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ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION; AN ANALYSIS OF ELECTORAL NIGERIA BETWEEN 2011-2018

MASTER'S THESIS

Ene Gift LINUS

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DEDICATION

I hereby declare that all information in this thesis document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results, which are not original to this thesis.

Ene Gift LINUS

FOREWORD

September, 2020   **Ene Gift LINUS**

EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION; AN ANALYSIS OF ELECTORAL NIGERIA BETWEEN 2011-2018

ABSTRACT

Democracy on this thesis paper is not enough. The observance and maintenance of free, fair & violence-free election is of paramount importance and yet, very crucial to establish and manifest the principle of representative democracy in any country. The power and ability of citizens to vote and be voted for in a country and to be able to have a say in the government through a peaceful demonstration can and will always significantly add weight greatly to the future of political participation in that country. Therefore, understanding why violent election occurs and mapping out a possibility of preventing it should be of great importance for any society. Electoral violence in Nigeria is an unfortunate phenomenon due to its re-occurrences she the country became a federation in 1963. Usually, the violence and killings occur either before election (electoral campaign) or after election. Overtime, the electoral violence grew from a few individuals killing other people to a mass violent protest involving a considerable amount of youths taking to the streets with all kinds weapon which in several instances claimed lives, properties and thus creating a negative effect on the concept of political participation involving protest. This research will focus mainly on the root causes of electoral violence. The studies will analyze the forms of electoral violence in Nigeria and its effects on political participation in the country. By so doing, argues for a relationship between electoral violence and political participation with a focus on analyzing the negative impacts caused. Thus, put forth an answer to the following research question: What are the effects of violence on political participation and how can it be averted or managed?

Keywords: Nigeria, Political Violence, Electoral Violence, Realism, Political Participation, Voting Behaivior

ŞİDDETİN SİYASAL KATILIM ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİLERİ; 2011-2018 ARASINDA SEÇİCİ NİJERYA ANALİZİ

ÖZET

Kâğıt üzerinde demokrasi yeterli değildir. Özgür, adil ve şiddetsiz bir seçim, herhangi bir ülkede temsili demokrasinin derinleşmesi için çok önemlidir. Vatandaşların bir ülkede oy kullanma ve oy kullanma ve hükümette barışçıl bir protesto ile söz sahibi olma yeteneği, o ülkedeki siyasi katılımın geleceğine büyük katkıda bulunabilir. Bu nedenle, şiddetli seçimlerin neden meydana geldiğini anlamak ve bunu önleme olasılığını planlamak her toplum için büyük önem taşımalıdır. Nijerya'daki seçim şiddeti, ülkenin 1963'te federasyon haline gelmesi nedeniyle talihsiz bir fenomendir. Genellikle şiddet ve cinayetler ya seçimden önce (seçim kampanyası) ya da seçimden sonra gerçekleşir. Fazla mesai, seçim şiddeti, birkaç kişiden başkalarını öldüren, çeşitli durumlarda yaşam, mülk iddia eden ve bu sayede protesto içeren siyasi katılım. Bu araştırma esas olarak seçim şiddetinin temel nedenlerine odaklanacaktır. Araştırmalar, Nijerya'daki seçim şiddetinin biçimlerini ve ülkedeki siyasi katılım üzerindeki etkilerini analiz edecek. Bunu yaparak, neden olunan olumsuz etkileri analiz etmeye odaklanarak seçim şiddeti ve siyasi katılım arasında bir ilişki olduğunu savunmaktadır. Bu nedenle, aşağıdaki araştırma sorusuna bir cevap verin: Şiddetin siyasi katılım üzerindeki etkileri nelerdir ve nasıl önlenebilir veya yönetilebilir?

Anahtar Kelimeler: Nijerya, Siyasi Şiddet, Seçim Şiddeti, Gerçekçilik, Siyasi Katılım, Oy Verme Davranışı.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CAN   **:** Action Congress of Nigeria

ADP   **:** Alliance for Democratic Party

ANPP   **:** All Nigerian People's Party

CPC   : Congress for Progressive Change

CDC   **:** Constitution Drafting Committee

EUEOM   **:** The European Union Electoral Observation Mission

FEDECO   : Federal Electoral Commission

INEC   **:** Independent National Electoral Commission

IO   **:** International Organization

NCNC   : National Council of Nigerian Citizens

NDI   **:** National Democratic Institute for international affairs

NPC   **:** Northern People's Congress

NRCP   **:** National Republican Convention Party

NYSC   **:** National Youths Service Corps

PVC   **:** Permanent Voter's Card

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I.   INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian democracy for a long time, has been in a state of continuous political turmoil since the country gained its independence in 1960 as a result of a constant presence of electoral malpractice and an unending presence of electoral violence. The period between 2011-2018 in particular witnessed an immense electoral violence such that has not been seen in the last three presidential elections in 1999, 2003 and 2007

(Vasudevan, 2011). This crisis which started on 18th of April, 2011 started as soon as Goodluck Ebele Jonathan of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) emerged victorious and was declared the winner with "56% of the total vote cased, which equals to 22.5 million votes" (BBC, 2011), against Muhammadu Buhari of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) whom took the second position with "12.2 million votes" while Mallam Nuhu Ribadu of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) took third position with "2.08 million votes" (Vasudevan, 2011).

Muhammadu Buhari of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) refused to concede defeat (Jameel, 2011). Buhari alleged that, the counting of votes, the collation of the outcomes from different polling stations and the preparation of the final score sheets of the 2011 election was done over 48hours thus it was argued that, the procedure adopted in the polls were believed to have had many irregularities which in turn resulted in election malpractice perpetrated by the People's Democratic Party (Vasudevan, 2011). Buhari's claims and his refusal to concede defeat encouraged his supporter's to not accept the election result. In the process of showing off their intentions towards the election result and the plans to make changes to the election result, violence erupted as many angry Nigerians took to the street to protest.

This electoral violence that first started in the form of "political riot" continued to reoccur in other forms such as kidnapping and luting of the homes of supporters of President

Jonathan the end of the four years term in office of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. Furthermore, Despite the claim that, 2015 was peaceful and power was democratically passed down from the ruling party to the opposition party, the 2015 election did not escape electoral related violence. In fact, prior to the 2015 general election, attacks had already started in the towns of Biri and Dakku that lead to the death of about 14 people while in the town of Miringa, armed groups burnt down people's houses and shot the people as they were escaping the fire from the house before polls (Aljazeera, 2015).

It was also reported that, "at least 39 people were killed by suspected Boko Haram fighter" during the 2015 electoral poll (Aljazeera, 2015). While in the Eastern part of Nigeria, it was reported that, about "two car bombs exploded at two polling stations in

South Central Enugu State without hurting anyone" while another two car bombs were detonated at a primary school in the same Enugu State (Aljazeera, 2015).

There was also a considerable number of people that died during the 2015 in the Southwest part of Nigeria, in Delta States, in Lagos State and in Rivers State (Campbell, 2019). The above crises left many dead and others displaced as thousands of people lost their homes in an effort to escape the violence. In fact, the violence according to Human

Rights watch, "degenerated into sectarian and ethnic bloodletting across the Northern

States. The Northerners predominantly Muslim took the streets in riots thus targeting the

Christians in the Southern part of Nigeria which resulted to death of many in both Christian and Muslim group but much death was recorded in the Christian part, who were perceived to have supported the ruling party, burning their churches, shops and homes, The incident further escalated and eventually resulted to attack in various police stations, the ruling party bureau as well as the electoral commission offices. In predominantly Christian retaliated by killing Muslims and burning their mosques and properties." (Campbell, 2019).

Unfortunately, electoral violence is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria. It has been ongoing for the past 6 decades in the country. In fact, it is so extreme that, most

youths in Nigeria are like gold, so preciously kept in preparation for an attack. The youths in Nigeria are as important to politicians as tools are important for mechanics. The importance of Youths to political elites in Nigeria lies on the need for, to perpetuate the electoral violence" given that, so many of the youths are uneducated and unemployed.

However, regardless of the lack of education and employment amongst the youths in Nigeria, cheering them to engage in violence during and after election is a violation of their human rights and the rights of other voters and therefore, against the principle of democracy as established in Nigeria's constitution.

The adoption of the principle of democracy as found in the chapter two of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) argues that, "The Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be a State-based on the fundamental principles of strong democratic and social justice system" in which, "the welfare & security of her people ought to be and in fact, must be the principal purpose of government" (WIPO, 1999). Thus, it demonstrates that, the 1999 constitution of Nigeria was put in place in order to ensure political stability and a stable democracy after a long history of civil wars and military coup (Ihonvbere, 1991) which in most cases are the results of incumbent greed for power or a dissatisfaction from an electoral result. Thus, in order to maintain a stable democracy and a peaceful political environment in Nigeria, electoral violence and other political related violence or violence in general should not be encouraged.

Therefore, this research seeks to focus mainly on the root causes of electoral violence. The thesis pinpoint and elaborates on the forms of electoral violence in Nigeria and its effects on political participation in the country. By so doing, argues for a relationship between electoral violence and political participation with a focus on analyzing the negative impacts caused. Thus, put forth an answer to the following research question: What are the effects of violence on political participation and how can it be averted or managed? To do this, this study has been divided into different chapters. The second chapter of this study will constitute a literature review on violence, a review of political violence and electoral violence. The categories of violence and how it has been used as a "Means to an end" in a political atmosphere.

The second chapter will also constitute a theoretical framework to lay the groundwork for further discussions in the subsequent chapters.

A. Objective of the research

This study will analyze the following;

1.   To explain electoral violence in Nigeria from 2011-2018.

2.   To analyze the forms of electoral violence in the country

3.   To examine the background cause of electoral violence in the country.

4.   To analyze the effects of electoral violence on the future of political participation in the country.

B. Research Method

My study will be based on secondary analysis of secondary data from the previous studies that have been conducted on violence, democracy and political participation etc., by some well-known Nigerian and international scholars. This study also uses a few primary data from the Nigerian Constitution, some election observers report and official statements from the media such as Newspapers that are accredited by the Nigerian government and NGOs in Nigeria.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW ON VIOLENCE

Many scholars and political theorists' attributes violence as part of human nature as human beings are naturally considered political animals (Aristotle). In other word, humans are self-interested beings thus therefore most of their actions results in a violent repercussion if not handled carefully. This chapter will focus on the review of some of the major theories that are often referenced in the study of political violence to understand the effects of electoral violence on political participation in Nigeria.

A. Violence as a concept

The power struggle plunged the world in violence, spreading escalating through the length and breadth of the world. Which insinuates that, "violence is seen or perceived in every society" (Jeffrey & Sophia, 2002) so much that, "No country or community is untouched by violence" writes the World Health Organization report in 2002 (WHO, 2002). Such violence includes, violence as petite as self-inflicted violence (violence against oneself), interpersonal violence (harming other people) and group violence like riots, guerilla attacks, insurgency to substantial violence such as world war, civil war, interstate war, genocide, etc., that has been on the rise between countries, within countries, between individuals, between groups, or institutions within countries. Hence, violence is considered a part and parcel of human lives, and thus an integral part of the society. That is, violence is present in every society, with or without a good awareness of it.

