the country could utilize in advancing its objectives in the politics of the West African Sub-Region within the platform of ECOWAS. The Country should utilize its potentials particularly in the area of international relations where in the expertise of the many professors and professionals in that area must be put forth in all the Country's ECOWAS engagements.

While these prospects may hold some advantages for the country, how they are managed and utilized remains sacrosanct. This is because a potential may not be of advantage to the bearer until it is managed in such a way as to produce the desired result. Thus, Nigeria must as a matter of urgency begin to harness its prospects with the view to advancing the interest of its citizens and achieving same in its relations with other Countries, starting with its western African counterparts within the premise of ECOWAS

Conclusion

Nigeria has played a critical role in the formation of ECOWAS. Even after its creation, Nigeria has maintained a special attention in ensuring its survival. This it has done through substantial financial support to the organization, enormous military assistance for the peace, security and stability of the region and technical support in various fields to countries in need of such assistance. While Nigeria could boast of little to show for this support over the years due to its negligence in defining its goals behind such support, there is need for the country to overhaul its machinery and focus with a view

to redefining its national interest. Globalization has brought with it the reality that nothing goes for anything even in regional integration platforms like ECOWAS. Therefore, Nigeria should as a matter of fact address its domestic challenges and deliver good governance to its people, device means to ensure that it gains for financial, military and technical support to member countries is in consonance or even outweigh its contribution, strategically deploy its resources in diplomacy to re-establish its overwhelming influence on the region to ensure its interest prevails in all matters that concerns it.

It is now more than ever that Nigeria can pool this through in view of the change in leadership that promises a change in the future and prospects of the country. There is thus, need for Nigeria to utilize its domestic goodwill to pursue goals of national interest first at the regional level before moving to other levels of international and global politics.

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COST OF CONDUCTING GENERAL ELECTIONS AND THE CREDIBILITY OF ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA: THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN FOCUS

Abdulkadir Ahmed

Department of Political Science

Federal University, Kashere

Gombe State, Nigeria

Abstract

Credible election is a sine-qua-non for democratic governance and democratic development and over the years, elections has become a capital-intensive venture in Nigeria's democratic experience. What is even more worrisome, is the geometric progression of expending tax payer's money in Nigeria's general elections and most often, the elections are deficient and suffered credibility deficits. For instance, a sum of 242.245 billion naira was approved for the conduct of the 2019 general elections and it is still a subject of debate on whether improved spending will guarantee credible election. This study examines the cost of the 2019 general elections vis-à-vis its credibility. The study used incremental theory as a framework for the study. Similarly, the methodology employed was wholly the use of secondary sources in which literature were interrogated to establish weather cost of conducting elections will guarantee credible elections in Nigeria. The study found that whilst government is spending huge amount of money to conduct elections in Nigeria, a lot still needs to be done by the electoral umpire to enhance the credibility of future elections in Nigeria. Furthermore, the study recommends among others, the need for proper training of INEC's adhoc staffs that will be engage for future elections, the need to improve logistics to ease operational challenges in the future elections and the need for improved synergy between the INEC and other critical stake holders such as security agencies, political parties and observers to ensure that process is free fair and credible.

Introduction

General elections in Nigeria has become a capital intensive venture in Nigeria especially in recent times. This has become worrisome in view of the fact that huge amount of money is always expended in the name of conducting elections by the federal government and yet the election process in Nigeria is still far from perfection largely because of the actors and factors involved in the electioneering process and combination of which ultimately inhibit a smooth and a credible elections. Since return to Nigeria's democratic governance in 1999, general elections has been conducted at least six times and hundreds of reruns and isolated elections were equally conducted. In all these elections, hundreds of billions of naira w spent and yet most of these elections suffered from acute credibility deficit.

For example, Momah (2016) argued that the 2007 elections fell short of national, regional and international standards for democratic elections. They were marred by very poor organization, lack of essential transparency, widespread procedural irregularity and substantial evidence of fraud. After the 2007 general elections for instance, a principal beneficiary of the presidential election, late President Umar Musa Yar'adua admittedly confessed that the election that brought him into office was flawed and that steps will be taken to improve the electioneering process in the future. Although there are noticeable improvement in the management of the electioneering process in Nigeria especially with the introduction and the deployment of technology such as the card reader and other innovative mechanism for enhancing the credibility of elections in the build up to 2015 and the recently concluded 2019 elections, the trajectory of skyrocketed and exponential increment in the budgetary allocation for the conduct of general elections has become more worrisome recently.

In the 2019 general elections for instance, a whopping 189.2 billion naira was expended for the elections and the funds were said to cover for the election operation cost 134.4 Billion, 127.5 Billion on election technological cost, 22.6 election administrative cost and 4.6 billion for contingency. This huge amount of money has been appropriated and expended and yet, problems that characterised the process and the barrage of criticisms that trailed the postponement of the polls by the electoral umpire on account of poor logistics is indeed a pointer to the fact that there is need to interrogate whether huge budgetary allocation would ensure improved logistics and enhance the credibility of elections in Nigeria.

Conceptual issues
Election

Election has been variously conceptualised to mean different thing to different people. It is a process of choosing a new leader or a representative through democratic process where all eligible people cast a ballot to choose a leader or decide on an issue. The majority rule and the new leader is the one who has the most votes. It is also seen as a formal process by which voters make their political choices on public issue or candidates for public office. Historically, the use of election in the modern era dates back to the emergence of representative government in Europe and North America since the 17th century. It is through election that leaders are hold accountable for their performance and permit an exchange of influence between the governors and the governed as the availability of alternatives is necessary condition to the success of a democracy (Samuel, 2010).

The relevance of an election in a democratic setting cannot be overemphasized. An electoral process, depending on how free, fair and credible it is, will either make or mar a democratic system. Constitutionally, Nigeria as a country and as a democratic nation ''shall be based on the principles of Periodic election as one of the tenet of liberal democracy has be described as one of the many options of choosing leadership and deposing old governments in a political system. As a core institution of representative democracy, elections are supposedly the only means to decide who holds legislative or executive power. (Lindberg, 2007:6).

Furthermore, elections in Nigeria dates back to colonial period and have been a means through which political leaders are elected at regular interval as stipulated in the nation's constitution. As an important component of democracy, elections have largely taken place a number time, especially with the return to democratic rule in 1999, after a long period of military regime. In 1999, election was clearly contested for various elective offices. For the presidential election, two major political parties presented their candidate and contested for the office of the president. All Peoples' Party and Peoples' Democratic Party presented Chief Olu Falae and Olusegun Obasanjo respectively and Olusegun Obasanjo emerged as a winner. Similarly, in 2003 the two major contenders were Muhammadu Buhari of All Peoples' Party and Olusegun Obasanjo of Peoples' Democratic Party in which the later again emerged the winner as declared by INEC. In 2007 still Peoples' Democratic

Party maintained the grip of political power at the centre in which the three dominant political parties presented Muhammad Buhari under the plat form of All Nigerians Peoples' Party, Atiku Abubakar of Action Congress of Nigeria and the late Umaru Musa Yar'aduwa of Peoples' Democratic Party.

In 2011 therefore, Action Congress of Nigeria, All Nigerians Peoples' Party, Congress for Progressive Change and Peoples' Democratic Party presented Malam Nuhu Ribadu, Malam Ibrahim Shekarau, Muhammadu Buhari and Good luck Jonathan respectively as the dominant political parties in which Good luck Jonathan emerged as the winner. Similarly, in the 2015 general elections, the contest was among over sixty political parties with the major ones fielding the incumbent Good luck Jonathan of the PDP, and General Muhammadu Buhari of the APC as the winner and in 2019, the PDP fielded Alh. Atiku Abubakar and the APC's Muhammadu Buhari as the winner.

Credible elections

The indispensability of credible election to democratic consolidation cannot be overemphasised. This is because a flourishing democratic practice is always predicated on the periodic and credible election. Adekunle and Florence (2016) observed that, election is universally regarded as the heart of representative democracy and that credible elections not only confers legitimacy on political leadership, it is also crucial to the sustenance of democratic order. Credible election however provide citizens with freedom to choose their leaders and to actively participate in policy formulation and implementation.

Open Election Data Initiative (OEDI 2018) observed that credible elections should be characterised by inclusiveness, transparency, accountability and competitiveness. These are basic ingredient that a credible election should have and election mismanagement will always have ripple effect on the delivery of good governance. It has become evident that lack of credible elections has plunged many countries into avoidable conflicts, absence of law and order, forcing states into paralysis, incapacitation, and hence unable to discharge basic functions such as in the Democratic Republic of Congo 2011, Kenya 2007 Zimbabwe 2008, Nigeria in 2007 and 2011 and so many other African countries such as Cote'd ivore, Guinea etc. in fact, credible elections has become a challenge to most African countries and all African countries should be encouraged to observe democratic ethos and the

principle of transparency, accountability, inclusiveness in conducting elections.

Methodology

This study is primarily a library based research and therefore, data for the study was gathered from **Secondary** sources and personal observation of the researchers. The researcher participated in both 2015 and 2019 general elections as Collation Officer and therefore his experience and observations in the field is considered as vital to the study. The secondary source included the use of existing literature derived from relevant materials like theses written on the subject matter, text books, journal articles, newspapers, magazines, relevant government publications, internet materials related to the subject of study as well as other relevant unpublished materials. These materials were interrogated and analyse qualitatively. Similarly, content analysis of document sourced was carried out where information generated was presented in tabular form and interpreted using statistical tools of simple percentages.

Theoretical framework

Incremental theory or science of muddling through was propounded by Charles E. Lindblom in 1959; other proponents of the theory include Martin Landau (1962) Robert Dahl (1967) and David Braybrook (1968). Lindblom (1959) wanted to provide an alternative to the scientific school, the rational comprehensive theory which is rooted in scientific thinking, thoroughness, rationality or power of proper reasoning, objectivity and empirical claim of proof of claims in dealing with societal problems.

Incremental theory is one of the empirically based theories of decision making and started from a recognition that human problems are extraordinarily complex, while our analytic capacities and resources are quite limited among other obstacles we lack sufficient knowledge of cause-and-action effect to understand complex social problems, and there is not enough time and recourses even to conduct most of the partial studies that are feasible (Lindblom, 1959).

Braybrook and Lindblom (1963) claimed that people do not know all their goals or the tradeoffs they are willing to make among them. They further argued that, humans disagree about almost everything, and have no satisfactory analytic method for resolving disparate perceptions and priorities into collective choices. Due to the constraints in time needed for rational decision, Lindblom proposes what he calls "disjoinetd incrementalism" or "the science of muddling through". In line with this philosophy Lindblom proposes

five distinct characteristics of policy decision making, which the analyst has to recognise (Dlakwa, 2008:141).

