
**PERISCOPING THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA,
1999-2019**

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ABSTRACT: *Elections are the hallmarks of democracy; they also serve the purposes of peaceful change in the government and confer political legitimacy on the government. Viewed from this prism, elections represent the expression of the sovereign will of the people. However, the conduct of elections in plural society like Nigeria is often fraught with animosities and violence. This paper, therefore, aimed at examining the economic implications of electoral violence on Nigeria's democratic trajectory. The paper makes use of qualitative and quantitative sources of historical data. It also employs and applies frustration aggression and systemic theory in discussing the economic basis of electoral violence in Nigeria. The study establishes the fact that elections in Nigeria since the return of democracy in Nigeria are hardly free and fair. They are manipulated and characterized with violence with grave implications on the country's economic development. The paper concludes that in order to do away with the teething challenges that usually translate to electoral violence in Nigeria certain things need to be done. In this connection, the paper recommends granting of full autonomy to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC); this would engender administrative efficiency and professionalism of the body. It also recommends among others, the reduction in wages and allowances of political office holders. The idea is to make politics less financially attractive so that leaders will see themselves as agents of development than money mongers.*

KEYWORDS: elections, violence, manipulations and economy.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria reverted to democratic governance on 29th May, 1999, after a long, tortuous period of military rule, which lasted for almost sixteen years (1983-1999). On 29th May, 2015, the country celebrated sixteen years of uninterrupted democracy for the first time in its political history since

it attained political independence. Within this period the country experience grievous challenges which include socio-political and economic challenges including electoral violence. Indeed, electoral violence has become protracted national malady in Nigeria's political history since post 1999. In fact, beginning from the 1998/1999 general election, electoral violence has become a recurrent decimal in Nigeria's electoral system. It has already destroyed lives and property. For example, the 2011 General election did not only occasion the destruction of properties but equally led to the killing of Eight Hundred people (Independent National Electoral Commission, 2011:6). Apart from killings, electoral violence has continued to improve in sophistry. An example of this pattern can be seen, when the defunct Congress for the Progressive Change (CPC) presidential candidate, General Mohammadu Buhari rejected the 2011 presidential elections from the South-South and South-East geo-political zones and alleged that the results were computably manipulated (Saliu, 2016:6). The manipulations and the use of arms to unleash terror ranges from pre-election days, election days and post-era periods; in most a times, after the whole processes of elections are over instead of shielding their swords they later continue using their arms to commit robbery and banditry activities, therefore harming the prospect of economic development. As electoral violence has continued to plague the country's democratic practice, scholars have written about the causes, origins, and impact of the menace on Nigeria's electoral process, ethnic-religious relations and internal security (Saliu, 2016:7, Azaigba, 2015: 5, Olawale, 2018: 5). Looking at the causes of electoral violence in Nigeria, (Ugoh, 2004: 16) argued that, "the attractive nature of public office coupled with the weak regulatory framework in the use of money in politics and investment mentality that governs party and election in Nigeria are some of the root causes of turbulent elections". The belief that political power, once captured, can lead to the distribution of wealth exacerbates electoral violence. Contributing on this matter, Ake (1990: 24) was more forthcoming when he opines that:

Those who win state power can have all the wealth they want even without working, while those who lose the struggle for state power cannot have security in the wealth they have made even by hard work. The capture of state power inevitably becomes a matter of life and death. That is one reason why our politics is so intense, anarchic and violent (Ake, 1990:24).

Corroborating the above data, Azaigba (2017: 3) argues that the struggle for state power and conviction of elections as a do-or-die affair have exacerbated electoral violence in Nigeria. Politics in Nigeria is monetary viewed hence the knack for violence that normally characterized electioneering periods. Interestingly, despite these attempts by scholars to examine the menace of electoral violence, peculiar attention has not been made on the need to examine the economic basis for electoral violence in Nigeria and implications on the country's economic development. This as a matter of historical necessity has usurped the intellectual urge to fill this apparent historiographical gap created by extant literature on the phenomenon under consideration. To do this effectively, the study comes in seven overlapping parts. The first part introduces the study while the second part conceptualises the key terms. The third part theorizes the study. The fourth part delves into the historicity of the electoral violence Nigeria, from 1999 to 2019. The fifth part discourses the causes of electoral violence in the area under review. The sixth part

analyses the economic implications of the electoral violence. The seventh and the last part takes the concluding aspects by recapitulating on the main argument of the paper.