This realization, makes violence, a hot and fashionable topic that has attracted and still attracting the attention of many scholars simply because of the need for a conceptual and theoretical clarity about the term 'violence'. The word 'violence' is a borrowed word from the Latin which means vis (force) and latus/fero (to carry) the mixture of "vis and latus/fero is interpreted as, "to use force against/towards something" which signifies that "violence is an application of any kind of force against or towards someone or something". Force in itself should do with, "the expenditure of physical effort" (Robert, 1969). Hence this etymological and literal

meaning of violence has been for a long time, influenced many scholars towards defining violence solely with the use of physical force.

As per John Harry 1980, he defined violence as, ''an act when injury or suffering is inflicted upon a person or persons by an agent who knows (or ought reasonably to have known), that his actions would result in harms in question'' (John, 1980). Such narratives suggest that violence occurs within the context of physical injury and suffering thus, violence happens when physical force is applied and when that force had caused some physical wounds. Violence for a long time, has been perceived as, "any use of physical force or an attempt to use physical force on someone or something unlawfully writes, (Gurr, 1970). Consequently, the focus of violence was on violence like rape, chocking or strangling someone to death, hitting, torture, police brutality, murder, wars, and genocide which are the forms of violence that are visible to oneself, otherwise describe as "physical or overt violence" (Betz, 1977, pp. 339-351; Chesnais, 1992, pp.

216-234).

However, this notion of violence was challenged by other studies (Robert, 1969) (Jacquette, 2013) whom although, not disagreeing totally with the physical explanation of violence but added that, the definition of violence should also include the psychological and structural concept of violence. Meaning that, "the violence that is unseen and unknown must be engaged just as much as the violence that is seen and known" writes (Jeffrey & Sophia, 2002). In fact, Dale argued that, "harm, injury, and damages can be psychological as well as physical" (Jacquette, 2013). The point drawn from the two arguments towards violence is that, violence can be expressed within the framework of physical force such as a targeted violence, self-directed violence, interpersonal violence, collective violence, warfare and likewise, violence, can take the form of a non-physical violence such as neglect or omission, intimidation and threats.

In fact, the psycho-social violence "would include such factors like brainwashing, lies, propaganda of various kinds, threats, etc., that serve to decrease mental potentialities" (Johan, 1969). For example, it is considered an act of violence of if someone walks into a grocery store with a gun to terrorize the seller in order to steal their money. Also, an act of violence is when someone in a jealous state of mind

always hits their spouse at every point in a conversation because they once caught them cheating on them. Likewise, it should be considered an act of violence if someone threatens to kill another person even if he/she didn't end up killing the threatened person. In 2002, The World Health Organization (WHO) gave a befitting definition of violence as "The intentional use of physical force or power, real or menace against another person, oneself, or against a community or a group in a society, that either results in or has a high tendency of resulting in death, injury, maldevelopment, psychological harm and deprivation" (WHO, 2002).

Dahlberg and Krug in 2006 acknowledged the World Health Organization's definition of violence as unsurpassed definition because of the fact that, the definition according to them, "covers a broad range of outcomes, including psychological harm, deprivation and maldevelopment" thus, the definition "associated intentional with the committing of the act itself, irrespective of the outcome it produces" (Linda & Etienne, 2006). Meaning that, it doesn't really matter if the act was done or yet to be done, it is considered an act of violence if threat is evident either in a spoken word, or in signs such as body language in any way that define a threat. Thus, violence becomes, "the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is" (Johan, 1969). This so because, "many forms of violence against women, children and the elderly, for instance, can result in physical, psychological and social problems that do not necessarily lead to injury, disability or death" (Linda & Etienne, 2006).

It is against this backdrop that, this study argues that, violence evolves. That is, the availability of violence starts when factors like incomes, literacy/education, are unequally distributed. Also, if violence evolves then, the process of involvement starts when poverty kicks in, or when a particular group is tied to an extreme low social structure in a society etc. The consequences would be availability of manipulations, pressures and exploitation towards a violent act. "The significant thing to be noted here is that if the masses are starving when this is objectively avoidable, then violence is committed" (Galtung, 1967, pp. 378–416).

Additionally, a recent study about violence by Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois called "social and cultural dimension of violence" confirms that, violence can never be understood solely with the lenses of its physicality force such as when there is

infliction of pain from assault or any other form of violence. Rather, a person's dignity, sense of worth or value can also be assaulted (Bourgois, 2003). Therefore, as Nancy and Philippe (2003) argues, it is clear that, "violence can be anything and nothing, legitimate or illegitimate, visible or invisible, necessary or useless" (Bourgois, 2003). This explanation looks into different theoretical approaches used in elucidating the term violence (such as the physical, psychological, socio-cultural), it also implies that, the grouping of violence into different categories depends on the context in which the violence took place. For instance, violence that takes place in homes such as beating a child, or a spouse is regarded as domestic violence while discrimination against a person because of their sex is regarded as a gender-based violence. Likewise, there is cultural violence, sexual violence, racist violence, religious violence, and political violence etc.

Furthermore, there is also, an anthropological concept of violence called, "the everyday violence" (Kleinman, 2000). This "everyday violence" is understood to have incorporated different forms of violence (mainly political violence) into daily practices thus, raising concerns regarding the inability of the society or the government to prevent violence from reoccurring. But what exactly constitute a political violence is a question that has attracted diverse viewpoints from different scholars.

B. Political Violence

Ted Robert Gurr (1970) defined political violence as, "the unlawful physical force used for political purposes" (Gurr, 1970). He added that, violence is considered a political violence when "all collective attacks within a political community against the political regime, its actors, or its policies", and especially when the "use or threat of violence by any party or institution to attain ends within or outside the political order", is a determinant, connecting other forms of political violence (Gurr, 1970). Following this approach, Thomas E. Hill (1997) defined political violence as, "any act of violent instigated by political motives such as, forcing the political elites to repeal the law, to discredit and render the political parties useless, to bring down a government, to win an election, and importantly, to gain the grip of power in order to make and enforce laws among a group".

He further to argues that, "For the violence to be classified "political," the principal targets and aims are not merely revenge, profit, personal grudge, & the likes, but rather to partially or wholly gain and retain control of the political & legal institutions, to clearly spell out & express an ideology, to assert or gain a perceived right, etc.". The definition of political violence suggests that, political violence is mainly any violence against a state's institution, government or government officials. Thus, establishing which actor is carrying out a political act of violence against which actor. The answer from their definition imply that, there is a political violence when members of the society either in person, or in groups uses force against an existing regime for a "political purpose." However, this kind of explanation is perceived by others as a one-sided approach of the notion of political violence. For example, Craig Jenkins and Kurt Schuck defined political violence as "a non-institutionalized coercive or threatening interactions between citizens and states" (Jenkins & Kurt, 1992). Meaning that, either party (that, is, the state or the citizens) could use violence on each other in a political violence.

Hence, violence is not necessarily wage only to against the government due to the fact that, one of the basic causes of political violence at most times, is the increase in "dissatisfaction, rooting from the relative-deprivation" (Gurr 1970). That is, political violence is motivated by individual's discontent from deprivation from basic amenities to which they are entitles to in a society that they belong. Thus, Mohammed Hafez (2000) points out that, "political violence does not have a single definition" since, political violence has the capacity to "adapt to changing circumstance" (Hafez, 2000). Thus, given the hitches in the definition of political violence, what is more difficult is attempts by political theorists in trying to differentiate between violence that is 'political' and violence which is not. Some studies (Oberschall, 2000; Juergensmeyer, 2003; Wimmer, 2013), stress that, for violence to be regarded a political violence, the violent act must be carried out within the framework of the "social entity" which ought to or must clearly defined the boundary between an illegitimate & legitimate entity. The above criteria give room for identifying forms of political violence such as inter-state's war, civil war, ethnic conflict, genocide, terrorism, riot and strikes (Markus & Betty, 1972), revolutions (Snyder & Charles, 1972, pp. 520–532), counter-insurgency, etc. Others prefer to use other forms of political violence such as non-cooperation, passive resistance, or

threat of force (Galtung, 1967). Or less extreme sorts of activities such as protests, demonstrations, sabotage (Markus & Betty, 1972), electoral violence and so on. The burden of the definition of political was finally lessened when it was established by the Studies of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland in their study of violence that, before any incident can be considered a political violence, it must meet certain criteria. 1) The particular act must be directed to attaining a socio-economic, political, religious, or social goal. 2) There should and in fact, must be a visible evidence of an intention to intimidate, coerce, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) than the immediate victims. 3) The particular action ought to be and must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities" (Fatz,

2011) Hence, there is more to the definition than the initial definition by Gurr. It is against this backdrop that, this study maintains that, political violence regardless of its forms is defined as violence that is politically initiated and that, political violence in contemporary politics is prompted by the need to appoint or change political leaders into political offices thus bringing us to the main focus of this study (electoral violence).

C. Electoral Violence

The notion election in liberal democratic theory, is an integral mechanism for consummating representative government (Adigun & Said, 2006). That is, election represents the means by which, citizens choose individuals that will represent them in political offices. Mill in his argument on representative government, Mill's argues that, a representative government entail the participation of the whole people or numerous portions of them exercising their political duties thus selecting leaders who are periodically elected by electorates with the ultimate controlling power in which, every constitution must reside somewhere. This ultimate authority & power, they must possess in all its completeness" (Mill, 1948). This demonstrate that, people in a democratic society poses the ultimate power to decide who would represent them in government and election becomes the arena by which people make themselves available and if found worthy of the post is elected for the political office that he/she signed up for.

However, recent study shows that, "elections are rather a misrepresentation of democracy given that, elections connote popular but not delegated" (Claude, 2000). This establishes that, election does not necessary mean that, the right person for the office will be picked since such decision is only left in the hand of the majority. Rather, election present an avenue, a battleground for resource control, which raises the stakes and likelihood of clashes (Kwarkye, 2019). Consequently, electoral practices in many liberal democratic countries have resorted to violence (Adejumobi, 2004). Thus, Electoral violence as the name suggest is one of the forms of political violence embodying a unique identity due to "its timing and target" (Hoglund & Piyarathne, 2009). The "timing" here suggests that, this kind of violence which can range from kidnapping, looting to assassination, armed attacks, ballot-stealing, and arson (Nwolise, 2007, pp. 155-179; Omotola, 2010), usually takes place before, and after election period.

Electoral violence is ''one of the variants of political violence that aimed at influencing the behavior of the voters, candidates or distorting the results of the elections which do not reflect the verdict of the ballot box'' (UNOWAS, 2017). The concept of electoral violence is therefore a political act of violence carried out by activists or extremists with the aim of achieving a particular end. In fact, Collier and Vicente in their study perceived electoral violence as, "an effective strategy meant to keep those likely to vote for opponents away from the polls" (Paul & Vicente, 2008). Furthermore, to understand the nature of electoral violence and leader's attitude while in pursuit of political power, we should analyze the writings of Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Lock. Machiavelli observed some traits that he thought would make a leader stay in power so he argued in chapter XVIII of "The Prince" that, "the end justifies the means". In the book, Machiavelli says and I quote "leaders must not really on luck but should shape their fortune through charisma, cunning, and force because people are unreliable and untrustworthy (The Prince, 1532).