Stillman (1980) further explained that, it is incremental in the sense that only small steps are taken at a time in order to achieve objectives and not broad ''leaps and bound''. Second, it is non-comprehensive because of the limitation imposed on policy makers by lack of resources to go into sufficient details of problems before taking remedial measures. Third, policy decision involves "successive comparison because policy is never made once and for all but made and remade endlessly by small chains of comparison between narrow choices." Fourth, in practice decision making ''suffices rather than maximizes from among the available options.'' The fifth characteristic of the incremental theory is plurality in choice. This is based on the fact that government decision making rest on a 'pluralist' conception of the public sector in which many contending interest groups compete for influence over policy issues, continually forcing the administrator, as a person in the middle, to secure agreement from among the competing parties'' (Stillman,1980:201, cited in Dlakwa 2008). Based on the outlined characteristics of the incremental theory, the following assumptions are discernible.

> **(xxi)** That Public policy and programme is a continuation of previous policy with minimum changes
>
> **(xxii)** That existing programmes, policies expenditures are considered as a base, and
>
> **(xxiii)** That Policy maker accepts the legitimacy of previous policies and programmes because of uncertainty about the consequences of new policies.

Relevance of the theory

In spite of the weaknesses of the incremental theory on account that it lacked methodological ground and moving in disjointed pattern because of its subscription in riding with the tide as observed by Dlakwa 2004, the theory explain the variable under study in view of the fact that the budgetary expenditure for elections in Nigeria has been consistently increasing to cope with the prevailing economic realities. Secondly, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has been using the preceding election to serve as the basis for improving and conducting subsequent election in terms of manpower, logistics and the general conduct of the elections.

Figure 1.1: Showing Linkage of the Incremental Theory and its Applicability
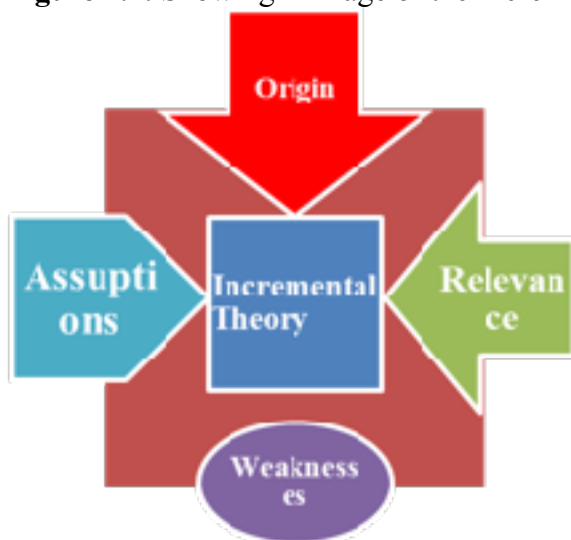
Source: Developed by the Authors 2019.

Results and Discussion
The 2019 general elections

The 2019 general elections will certainly go down in the history of Nigeria as one of the fiercely contested. Babayo (2019) argue that 2019 general elections is the most keenly and closely contested in the history of Nigerian presidential elections since the colonial and post-independence period. This has become evident in view of the fact that the election was characterized by tension, intense campaigns, media war, and the palpable desperation of the frontline contestants is arguably the top spender of taxpayer's money on election management.

A cursory look at the 2019 election expenditure revealed that Nigeria has spent far more than so many countries with bigger economy. For example, Nuruddeen (2018) observed that the cost of conducting general elections in Nigeria is higher than that of countries with bigger economies such as India, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. Nuruddeen went further to argue Canada spent 375 Million Dollars on election expenditure where 17.5 Million people voted, Kenya with 14.3 Million registered voters spent 427 Million Dollars during its 2012 general elections and India spent 600 Million Dollars where 553.8 Million people voted in the 2014 general election. There is no

doubt that the 2019 general elections will go down in the history of Nigeria as one of the most expensive election the country organized.

Table 1.1: Budgetary Allocation for General elections in Nigeria 1999-2019

Year	Budgetary Allocation	Increase from the Previous	Percentage Increase
1999	32,000,000,000		
2003	60,500,000,000	28,200,000,000	88.12%
2007	74,200,000,000	13,700,000,000	22.83%
2011	89,200,000,000	15,000,000,000	20.21%
2015	120,000,000,000	30,800,000,000	34.52%
2019	189,000,000,000	69,000,000,000	57.5%
Total	**564,900,000,000**	**156,700,000,000**	

Source: Compiled by the researcher

Figure 1.2: Graphical presentation of the cost
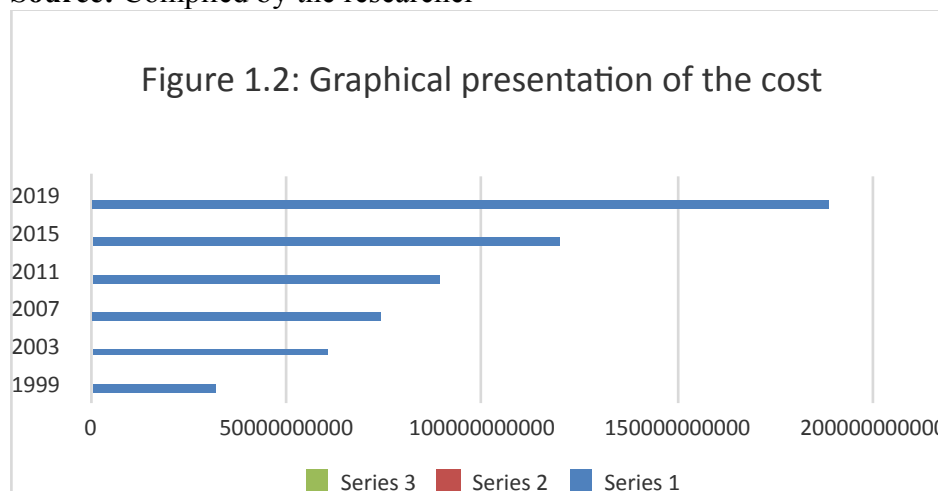
Source: Developed by the Authors

Table 1.1 and Figure 1.2 above present the budgetary expenditure of INEC from 1999 to 2019. The table shows that INEC has conducted six general elections within the period and whooping sum Five Hundred and Sixty Four Billion, Nine Hundred Million Naira (564,900,000,000) was expended in conducting the six general elections and yet, Nigeria is still battling to perfect

the process. Although there are improvement in the conduct of general elections especially with the introduction of Permanent Voters Card and the electronic Card Readers, there are room for improvement. The table indicated that in 1999, the electoral body under the leadership of Ephraim Akpata spent 32 Billion naira to conduct the 1999 general elections.

In 2003, the electoral body under Chief Abel Goubadia spent 60.5 Billion Naira to organise the 2003 general elections. In spite of the spending, the conduct of the 2003 elections was characterised by irregularities and the report of both foreign and local observers indicated that the election was neither transparent nor credible. For instance the report of the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) observed that INEC contributed its own fair share of the electoral problems in the 2003 elections. The report indicated that lack of clearly designed compartments for thumb printing and poor transportation arrangements of the sensitive materials to the polling units. In the same vein, Momah (2003) argued that INEC was part and parcel of the enormous fraud that characterised the 2003 elections by not been proactive and the apparent lack of adequate preparedness to conduct the elections.

In 2007, INEC under Prof. Maurice Iwu spent 74.2 billion naira to conduct the general elections but, 2007 elections was highly characterised by widespread rigging and allegations of falsification of results. Momah (2016) observed that the 2007 elections fell short of national, regional and international standards for democratic elections. They were marred by very poor organization, lack of essential transparency, widespread procedural irregularity and substantial evidence of fraud.

The contest for the 2011 presidential elections was between the then incumbent President Dr Good luck Jonathan and Gen. Muhammadu Buhari. In 2011, INEC under Prof. Attahiru Jega spent 89.2 billion Naira to conduct the 2011 general elections and just like the previous elections, the 2011 election was characterised by irregularities poor organisation leading to postponement and rescheduled of the Presidential and National Assembly elections. Similarly, in 2015, under the leadership of Prof. Jega, INEC spent 120 billion to conduct the 2015 general elections and in 2019, INEC under Prof. Mahmoud Yakubu has spent 189 billion to conduct the 2019 general elections.

Challenges of the 2019 general elections
   1.   **logistics problems**

Logistics is one of the critical component of electioneering process. Efficient and effective logistics is always needed to ensure credible election exercise. Movement of election materials and personnel is the fulcrum for a credible process. During the 2019 general elections, there were observable lapses on the part of INEC on how movement of election materials was carried out. In fact, the presidential and national assembly elections that was earlier slated for 16th February, 2019 had to be postponed to 23rd February, 2019 at the eleventh hour owing to the poor handling of the logistics on the distribution of both sensitive and non-sensitive election materials. Election materials were not distributed on time and the election materials of some states were conspicuously missing, only to be found in another state.

2. **Inadequate manpower and lack of proper training**
   Manpower training is another factor that would guarantee a credible electoral process. In 2019 general elections, a total of 134.4 Billion was expended as election operational cost including training of the adhoc staff engaged for the election exercise at various levels. The training was carried out within two to three days. Some of the personnel engaged, the Supervisory Presiding Officers (SPO's) were trained to train the Presiding Officers (PO's) and Assistant Presiding Officers (APO's) and even the SPO's were not sufficiently trained and therefore, they could not effectively train the PO's and the APO's on how to carry out their designated responsibilities. This has led to poor management of the conduct of the elections at various levels and different parts of the country. This has further undermined the determination of the electoral umpire to organised a credible elections and the apparent displeasure expressed by election observers. Inadequate and poorly trained personnel has impacted negatively on the 2019 general elections and eroded and eclipsed the confidence and trust of the electorate, domestic and foreign observers on the ability of INEC to conduct a credible electoral exercise that would meet the international standard.

3. **Electoral Violence and the militarization of the process**
   Electoral violence has remain a challenge to credible electoral process in Nigeria. This is because, electoral violence have over the years become one of the defining characteristics of the Nigeria's electoral

process. Abubakar etal (2018) observed that electoral violence is the illegitimate and unauthorized use of force related to elections processes. It is characterized by intimidation, harassment, assassination, blackmail, kidnappings, killings and destruction of valuable properties. Electoral violence has become impediment to credible elections in Nigeria because it has continued to eclipse the efforts of the electoral umpire in organizing a credible election. The use of political violence during elections has become alarming and worrisome for instance, the Human Right Watch in its 2007 report observed that the 2007 election in Nigeria was marred by violence and fraud. Similarly, the 2007 report observed and federal elections have fallen short of basic international and regional standards for democratic elections. They were marred by poor organization, lack of essential transparency, widespread procedural irregularities, significant evidence of fraud, particularly during result collation process, voter disenfranchisement at different stages of the process, lack of equal conditions for contestants and numerous incidents of violence.

The subsequent elections were conducted in 2011, 2015 and the 2019 general elections. In these elections, there are improvement from the previous elections and though they equally suffered from credibility deficit especially the 2011 general election, the 2015 general election and the 2019 general elections were conducted with improved organization and logistics.

One of the major drawbacks of the 2019 general elections was the use of military in some states like Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Kwara, Ogun and a couple of other states to supervise the elections and in the process, voters were scared away and there are allegations that the military were brought in to help rig the elections. Though the military can be called upon to intervene in internal security problem, the way and manner the military were brought-in and the prevailing condition that does not warrant the military's involvement raise a lot of unanswered questions.