Conceptualization of the Keys Terms

Elections

Elections have generally been defined as the process of choosing by voting a person or a group of people for a position, especially a political position (Ugoh, 2004: 170). To this end, election can be seen as a process of choice agreed upon by a group of people. It enables them to select one or few people out of many to occupy one or a number of authority positions. This process of choice usually involves rules and regulations designed to ensure a certain degree of fairness and justice to all concerned. Agreeing this position, (Dunmoye, 2010:12) conceived elections as that process of selection of one or more person(s) to serve in public office. He stressed that election is a government process in which people, whether opposed or unopposed, seek party's nomination for election into public office. Extrapolating from the above, the paper arrived at the working definition of elections as a process through which candidates are elected or chosen (conventionally or unconventionally) into various positions of authority to steer the affairs of government at different levels according to their constitutional responsibilities.

What then is Electoral Violence?

Electoral violence is difficult to conceptualize. The difficulty arises from the misinterpretation of the concept to mean political violence and physical violence (Anifowose, 1982: 31). In spite of this difficulty, (Fisher 2002:7) defines electoral violence as:

Any random or organized act that seeks to determine, delay, or otherwise influence an electoral process through threat, verbal intimidation, hate speech, disinformation, physical assault, forced protection, blackmail, destruction of property, or assassination.

Deducing from the above, the term electoral violence therefore means any act of violence perpetrated in the course of political and electioneering activities that spanned from political consultations, party campaigns, primary elections, general elections and post-election periods. It also means any act of violence perpetuated in the course of political activities, including pre, during and post-election periods, and may include any of the following acts; thuggery, use of force to disrupt political meetings or voting at polling stations, or use of dangerous weapons to intimidate voters and other electoral process or to cause bodily harm or injury to any person connected with the electoral processes (Nnamani & Lloh, 2015: 15). Reinforcing the above definition, Birch & Muchlinski (2017:2) assert that:

Electoral violence is a coercive force, directed towards electoral actors and/or objects that occurs in the context of electoral of electoral competition-can occur before, during or after elections and it can target a variety of factors, including candidates, activists, workers, election observers, journalists and voters.

Considering the above conceptualization, this paper provides the textual meaning of electoral violence as the process of using against the tenets of democratic governance to develop fiercely or

violent measures in order to win election and control the state apparatus for personal aggrandizement of the perpetrators of such violence.

Theoretical Propositions

This study is predicated on two theories which serve as the pillar of our analysis. These are: Frustration-Aggression theory and the Systemic theory. The frustration-aggression theory was developed by Dollard and his research associate and later expanded and modified by other scholars including Yates (1962:192). The central premise of this theory is that aggression is always the result of frustration. Given the requisite conditions, an individual whose basic desires are thwarted and who consequently experiences profound sense of dissatisfaction and anger is likely to react to this condition by directing aggressive behaviour at what is perceived as being responsible for thwarting those desires, or at a substitute; the greater the perceived importance of the desires, the more comprehensive the checking and the more vigorous the aggressive response (Hann, 1973:133).

The second aspect of the frustration-aggression theory is the idea of relative deprivation, interpreted to mean a state of mind where there is discrepancy between what men seek and what seems attainable. The greater this discrepancy, the greater their anger and their propensity toward violence. Gurr opines that relative deprivation is a perception of thwarting circumstances. According to him, "When we feel thwarted in an attempt to get something we want, we are likely to become angry, and when we become angry the most satisfying inherent response is to strike out at the source of frustration" (Gurr, 1970:24). This in effect means that frustration is no longer seen as the blockage of present goal directed activity but as anticipated frustration engendered by discrepancies between what is realistically attainable, given the social context and what is sought. The third phase of this theory is anchored on "revolution of rising expectations" which locates the genesis of violence in the feeling of dissatisfaction arising from the comparison between what one expects, what one thinks and ought to have or what one regards as ideal. According to the expectation theory, it is hope, not despair, which instigates violent political behaviour. Arising from the frustration-aggression theory, this paper argues that the occurrence electoral violence in Nigeria is due to the dissatisfaction of the people over the conduct of elections and electoral processes as demonstrated in the paper.

Another theory examined and adopted in this paper for the purposes of analysis is the systemic thesis. Scholars of systemic hypothesis like Pothelm (1979:149) assumed that there is a paradoxical relationship between modernization and political disorder, in which modernity produces stability and modernization instability. In this view, nations are classified into three groups, namely: modern societies, traditional societies, and modernizing ones. The latter are said to be passing through the traditional stage to modernity. Generally, this period of transition is regarded as one that entails an inordinate amount of strains, tension and crisis. It is suggested that modernization produces a "revolution of rising expectations" and that since these expectations cannot be consistently satisfied, the frustrated will scapegoat or transfer their aggression into violence against perceived sources of frustration. Importantly, modernization intensifies conflict,

especially over the distribution of scarce resources between groups and produces political violence (O'Connell, 1964:181).