The prince has been a source of inspiration for many political leaders across the world (Kashi, 1952). Therefore, some argued that, electoral violence is a "means to an end". In trying to understand the unusual behavior of political elites towards elections, this study also explores the work of Hobbes namely the "Leviathan". In the Leviathan book of Hobbes, he argues that, "the nature of human existence selfishness in which, everyone is pursuing for their own personal selfish interest".

Hence, if given the opportunity human beings will always take advantage of each other irrespective of the consequences.

Therefore, in order to avoid this "state of nature", government was formed through the agreement of people. On the other hand, Locke in his study of Hobbesian Human Nature and Moral Judgment argues that, "Hobbes's Leviathan can effectively reduce its need for repressive violence by training people in the practical deployment of right reason" (Branstetter, 2017). Yet, training the people in the practical deployment of the right reason is not sufficient in ensuring a peaceful election because, whatever content people are feed with will determines their perception thus, political elites through various means has been brainwashing and influencing the minds of people to the benefit of their political carrier which in return, manifest itself in electoral violence and political instability. However, regardless of the targets of an electoral violence and the motives, the consequences are very devastating.

D. Theoretical Stance

"Sorel" seconded this claim that there exist a huge distant between people who imagine the world to befit their policies, & people who arrange their policies to befit the realities of the world (Sorel, 1971) signifies that there are those that sign up to comprehend the realities of life and politics and others whom knew the realities of life and politics but yet failed to acknowledge it. This understanding proceeds from the debate between the so-called idealism and realism. Although there is no single unanimous theory that can explain all the wide range of violence in the world but, "the theoretical lens (realism) that has traditionally held a central position in the study of "International relations and power politics" is probably the best way in any attempt to analyze the causes of violence in human society. Thus, this study builds on the view of the realist school of thought, its approach to the study and practice of politics in order to understand the conceptual nature of violence and conflicts, and the motivation behind people's behavior while in pursuit of political power that results in "political violence".

The goal is not to establish the cause of political violence via the realist school of thought alone but to establish that, if violence is certain as the theory claims, then there are possible means of averting or suppressing it from intensifying.

Realism as a school of thought argues that politics is centered mainly on power struggles between different actors. The word 'Power' in this context is defined by Weber (1947) as, "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will, despite confrontation, notwithstanding the basis on which this probability rests" (Weber, 1947). Or as simply defined by Dahl, "power is when A has the power over B to the extent that, A can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do" (Dahl, 1957). The exercise of this power by different political actors towards each other is what is regarded as "power politics" (Goldstein, 1999). However, the exercise of power in such an anarchic world in which there is no central authority to regulate the system, realist theorist argues that violence is absolutely inevitable and near impossible to avoid (Martin, 1999). Realists thus, embrace politics generally as an arena of conflict among actors because of the differences in individual and groups.

In its early beginning, realism was evident through the writings of Machiavelli, Thucydides, and Hobbes (known as classical realists) is prominent for laying the groundwork for the development of the theory. For example, Machiavelli wrote in the chapter XVIII of "The Prince" that, "the end justifies the means". Thus, "leaders should do all it takes so as to stay in power" even if it means going to war (Machiavelli, 1950).

Thucydides in his "classical work" titled "The account of the Peloponnesian War" added that, "the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept" (Thucydides, 1972). Thucydides writes that, "this human nature never changes because human beings are driven by three fundamental principles namely; interest, pride and fear" and so human beings will continue to result to whatever deemed necessary to preserved these three principles. Hence, political violence or any other related violence is inevitable given that there will be always a clash of interest (Ahrensdorf, 1997, pp. 231–265). By this, Thucydides concluded that, events of power struggles, political and wars etc., that has happened in the past

will still happen in the future given that, "human nature is fixed" (Gilpin, 1988, p. 59).

Likewise, Hobbes argued that, "human beings are selfish creatures seeking to dominate and rule over each other". Hobbes established that, "there are genetic flaws that pushes human kind into behaving negatively" (Koestler, 1967). However, this view was underestimated by critics until after the outbreak of World War I. Goldstein states that, "realism resurfaced again aftermath of WWII as the focus was then shifted more and more from the liberal tradition ideal called "Idealism" (Goldstein, 1999). The theory "Idealism" buttresses and put much emphasis international laws, on morality, & International organizations (IO) as opposed to power alone as the major effect on international events. More importantly, 'idealist' argued that, "human nature is good so, the international community is a community of States that have the potential to work together for the greater good" (Goldstein, 1999). This view realized their short coming when another world war broke out in 1939. In fact, Carr in his seminal book called "The

Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International

Relations" Carr openly criticize the supposed "universal morality" of "idealist theory" (Carr, 1961). After the end of the second world war, contemporary realists such as Kenneth Waltz, Hans Morgenthau, Edward Hallett Carr, and many others argues that, "international politics is governed by objective, universal law based on national interest defined as power. Thus, it is evident that, violence in politics and skepticism about the human nature go hand in hand for the reason that, in the process of fighting for a governmental position, conflict is inevitable due to the differences in individual's interest. The defects in 'human nature' which is seen to be "selfish and in a constant pursuit of personal interest in power", (Shedrack, 2009) shows why most political elites in their pursuit of power in Nigeria results to violence with the aims of achieving political goals irrespective of the consequences on the democratic process in Nigeria. Recent study affirmed that, "People appeal to human nature either when they feel the need to defend the status quo or when they wish to attack it" (Yanklelovich, 1973).

Therefore, any opposition parties with less confidence of winning or with the perception of being cheated in an election would turn to violence in an effort to

change the situation towards their advantage (Hoglund, 2009; Newman, 2013). This has been the usual routine of most elections in Nigeria as violence is often always surfacing when and only when an existing and dominating party has lost greatly in an election (Onapajo, 2014, pp. 27-51).

Kenneth Waltz (1979) in his book titled the Theory of International Relations explained that, violence is constant and nearly impossible to avoid due to perceptions, interpretation, and security dilemma in what he termed "defensive realism" (Fischer 2019). This suggest a situation whereby, political parties seek to maximize power by preserving the existing balance of power via defensive strategies. The major aim of political parties or candidates is to ensure survival and safety hence competition between different actors leads to aggressive moves due to threat perceptions and interpretations. Consequently, this aggression, expansion and subjugation will leave the State's institutions weaker and less secured because an attempt by one party to gain advantage over the other will provoke a counterbalancing behavior by another party therefore violence is inevitable. Thus, the realization that, "violence is inevitable in human societies" should stand as enough precaution in any political dealing, to ensure that, there are always adequate resources available to maintain peace and other.

III. NIGERIA'S POLITICAL HISTORY IN THE 20TH CENTURY

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is a country located in the western part of Africa with a population of over two-hundred million (200M) (Worldometers, 2019). Nigeria, the giant of Africa due to its population, is a country rich in natural resources, human resources, culture and yet, the country's political atmospheres has always been clouded by the presence of violence in almost every election thus rendering the country vulnerable to political instability ever since the country gained her independence in 1960. Yet, much of the acts and practices that resulted in violence of electoral practices in the country for almost six decades have remained unchanged. Therefore, it is worth the effort in this chapter to analyze firstly, Nigeria as a country briefly, analyze the postindependence policies in Nigeria. Secondly, to give a detail analysis of electoral violence in Nigeria from 2011-2018. In this chapter, the background cause of the violence, and the measures taken to combat the electoral violence will be analyzed in order to establish reasons for the failure of the supposed measures taken that resulted in the reoccurrence of electoral violence in Nigeria. Therefore, it is important to also explore the democratization process in Nigeria after independence.

Today, Nigeria is a federation of 36 states namely; Abuja (the federal capital territory), Abia, Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Delta, Ebonyi, Enugu, Edo, Ekiti, Gombe, Imo, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kogi, Kwara, Lagos, Nasarawa, Niger, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, Plateau, Rivers, Sokoto, Taraba, Yobe, Zanfara. These 36 states constitute over 250 different languages and about 400 tribes. The majority of the Hausa and Fulani tribe lives in the Northern part of Nigeria. The majority of the Yoruba people live in the Western part of Nigeria. While the Ibo people live in the Eastern part of Nigeria (Edward, 1961). The rest of minority groups live within the Hausa-Fulani, the Igbo and the Yoruba. Thus, "Nigeria has always been faced with the challenge of trying to form a sense of Nigerian belonging and identity" (Aljazeera, 2010). In fact, Nigeria

is so big (regarded as the giant of Africa) because of its huge population and cultural diversity. This diversity was one of the consequences of the legacy of colonial rule, the amalgamation of the Southern, Northern, Easter and Western region to form one colony by Fredrich lord Lugard. That is, the British conqueror Fredrich Lord Lugard joined the 4 regions (North, South, East and West together) to form one colony in what is now known today as Nigeria. However, the four regions are so different from each other in terms of language, culture, religion and even in natural resources. The Southern region has the highest crude oil than the other regions combined and so they feel they should be entitled to more revenue allocation but the Northern region which has almost no natural resources except gold has more control of political power thus has more control over the national revenue allocation hence Each of the regions wants to be in power in order to have a share of the national revenue and would do anything to remain in power hence there is a huge tension between the different regions which always manifest in violence during electoral process. In fact, between 1960 when Nigeria gained independence, Nigeria has undergone 4 different phases of republics and several military rules. Therefore, to understand the democratization process in Nigeria, it is important here to explore the different republics in Nigeria.

A. Post- Independent Politics in Nigeria (The First Republic)

Nigeria's declaration of independence on the 1st of October 1960 meant a hope for a better Nigeria because, "at independence, Nigeria due to its abundant and material resources had all it takes to be great" (Muhammad, 2014). The giant of Africa, the newly "biggest black free nation" (Edward 1961), adopted a federal constitution that includes a comprehensive bill of rights, a multi-party system and also gave autonomy to the three (North, West and South) and later four (North, West, East and South) regional administrative unit. With such a parliamentary democracy that resembles that of the British parliamentary democracy that respects the rights of the citizens including the minority rights, "Nigeria became a symbol of hope for democracy and democratic norms" (Muhammad, 2014) in Africa yet, "Nigeria today is struggling with political instability", election malpractice and a reinforced electoral violence "due to the socioeconomic and political crisis which pushes the citizens to struggle to protect and promote their interests" (Koku 2017).

Although, some blamed it on corruption and bad leadership (Joseph 202), others other's blamed it on the legacy of colonial rule in the country (Nnabugwu, 2008) because, as

Cletus remarked, "Nigeria is still heavily under the influence of the British government

(Okeke, 2001). In fact, after the declaration of independence in which Sir Abubakar

Tafawa Balewa of Northern People's Congress (NPC) became the Prime Minister (Head of Government) and Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe of National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) became the president while, the real presidential leverage resides on the Queen of England as a ceremonial head of State of Nigeria. This arrangement of independent constitutional rule in Nigeria continued until 1963 when the first republic was declared.