Conclusion

Credible election is a necessary ingredient for democratic governance and democratic practice and the credibility of general elections is largely hinged on a number of factors such as the preparedness of the electoral body

in terms of its ability to engage, effectively train and deploy election personnel without manipulations, the neutrality of the electoral umpire, the commitment of the critical stakeholders such as the political parties, the security agencies especially the police, the electorate, foreign and domestic observers and non-interference from government by given the INEC the free hand to independently conduct the elections. This has become necessary in view of the fact that the trajectory of elections experience in Nigeria is such that has been characterized by credibility deficits. Although there are improvement on how the election management body organized elections recently, there is still room for improvement considering the huge amount of money being invested for conducting general elections in Nigeria.

Recommendations
12. Substantial efforts should be directed at the training of the Ad-hoc staff that would be engaged for the election exercise. This has become necessary due the fact that the training given to the ad-hoc staffs for the 2019 general elections was grossly inadequate in view of the enormity of the work involved.
13. There should be improved and timely delivery of sensitive and non-sensitive election materials to states, Local Governments and to their respective polling units
14. Capacity of the police should be improved to effectively carry out their statutory responsibility of providing security before, during and after elections. Similarly, soldiers should keep away from election duty unless where necessary in order not to scare away prospective voters
15. Efforts should be made to ensure funds budgeted for future elections are transparently and judiciously utilized for elections purpose.
16. The anti-graft agencies, the EFCC and the ICPC should beam their search light on the activities of the electoral umpire to forestall any act of corruption and ensure proper appropriation of the funds set aside for the elections

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EARLY VOTING IN NIGERIA:
THE PRIVILEGE OF THE UNDERPRIVILEGED

Emmanuel Adeniran Alebiosu
Department of Political Science
Federal University Wukari, Nigeria

Abstract

One of the major ways the citizens can participate and influence the decision-making of government is through voting. Voting is the act of formally indicating one's preference for a candidate or political party at a public election. Everyone has the right to vote. However, not everyone exercises this right during election. There are privileged and underprivileged voters in Nigeria. The privileged voters are those who are able to cast their votes while the underprivileged voters (estimated to be more than two million) are those who are eligible voters but are unable to cast a ballot due to their engagement with the election process. The number of those deployed by the Nigerian state and the Independent National Electoral Commission for the conduct of general elections is increasing which is affecting voter turnout and participation. This is worrisome, because democracy is everybody's business. In other words, the point of democracy is to reflect the views of all citizens, whether engaged or not. One of the ways of addressing this problem is adoption of early voting- the process by which voters in public election can vote prior to the schedule election day. Consequently, this paper explores the prospect and problems of early voting in Nigeria. The paper relied on qualitative content analysis. The paper shows that early voting in Nigeria will increase voter participation, decongest the polling units and reduce the workload of election officials on election days. Also, the paper found that expansion of access to polling units, funding, infrastructural and logistics issues are some of the challenges to early voting in Nigeria. However, the paper recommends that Nigeria's electoral legal frameworks should be amended, and that adequate voter education and funding should be provided for a seamless early voting in Nigeria.

Introduction

In every democratic society, election is considered the best process for the transfer of political power from one government to another. Indeed, elections are a means to translate the general will of the electorate into representative government. In other words, elections provide the electorate the freedom of choice among competing parties, programmes and candidates, the power to hold elected leaders accountable, as well as protection against regime perpetuation and arbitrary rule (Obi & Abutudu, 1999). However, voting is the action of formally indicating one's choice of candidate or political party at an election (Nma, 2015). In other words, voting provides a wider avenue through which people make prefer choice of their candidates during election (Nma, 2015). The Constitution of most democratic countries guarantees the right of every eligible citizen to vote. However, there is an unequal voting participation in several countries including Nigeria.

One among the reasons for this is the nature and system of the electoral process which makes it impossible for certain category of eligible voters to cast a ballot on the days of elections. The inability of these large numbers of underprivileged voters (those workers who are engaged by the electoral process and are on essential duties on the days of elections) to cast a ballot may affect the turnout and outcome of an election. For instance, election officials, security personnel and other workers on essential duties are unable to vote due to their engagements on election days with attendant effects on voter turnout.

Voter turnout has been declining across the globe since the beginning of 1990s and such a trend in democratic participation has raised many concerns among election stakeholders (Solijonov, 2016). Low voter turnout is serious democratic problem because the results of such low turnout may not be representative of more popular sentiment (Jakee & Sun, 2006). In other words, an election with very low turnout may lead to unequal representation among various parts of the populace; and be an inaccurate reflection of the electorate which may give rise to legitimacy crisis.

To address this structural and institutional disenfranchisement, several countries of the world have introduced different processes, procedures and policies in ensuring that eligible voters exercise their franchise irrespective of their careers and locations. One of such methods adopted in bringing about electoral inclusion is early voting system. To that extent, this paper examines the prospect and problems of early voting system in Nigeria especially as it concerns essential duty workers on Election Day. The paper consists of

different sections. First, is the introduction. Second, is voter turnout and underprivileged voter in Nigeria. Third, is underprivileged voters and early voting in Nigeria. The last section is the conclusion.

Voter Turnout and Underprivileged Voters in Nigeria

Voter turnout is the extent to which eligible voters use their vote on election day, and it is measured as the percentage of votes cast at an election, including invalid votes (Solijonov, 2016). Turning out to vote is the most common and important act citizens take in a democracy and, therefore, is one of the most important behaviour for scholars of democratic politics (Aldrich, 1993). Voter turnout has also been seen as an important indicator of the state of health of any democracy, old or new, consolidated or in transition, where a high turnout is usually associated with a healthy democracy and a low one with an unhealthy one (Kuenzi & Lambright 2007; Freitag 2010; cited in Omotola & Aiyedogbon, 2011).

Despite the growth in the global voter population and the number of countries that hold elections, the global average voter turnout has decreased significantly since the early 1990s, and Africa generally has the lowest turnout over the entire period since the 1950s (Solijonov, 2016). A multitude of factors affect voter turnout and these factors appear in complex combinations in each individual country (Solijonov, 2016). In Nigeria, voter turnout since 1999 has generally been low, hovering around 50% or slightly below and the reasons for this tend to vary from one election to another (Omotola & Aiyedogbon, 2011). However, there are common factors that cut across the various elections; these include ethno-regional considerations, the level of trust in electoral institutions and processes at any point in time, the disposition of the government (ruling party) towards free and fair elections, campaign issues, the level of political education and mobilization and voting experience (Omotola & Aiyedogbon, 2011).

Furthermore, there are structural barriers and voting arrangements and process which keep millions of eligible Nigerian citizens from participating in elections especially the underprivileged voters. These underprivileged voters were at various times during the general elections in Nigeria deployed on the days of elections in order to have credible elections. About two million of these categories of workers did not vote in the 2019 general elections. These

numbers are huge to the extent that it can influence the outcome of an election. Indeed, their total number is higher than the total number of eligible voters in some states of the federation. These millions of workers are missing in the opportunity of being part of the Nigerian political decision-making process.

Democracies perform better when more people vote (Bonica & McFaul, 2018). Indeed, democracy is everybody's business. To that extent, the point of democracy is to reflect the views of all citizens, whether engaged or not. To realize the promise of a representative, inclusive democracy, our electoral system must guarantee every eligible voter the right to vote, the power to participate and elect leadership that is responsive (The Centre for Popular Democracy, 2018). Election reforms are often designed around the goal of making voting more convenient for citizens, and increasing voter turnout (Burden, Canon, Mayer& Moynihan, 2009). Therefore, what reform can be embarked upon to ensure that these categories of workers are part of the voting arrangements in Nigeria. In other words, what mechanism can be adopted for the underprivileged voters to be privileged to cast their votes before the election day? What are the prospects and challenges of early voting in Nigeria?

Underprivileged Voters and Early Voting in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges

Early voting is also referred to as convenience voting, special voting, pre-poll voting or advancing voting. Early voting is the process by which voters in public election can vote prior to the schedule election day. Early voting provides a means for eligible voters to cast their ballots at a time and location other than in person on Election Day (Rogers, 2013). Although there are many state-specific variations among early voting system, there are two fundamental forms: mail-in absentee voting and early in-person voting (James, 2010). First, early in-person voting - voters can cast a ballot by appearing in person at a local elections office or other designated location during a designated period prior to Election Day while absentee voting- voters submit their ballots via mail or by dropping them off at designated locations (Rogers, 2013). Voters simply apply for and receive an absentee ballot in the days or weeks before Election Day (Rogers, 2013).

The objective of early voting is to protect the freedom to vote and increase voter participation. The intention is to ensure that those who will be unable to vote on traditional or normal Election Day are given the opportunity

to cast a ballot prior to the election day. Among these persons are those on essential duties on election day. By this, voter turnout may be higher. A study conducted by Leighley and Nagler (2009) indicates that there has been a small but statistically significant increase in turnout for federal general elections in relation to early in-person voting. Decongestion at the poll and the reduction of workload for election officials are also among the reasons for the adoption of early voting. On traditional election day, voters are usually crowded at the poll center, as such, poll officials are at their best towards ensuring that the waiting time of voters is reduced. Therefore, by adopting early voting, the crowd is reduced and poll officials are relieved of the burden of election day activities. However, early voting has been criticized on the basis that it disrupts voter's decision making, changes what it means to vote, decrease the impartiality to debate, disclose voting pattern and increase election budget.

In Nigeria, a large number of underprivileged voters are unable to vote on the traditional election day schedule by INEC. Affected by their activities on election days include thousands of the Independent National Electoral Commission officials and other millions of officials which include ad-hoc election staff; police officers, military and para-military personnel including Nigerian Customs Service, Nigerian Immigration Service, Federal Fire Service, Nigerian Prison Service, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, members of the National Youth Service Corps. Others include journalists, domestic election observers and election volunteers. These categories of underprivileged voters are largely unable to vote by the design of our electoral system.

Some of the issues that will arise in adopting early voting in Nigeria would be first, election legal frameworks amendment. The 1999 Constitution (as amended), the Electoral Act and INEC Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of Elections are the major legal frameworks for the conduct of elections in Nigeria. None of these legal frameworks provide for early voting in Nigeria. Second, is funding, election logistics and infrastructure. Funding is critical to implementing early voting system. More so, additional funding will be required to successfully carry out early voting in Nigeria by way of providing additional facilities and materials.

These resources are not easy to come by within the context of national budgeting in Nigeria. However, to overcome these challenges and successfully implement early voting in Nigeria, there is need for our electoral legal frameworks to be amended to accommodate early voting in Nigeria. To

achieve this, there must be adequate voter education and regular election stakeholder's engagement by INEC with political parties, civil society organizations and the national assembly. The INEC funding should be increased and released as at when due.

There must also be political will on the part of the President to align himself with the reform and ensure that every hurdle on the part of implementation is addressed. The INEC should understudy other country early voting system in order to have first information on the processes and how they overcome their challenges. The INEC should experiment with smaller bye-elections before full blown implementation of early voting. The implementation of early voting in should start with the underprivileged voters in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The paper examines the underprivileged voters and the prospect of early voting in Nigeria. The paper argued that to achieve the promise of a representative and inclusive democracy, our electoral system must guarantee every eligible Nigerian voter especially the underprivileged voter the right to vote. It is the contention of this paper that the introduction of early voting in the Nigerian electoral process will increase voter participation, decongest the polling units and reduce the workload of election officials on election days. The paper recommends that Nigeria's electoral legal frameworks should be amended, and that adequate voter education and funding should be provided for a seamless early voting system in Nigeria.