With the establishment of a republic in 1963 presidential power was vested with Nnamdi Azikiwe. Yet, this didn't erase the legacy of the British colonial rule in Nigeria. One of the solemn consequences of the British colonial legacy rest upon the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorate that was joined together with Lagos to form a single colony by Sir Fredrich Lord Lugard in 1914. The Northern and the Southern region that was joined together by Lord Lugard were different in every way. They spoke different languages and had different cultures. The worst came with the establishment of the Richard constitution in 1946 that led to the creation of the Regional House of

Assembly for the three regions of South, West and North regions "to serve as the fulcrum of politics in the regions" (Alapiki, 2005). This arrangement was unfortunate such that "Whenever any party or group felt strongly aggrieved over any significant national issue, the natural thing to do was to threaten secession from the federation" remarked Henry E. Alapiki (Alapiki, 2005). It was these grievances coupled with the questions about the credibility and transparency in elections in post-independence Nigeria that led to the fall of the first republic that lasted from 1963-1966. It was alleged that, "there was massive rigging in the 1965 elections" (Ini, 2019) which led to accusations and counteraccusations of electoral fraud and

corruptions leading to Nigeria's first military coup on January 15 1966 (Obi-Ani & Obi-Ani, 2016).

The coup resulted in the death of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (Nigeria's first prime minister) and several other government officials. With empty seats for the head of State, the army commander Major-General Aguiyi-Ironsi took over power and immediately abolished the federal structure and replaced it with a unitary style of government structure. Six months later, there was a counter coup in July 1966 from the Northern part of Nigeria led to the death of Aguiyi-Ironsi. Thus, the country was on a verge of a civil war given that, the voting patterns in Nigerian election prior to independence and after independence had revealed preferences based on ethno-regional limitations (Kifordu, 2013) and tensions between the two opposing regions of the North and the South was on a rise, the country was drawn to a civil war between the Federal government and the 'Biafran forces' when Lieutenant Yakubu Gowon took over power. Although prior to the civil war, Yakubu Gowon, seeing the tension between the both regions had taken measures to avoid being assassinated in another counter coup thus, he (Gowon) restored the federal structure back to the Nigerian government with a promise of democratic rule instead of the military rule. Few months later, the Eastern Region of Nigeria declared their intention of secession and the establishment of an independent state named the "Republic of Biafra" (Commonwealth.org, 2019). This decision led to a civil war, which lasted until 'Biafra' was defeated in 1970. Although the war ended in 1970, the grievances and the legacy of the war remains and still affect voting preferences in subsequent elections because many lives were lost as well as many properties destroyed (Obi-Ani & Obi-Ani, 2016).

B. Post- Independent Politics in Nigeria (The Second Republic)

The second republic was the period between 1979-1983. After the military overthrow the first republic and assumed power, the Nigerian State remained under a series of military rulers from 1966 until the year 1979 when Major General Olusegun Obasanjo initiated the transition process to a civilian rule in 1979. These processes include; drafting a new constitution through setting up a Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC).

The constitution created a Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) to organize and conduct elections and further entrusted the fiscal and monetary policy on the president thus ending the previous Westminster system of government previously used in the first republic and replaced it with an American-styled presidential system.

However, despite the trivial change to a presidential parliamentary system, the military regime failed to address the issues of electoral campaigns, vote riggings and electoral malpractice in the second republic. Therefore, after the ban on political activities was lifted, several political parties competed in a series of elections in 1979 in which Alhaji Shehu Shagari of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) was elected president with huge voting turnout and General Obasanjo peacefully transferred power to him (Shehu Shagari) as president thus ushering in a second republic in Nigeria. The general population was starting to have faith in the government that seem very promising and focused given that the country's economy was booming fueled by increasing oil production and rising oil prices. However, the blessings from the oil resources soon became a curse as remarked Rotimi T. Suberu, "Nigerian federalism during the Second Republic was primarily undermined by the relentless competition among regionallybased constituencies and elites for access to federally-controlled patronage which is derived overwhelmingly from oil revenues" (Rotimi, 1992). Thus, the fight for the control over the oil and other resource-based revenue resulted in greed, corruption, mismanagement hence, another disappointment of failed promises of a better Nigeria and a better future for the Nigerian citizens was on the way along with the 1983 general election. An election which was marred by violence and allegations of widespread vote rigging led to clashes over the election results (Falola & Julius, 1985). This electoral related violence and intensifying political conflict eventually resulted in a military coup on of 31 December 1983 that ended the second republic.

C. Post – Independent Politics in Nigeria (The Third Republic)

Election related violence resulting from "the polarization of ethnic and regional conflict" coupled with fight over resource leverage by greedy leaders resulted in corruption and mismanagement of the country's revenues leading to the collapse of

Nigeria's first and second republic and a central concern for the design of the third republic (Diamond, 1987). In fact, some studies have argued that, the four years term in office employed from the second republic is not enough time for leaders to effectively put their best skills to work because, "with everything up for grabs, it was highly likely that a failed and fraudulent election would bring the system crashing down" (Diamond, 1987).

The logic of serving the nation other than self is what the Nigerian political leaders have refused to accept into the Nigerian democracy and for so long, election related violence has always been instigated by political elites who did not have their way in an election. In fact, the third republic did not escape the violence despite the intervention of Major Ibrahim Babangida. The third republic only lasted between 1992-1993. This was because, after the ban on political activities was lifted in 1989, in December 1990, General Ibrahim Babangida allowed for local government elections followed by state legislative elections in 1991 while the presidential election was postponed until 12 June

1993 due to political unrest.

In the 1993 presidential election, M.K.O Abiola of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) won a decisive victory in the presidential election against Bashir Tofa of the National Republican Convention Party (NRCP). Unfortunately, M.K.O Abiola did not assume power because, On 23 June 1993, Major Babangida annulled the presidential election and appointed Ernest Shonekan, to manage state affairs as "interim government" while he resigned. This "interim government" was not accepted by Nigerians thus, in order to avoid riots escalating into a civil war, the "interim government" was declared illegal by the Lagos High Court in November 1993 (Kifordu, 2013). Therefore, given that, the interim government was declared illegal, General Sanni Abacha (another military personnel, the most senior after IBB) took over power and forced Shonekan's resignation on November 17, 1993 leading to the end of the third republic.

D. Post- Independent Politics in Nigeria (The Fourth Republic)

Following the death of General Sani Abacha in 1998, General Abdulsalami Abubakar (Abacha's successor) took over power and initiated a transition process

that ensured the return of democratic rule to Nigeria when he allowed for the drafting of a new constitution on May 29, 1999. The drafting of the constitution marks the beginning of the fourth republic and the current republican government in Nigeria till date. The 1999 constitution like the 1979 adopted the American styled presidential system instead of the British Westminster system of government. The constitution included the separation of powers, a bill of rights, a multiparty system and a secular state. After the ban on political activities was lifted, new political parties were formed such as People's Democratic Party (PDP, Alliance for Democratic Party (ADP), and All Nigerian People's Party (ANPP) etc., and elections were set for April 1999. The election took place accordingly and Olusegun Obasanjo (a former military ruler) won the election and was sworn in as president and commander in chief of the arm forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Olusegun Obasanjo of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) ruled as Nigerian president for 8 years (two term) from 1999-2007. There were subsequent elections and so far, the fourth republic has been the longest civilian rule in Nigeria and still ongoing yet, it doesn't suggest that, Nigerian election is violence-free rather, electoral related violence continues to threaten the growth of democracy in Nigeria and continue to have negative impact on the political participation in the country.

E. Checks and Balance in Nigerian Political System

After gaining independence from Great Britain in 1960, Nigeria in the early stage of her independence adopted a parliamentary democracy and a federal constitution that resembles that of the British parliamentary democracy but was later shifted to a presidential system that resemble that of the United States. One of the reasons for a federal constitution was in order to ensure autonomy to the 4 (North, West and South) and later four (North, West, East and South) regional administrative units. Another reason for a federal constitution was in order to rheostat the Nigerian fast-growing population. The Nigerian federal presidential system according to the 1999 constitution established the system of checks and balance by establishing the Legislative body, the Executive, and the Judiciary. The Legislative body called the National Assembly which consists of the House of Senates and a House of Representatives has the power to make law. The Judicial body has the power to

interpret the law made by the legislative body. The power of the Judicial body is vested in the Courts (the Supreme court, the Court of

Appeal, the Federal High Court, the High Court of the FCT; Abuja, the High Court of a State, etc.) that are established by the Federation. The Executive body has the power to exercise and maintain the law made by the legislative body and interpreted by the judicial body. The power of the executive body on the federal level is vested on the president, to be exercised by the president directly or through the Vice-President or Ministers. In regards to elections in Nigeria, the law vested the power to oversee the conduct of elections to the INEC (Independence National Electoral Commission) which should act independence outside the interference of any political party, candidates or even the president except should follow the laid down laws of the conduct of elections as set out by the constitution. However, party politics has rendered weak some of the institutions that should hold individuals and groups accountable when they act contrary to the law. Hence, individuals such as, wealthy business men/women, Philanthropists and influential business people who are not politicians in Nigeria has made it a habit to sponsor political candidates financially in order to win governmental contracts, and big projects in Nigeria. All these interests rather than the interest of Nigeria as a whole is what drive most people into politics and as candidates for one governmental position or the other, the fight for power is mostly perceived as a war against the other candidates or party thus, election becomes the battle field.

F. Electoral Violence in Nigeria between 2011- 2018

The period between 2011- 2018 in particular witnessed an immense electoral violence such that has not been seen in the last three presidential elections in 1999, 2003 and 2007. This crisis which started on 18th of April, 2011 left many people dead and many properties destroyed. However, electoral violence is not a new phenomenon to the

Nigerian electoral history. Election observation and results across the length and breadth of Nigeria, is conducted via two paradigms which are, 1) "pooling and party's election observers will record the votes cast at polling stations, 2) while second group records the number of people killed during the election period" (The Economist, 2011). Consequently, Nereus I. Nwosu (2000) says that, "several

elections conducted in post independent Nigeria have been visited with violence" thus, 2011 and 2018 wasn't any different (Nwosu, 2000). Prior to the 2011 general election, INEC (The Independence National Electoral Commission) was already having logistics problems which led to a change of date for the elections including National Assembly election (from 2nd April

2011 to 9th April, 2011), presidential election (9th April, 2011 to 16th April, 2011),

Governorship and State Assembly Elections (from 16th April, 2011 to 26th April, 2011).

Tension was already everywhere but after seeing the success of the National Assembly election, (consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives) on 9, April 2011 which was perceived by many to be competitive, "transparent, free and fair", there was hope that the presidential and governorship and State Assembly election would follow suit. However, recent studies argued otherwise that, "there was allegations of vote rigging, ballot stuffing and ballot box snatching" in the National Assembly election as well as other elections in 2011 (Ben & R, 2011). "Vote rigging, ballot stuffing and ballot box snatching" has in fact, been present in Nigerian Elections from the First Republic till date hence Timothy Onimisi (2015) argued that, "one of the profound major obstacle that Nigeria is dealing with for decades now is the choosing and electing political leaders at both local-government and central government which is observed without transparency, free-fair elections" (Onimisi, 2015). Reasons been that, "the Nigerian electoral process over the years has been characterized by intimidation, insecurity, rigging, snatching of ballot box and killings" (Onimisi, 2015). Consequently, "Violence has become part of the political culture in Nigeria such that all elections are virtually violence-ridden" (Laden, 2007). The tables below demonstrate in details the electoral violence in Nigeria between 2011-2018.

Table 1. Overview of 2011 Electoral Violence in Nigeria

number	State/province	Kinds of violence	Casualties (death)
1	Niger	Bomb explosion	10
2	Delta, Edo, Osun	Election related violence	20
3	Kaduna	Riots kidnapping, torture	500
4	Zaria	Riots, kidnappings	180
5	Bauchi	Bomb-blast, riots	59
6	Borno	riots	20
7	Plateau	Electoral related violence	200

Source: Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) 2011

Violence that broke out in the 2011 general election according to Independence National Electoral Commission (INEC) was as a result of the "expression of frustration, disappointment and the general inability of politicians to accept defeat as well as a consequence of the "do or die" attitude of the political class to electoral contests (INEC, 2011). Meanwhile, prior to the election, that is, Incidents of violence began from the primaries through the campaign period, election day and the aftermath of the general elections. The campaign violations as reported by National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) included "vote-buying with cash

or gifts, purchasing and then destroying voter registration cards, and bribing or intimidating election officials" (NDI, 2012). The election day violence includes planting of bombs in public places to scare and intimidate voters, Clashes among party supporters or with the police, ballot box snatching etc.

The post-election violence is similar but more severe, extreme and it include such things as shootings, kidnapping and assassination of candidates or their family members, the actual bombing of innocent civilians (NDI, 2012), killings of people by angry mobs in public places. In Suleja (Niger state) for example, a bomb explosion killed about 10 people in early March 2011, during a campaign period. Few months before the general election, over 200 lives were lost in communal unrest in Plateau State (Amnesty International, 2011). While in Bayelsa, Edo, Delta and Osun, over 20 people were reported dead during the National Legislative polls (NDI, 2012). After the polls were closed (that is after the election was over), there was serious tension among party supporters and so, after the result of the election was announced, there were serious violence in a number of States, specifically States in the Northern part of Nigeria.

In Bauchi State for example, about Nine (9) NYSC members along with over fifty (50) other innocent persons were also killed (INEC, 2011). According Muslims and Christian leaders interviewed by the Human Rights Watch, there were several numbers of people that died in Various towns and villages in the Southern part of Kaduna specifically Zonkwa, Matsirga and Kafanchan. The violence left more than 500 people dead (HRW, 2011) in the three villages. In fact, the Human Rights Watch estimated that, over 180 people had died in the cities of Kaduna and Zaria in the 2011 post-electoral violence. Also, several people died in the bomb-blast in Bayelsa, Borno and Niger States. Furthermore, prior to the 2015 general election, there were already tensions and given the terrible condition of the Nigerian economy under the Jonathan's regime, Nigerians were craving for a change and Buhari happened to be the candidate for that change. As a common norm in Africa, people can predict winners before election and so Buhari's victory was speculated prior to the electoral result in the Northern and Western part of Nigeria even several States in the South. Thus, many people were ready for a fight if the electoral results say otherwise. Consequently, supporters of Jonathan perceived a foul play already going on

therefore they were prepared for the worst. Hence, the 2015 general election did not escape the Nigerian culture of electoral violence. Although, some measures were taken by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) of Nigeria to avoid any fraudulent activities towards the vote cast that would annoy supporters of the candidates for the election and spark electoral violence.

Such measure includes bio-metric measure such as the use of voter's card and card reader as a provision for the conduct of the 2015 general elections. While for the general election, INEC reports that, about sixty-eight million eight hundred thousand voters

(68.8M) were registered with the voter's card, and "an estimated 78% of the total voting age population, with approximately 82% of registrants' permanent voter cards (PVCs) were collected" (EUEOM, 2015). The two-registration figure given here according to the INEC report is because, the procedure for the voter's card registration is in two phases. The first stage involves capturing of each person's data into the system after which a temporal card is issued to the registrant. Few months later, the registrant is expected to collect a permanent voter's card (PVC) which is what will be used on the election-day for casting of votes. That been said the recorded number of deceased were not removed from the list prior to the 2015 election" as well as the "poor quality of biometric data capture and subsequently weak finger-print recognition rate during polling, the bio-metric measures, "had limited impact on the 2015 election", writes (EUEOM, 2015).

Table 2. Overview of 2015 Electoral Violence in Nigeria

Number	State/province	Kinds of violence	Casualties (death)
1	Ebonyi	Shooting by thugs, protest	10
2	Osun	Gun shots	2
3	Gombe	Shooting by thugs	2
4	River State	gunshots and explosions	2
5	Akwa Ibom State	Gun shots	1
6	Oyo	Shooting by thugs	2

Source: European Union Electoral Observer Mission (EUEOM), 2015

Furthermore, given the card reader's failure to recognize the incumbent party candidate (President Goodluck Jonathan) card and that of his wife (Patience Jonathan) despite being tried 4 times, the incumbent party (PDP) objected to the INEC that, such a new technology was not going to work perfectly without proper testing. Hence, many political parties' lost faith in the effectiveness of the bio-metric measure and relied on their campaign skills for winning in the election. Thus, it was reported by the European

Electoral Observation Mission (EUEOM) that, "the 2015 elections took place in a tense campaign atmosphere and the environment wasn't conducive, with incidents of election related violence as well as disregarding the campaign rules and regulations was observed through the length and breadth of the country" (EUEOM, 2015). Despite the "peace Accord" agreement signed by all the registered political parties to uphold peace during the 2015 general election, recent study confirmed that, many people lost their live and several other injured in the violent campaign incident (Idowu, 2016). While the 2015 electoral violence has claimed less lives than the previous 2011 election, prior to the election, there were irregularities of Boko Haram in the North-Eastern part of the country hence, for security purposes, the 2015 election was postponed for about 2 weeks. Yet, in Ebonyi State, election related violence claimed the lives of Mr. Ocho Monday, Mike Ojon, and 8 other people were killed in different locations during the 2015 gubernatorial and state Assembly elections (Nkwede, 2016). At least one policeman and a young man lost their lives in the gunshots and explosions that happened at one of the APC governorships rallies in Okrika, Rivers State (Animashaun, 2015). An APC candidate for the House of Assembly for Akwa Ibom State was shot dead by a straight bullet in Akwa Ibom State. While in Oyo State, two people lost their lives in a rally campaign.

On the day of the presidential election, two people were killed several people were injured in Osun and Gombe State. However, it is safe to say that, electoral violence didn't deteriorate further during the 2015 general election because of the substantial amount of efforts put forward towards a peaceful election by INEC, Electoral observers, NGOs and many others.

H. Causes of Electoral Violence in Nigeria

According to Dr. Nkwachukwu & and Nkiru (2012), the remote causes of electoral violence in Nigeria includes saliency of communal tensions & communal identities in politics and the lack of trust in the electoral justice system. On May 11, a report by d a 22-member panel appointed by president Goodluck Jonathan tasked with investigating the pre-election violence in Akwa Ibom and the post-election violence in the north suggests that, "provocative utterances" by politicians, and failure of the

Nigerian government from taking actions to prevent events of electoral violence in the past are the main causes for violence in parts of the country (NDI, 2012).

IV. THE OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Political participation is both a phenomenon and a practice that is observed in a democratic rule or governance. In any democratic governance, the participation of the citizens in political activity is regarded as a virtue, a symbol of political life and therefore, the best method of ensuring one's public & private interests. Participation allows expressing one's point of view and secures the greatest good for many important reasons. Political participation provides citizens with a way of dignity and value, alerting both the ruled and the rulers of their constitutional duties and responsibilities and thus facilitates broader political understanding. By involving people in the affairs of the state, participation promotes stability and order within the system. Participation does not only stimulate political learning but it also makes citizens responsible. It deepens the political awareness and increases the sense of political engagement and enhance effectiveness in a democratic political sphere. (Pervin & Saunders, 2018).

Political participation in its simplest definition is; to engage and take part in the political processes which lead to or, will lead to the selection of political leaders, to change the political landscape of the country, to determine or influence public policy. Although, elections are the major event in the political process. However, political participation cannot be limited to the electoral process only, i.e., campaigning & voting. Participation in politics incorporates a lot and applicable to various types of activities ranging from political orientations, giving awareness in terms of knowledge of politics, interest in politics, associating and identifying oneself with a political unit (a political party or its wing) thus actively engage into in political activities such as rallies, campaigning for voting in elections, a demonstration against policies, mobilizing and carrying out strikes. However, the most common and important political activities are those carried out by citizens or political parties during elections to effect changes to influence government decisions about specific problems that concern them. Furthermore, participation refers to all those activities which influence the decision-making process. These activities

include; seeking information, making a financial contribution, attending public meetings writing speeches and delivering them to create awareness, communicating with representatives to become a member in a political party, canvassing, competing for public and party offices, etc. (Pervin & Saunders, 2018). Regardless of many definitions of political participation, there is no unanimous consensus among scholars whether to include in its definition the legal activities as well as the illegal ones. Successful & unsuccessful attempts of influence and involuntary as well as voluntary action. Huntington and Nelson argued that manipulated (mobilized) & voluntary (autonomous) participation are not distinguished categories (Huntington & Nelson, 1976).

On the other hand, Weiner restricts his definition to voluntary action—the activity which is designed by the actor himself to influence governmental decision-making. When we define political behavior in such broad terms as any form of (collective or individual) involvement in any activity or the political process which has political consequences relating to the policies & the government, then naturally both illegitimate political activities (including revolutions and coups d'état) & legitimate forms of political participation (such as voting in elections, activism in interest groups, or social movements) come under its purview (Weiner 1962).

According to Weiner (1962), nine factors influence political participation which is discussed below; 1. Psychological or cognitive traits 2. The social environment 3. The political environment 4. The level of urbanization & modernization 5. The political socialization 6. The modes of participation 7. Voting 8. Campaign activities 9. The cooperative activity.

1) **Psychological or cognitive traits:** Weiner argued that social psychology has an emphasis on psychological traits which stem from individual personality and cognitive structures. These include the sense of civic duty, sociability, sense of efficacy, sense of alienation and authoritari-anism. It's believed that there's a relation between the cognitive status of low self-esteem and feeling of pessimism and alienation from society and political apathy. However, this political apathy influences on political participation differ from one country to the other.

2) **The social environment:** The social environment has a significant impact on political participation. The social environment incorporates elements like age, sex,

education, income, occupation, ethnicity, mobility and habitation. The more educated citizens are, the more & better they will be able to enlighten their political interest and knowledge to their children and as well as those in their neighborhood. In light of this, the educational institu-tions serve as the basic ground in the development of skills & articulateness of political participation through university union, schools/college/university, especially for young political aspirants. Many young political aspirants learn the importance of politics in school those prompting them to join political parties, civil right organizations, participate in meetings, discuss social issues and organize to achieve group goals as well as working towards democratization if the need arises.

3)   The political environment: To what extent a citizen receives political stimuli to participate in political activities, depends on the political environment or the political setting during which he/she finds himself/herself. The constitutional right to participate may be a defining feature of democratic political systems but isn't fully exercised. The level of political apathy & political interest has often been taken as criteria of participation and non-participation, which includes party membership, expressed interest in politics and awareness of issues. In this regard, Political parties have a crucial role to play in political partici-pation. This role partly instrumental & partly expressive. The party inspires in its members a sense of belongingness.