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INTRA-PARTY CONFLICTS AND POLITICAL INSTABILITY IN NIGERIA: AN EXAMINATION OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

Hope A. Ikedinma, Ph.D

Department of Political Science

Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

Abstract

There is a growing public apprehension about the upsurge of inordinate conflicts within Nigerian political parties. The internal wrangling within them has engendered dangerous bickering and disorder. As a result, discords, recriminations, treacheries, flagrant breach of party rules, splits, defections and factionalism are challenges that the political parties have to contend with. This ugly development has invariably enfeebled the party institution and disrupted the entrenchment and proper functioning of democracy in Nigeria. Besides, there are frequent personality feuds, inter communal rivalries and factional cleavages that surface menacingly affected within the affected parties. While several studies have investigated the causes and effects of intra-party conflicts on party growth, democratization and national integration, there are a few works on intra-party conflicts and political instability. Hence, this study investigates why Nigerian political parties are embroiled in crises; it also highlights the causes and patterns of these conflicts, and x-rays their disruptive consequences on the stability of the country. Finally, it suggests how these anomalies can be curtailed.

Keywords: conflicts, democracy, Nigeria, political instability, political parties

Introduction

Right from inception, Nigerian Fourth Republic political parties have been composed of people with diverse political opinions. Conflicts among party factions are major characteristics of these parties. Prior to the party primaries, there are usually crises and the intensity of such crises is always in relation to the party's political influence. Onwudiwe and Berwind-Dart (2010) put it this way, "where a party holds power, the level of strife within that party tends to be greater." This type of bickering rarely involves ordinary

voters directly. More typically, it is demonstrated by elite-sponsored militia or directed at or by the elites themselves.

Omotola, (2009) posits that the   origin of the parties   is not in tune with the guidelines stipulated in political literature, noting that, their composition can be viewed as mere   strategy of transition from the military rule to civilian administration.   Beginning from the formation of the leading three political parties, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) was described as a collection of persons with different ideologies made up of the conservatives, the radicals and the progressives who do not only misunderstand themselves but are also regularly feuding. The Alliance for Democracy (AD) then was a Yoruba based party, formed just to see that power returned to the South West. The All Peoples Party (APP) (later changed to All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) comprised politicians who either supported or served under the military junta led by Gen. Sani Abacha (Adebayo, 2008). This explains why the nation has been witnessing serious internal party crises within most of the political parties (Ikelegbe, 2014). These internal parties wrangling have translated into political instability which is a threat to nation building.

The tussle for power and control of party structures has become the order of the day, as some members parade themselves as founders of particular parties. Sambine, (2004) posits that those who claim to own or had played major roles in the formation of the parties have become dictatorial in their conducts regarding the activities of the parties concerned. The former chairman of People's Democratic Party (PDP) Audu Ogbe, lamented that there were individuals who did not see themselves as being members of the party but rather sought to hijack the party or to own part of it and to dictate to the party (Ogbe 2014).

The trend of internal crises within various political parties since 1999 shows that the parties in Nigeria spend more time on unfruitful reconciliatory processes, than on programmes that would institutionalize democracy which in turn will ensure political stability. It is equally deduced that the failure of the political parties to imbibe internal democratic principles and embrace dialogue in resolving their internal crises is antithetical to the role expected of political parties   as an instrument of electoral education, mobilization for electioneering, and peaceful elections.

Intra-party conflicts pose a danger to democratic order in Nigeria. Indeed, intra-party wrangling are more fierce than inter-party conflicts rocking the nation. It is therefore advocated by this paper that intra-party dynamics

should be urgently brought to the forefront for   separate and detailed consideration they deserve rather than being subsumed in the compartmentalized fields of political history, election studies.

Exclusionary Elite Bargains Theory and Classical Elite Theory

It is apparent that no single approach can explain the inexorable disagreements, contradictions and incompatibilities which manifest themselves in strife, and clashes that sometimes present the Hobbessian state of nature at the convention and nomination venues of Nigerian political parties during their party primaries. Therefore the explanations here are linked in a causal chain that is complementary and self-reinforcing. However, they are co-joined in order to retain their analytical perspectives.

The discourse is therefore underpinned by two theoretical premises; Exclusionary Elite' Theory and Classical Elite Theory. Lindemann (2008) hypothesizes that the systematic exclusion of key elites from rent sharing arrangement produces a platform for mobilization of their loyal constituencies towards violence.

This theoretical view provides some understanding into intra-party conflicts within Nigerian political parties. This is because, the pre-eminence of the state as the major means of procuring direct material benefits and amenities makes political power a highly prized goal for contending groups. Exclusion from power is therefore extremely costly and unthinkable. It is the fear of losing out that compels all factions to jump into the same boat as it were, in the belief that it is better to fight within the winning party than to risk the possibility of being outside the victorious party.   The opposition will take a decisive and perhaps ruinous advantage over them   even among the rival groups, a desire to be part of the political mainstream.

Put differently, each political actor wants to join and possibly hijack or, at least not to be excluded from the party with the strongest prospect to secure political power, the party with an impressive war chest and an intimidating ensemble of political 'heavyweights', the party that will ensure an appropriate allocation of state jobs, amenities and benefits to powerful party men and their ethno-linguistic, regional and religious communities. Thus, any party that wins election at the center becomes the chosen bride by all notwithstanding their differences. Hence, fractionalizations and factional crisis usually occur as each political party establishes a narrow political coalition or

breaks informal rules of the game like zoning formulas by Nigeria's Fourth Republic political parties.

The zoning principle which was initiated by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in 1999 but currently has also become a common policy of other major political parties in the country. This North-South power sharing agreements give certain ethno-regional elites disproportionate and exclusive access to state structures and state resources. The formula alienates and excludes other leaders from other regions and has become an avenue to mobilize violence against the party and by extension the state.

Classical Elite Theory on the other hand, posits that the elites as popularized by one of the advocates of elitism Pareto believe that society consists of two classes: (i) a higher stratum- the elites, who are divided into governing elites and non-governing elite, and (ii) a lower stratum, the non-elite (Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, Roberto Michels, Wright Mills (Varma, 2006)

In general, individual interest is what the elites emphasize. They therefore cling desperately to their powers and privileges and become in-movable. Once a leader reaches the pinnacle of power nothing could bring him down. If laws are passed to control the dominance of leaders, it is the laws that are gradually weakened, and not the leader(s). To preserve itself and to avoid change and stress, it concedes to some welfare programmes and public demands. The masses of the population on the other hand, are unorganized, passive and uninformed and have little influence on public issues. Thus, even in representative democracies, the masses still have little or no control because elites select the candidates and manipulate the votes through propaganda and economic resources. Election as an instrument of controlling the elites, does not limit, confiscate and constrain the elite supremacy and power because the elites direct and manipulate both the electoral mechanisms and the society as a whole.

It is against these backgrounds that this study takes a critical analysis of internal party conflicts in Nigerian political parties. There is no doubt obviously these issues characterize the Nigerian political system considering the fact that most political parties that exist in the present democratic dispensation, according to Obah (2017), are built on personal or primordial interest of the few who possess economic and social power instead in the interest of the nation.

The Nigerian polity has been plagued with different kinds of crises and animosity which have led to decampment of members from one party to the other, whose end result is political instability. Politicians like Atiku Abubakar, Rotimi Amechi, Bukola Saraki, Muhammadu Buhari, Rochas Okorocha among others are examples of party decampees (Dike, 2003; Michael, 2013).

In relation to this, it has been affirmed that political parties in Nigeria are characterized by weak organizational strength and lack of institutional capacity; their decision making processes are unstructured while power is often personalized in the party leader and a few cronies who are usually wealthy enough to bankroll the party (Dike, 2003). The role of the party membership is reduced to the barest minimum, usually to endorse decisions already made by the elites. Political mobilization assumes the form of personality cults and loyalty is often accorded to the party leader as opposed to the party as an institution. These challenges often result in undesired outcomes such as declining membership, electoral loss, lack of cohesion, factionalism and instability, weak coalitions and poor state of internal democracy which result in internal party conflicts (Ikelegbe, 2014).

In the 2019 party primaries, there were series of antagonistic agitations between the party leaders and aspirants over the imposition of candidates by party chairmen. A good example is the issue between Adams Oshiomohle, the national chairman of APC and former Governors Rochas Okorocha of Imo State and Ibikunle Amosun of Ogun State. These ex-governors were expelled from the ruling party because they expressed support for their own preferred candidates thereby deviating from the party's laid down principle in selecting candidates to contest gubernatorial election in their respective states. The duo went ahead and formed new political parties where they put forward their candidates for election as governors while at the same time maintaining their membership in the ruling APC.

Conceptualization of Intra-Party Conflict

The phrase "intra-party conflict" is a concept coined to describe all the tussles and wrangling within a political party that are inimical to normal nomination and/or election of party flag bearers, as against inter-party politics which is political activity among different political parties (Okonkwo & Unaji 2016). This ugly trend manifests in the form of opposition within a political party. As a corollary, (Okoli) 2001 avers that intra-party opposition is located

within a political party. It is an internally generated opposition whereby a dissident group of a ruling party constitutes itself into a splinter movement that stands opposed to the activities of the parent party. This is characterized by the emergence of parallel party structures and leadership, as well as partisan alignments and re-alignments among the party faithful around the attendant parallel party platforms (Aliu, 2019).

> Okoli (2001) further enumerates factors that are responsible for intra-party opposition as follows: personality differences, clash of socio-economic interests, ideological incompatibility, etc, among politicians. Adding to the above is the contextual pathologies of party politics in Nigeria, among which are: (i) The Hobbesian character of politics where struggle for state power is seen as a "do or die" affair; in this context, politics incidentally becomes a crude warfare. (ii) Internal characteristics of political parties, which are exemplified in organizational and operational defects, poor sense of party discipline and loyalty, lax party supremacy, and gross ideological deficits. (iii) Influence of money politics and personality cult, which gives rise to cabalism, godfatherism, and the likes. (iv) The incumbency factor, whereby the ambitions of the incumbent political executives contradict with those of some party elements in such a manner that precipitates gang-up and intra-party wrangling. Still on the track of unveiling the propelling force behind the intra-party conflict in Nigeria, Mbah (2011) submitted thus: The Petit-bourgeois found out that although they have acquired political power, they were not truly in control of the economy. However, they understood that political power offered opportunities for economic power and therefore the opportunities inherent in their political power were best and perhaps the only way they had to create economic base for themselves (Mbah, 2011).

In a similar manner, Shale & Matlosa (2008) identify the causes of intra-party conflicts to be: (i) Favouritism- promoting one's kith and kin; (ii) Unequal sharing of resources– leaders' constituency gets the lion's share of the party's largesse (iii) Lack of regular meetings; and (iv) Centralized authority - power concentration at the top. Rubin, Pruitt, Kim (1994) also

reiterate the above factors. The clarification of the concept of intra-party conflicts and their attendant outcomes are enunciated in order to sharpen the focus of the study which is more or less to unravel the link between the intra-party conflicts and political instability in the country.