 It acts as a strong reference group in its title. As a neighborhood of its instrumental functions, the party contacts and registers voters select party nominees organize campaign activities, mobilizes rallies to influence the electorate during elections to vote and at other occasions to favor their programs. The rallies & campaign have their effects on polarizing party attachments and reinforcing candidate preferences. And the big aspect of the relation of the individual to his political environment is his exposure to the influence of propaganda.

4)   The level of urbanization & modernization: It has been argued that there's a direct correlation between these two processes and political participation. Both the processes help in increasing the extent of political communication which results in greater political awareness. Urbanization because the first stage of the modernization process tends to boost literacy; increased literacy tends to extend media exposure, and increasing media exposure facilitates wider political participation. Economic modernization affects political participation through socio-economic status. High

socioeconomic status is conducive for a rise within the overall amount of political participation. Modernization not only tends to extend class-based participation but also decrease communal-based participation. A majority of lower-class persons generally vote for the left parties while the bulk of the upper and middle-class persons vote for the rightist parties.

5) **The political socialization:** Socialization is a mechanism in which citizens become conscious of the ideology & issues thus identifying or associate with a specific political party. Socialization affects both amount and standard of participation. Those politically aware citizens are most of the times ready & willing to better relate their social values to their political opinion in order to collectively realize stable, internally consistent belief systems with other citizens who are politically aspired but lacks the knowledge.

6) **Modes of Participation:** There are different ways in which people participate in the political processes of a country. Some are directly related to the electoral sub-system and a few are with other political activities. Activities like voting, campaigning, etc., are a number of important modes of participation.

7) **Voting:** Taking part in the voting is the most common activity citizen actively engage in especially in modern democracies. The process and the outcome of voting are very complex thus affecting almost all the members of society either those who decide not to vote for one reason or the other. Voting determines the socio-economic & political landscape of the country ranging from the leadership-policy issues, as well as the political parties. The major criterion remains voting in elections which is consistently somewhat higher than the other measures.

8) **Campaign activities:** partaking/participation in an election campaign pursuant to mobilizing and sensitizing is another mode of political participation. Through campaigning, leaders increase or can increase their influence over the electorates and the voter turnout. Campaign activity also most of the times results in collective outcomes.

9) **The co-operative activity:** Citizens have the tendency to participate outside the electoral process—voting and election campaign. Citizens can partake in organizational or groups activity to deal with political & social problems. In such scenarios, people collaborate with each other in society in order to influence the

actions of the government. The outcome of such participation often results in a collective gain.

Political participation is not a new phenomenon, citizens across the globe have given much emphasis on it from centuries ago which is said to be inspired by the "Pericles" when he gave a famous funeral speech in Athens, Greece (431 BC). Scholars and Politicians around the globe had and are still emphasizing the unique attribute of democracy thus pinpointing the pivotal role of political participation of citizens in the policy making of their various political sphere. In the contemporary world of politics, political participation has gone beyond the scope of voting in given elections but the scope has widened up to become virtually limitless thus encompassing of varying amounts of skill, time, and resources. People are very much engaging in election campaign such as contacting public officials, to circulate a petition, join a political organization, and donate money to a candidate or a cause. Serving local governing or board of education, volunteering within the community, and running for office are sorts of participation that need significant time and energy. Organizing an indication, protesting, and even rioting are other sorts of participation (Milbrath and Goel 1977). In the modern-day politics, political participation has been a major importance and very relevant for many social groups including civil society organizations, but most importantly, is for democracy and democratization to prevail.

The increasingly salience of the daily struggles in politics across the globe, the visible distinctions between public and private spheres, the increasingly resourcefulness and the sociopolitical competences of citizens notably in the education sector, coupled with the availability and easy accessibility of profound information pertaining to politics have made possible for citizens to fully engage in politics to correct the ills of their various countries thus doing everything possible for good governance and accountability to prevail. There is no consensus on the definition of political participation amongst scholars because of the differences in perceptions and insights. Many academics defined political participation as "the engagements and activities observe by citizens that are more or less directly aimed toward influencing the policies of those held with power and authority regarding the actions they take". However, Arnstein defines political participation as a categorical term for citizen be it public or private to exercise their power in any activities

progressing gearing towards influencing the present power structures (Arnstein 1969). The differences in definition clearly shows the increasingly amount of abstraction that allow citizens to work out the different participatory avenues in politics which exposed citizens to understand the worth of losing analytical rigor and empirical precision. Neither the searched for common aspects among nominal definitions of political participations, nor the enumeration of various sorts of participations seems to finish in an encompassing conceptualization of political participation. A meticulous pragmatic approach is required to aid the identification of indispensable requirements for some phenomenon to be recognized as a specimen of political participation. In other words, one can conclude that the initial question "what is political participation" is or will be substituted for practical task: how to acknowledge a mode of participation once you see one?

In light of this, a new approach can be use as operational definition of political participation specifying the precise ingredients that are required to determine its existence. Hempel in his classical work on taxonomies and classifications, he pinpoints two general requirements for operational definitions. Firstly, he argues that an operational definition should provide "objective criteria by means of which any scientific investigator can decide, for any particular case, whether the term does or doesn't apply. What is needed may be a systematically developed set of decision rules to answer the question whether we depict a particular phenomenon as political participation. Secondly, Hempel not only argues that these decision rules must be unambiguous, he as well stressed that they need to be efficient by placing them in an exceedingly hierarchical order. In an exceedingly hierarchically ordered classification each subgroup is "defined by the specification of necessary and sufficient conditions of membership" (Hempel 1965).

Following this recommendation for political participation there is a need to develop a minimalist definition of the concept before more complex variants can be considered. Hempel further argues that, the advantage of this smallest set of decision rules is that we are able to house unproblematic cases easily; because no sophisticated arguments are required to acknowledge voting or contacting a political candidate as specimen of political participation one should always specialize in properties which could bring community participation, boycotting policies and voting's, or blogging under the identical label.

A. Political Participation in Nigeria

Political participation has become a hot topic of interest in recent years in Nigeria notwithstanding the fact that many countries in the world are becoming increasingly democratic thus observing good governance and Nigeria, is not an exception to this recent development compared to three decades ago. Democracy as it implies stands for (the government of people, by the people and for the people) which advocates & encourage a pivotal commitment and participation citizens to participate in the socioeconomic and political affairs of their states. Thus, renowned political elites across the globe argues that democracy and political participation gearing towards good governance are inseparable

(Kaase & Marsh, 1979) because "the more citizens participate in politics, the more decisions are made.

Nigerian like any other country, the notion of citizen's participation becoming a necessity in a democratic society hails from the Pericles famous funeral speech of 431430 B.C. The speech buttress and I quote "An Athenian citizen doesn't neglect the state because he takes care of his own household; and even those people who are engaged in business have a good idea of politics. We alone regard a person who takes no interest publicly affairs, not as a harmless, but as a useless character; and if few people are originators, we are all sound judges of policy" signifying that "it may be a useless character" if people should focus only on their personal or household business (a more private aspect) thus leaving aside the general public aspect unattended. In light of this notion, Benjamin Barber (1984) argues that, there should be a more 'participatory democracy' instead of the 'thin democracy' of the liberal tradition that welcomes **'pervasive privatism'** because Barber believes, "the conscious political pursuit of public goods by private sectors is destructive of private life and values" (Barber 1984). Benjamin Barber argued that instead of gluing this liberal tradition of 'pervasive privatism', there is a need to establish a 'strong democracy' that would require unmediated self-government by an engaged citizenry so that there will not be any need for "the politics of amateurs, where every man is compelled to encounter other man without the intermediary of expertise" (Barber, 1984). By 'engaged citizenry' Benjamin stresses on the importance for citizens to be directly involved in the politics of their country. Furthermore, as colonialism draws

to the end in the 1950s and as well as many countries began to gain their independence in the 1960s across Africa, there was a wide spread sensitization and need for the study of political participation that reflects the importance for citizens to take part in the decision making of their countries. On the other hand, a more rigorous definition of political participation given by (Lam) as "lawful or unlawful activities of support, making demands, debates, and other forms of expressions communicated verbally and/or through the media targeted at the government" (Lam, 2003).

Lam's definition of political participation takes into account different forms of activities such as giving supports, or making of demands on the government as part of political participation. Lam also states that there can be lawful as well as unlawful activities carried out by citizens in the name of political participation and these activities can also be expressed on social media like twitter, Facebook, Instagram, snap-chat etc., and mainstream media such as TV news, radio, newspaper publication other than physical appearance. All these implies that, the scope of government tasks and activities have lengthened and so is the scope of political participation (Norris, 2002). Political participation in Nigeria like any other country encompasses activities such as, joining political parties, contesting for political offices, attending political campaigns, rallies, giving financial assistance to parties and party candidates, casting votes, gathering of votes, counting of votes, hosting political talks on social media, demonstrations and strikes, riots, etc.

Few decades ago, to present, we have seen a huge rise in "political and economic clientelism" throughout the length and breadth of Nigeria. "Ricard Graham" argues that clientelism is an action-set built upon principle of "take here, provide there" enabling purchasers and patrons to gain from mutual help and benefit as they play parallel to a very different distinctive degree of political, social and administrative paradigms (Ronigner 2004). This definition and description of clientelism is a perfect fit for the case of Nigeria. We have seen time without numbers in which, influential and affluent individuals, entrepreneurs are directly or indirectly engage in politics of Nigeria which is totally very distant from their line of business and yet, they sponsors politicians, political parties, lobby and interest groups with huge amounts of money, provides them with lot of brand new vehicles during political campaigns, rallies, buying votes from electorates through compensation with

handsome amounts of money or a-times, with anything appealing to the electorates concerned (Kerem and Herbert 2020).

These influential individual businessmen do this all the times with the hope and believe that they will be compensated with massive government contracts thus paving them the ways to get connections in the government houses and institutions should their sponsored politicians get elected. Interestingly, political clientelism has become a norm and serious competition amongst the wealthy individuals and companies across Nigeria all looking and hoping for connection and recognition in the government. In fact, many scholars unanimously agreed that clientele politics exist even in the most developed and democratic countries across the world so long the political leaders and actors can or are able to make use of preferential allocation of resources which leaders and actors have discretion for political gain & advantage. Atypical example of this befits can be attributed to "Donald J. Trump America's with his allies".

B. The Link Between Political Participation & Electoral Violence

The correlation between violence and political participation is clearly evident in party politics which is usually channeled through the tactics of "divide and rule policies in contemporary politics". In an increasingly globalizing world in which many citizens especially, the younger generation participates or are expected to participate in politics of their countries, we observed a huge rise in party politics amongst the youths of Nigeria all influenced by the hope of making changes thus making their concerns and voices heard that will guarantee winning a political position and seats in their respective constituencies, government institutions and amongst other things. All these trends in recent decades have been highly influenced and determined by the level of popularity and influence of political parties thus using extra skills, maneuver and propaganda as avenues to gain influence and popularity. (Mansfield & Snyder, 2005).

That been said, violence and political participation in Africa and Nigeria to be precise, is like an incurable epidemic. Regardless of recent attempts and wide scope advocacy to have development and democratization across Nigeria in which,

citizens' rights to freely exercise their civic and political rights such as participating in campaigns, voting in any given local and central government elections are seriously undermined. This frustration and institutionalized negligence of citizens' rights to freely and fairly observe their constitutional political rights always results to instigating violence during elections process, pre-election date and even to the end of post-election results. The institutionalized corruption and corrupt regimes in Nigeria always and, will continue to prompt the youths to participate in politics which most of the times are channeled and manifested on the bases of tribal lines and ethnic dividend and, not necessarily on the bases of the agenda and policies the political parties have to offer. These tribal sentiment and ethnic dividend have deterred full scale development and democracy to prevail in Nigeria for so many decades thus always leading to outbreak of serious violence during political rallies, campaigns down to the election period and post-election results (Onapajo 2014).

It is not a hidden fact that Nigeria is the economic giant of Africa blessed with vast deposit of oil reserve and yet, average Nigerians lives under USD $2'a day with corruption almost impossible to uproot (WB Data 2018). It is not also a hidden fact that, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and seventh most populous country in the world of which according to the United Nations report on World Population Ageing in 2019, a large proportion of the total population of Nigeria is relatively composed of young people, a percentage calculated from between age 0-14 (43.7 percent), and age 15-59 (51.8 percent). This massive population makes political participation and violence inevitable given the fact that, the young people constitute a larger share of the total population yet, the Nigerian government has not been able to successfully establish a long-lasting quality education for its citizens. The government has failed to provide adequate funding towards the education system thus, making it impossible to have educational infrastructures such as adequate classrooms, teaching aids (projectors, computers, laboratories and libraries), clean learning environment, and trained/qualified teachers.

Studies shows that, despite recommendations of the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) of 26% of budgetary allocation to education by member nations, the Nigerian government spending on education system has never exceeded 15% in the country's fourth republic (Mobarak 2015). Instead statistic of the government spending on education between 1999 – 2010 (a

period when democracy returned in Nigeria from the military rule and 2010 before inflation kicked in 2015 and in 2018) shows that, in a pace of ten (10) years, Nigerian budget spending on education was only 13%, an indication that, the Nigerian government hasn't been doing much to educate the youths thus, increasing the rate of school drop-out and illiteracy which would increase the possibility of an increased poverty rate and low standard of living, and thus exposing the youths to unfavorable conditions that render them vulnerable to the patron-client policy in Nigeria.

Table 3. Federal Government's Allocation to Education b/w 1999-2010 and UNESCO's Recommendation Compared

Year	Allocation (N billion)	UNESCO recommendation in N billion	Percentage of Nigeria's budget (%)	UNESCO (%)	Shortfall in N billion	UNESCO N (%) shortfall
1999	23.0	53.3	11.2	26	30.3	14.8
2000	44.2	138.6	8.3	26	94.4	17.7
2001	39.9	148.2	7.0	26	108.3	19.0
2002	100.2	510.8	5.1	26	410.6	20.9
2003	64.8	142.8	11.8	26	78.0	14.2
2004	72.2	240.7	7.8	26	168.5	18.2
2005	92.6	290.1	8.3	26	197.5	17.7
2006	166.6	497.9	8.7	26	331.3	17.3
2007	137.5	586.1	6.1	26	448.6	19.9
2008	210.0	420.0	13.0	26	210.0	13.0
2009	183.4	662.3	7.2	26	478.9	18.8
2010	249.1	1,012.0	6.4	26	762.9	19.6

Source: UNESCO via (Mobarak 2015).

Hence, having a great number of youths without a proper education is a huge indication that electoral violence in Nigeria is inevitable said (Mobarak, 2015). Against this backdrop, it can be argued that illiteracy has been used as a tool by politicians in Nigeria to exploit the youths, turning them against each other for the purpose of creating violence just to achieve their political aims. Therefore, it is evident here that, although the Nigerian youths for the past decades are very much involved in politics doing everything humanly possible to strengthen their political awareness and participation. That is, the youths in an attempt to bring corrupt politicians to political correctness thus holding them responsible and accountable for their mismanagement of public fund and abuse of office, took it upon themselves to actively participate in the in the socio-economic and political landscape of their country pursuant of having a well functional and accountable government and institutions in place. However, this political participation is most of the times embraced through violence either by engaging in a protest or demonstration without having to obtain the legal permit to do so as the constitutions demands. Basically, they take the law in their own hands either after being paid off to do so by the politicians or, out of frustrations without calculating the consequences and repercussions of their actions. These unlawful and forceful demonstration often leads to clash between the civil protesters and security personnel's which often most of the times results to death or lifethreatening injuries.

Another serious issue that often most of the times lead political participants into violence is that it is nearly impossible for incumbent presidents of Africa and Nigeria to be precise, to concede and accept election defeat in any given election be it local government or central government elections. The incumbents always and will continue to claim that the elections were free and fair observed thus hiding under the curtains of oppression and dictatorship installing fear and threat in everyone. On the other hand, the opposition parties will outright and reluctantly claim that the elections are not freely and fairly observed thus pointing out election malpractices and abnormalities. An example of this is likened to the situation of the 2011election when Muhammadu Buhari of the

Congress for Progressive Change (CPC refused to concede defeat from Goodluck Ebele

Jonathan of the People's Democratic Party (PDP). Buhari alleged that, the counting of votes, the collation of the outcomes from different polling stations and the preparation of the final score sheets of the 2011 election was done over 48hours thus, the procedure adopted in the polls were believed to have had many irregularities which in turn resulted in election malpractice perpetrated by the People's Democratic Party (Vasudevan, 2011). The situation sparked a violent protest that killed a considerable number of people (Campbell 2019).

In such a situation, angry and frustrated electorates who are expecting to have change of government and governance will take the streets in massive violent protest willing fully ready to lose their lives in exchange for good governance, accountability and transparency thus liberate the country and its future from the hands of oppressors and dictators. (Onapajo, 2014).

To make matters worse and complicated, the violence is usually observed and segmented based on trial lines and ethnic sentiments instead of coming together in solidarity as citizens of Nigeria to unseat the defeated president or any other candidate in local government offices. On the other hand, the incumbent governments are usually supported by the security forces whom in no doubt, always pledged their alliance and loyalty to the president instead of pleading their allegiance to the constitution they sworn to defend.

C. Effects of Electoral Violence on the future of political participation in Nigeria.

Political violence has always been and is still a major deterrent and setback to growth, progress and development in Nigeria (Abama and Chris 2009). This claim could remind oneself about the roles of participants and electorates that took part in the 2011 election which outcome and the manner in which it was held, left many Nigerian citizens, election observers across African and International observers questioned the future of Nigerian elections as to if, the elections in future will be safe, violent free, free and fair without major casualties.

Victims of political violence in Nigeria are usually the youths and sometimes women (regardless of their age) thus, many are of the opinion that, in the long run/future,

youth's (especially women's) participation in politics across Nigeria will diminished due to the kind of inhumane treatment that are usually meted out on them during electoral process, election time and even post-election transition.

The 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA), violence against women is coined as any form or an act of gender-bias violence which could be in form of psychological, sexual or physical harm or suffering meted or most likely to be meted out on women, which usually includes; acts such as, arbitrary or coercion deprivation of their fundamental human rights, liberty whether in private or public life. (UN publication Sales No:96.IV.13). Rapid occurrences of violence against women signals and fueled the global feminist campaign which gave birth to national and international instruments intended at protecting women against all sorts of violence thus promoting the rights of women to rightfully participate in the socioeconomic and political affairs of their respective countries and beyond which is clearly spelt out as the Convention on Elimination of All Forms Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) articulated on the article 21 of the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Right (UDHR) as well on the African Charter on Democracy, election and governance. (ACDEG).

That been said, in a supposedly democratic state and societies, elections are supposed and expected to be observed in a free and fair manner in which both the electorates and the elected officials to exercise their constitutional rights to participate in decisionmaking process should and ought to be subjected to the rule of law. In-spite of this legal framework that curbed the constitution and ought to guide the electoral process and outcome, there is still always a violence outbreak in Nigeria especially towards women who are seen and perceived vulnerable, fragile and emotional.

The 2011 Nigerian post-election violence has resulted to countless rape meted on women, deflowering teenage girls, forcefully gang rape and defilement of several members of unarmed female security personnel by angry protesters across the length and breadth of the Northern part of Nigeria (Onapajo 2014). On the other hand, the pre-election violence of 2011 election claimed the lives of many female supporters both young and old. The 2011 incident instigated fear and uncertainty amongst women political aspirants across Nigeria as they drew near the 2015 general

elections which prompted the women wings to demand the government to provide a very strong and comprehensive security post and coverage while they go out to exercise their constitutional political rights to cast their votes and go back to their respective abodes in peace said Jega (Gallagher 2015). The constant suffering, humiliation, rape and even physical assaults that continues to be meted on women left many scholars and visionaries of the opinion that continuous electoral violence will eventually limit or completely diminish women's participation in the political landscape of Nigeria especially, the ambitious young women.

There are different theoretical perspectives that can be used to explain and comprehend the electoral violence in Nigeria. However, one can use the pluralist theory as the best fit for electoral violence and the impact it will have on the future of political participation in Nigeria. The pluralist theory and its theories argue that violent conflict is inevitable and near impossible to avoid in a plural societies and countries. (Cohen, 1996). In fact, tussle between plural societies takes place mainly in volatile political arena. The aspiration of violence as a result of political tussle becomes very much complex in the crippled democracies of Africa and Nigeria in particular due to her massive population which is always channeled via tribal dividend and ethnic sentiments. On the other hand, cultural pluralism most of the times endangers minorities as well as denying them equal and fair access to political offices.

Without much doubt, ethnic sentiment and tribal dividend and support always plays a pivotal role in mobilizing women political aspirants to cheer up and provides selfless support for their chosen candidates and yet, they are most likely to be victimized, and encounter the wrath of electoral process bring beginning to the ending with little or no protection provided for them against violent mob of angry male protesters. In recent years, precisely the last ten years, International election observers observed and documented lot of psychological abuse meted out on women throughout the electoral process. These psychological depressed women on the other hand, respond and strikes at the time it is least expected in response to what they have suffered and continues to suffer in the hands of villain people not only in terms of physical abuse such as rape but also, denying them to fully exercise their constitutional rights without being obstructed or humiliated in the process. In another breath, it could be seen as the degree in which these vulnerable women feel

unprivileged thus leaving them with no option than to mobilize and organize violent protest for their voices to be heard and their dignity as women be respected and protected.

Furthermore, the impact of electoral violence on the future of political participation in Nigeria is evident in what Tonnie Iredia argued (2019) in his article that, "those qualified to vote" are not going out to election polls to vote anymore in Nigeria because, of previous violence in the "election process" and also because, most people (especially the youths) feels that, their "votes don't count" anymore (Iredia, 2018). People (most especially youths) feel that their vote won't count because the winner for the particular election has already been decided way before elections are conducted hence, people will rather distance themselves from voting, or from participating in the voting process.

However, Tennie Iredia stated that, not many Nigerians "are aware that their political rights constitute their highest rights" and that, if people distance themselves from "politics and elections", they are "inadvertently allowing wrong hands to get into government." Tennie Iredia propose that, "Nigerians needs to be educated on their voting rights" yet, this article argues that, what Nigerians need is not just a mere "voter education" only when elections are around the corner rather, the system of education in

Nigeria needs to be improved and funded properly and made affordable for an "average Nigerian" to attend.