Conditions that Nurture Intra-party Conflicts in Nigeria

There are general conditions that nurture intra-party conflicts in Nigeria. On the other hand, the writer of this paper believes that the behaviour of Nigerian political parties' members is not all process without structure, that institutions are not epiphenomena but critical variables for the study of parties. It is worth noting that election-related violence across Nigeria manifests in different patterns. Election conflicts typically fall into four related categories which Osimen and Ologunowa (2013) identify as intra-party feuding, inter-party clashes, electoral events violence and communal unrest. However, the focus of this discourse is on intra-party feuding. The following breed eruption of intra-party conflicts in Nigeria:

(i) Length of time to form and organize the political party itself: Political parties that are hurriedly formed lack the time and gradualness to work out their internal differences and develop a unifying ideology. In the last 2019 general elections in Nigeria, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) kept registering political associations that did not even meet the minimum requirement to be registered as political party until a few weeks to the election. Most of these parties were formed by members of some previously existing political parties who defected and formed these parties (Channels Television, 2019).

(ii) Cleavages: The cleavages that bedevil the society tend to be replicated within Nigerian political parties. In other words, competing sectional groups in the wider society tend to become competing factions within parties. Because of the preeminence of the Nigerian state as the easiest access to wealth, lucrative job opportunities, prestige and pecuniary benefits, the struggle to control the parties and through them the state tends to be grim and all consuming (Obah, 2017).

(iii) Political Culture: Nigeria has a political culture of the winner takes all syndrome. The syndrome is marked by an accepted notion that the party in power will unleash severe deprivations on its opponents. This attitude makes intra-party conflicts to be unrestrained and violent. Intra-party clashes can happen at any point in the election cycle. However, they mostly and frequently

take place after party primaries and during the post-election period when party supporters who believe that the primaries were rigged against their candidates clash with the opposition. A good example of this was the recent post-election violence that took place in Imo, Rivers and Zamfara states. Voting in these states had been minimal. Missing ballot materials or closed pooling booths and intimidation of the electorate permeated the electoral process. Yet statewide electoral votes were usually in the millions, causing significant outrage. In this case, election violence increased rather than decreased during the subsequent elections.

In other words, intra-party competition in national politics has tended to conceal the persistence of one party system in Nigeria in so far as many regions or states of the federation are usually dominated overwhelmingly by one political party in successive elections. The multiparty system of the First Republic thus overlaid the "virtual one-party sub-states" that held sway in the regions, a pattern that has been replicated in many states of Nigeria in successive democratic eras. Intra-party competition apparently provides the only meaningful alternative in such areas where inter-party competition provides virtually none (Obah, 2017).

(iv) Lack of Political Ideology: It must be clearly stated that the most important vehicle of any political party in an ideal society should be its ideological position. However, this is not the case in Nigeria perhaps due to the shallowness of democratic roots in the country and the developing countries in general. Other forms of identity particularly ethnicity and religion appear to have taken the place of ideology in these countries. Moreover, the rising influence of money politics represents another crucial limiting dimension of political ideology in Nigeria (Nugent, 1999; Omotola, 2004). Ideology is like a superstructure upon which every other thing is built. It consolidates a political party. It precedes party structure, organization and manifesto. It is a set of ideas, beliefs and representations common to a specific social group. It consists of ethical interpretations and principles that set forth the purposes, organizations and boundaries of political party life.

One of the ways to assess the degree of internal democracy in a party is to identify what helps in determining the content of the party's electoral promises in line with party ideology. In the most inclusive parties, individual party members may be asked to vote on specific policy positions. More usually, parties do choose the less inclusive option of asking party conference delegates to endorse a set of commitments prepared by a platform committee.

Often, the deliberation process may be more open than the actual vote. Party policy committees may take pains to show that they are listening to different viewpoints, for instance by holding consultation meetings across the country or soliciting comments via local (wards), State National Executives or Internet. Similarly, party leaders may permit an airing of viewpoints during debates at party conferences (Wayne, 2001).

Among all political parties in Nigeria none of them has an identified ideology rather there exist a mixture of capitalist and conservative ideologies, liberal and labour ideology and even those that cannot be situated. Political parties in Nigeria are pendulums that swing depending on the nature and dynamics of the politics of the day. That is why politics in the nation is often regarded as a "do or die" affair making the game of politics dirty. Until the absence of ideology is addressed in Nigerian politics, intra party conflict will continue to be part and parcel of country's politics whose end result is usually political instability.

(v) Selection of Candidates: This is a process of choosing who will represent the party in an election. The mode of the selection remains one of the most difficult and conflictual in Nigerian political parties notwithstanding that the mode of selecting candidates differs from one party to the order. Some party may decide to use the open ballot system as is widely used by political parties in the country. This is usually done at state and national levels but records have indicated that these primaries are not devoid of intra party conflict as many candidates resort to judicial intervention to reclaim their stolen mandates. In Nigeria, the selection of candidates by political parties have not been easy because of the way most of these parties are structured and the way the leaders exercise influence in thwarting the democratic processes of their party to favour their desired candidates (Kura, 2011). Instances of what happened between Adams Oshiomohle, the national chairman of the ruling APC and other interest groups like state governors prior to the 2019 general elections readily come to mind in this regard.

In 2007, the late President Musa Yar'Adua was single handedly imposed on the party (PDP) by his predecessor Olusegun Obasanjo as his successor to the surprise of many party members. Another striking example was what happened in Anambra State chapter of the PDP where Professor Charles Soludo was imposed on the party as governorship candidate by the National Executive Committee of the party. The act triggered a spate of petition writing. In Enugu State in 2015 governorship election that took place

on the 11th of April, the outgoing governor (Mr. Sylvester Chime) single handedly picked the present governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi as his successor. The action generated a lot of tensions among the members of the party in the state (Mbah, 2011).

This culture of handpicking candidates by the leaders in Nigerian political parties has seriously engendered political instability in the country as elections are characterized by various court petitions or election tribunals hanging on the necks of those assumed to have won the elections. The court or tribnal petitions do not allow them to perform in office as their minds, state resource and attentions are directed at winning the cases in the courts. Again, many of them that were assumed to have been elected initially are removed from office by nullifying their party primaries by the courts through landmark judgments. In the 2019 general elections some parties like the APC were prevented by the court from presenting candidates for governorship race in some states like Zamfanra due ramblings from their party primaries. All these cause political instability.

The undemocratic conduct of political parties at the party primaries also contributes in no small measure to the political violence and political assassinations in Nigeria. As party abstain from healthy intra-party rivalry in the process of candidates' selection, the venue of party primaries were mostly turned into violence gathering (Mbah, 2011).

Consequences of Intra-party Conflicts

Studies have revealed that the lack of internal democracy in Nigeria political parties is a major threat to the country's nascent democracy and a veritable source of political instability. Party primaries throughout the country clearly show that political parties are not operating within norms of democratic principles and are not ready to play the role of stabilizing the polity through the process of interest aggregation and articulation. Various political parties have failed to open up to their members who are eligible and want to run for offices in their party primaries. Some candidates were imposed on the party without election and due process. Some of the candidates allegedly won via the so called consensus option (Kwasau, 2013; Obah, 2017).

There are often significant gaps between the policies supported by a party's membership and the party leadership. While political parties generally try and present a united front to the electorate, members' perceived role within

the party and political interest are associated with higher incongruence. Both represent suggestive evidence for how emancipated party members with higher levels of political interest and with a more independent self-conception might be less in need of cue taking from the party. They are comfortable explicitly disagreeing with their party's position (Nwomeh, 2006).

Some level of ideological disagreement is good, even necessary for a vibrant and effective party. Discussions and debates over policy sharpen and refine the proposals to be offered to the electorate. However, deep divisions and rampant factionalism can become existentially detrimental to the life of a political party. Ideological incongruence increases the probability that a party member more frequently considers joining another party. This means that members' disagreement with their party's ideological profile can have severe organizational consequences with potentially important ramifications for party competition in systems such as Nigeria where electoral success is determined by small margins (Okonkwo & Unaji, 2016).

Some state governors have unprecedented sway over their state party machinery to the point of mandating the delegates to vote for a particular candidate. The governor's high – handed approach over their state party machinery has made it difficult for democracy and nation- building to take root at the state and local levels. State House of Assembly members who disagree with their state governor face impeachment, suspension or expulsion from the House. Some governors dissolve local government councils where the chairmen appear to be too independent notwithstanding the fact that local governments are supposed to be the third tier of government with separate budget (NSRG, 2015). Essentially, intra-party conflict appears to thwart orderliness in any democratic setting, by serving as impediments to proper and objective nomination of candidates at party primaries.

The frosty relations between the executive and the legislative are as a result of weakness of the political parties due to internal conflicts which fuelled the impeachment saga in the early life of this Fourth Republic. Less than a year, for instance, the first Senate President, Evans Enwerem was removed from office in November 1999 on the grounds of age, name and academic qualifications falsification. Evans Enwerem's successor Chuba Okadigbo, was also impeached on August 8 2000 on allegations of financial misappropriation, unsteady character and be short of moral fibre. The pioneer Speaker of House of Representatives, Salisu Buhari, was also removed due to alleged forgery of age and educational qualifications. The wind of

impeachment also blew to some state executive governors and legislative members. In the South-East, the pioneer Speaker of Enugu State house of Assembly, Cletus Eriebe, was impeached on allegations inefficiency, highhandedness acts of impropriety. The situation was the same in Akwa Ibom State, whereby the Speaker, Gabriel Agada, was impeached on September 6, 2000 along with his Deputy, Orak Otu on almost similar allegations. In the same vein, the first Speaker of the Oyo State House of Assembly, Kehinde Ayoola was also impeached on November 24, 1999. In Northern Nigeria, Speaker of the Kano State House of Assembly, Ibrahim Gwaramai and his Deputy, Zakari were impeached in the first legislative year (Omotola, 2008; Muheeb & Aiyede, 2015).

> The implications of the frequent impeachment are captured by Adejumobi and Kehinde (2007) as follows: First, it absorbs the attention and energies of the main actors within the parties, diverting their focus from urgently needed internal party organization and planning for elections. Second, it reinforces the non-adherence to due process and rule of law. Third, it creates fear, apprehension and tension in the political environment, and decelerating preparations for the elections. Fourth, it creates an uneven playing field for actors between and within political parties… (Adejumobi & Kehinde 2007, p.105).

The activities of all the parties show that they possess non identifiable ideologies that serve as motivating force, which is expected to be the source of their manifesto (Ajetunmobi and Kehinde, 2007). As a result Nigeria democratic process no doubt has been bedeviled by poor party politics as a result of not only ethnicisation of party politics, poor political leadership, party indiscipline, lack of clear cut party ideologies, among others but also and more worrisomely, lack of internal party democracy (Ntalaja, 2000).

The current number of political parties is suggesting a more democratic polity, a widening of political space and more options for voters. But most of these parties are composed of individuals whose personal interests are threatened by the existing government and thus decided to join the opposition party or form new parties. Hence, the opposition parties in Nigeria today lack the integrity to stick to their stance on some salient political issues

as it affects the citizenry. The priorities of most members of these parties are what they will gain in politics.

Opposition parties in Nigerian democracy remain ineffective due to their failure to form strong coalitions that will give the ruling party challenge and influence it to formulate and implement people-oriented policies and programmes so that the masses can enjoy dividends of democracy. Scholars have emphasized the need for alternative policy in Nigeria, for instance Isakpa (2000) said, if ruling politicians are failing the people, it is the responsibility of the opposition to step in, in a credible, robust, articulate, clear and coherent manner, to provide alternative policy options on how to deal with the challenges that confront the country and the majority of Nigerian people.

However, this is not the case because once elections are over; the interest of the common man is no longer in the opposition's agenda. They will be struggling to be part of a unity government initiated by ruling party. Members of All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP), after 2007 General Elections for example, abandoned their party and presidential candidate to be part of unity government introduced by the then ruling Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP). The presidential candidate (Muhammadu Buhari) of the party (ANPP) was persuaded by his party leaders to drop his case against the ruling party despite the admission of the elected president that the election was characterized by fraud (Gabriel, 2012). Sometimes ago, politicians whose interest were threatened in All Progressives Congress (APC) and subsequently decamped to opposition PDP are retracing their steps and are calling the party not to challenge the 2019 presidential election in the law court (Obiora & Chiamogu, 2020). This, they want to use as a bargain for the ruling APC to receive them back into their fold.

The disorderly struggle by groups to capture and retain the state power thus engulfs the institutional party, which is the pillar of any democratic government (Nwomeh, 2006). The struggle within these parties prompted Sambine (2004) to argue that Nigerian political parties are run as factions and caucuses with many bigwigs posing as members of Board of Trustees and others as elders and leaders of these parties. The collisions among these groups within the political parties usually manifest in frequent change of the party's' leadership. For example within eleven years, the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) had six chairmen, out of which none of them complete his tenure. Besides, the issue of zoning within the party is also instrument that nearly break the parties into pieces (Sambine 2004).

Similarly, the activities of godfathers in political parties render the parties ineffective in the process of discharging their responsibilities. These godfathers impact negatively on operations of the parties by restricting members' participation as voters in the selection of candidates or to be voted for as candidates. Godfathers in an undemocratic way, impose candidates on the parties and by extension on the electorate right from local level to national level, on agreement that they surrender the state treasury to them (Omotola, 2007). This kind of agreement institutionalizes political instability. The legitimacy of leaders whose process of selection fall-short of democratic norms is highly questionable at the expense of national stability (ICG, 2007b).

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the nature and character of intra-party conflicts and the incessant political instability. It has revealed among others that the intra-party conflict in the country is a bane to political instability in the country. The undemocratic posture of party primaries in the country goes a long way in creating and recreating itself endlessly not only in the intra-party conflicts but in the inter-party arrangements which inevitably culminates in political instability. It also identified lack of political ideology, undemocratic selection of party candidates, and the domineering role or influence of elites among others as the sources of intra-party conflicts which foster political instability in the country.

Thus, the paper recommends that political parties should be guided by a given ideological basis upon which any member that wants to join such political party should be aware and guided by it. This will insulate the party from the hands of power hungry elites that may use the party for their own selfish interest and ensure internal democracy within the parties. It is also noted that internal democratic governance within political parties will be reflected at the national level, democratic culture will be developed among the citizens and democratic regime will be instituted in Nigeria and there will be stability in the polity. The imposition of candidates into any elective position should be abolished. The right of every member must be respected and preserved. The parties should be guided by the constitution of the country and the electoral act and the electoral body in charge should make sure that the laws as they are stipulated are obeyed by the political parties.

Finally, parties' members should note that parties have structures, and parties should not allow the influence of the elites to contradict these structures.

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ZONING OF ELECTIVE POSITIONS AS POWER SHARING STRATEGY IN THE NIGERIAN FEDERATION, 1998-2018

Usman Salisu Ogbo & Odiji Okpanachi Linus
Department of Political Science, Kogi State University, Anyigba

Abstract

Federalism in Nigeria is no doubt challenged by so many issues which have undermined it since adoption as a form of managing the country's ethno religious and cultural diversities. Some of the challenges in perspective are: the problem of resource allocation and distribution, ethnic chauvinism as against nationalism, the marginalization of the minorities and a host of boundary disputes. One of the means through which the state has sought to ameliorate these challenges is the zoning of political offices among the various geographical and ethnic configurations of the polity. Though not explicitly enshrined in the Nigerian constitution, this approach to peaceful coexistence has recorded certain successes just as it has met critical challenges impacting negatively on democracy in the country. Exploring the Rawls justice theory alongside the theory of conspiracy to guide the course of analysis, this work which made use of the secondary sources of drawing data, argues that while the practice has to a very large extent paved way for political harmony and national unity, the Nigerian experience is confronted by such factors as religious and ethnic sentiments, political and financial influences, as well as the sit-tight syndrome exhibited by the ruling elite. The above shortcomings notwithstanding, the paper concludes that the zoning of political offices as a power sharing strategy in Nigeria remains a veritable model for maintaining the relative peace which the country has enjoyed in the fourth republic. We recommend therefore that policy makers particularly the legislature should endeavour to consolidate the successes recorded this arena by enshrining zoning as a provision in the nations electoral laws.

Keywords: Zoning, elective position, Party Politics, Power Sharing, Strategy, Federation.

Introduction

One of the greatest challenges often faced by most multi ethnic and religiously diversed entities like Nigeria is the difficulty inherent in

maintaining and sustaining the system in such a manner that political harmony and peaceful coexistence are guaranteed. While the United states of America have existed for over 250 years and demonstrated the capacity to politically manage their complexity and diversity, the defunct Soviet Union was only able to manage similar diversity for 74 years before the whole world openly witness their eventual disintegration. Similarly, while the Swiss federation comprising four major ethnic nationalities have over the years shown sign of waxing stronger politically speaking, the Nigerian federation is no doubt undergoing trials and challenges which the political elites have been unable to chart and agree on a consensual solution that could have doused the inherent political tension in the land. A common and worrying feature of the Nigerian democracy sinc the military exited in 1999 is the conflict and violence which have often characterizes it (Domingo and Nwankwo, 2010). This violence against democracy arises from the struggle for power and attendant control of state resources by individuals and groups who often claim to fight for their region's right to rule have often claimed lives too overwhelming to ignore with the latest manifesting in 2011, 2015 and 2019. While the 2011 case was an instance in which dissatisfied and disgruntled individuals mainly from the northwest and northeastern part of the country, massacred over 800 innocent individuals following the failure of their preferred candidate to win elections (Angerbrandt, 2018), the result of the 2015 polls which did not go down well with militant pressure groups from the south east and south-south, resulted in various threats and attempts to disintegrate the country by pressure groups representing and pursuing ethnic and regional interests.

Rustad (2008) identified these ethnic/regional based agitators/elites as the Northern Elite, Yoruba elite, Igbo elite, Niger Delta elite and Middle Belt elite. Politically, the Northern People's Congress (NPC) a predominantly Hausa-Fulani political machinery, represented the Northern elite in the first republic. They allied with the National Council of the Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) led by a nationalist of an Igbo extraction. This alliance however latter collapsed when the leadership of NCNC was accused of being overly interested in Igbo issues. The Middle Belt consists of minority groups in the North-central parts of the country. Though ethnically and linguistically different, they share an historical resistance towards the domination of the Muslim Hausa-Fulanis. For the Yoruba elite, located in Southwestern Nigeria, they established the Action Group (AG) to serve as a machinery with which to

advance their political interests. Just like the middle belt, the Niger Delta people are not dominated by one ethnic group. However, they have overcome their ethnic and cultural differences, and have since formed a common front in the fight for political representation and resource control.

As a solution to this imbalance, the Southern-regions have, demanded for several decades that the principles of zoning should be included in the constitution alongside the Federal Character. So far this has not happened (Rustad, 2008). The exclusive dominance of the presidency by northerners since Nigeria's independence underpins ethno-national agitations that threaten the polity. Nigeria's leadership question is directly linked to the country's inability to satisfactorily resolve this challenge (Nwozor, 2014). The resultant effect of this is that Interethnic and regional tensions and conflicts have been increasing. Southern politicians are exerting pressure to retain power, while northern politicians insist that a long-standing pact says power should revert to their region. Over the past fifteen years, political tension has risen significantly in the petroleum-rich Niger Delta. Insurgency has spread and ethnic and youth militias have emerged. The state has lost the capacity to exercise authority effectively (Ibrahim, 2007). At the root of the north-south dichotomy is the distribution of power between the two blocs and access to infrastructure and privileges at the federal level. It will be helpful to institutionalize or codify the existing conventional system of power sharing and rotating the presidency between the two blocs as an interim measure until the country's democracy matures and trust between the two blocs and among Nigerians has improved (Adibe, 2017).

Though as one of those who keenly studied the practice of zoning political offices in Nigeria, Simbine (2002) had opined that the formula seems to fit into the heterogeneous and federal nature of the Nigerian state, helping to accommodate all groups as much as possible and therefore reducing complaints of domination and marginalization. Other scholarly commentaries such as Ololajulo (2016) have alluded to the capacity of such informalities for conflict mitigation and consensus formation in plural societies. The author however argued that though the practice of zoning has the capacity for maintaining peaceful political order, it has rather occurred more as an elites' strategy to negotiate continued participation in the political process and access to the national wealth. There are those that have hardly seen anything benevolence about the arrangement. Kunle Adegoke for instance who was

reported in Ogbonikan (2018) grossly faulted the preference for zoning when choosing candidates, saying it is a strategy to narrow the political space to favour a weak candidate. Others such as Domingo and Nwankwo (2010) and Mudiaga-Odje (2010) who bemoaned the practice have cited how it has generated so many furore in the polity particularly with the controversy that surrounded President Jonathan's intention to run for the presidency in 2011 and 2015 when the northern political elite believed it was still their turn to maintain the position. Following this debate, the intention of this work is to carry out a systematic analysis on this issue in order to present a more critical and holistic essay.

Conceptual Clarification

Understanding zoning as a strategy which is aimed at equitable distribution of political power positions in a country that is as ethnically diverse as Nigeria, demands a proper comprehension of the term 'strategy'. Strategy simply stands for a careful plan or method which is aimed at achieving a long-term goal or objective (Odiji, 2016). It is an adaptation or complex of adaptations whether of structure, system or behaviour which serves or appears to serve an important function in achieving evolutionary success. The Nigerian federation as is historically known, is bedeviled with lot of challenges principal amongst which are the violent conflicts arising from the struggle for power and resources among the diverse ethnic groups which comprise the system. It is in an attempt to douse the tensions and forestall the violence that usually arise as a result of the struggles for powerful political positions that the political elite adopt some form of zoning models for the distribution of political offices.