More attention is given to education here because, education is a social problem that has affected and still affecting a large portion of people (especially the youths) in Nigeria. A considerable number of the Nigerian youths are "school drop-out and are illiterates." This was affirmed by the Nigerian Minister of Education in person of Alhaji Adamu in 2017 who stated that, "Nigeria had about 65 million to 75 million illiterates" which is a very high share of the Nigeria's total population (Vanguard, 2017). When people are out of school or illiterates, they will be faced with a lot of hardships such as not being able to find proper jobs and thus, not been able to enjoy "a good standard of living" therefore, when presented with money or any other material gifts or promises so as to carry out evil act during election, they quickly or are tempted to accept such offers and this is exactly the situation in Nigeria.

Therefore, Nigerian, a country with such a fast-growing population in which a major share of the total population constitutes young people between age 0-59 should definitely pay more attention towards investing and maintaining the educational system in the country.

 Also, the idea of "divide and rule" policy used by Nigerian politicians to pit people (most especially youths) for their own political needs in Nigeria is a threat to the growth of Nigerian democracy because, such practices will "endanger the perception and interpretation of people as well as the rise of identity politics" given that, if people grow to accept or adapt to the ongoing "patron-client" politics in Nigeria whereby "the patron" are fond of using "various forms of political weapons like propaganda, blackmail, kidnapping, assignation," and material gifts to entice the masses so as to "ensure the continued influence and control over the client and the machinery of the state" (Oarha, 2010), then it is most likely that, people's expectation for any political participation would be firstly, after they had received certain gifts from a supposed candidate (or party), or a promise of material, money or other gifts. Likewise, such offer can be extended an induvial or a group of individuals for the purpose of disrupting an electoral process or to carry out violent act during elections.

V.   CONCLUSION

It will be of paramount importance to give a befitting and comprehensive conclusion of all the chapters discussed and thus vividly spell out and pinpoint the coloration between the Nigerian supposedly democracy and relates them with the relationship and impact they have on good governance, respecting rule of law, and accepting the faith in electoral outcomes each time a central or local government elections are held. To start with, Nigeria is undoubtedly a well-known country across the globe not just because of her vast number of population, her richly petrol reserve deposit but in fact, Nigerian is wellknown for her epileptic deep-rooted corruption, negligence and disregard for her citizens fundamental socio-economic and political rights, tyrannical behavior of political leaders who are entrusted and vested with power and authority, suppressing and oppressing the opposition parties and their supporters, arbitrary arrest, torture and extra-judiciary killings of those who oppose executive directives or, are perceived a threat to the ruling party's policies and agenda and amongst many other things (Human Rights Report, 2019).

Prior to the independence, Nigerian became a Federation in 1954, the Eastern and the Western regions gained internal self-independence in 1957 and the Northerners in 1959. By 1960, the rest of Nigerian came under one unified umbrella to fight for their independence which was finally won October 1st 1960. During those struggling days of fighting for independence, Nigerians collectively do away with their tribal sentiment and prejudice and all they could see was, "Nigeria" without tribal or ethnic dividend with one purpose and only one which was, to gain independence from Britain. However, this tribal sentiment and hatred started to saw face after she gained her Independence from the Great Britain in 1960. Since Nigerian became Independent of colonial rule, free, fair and credible elections, democracy, observance of good governance, respecting the principles of rule of law, credible and functional separation of power, independence of judiciary are divorced from Post-independent Nigeria. Pre-election and post-election violence are no more news in Nigeria due to its frequent occurrences. One can actually argues that electoral violence is

institutionalized like how corruption and bad governance are institutionalized which is very much justifiable and quantifiable from evidence based from 1960s to present (Onapajo 2014)

Electoral violence in Nigerian comes in many different forms ranging from physical, cultural and structural violence which are very much observed during electoral campaigns and rallies. Physical violence is mostly inflicted on people through physical torture either on individual bases or, through collision of opposing party supporters during pre-election campaigns and rallies to the end of post-election outcome. Sadly, many well-known and recognized party supporters are usually victims of physical and psychological torture especially, those who are very much outspoken and critical of the incumbent during campaigns, are often high marked and pinpointed by security forces and they mostly end up been arrested through false disappearances & arbitrary arrest after post-election if the incumbent wins. Once those outspoken persons are being arrested, they are either torture mercilessly or send to jail without prosecuting them in the court of law as the constitutions demands.

The other way physical violence is meted on citizens especially the vulnerable such as, women and children which often leads to emotional and psychological trauma is through rape. Raping young teenage girls and other defenseless women during pre-election rallies and post-election protest is unspeakable. Many violent angry male protesters will use election campaign, rally and protest times as their golden opportunities to prey on those vulnerable female political aspirants and lure them into forceful sex without their consent which often most of the times, results to many young women attempting to commit suicide as a result of the emotional and psychological trauma. Many other electorates are usually traumatized by post-election results simply because, their hopes of changing bad and corrupt leadership and replace it with a democratic leadership with good governance practices through ballot box are usually hijacked by illegal use of power by incumbents. This illegal and unlawful electoral malpractice always leave many in psychological and traumatize conditions with little or nothing absolutely to do about it. One can justify all this electoral violence in Nigeria with the notion that **"A desperate mind is a devil workshop".** This idiom pretty much explains why electoral violence is no

more a breaking news in Nigeria. Cultural violence is another major problem in Nigeria's political arena. Nigeria has around two hundred and fifty (250) different tribes each with their unique cultural believe and practice that is totally different from the others. In such a composition of cultures living in one country under one political leadership is almost impossible to satisfy each one of them. In light of these, some tribes feel their cultures are superior to the others and therefore, they will do everything humanly possible to suppress or look low upon the minorities and their cultures.

This cultural violence is usually observed during campaigns and rallies. No one would wish his/her culture to be humiliated and regard them as inferior especially in public speaking. Speaking ill of one's culture and regarding them insignificant to the socioeconomic and political development of the country pretty much hurts like a surgery blade. Once this kind of redirects are presented by one political party, the particular tribe mentioned will be outrage which always provokes an attack outright at the rally venues resulting to serious of death and injuries. In fact, cultural violence is a big issue for almost all the African countries (Int. Crisis Group Report). Structural violence is another significant problem if not the biggest issue in Nigeria. The level of socio-economic inequality in Nigeria is unprecedented. The gap between the rich and the poor is huge in such a way that there is nothing like middle class. One is either very rich or very poor. This socio-economic inequality is not a natural phenomenon but, it is structurally created and fuel by corruption, bad governance, bribery and amongst so many illegal malpractices. In such a country where especially, the youth feels like their futures are hijacked by those vested with power with little hope to progress and excel in their dreams of becoming what they want to be in life, violence is very much inevitable and nearly impossible to be uprooted. In the wage of changing such a dysfunctional political structure in the government through a democratic, free and fair elections always end in a heartbreaking violence, death and injuries.

The only weapon available to citizens to change their socioeconomic and political landscape and entrust it to a trustworthy and genuine politician is through ballot box. Times without numbers, Nigerians have witnessed electoral malpractices such as, rich politicians buying votes from poor and desperate electorates at amount only worth handful of peanuts just to put food on the table for their families. This is quite

heartbreaking however, a poor man with an empty stomach will probably have no choice than to fall for such trap without having second thought of his pride and future of his children. The rich politicians on the wage of lobbying for votes from electorates often lies to their party aspirants during campaign by giving them empty promises that everyone knows will never come to pass. Many of such cases have resulted to very severe post-election violence in which people takes the street in protest demanding pre-election promises to be fulfilled. Many reasons of electoral violence can be said but these are the most relevant ones and the manners they are conducted.

The study also emphasized on the need for the Nigerian government to invest more on establishing and maintaining a proper, good and quality education for the Nigerian society because, the Nigerian population is a fast-growing one in which a larger share of the total population are young people thus, the Nigerian government ought to pay a close attention to educating the young people. That is, the government need to provide adequate funds in order to be able to keep the Nigerian educational system running accordingly because, the future political participation in Nigeria especially, the young men and women are seriously at stake bearing in mind the level of socio-economic injustice, electoral malpractices are concerned. Many young men at this moment, are engaged in their personal business as they lose hope in changing the socio-economic and political landscape of their beloved country Nigeria. For the past two decades or beyond, young men and women of Nigeria have sacrificed their lives to make changes in the socioeconomic and political structure of their country but to no avail. For the past ten (10) years, we have seen young Nigerian men in their thousands embarking on suicidal journey trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea via the coast of Libya to get their way into Italy with the hope of having a decent live and livelihood for themselves and their families. Countless number of young and vibrant young men have lost their lives in that suicidal journey because they completely lost faith in their country to provide and sustain a decent live and livelihood for them.

Women on the other hand, have suffered and will continue to suffer serious of preelection and post-election humiliations through rape, physical torture meted on them by violent male protesters and campaigners if nothing is done about it. Many reserved the opinion that the electoral experience of 2011 and 2015 meted out on

women is a significant threat and will thus discourage female political aspirants to participate in the future electoral process of Nigeria especially, when they know that their lives will be in danger and vulnerable to rape with little or no security to protect their sanity throughout the electoral process. Well, there is no problem without a solution. If one is not part of the solution, he/she is part of the problem. If he/she is not part of the problem, he/she should be part of the solution. In light of this, Nigerians might not totally do away with corruption, socioeconomic injustice but there is still and can be hope to lessen the impact of electoral violence across the country where everyone will exercise their constitutional political right without fear, favor and intimidation. However, this requires a full commitment from both the government and the citizenry. The first step that needed to be done is, to strive and have a functional democracy in which, the leaders will be accountable and liable for their portfolio during their tenure of office. This could be achieved by mounting pressure on the leaders for failing to live up to their responsibilities in conjunction with International community and human right watch organizations. This collaboration will mount pressure on the ruling government to compromise on lot of things.

Secondly, Nigerians must see and embraced Nigeria as theirs and the destiny of their country solely rest on their shoulders. By doing that Nigerians must do away with ethnic and tribal politics and vote for a leader that will represent the interest of Nigeria and Nigerians both home and in global arena. This will lessen the tribal sentiment and prejudice and will have less consequences on electoral violence. International and regional electoral observers must play their cards very well during electoral process and take accounts of any abnormal electoral practice. Once the president-elect is declared the winner, from that point and trough out the transition of swooning in into office must be secured just like that of the Gambian Presidential election of 2016.

In case the defeated incumbent refused to accept the electoral outcomes and threatened not to step-down, It must be an obligation for the West African regional block's military

(ECOMOG) to force him/her out of office like they did with the Gambian President Yahya Jammeh when he conceded defeat to President Barrow in 2016 presidential

pool and rejected the election results. Series of diplomatic negotiations were held in Banjul headed by Nigerian president Buhari but to no avail. Then regional military intervention was launched against him which force him to step-down. The same thing must be applied to Nigeria to avoid post-election denials and violence and inaugurate who so ever emerge the winner in any giving local and central government elections. During electoral process, tight security measures should not be a matter of choice but instead, it should be a matter of obligation to protect the lives of electorates to freely cast their votes without fear, favor and intimidation and go back to their house unharmed. If these measures are put in place, one can be assured that, violence might not be totally contained but its impact will not be severe like the past decades.

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