Zoning, as connotated in this work is barely different from the common meaning attached to it by the common dictionaries of the English language. It simply refers to any means of arrangement or marking off into zones (See Webster, 2013). In this regard, it connotes partitioning of either a city, local council, or country by ordinance into sections reserved for different purposes. Understanding zoning from the parlance of politics, a politically administered system is separated or divided along geographical configuration and meticulously named for purposeful identification. As a policy and practice, the idea of partitioning and zoning of political offices along these partitions have consciously been adopted by the founding fathers of the country. This is in line with the federal character principle of the Nigerian laws

as clearly stated in the 1999 constitution. The practice allows for the sharing of contestable political office positions so as to be equitably distributed amongst the variously recognized geopolitical enclaves of the country, states or local governments as the case may be. Particularly, Sections 14 articles 3 and 4 of the 1999 Constitution provide categorically that the composition of governments of the Federation, states and Local Government Areas (LGA), or any of their agencies, shall be carried out in such a manner that would reflect the federal character of the country. Explaining and supporting zoning within the context of the Nigerian state, Agbakoba (2011) cited in Awopeju, Adelusi and Oluwashakin (2012) asserts that the the Federal Character principle at Section 14 which informs the zoning of public offices is about inclusion of the six geopolitical zones in the allocation of political and public-sector appointments including the office of President. As far as Antonia Simbine (2002) is concerned the zoning formula fits into the heterogeneous and federal nature of the Nigerian state helping it to accommodate all groups as much as possible and therefore reducing complaints of domination and or marginalization. The author further posited that the system is more inclusive of almost all if not all identifiable groups and therefore more supportive of what is now known to be the democratic culture. It also serves as an act of balancing conflicting demands and one of the requirements of nomination of candidate in order to embrace the principle of federal character in a cleavage society. Zoning policy as the federal character principle is used for sharing of political offices and appointments.

According to Sakanko and David (2018), the introduction of the zoning system into the country's political space was to aid the smooth rotation of key political positions across the country. This policy is to achieve peace, fairness and equitable distribution of resources. Defining zoning as a formula which partitions or divides a country into different electorate zones, for the purpose of rotating major political offices, the authors observe that the practice did not just commenced in the fourth republic but was adopted and implemented during the politics of the second republic particularly between 1979 and 1983. Despite being initially designed for the federal level, the formula was consciously replicated in states and local authorities for easy diffusion of government. Summarizing the essence of this practice in the Nigerian context, Orji in Rustad, (2008) emphasized that the principle refers to an aggregation of the states into six geographic zones on the basis of which positions are allocated. The main purpose of zoning is to make sure that the

different offices are rotated amongst the regions. The second function was to make sure that power would shift from one region to another, thereby hindering one region from politically dominating others.

A **federation** or a **federal state** is a political entity which is characterized by a union of partially self-governing provinces, states, or other regions under a central federal government (Leonardy, 1992). In a federation, the self-governing status of the component states, as well as the division of power between them and the central government, is typically constitutionally entrenched and may not be altered by a unilateral decision of either party, the states or the federal political body. Alternatively, federation is a form of government in which sovereign power is formally divided between a central authority and a number of constituent regions so that each region retains some degree of control over its internal affairs (Law, 2013; Wheare, 1946).

The governmental or constitutional structure found in a federation is considered to be federalist, or to be an example of federalism. It can be considered the opposite of another system, the unitary state in which possesses a single, centralised, national tier of government.. While France, for example, has been unitary for multiple centuries, Nigeria based on its claims in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) practices federalism.

Theoretical Framework

The ideas and precepts of both the justice and conspiracy theories will serve to give direction to the analytical course of this paper. The theory of justice as expounded by Rawl asserts that Each person has the same indefeasible claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic liberties, which scheme is compatible with the same scheme of liberties for all; and Social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions which are to be attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity. These are to be to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society. The first principle of equal basic liberties is to be used for designing the political constitution, while the second principle applies primarily to economic institutions. (Sampurnaa Dutta 2017). This articulated complex idea of justice by Rawls is meant to provide a procedural method of distributing political rights and economic benefits to the citizens as moral agents in any given society, especially, in a democratic set up where there is free economy and individual liberty. This perhaps aims at maximizing the

welfare of the citizens, especially the worst-off group. It is in accordance with Rawls" doctrine of procedural principles of fair treatment that Nigeria adopts the federal character or the zoning system as a formula of distributive justice which aims at achieving a fair play in politics as well as equal distribution of burdens or opportunities and other social goods (economic and social benefits) Kabuk (2015).

For the conspiracy theory, what is known today by it, is an explanation of any event or circumstance which invokes a conspiratorial act supposedly carried out by the state or the powerful elite without credible evidence. According to the political scientist Barkun (2003), conspiracy theories rely on the view that the universe is governed by design, and embody three principles which are:

11. Nothing happens by accident,
12. Nothing is as it seems, and
13. Everything is connected.

A major feature of the conspiracy theory is that it evolves to incorporate whatever evidence exists against them, so that it becomes a closed system that is unfalsifiable, and therefore "a matter of faith rather than proof" (Barkun, 2011). The Oxford English Dictionary defines conspiracy theory as "the theory that an event or phenomenon occurs as a result of a conspiracy between interested parties. It is a belief that some covert but influential agency (typically political in motivation and oppressive in intent) is responsible for an unexplained event". According to Douglas, Karen and Sutton, (2011) speaking from psychological perspective, correlate conspiratorial thinking with Machiavellianism and paranoia. That is, it deals with the plot of a few cabal for their own selfish interest. Again Barkun was quick to write that a conspiracy theory is not simply a conspiracy which is an actual covert plot planned and/or carried out by two or more people. A conspiracy theory, on the other hand, is "an intellectual construct", a "template imposed upon the world to give the appearance of order to events". Positing that "some small and hidden group" has manipulated events. In line with this understanding, Walker (2013) identified five kinds of conspiracy theories:

15. The "Enemy Outside" refers to theories based on figures alleged to be scheming against a community from without.
16. The "Enemy Within" finds the conspirators lurking inside the nation, indistinguishable from ordinary citizens.

17. The "Enemy Above" involves powerful people manipulating events for their own gain.
18. The "Enemy Below" features the lower classes working to overturn the social order.
19. The "Benevolent Conspiracies" are angelic forces that work behind the scenes to improve the world and help people.

Going back to Barkun (2003), three types of conspiracy theories can be identified and analysed. These are: The Event conspiracy theory which refers to limited and well-defined events. Examples may include such conspiracy theories as those concerning the herdsmen massacre of farmers in Nigeria, the underdevelopment of Africa by Europe, and the spread of AIDS; the systemic conspiracy theory usually conceived as securing control of a country, a region, or even the entire world by a single, evil organization which implements a plan to infiltrate and subvert existing institutions. This is a common scenario in conspiracy theories that focus on the alleged machinations of Jews, Freemasons, Communism, or the Catholic Church. And lastly, Super conspiracy theory links multiple alleged conspiracies together hierarchically. At the summit is a distant but all-powerful evil force. His cited examples are the ideas of David Icke (archons' hijack of the earth) and Milton William Cooper (multiple global conspiracies).

Methodology
This paper made use of the secondary sources of drawing data. Information was derived principally from events which unfolded and reported in journals, textbooks and the news media. Party documents, such as their constitutions and guidelines were also instrumentally beneficial. Using the critical and expository methods of presenting information, the salient points of this discourse were duly presented and analysed.

The Zoning Arrangement in Nigeria: 1998-2018
The resolve to carry out an analysis of the operationalization of the zoning or rotation of power in Nigeria from 1998 was born out of the fact that the actual formation, arrangements and scheming by political parties towards the 1999 elections actually commenced in 1998. It was in 1998 that the military

government of General Abdulsalami Abubakar gave opportunity and impetus to the political class to actually form political parties under whose umbrella majority of the people can be allowed to freely participate in elections. One would recall that the five political parties which had existed during the Abacha 'dark days' and regarded as the five fingers of a leprous hand by Chief Bola Ige had dubiously adopted the head of state as sole presidential candidate before his demise. Following his death, the stage was then set for a new lease of party politicking and electoral democracy guided by the principles of fairness, equality and justice. Following the annulment of the June 12, 1993 elections, the attendant incarceration of the winner of that poll – Chief M.K.O. Abiola and his eventual death while in detention, the need for the then ruling elite to douse the tension created by this abnormally and untense the polity became imperative.

The Imperativeness of Zoning

The zoning of elective positions particularly the office of the president of the federal republic of Nigeria, was born out of this need to pacify the aggrieved nerves mainly from the south western part of the country who vehemently fought for the revalidation and restoration of the June 12 election results. The grouse of the pro democrats with the northern elite who purportedly annulled the election was the fact that the north have controlled the country more than the other section since independence (see Siollun, 2019). This fact gave credence to the agitation for zoning or the rotation of political offices.

Another imperativeness or need for zoning in Nigeria is that being a country of 36 states geographically classified into six zones. The six zones were not entirely carved out based on geopolitical location, but rather states with similar cultures, ethnic groups, and common history were classified in the same zone (Mustapha, 2006). while the country is made up of approximately 250 ethnic groups only the major ones have called the shot in the political affairs of the country. The need for fairness, equity and justice would naturally demand that other segments of the state be give the chance to have the taste of power.

One other trend which observably calls for a regime of zoning political office positions in Nigeria is the fact that electoral democracy in Nigeria has more often than not reflected the ethnic coloration and segregation of the

country. Most elections apart from the June 12, 1993 polls, show how the electorate vote along ethnic and regional lines. This obviously shows how the more populous ethnic group(s) always have their way whenever elections are conducted. This indeed is responsible for the trend of violent conflicts that have over the years characterised the nation's political terrain. It is in the light of this that the issue of zoning in party politics dates back to the Second Republic when the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) operated the formula as a strategy for the re-unification of the country after the civil war (Awopeju, Adelusi and Oluwashakin, 2012). In the runup to the Nigerian fourth republic and during the General Sani Abacha Constitutional Conference, Dr. Alex Ekwueme and Chief Emeka Odimegwu Ojukwu, supported by other Southern politicians and members of that conference, championed the cause of rotating the presidency among the six geo-political zones. The division of the country into geo-political zones is for the purpose of rotational presidency after the annulment of June 12 elections (Zik, 2010: 12). The importance of zoning in Nigeria is also informed because it is a phenomenon used to ensure the continuity and integration of the Nigerian state. The issue of power shift has become a recurring phenomenon in the Nigerian polity. (Ayo Awopeju, Olufemi Adelusi and Ajinde Oluwashakin, 2012)

The zoning experience so far

As rightly observed earlier, the principles of zoning and rotation of political office positions as agitated and experimented in the current Nigerian republic date back to the proposition of the country's former vice president Dr. Alex Ekwueme who had sought during a constitutional conference in 1995 that states in Nigeria be aggregated into 6 geographic zones on the basis of which positions are allocated. The main purpose of this zoning according to Orji in Rustad (2008) is to make sure that the different offices are rotated amongst the regions. The second function was to make sure that power would shift from one region to another (often referred to as "power shift) and hinder one region from dominating in terms of power.

In an attempt to play by the rules of the federal character principle as contained in section 21 of the 1999 constitution, the leading political parties which had actively participated in the country's polls since the beginning of

the fourth republic have consciously chosen their flagbearers from the different sections of the country. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) was careful to be faithful to this principle when it included it in its constitution in 1998. In the preamble to the document the party had highlighted that:

> … to create socio-political conditions conducive to national peace and unity by ensuring fair and equitable distribution of resources and opportunities, to conform with the principles of power shift and power sharing by rotating key political offices among the diverse peoples of our country and evolving powers equitably between the federal, state and local governments in the spirit of federalism.

The party further emphasized in her main document that in pursuant of the principles of equity, justice and fairness it shall adhere to the policy of rotation and zoning of party and public elective offices and it shall be enforced by the appropriate executive committee at all levels (section 7 (2) (c) of the PDP Constitution, 1998). It is in obedience to this guiding principle that the vice president was picked from the north east after the president emerged from the south western part of the country. Other positions such as that of the senate president, speaker of the house of representatives, secretary to the government of the federation and their deputies were carefully selected to reflect and abide by the principle of federal character and zoning. At the levels of the states too particularly where the people are diverse ethnically, efforts were made to distribute power to reflect the ethnic configuration of the polity.

The then opposition party too All Peoples Party (APP), also demonstrated their belief in and obedience to the federal character and zoning principles. While their presidential candidate had emerged from the southwestern part of Nigeria, they arrived at the choice of a Northwesterner as his deputy presidential candidate. It is to the credit of the party that despite it did not win the presidency for scholars to intellectually interrogate their mannerism towards power sharing, their operationalization of the zoning principle in some of the states they controlled at this time showed how committed they would have been if they had been in charge of the centre. Taking Kogi state for instance where Prince Abubakar Audu from the eastern flank of the state became the governor, Patrick Adaba from the central senatorial zone was made his deputy while the speaker to the house of assembly as well as secretary to state government went to the western

senatorial district. This pattern of distributing power which takes cognizance of the three senatorial zones of a state was replicated in Ondo State during the administration of Dr. Olusegun Mimiko who won governorship under the platform of the Labour Party (LP). While Mimiko was meticulous in picking his deputy from the northern senatorial district of the state, the state legislature otherwise called the house of Assembly as a result elected a speaker from the southern zone.

Although it may appear inapt to appraise the All Progressive Congress (APC) on the issue of Zoning and/or rotation of power on grounds that it is yet to spend the first four years as a ruling party as at the period of this discuss, the outlook of how power was shared amongst the six geographical zones showed that it has considerable regard for federal character and the zoning principles. While the president of the federal republic emerged from the northwestern part of the country, and the vice president from the south west, the senate president and his deputy hailed from the northcentral and southeast respectively. Within this zoning arrangement too and in fairness to the northeast and south-south regions, the house of representative speakership as well as party chairmanship were respectively zoned to these regions.

This adherence to the federal character principle is in consonance with the All Progressive Congress (APC) constitution whose article 20 (iv) reads that:

> Without prejudice to article 20 (ii) and (iii) of this constitution, the national working committee shall subject to the approval of the national executive committee, make rules and regulations for the nomination of candidates through primary elections. All such rules, regulations and guidelines shall take into consideration and uphold the principle of federal character, gender balance and geopolitical spread and rotation of offices to as much as possible ensure balance within the constituency covered.

For the positions which these zoning or power sharing arrangement should apply, they were particularly mentioned in article 20 (iii) as local government area councilors and their various chairmen, house of assembly and federal house of representative membership, the senate and presidency. All these show that despite the covert appearance of the idea of zoning in the Nigerian constitution, political parties operating in the country have

demonstrated the extent to which they cherish it ideals within their own limits and capacities.

Observed Setbacks to the Practice of Zoning in Nigeria

A major setback to the zoning arrangement in Nigeria is the incongruity of the constitution. Despite making provision for adherence to the principle and practice of federal character, the nation's number one document went further to throw open irrespective of region, the eligibility to contest for elective offices in each electoral constituency. Section 131 of the 1999 Constitution for instance provides that: A person shall be qualified for election to the office of President if – (a) he is a citizen of Nigeria by birth; (b) he has attained the age of forty years; (c) he is a member of a political party and is sponsored by that political party; and (d) he has been educated up to at least School Certificate level or its equivalent. Opponents of the zoning arrangement or those who discolor it for greed and selfish interest often opine that the constitutional provisions above accentuate the legal requirements to be met by any presidential aspirant in Nigeria. Consequently, any further conditions or restrictions placed by the guideline of any political party including zoning policies are a fortiori, unconstitutional, null and void to the extent of that inconsistency (Vanguard, 2010).

One of those who observably exploited this constitutional lacuna to pursue personal political interest was former president Goodluck Jonathan who in the run up to the 2011 presidential election maintained in an interview granted to the Cable News Network (CNN) that he was not barred by any law from contesting the polls despite a purported understanding and arrangement by his party members that the presidency remained in the north despite the death of Umaru Musa Yar'adua (see Onabanjo, 2010). Similarly, save for divine intervention in places like Kaduna and Kogi, major ethnic nationalities in many states have hardly allowed the minorities to taste governorship despite the existence of zoning arrangements in the parties which control these states. This has been the case for example with Benue and Rivers where minority tribes have never tasted governorship since the beginning of the fourth republic.

Related to this constitutional constraint imposed on the practice of zoning in Nigeria is the sit-tight syndrome which is characteristic of the average political office holder in Africa. While historical records showed how the likes of Mobutu Sese Seko, Ibrahim Babangida, Sani Abacha, Idi Amin,

Mamman Gadhafi and Yahaya Jamail to mention just a few undemocratically held on to power for many years, the syndrome is still very much with Nigeria as many post military era politicians like Olusegun Obasanjo as president (1999-2007) and Ibrahim Idris of Kogi State (2003-2011) were reluctant to quit power at the end of their constitutionally allowed second tenure in office. While Obasanjo embarked on a failed attempt to amend the constitution to allowed him contest for a third term in office, Ibrahim Idris was sacked out of office after exceeding the constitutionally stipulated eight years as governor of Kogi State.

Another major factor that have over the years undermined the idea and practice of zoning in the Nigerian polity is exigency politics which paves way for political opportunism and marginalization. While zoning might be agreed upon in principle, its actual implementation is subject to the exigency of any particular political moment. Learning for instance from the lessons of 2015 in which it loses election to the superior population might of the northern voting bloc, the PDP immediately after that poll, quickly announced that it has zoned the presidency to the northern part of the country (Premium Times, 2018). This is not an isolated case, for in attempts to win elections, parties have often fielded candidates who they feel possess the electoral value to win the electoral contests. This have been the case in states like Kogi, Benue, Kaduna, and Rivers where it has been psephologically proved that the major ethnic groups have since 1999 exploited their population during elections to hold on to power. It is also in similar vein, that a former Governor of Kano State and presidential aspirant on the platform of the PDP, Senator. Rabiu Musa Kwakwaso, urged the leading opposition party to consider picking its presidential candidate from the North West if it wants to win the 2019 general elections. This is in view of the fact that the northwest region of the country has been the largest voting bloc since 1999. In Benue, the Tivs control two senatorial districts out of the three in the state. On their own part, the Igalas are said to constitute over 56% of the total population of Kogi state. It is not contestable therefore that in a country like Nigeria where election results most time reflect ethnic and regional affiliations, these larger ethnic nationalities would at will exploit their demography to selfishly hold on to power.

Another major issue bedeviling zoning as a political practice in Nigeria is lack of political will by the ruling elite to adhere to its tenets. Ethno religious and regional sentiments including political and financial influences have obviously interrupted the smooth operation of zoning in Nigeria. There

exists for instance, an allegation of conspiracy against former president Obasanjo that he deliberately supported and enthroned late Umar Musa Yar'adua because he knew his ill health would overwhelm him to pave way for a southerner to return back to power. This conspiracy theory seems to have been confirmed when former president Olusegun Obasanjo unapologetically supported and campaigned for president Goodluck Jonathan during the 2011 elections against the believe of the northern political elite that one of them should have been supported to replace the late president. Also, banking on their demographic strength which no doubt is capable of influencing party congresses, the PDP chairmen in the northern part of Nigeria vehemently rejected the zoning of national chairmanship to the southwest (Premium Times, 2017) despite the fact that the position has never come close to that region. This pathetic situation Ogundele, (2017) succinctly captured when he opined that it is only logical to make someone from the Southwest the National Chairman. Since the formation of the PDP in 1998, nobody from that zone has been elected into that position and this is the right time and opportunity to correct the abnormally.

Conclusion

Taking a cursory look into the zoning arrangements which has been adopted and operationalized by the political parties which have managed the affairs of the various units of the country since 1999, it was observed that the practice of zoning is not as bad as it has been portrayed in some quarters. Instead like in Switzerland, it is supposed to entrench fairness, equity and justice into the Nigerian electoral political terrain which over time has been characterised by the perpetual domination of the major ethnic groups over the minorities. The major ethnic groups have often capitalized on their numerical strength to perpetually retain power and allocate almost all state resources to their domains. Efforts by the minority whether at the central or state level to have a taste of the executive powers of the state have often been squashed by the numerical strengths and forces of the majority. So many ethnic groups which constitute minorities in their domiciled states have never produced governors of such states and do not have hope of doing so unless an arrangement of zoning is put in place to assist them.

Although attempts have been made by some political parties and elite groups to rotate and share power among ethnic nationalities in the country likewise some states of the federation, religious and ethnic sentiments,

political and financial influences, as well as the sit-tight syndrome exhibited by every ruling elite have often undermined these arrangements so that they do not achieve the intended objective. We therefore agree with the position of Adibe in 2017 who while arguing that at the root of the north-south dichotomy is the distribution of power between the two blocs and access to infrastructure and privileges at the federal level, admonished that it will be helpful to institutionalize or codify the attempted conventional system of power sharing and rotating the presidency between the two blocs as an interim measure until the country's democracy matures and trust between the two blocs and among Nigerians has improved.

Recommendations

Following the observations and conclusion above, the following admonitions form the basic recommendations of this paper.

x. The principle of zoning and rotation of elective/appointive office positions should be encouraged by all political parties which seek to participate and manage public offices in Nigeria.

xi. The zoning and rotation of power should be done on the basis of the current six zones (north-east, north-west, north-central, southeast, southwest and south-south) within which Nigeria and its people are currently geographically partitioned.

xii. Similarly, the rotation of these elective/appointive office positions at the level of the states should be on the basis of the three senatorial districts of each state of the federation. Interestingly, a major feature of ethnicity in Nigeria is one in which each ethnic group live in an identifiable geographical region/zone/district as the case may be. For instance, the three largest ethnic groups are concentrated in the sorth-west, south-west, and south-east zones respectively, while the smaller groups reside mainly in the South-south, North-central and North-east zones.

xiii. The political class particularly the governing elite should find a way of constitutionalizing this principle and practice to give it all the legal backings it deserves for effective implementations. When this is done, the Independent National Electoral Commission would not only be able to reject the candidates of parties which fail to comply but it will sanction them appropriately.

xiv. The regulatory and implementation agencies such the INEC, political parties and civil societies should endeavour to carry out massive political education and sensitization programmes in this regard so as to give room for proper comprehension of this principle at the various levels which they are to be implemented.

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