The systemic hypothesis attempts to unfold some of the contradictions that lead to electoral violence in developing democracies like Nigeria. This is because Nigeria is within the bracket of the traditional and the modernization stages. As Pothelm rightly observed, this stage is characterized by numerous economic, social, and political problems. From socio-economic dimension, there is high level of land dispute and political crises in Nigeria, especially since the resurgence of democracy. From political dimension, partisan politics has been characterized by serious contradictions spanning from official manipulation of the electoral system by the political party in power to open harassment, intimidation, abduction and in some instances imprisonment of opposition citizens and candidates, gerrymandering of constituencies so as to create an uneven playing ground for the opposition, deliberate omission of names from the voters register as well as stuffing of ballot boxes. There are also numerous cases of imposition of candidates by the government in power against the wishes of the people. Such contradictions are necessary springboards for electoral violence in Nigeria.

Historicity of Electoral Violence in Nigeria, 1999-2019

The elective principle of the Clifford Constitution of 1922 ignited electoral practice in Nigeria. However, the first elections based on universal adult suffrage in Nigeria were conducted in 1959 to usher in a post-colonial Nigeria. The elections because of the high stakes, were rigged. According to Achebe (2012: 50) the elections were rigged in favour of the Northern People's Congress (NPC) by the British. A young British civil servant named Harold Smith was designated by Sir James Robertson, Nigeria's Governor General to manipulate the elections in favour of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Belewa of the NPC. The overwhelming support the NPC received from the British paved way for their control of the central government. Be that as it may, the Regional elections of 1961, the Federal elections of 1964-5 were characterized by violence. The violence was premised on the ethno-regional nature of the political parties that contested during the elections and the fear of ethnic dominance that accompanied Nigeria's independence in 1960 (Akinduro 1965:3). The violence led to the death of over one hundred and fifty-three people and the destruction of five thousand houses (Afenifa, 2016: 10).

The quest for ethnic dominance resulted to civil unrest that resultantly led to the collapse of the first republic and the emergence of military rule in Nigeria in January 1966 (Siollun, 2009: 18). The transition program of the Generals Murtala Mohammad and Olusegun Obasanjo's regime paved way for the 1979 General elections which were marred by violence (Ugoh, 2004: 170, Iyayi, 2007:5, Agbaje, 2010: 69). In supporting this point, Ugoh (2004:170) expresses himself through the citation thus:

The general elections conducted under Obasanjo's era that ushered in the second Republic were not devoid of malpractices. Various forms of electoral malpractice were also recorded. The manipulations ranged from victimization, use of thugs, manipulations of results by the polling agents to bribing electoral officers as well as policemen.

The 1983 general elections that followed were equally marred with violence (Agbage, 2010: 78, Kertyo, 2015: 256, Iyayi: 2007: 6). The violence that characterized the 1983 general election was anchored on the quest by the then ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN) under Alhaji Shehu Shagari to increase her political scope and capture states in the Western Region (Adejumobi, 2010: 94). The western region of the country which was dominated by the Chief Obafemi Awolowo's Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) was the theatre of violence. The violence led to the death of the then Majority Leader of the Ondo State House of Assembly Hon. Tunde Agunbiade along with his wife, two children, his driver and two other persons and the destruction of three hundred houses in Akure the capital of Ondo State (Afenifa, 2016: 11).

The Alhaji Shehu Shagari's administration was ousted by the military coup of 31st December 1983. From 1983 to May 1999, Nigeria was under military rule; transitional program of the military under the regime of General Ibrahim Babangida that ushered in the aborted third republic. The republic itself is christened aborted because of the annulment of the June 12 1993 presidential election and the violence that greeted the annulment. The violence did not only threaten Nigeria's internal security but had severe implications on the country's external relations. But more importantly, the violence led to death of over two hundred people in Lagos and Ibadan who protested the annulment of the election (Afenifa, 2016: 12). With the annulment of the June 12 1993 presidential election, the transition program of the military under General Abdusalami Abubakar following the death of General Sani Abacha returned democracy in Nigeria in 1999.

With the return of democratic practice in Nigeria in 1999, elections have become the platform via which leaders are elected in various positions of authority. Unfortunately, they are marred with violence that often leads to the destruction of lives and properties as seen in table 1.

Table 1: Figures of lives lost in General Elections in Nigeria from 1999 to 2019.

S/N	Election Type	Death Toll	States Affected
1	1999 General Election	Not certain	Ogun, Benue, Lagos, Anambra etc
2	2003 General Election	1 0 0	Violence was recorded in virtually all the 36 states of the federation. But the South west states of Ogun, Osun, Oyo, Ondo, Ekiti were most affected.
3	2007 General Election	3 0 0	In preparatory to the elections, violence began in the Niger Delta. It was followed by violence in North Central Nigeria and in states like Ogun, Kano, Benue, Cross River, Borno, Adamawa.
4	2011 General Election	8 0 0	Violence was recorded in virtually all states. The most affected were Kaduna, Gombe, Kano, Bauchi and Adamawa.
5	2015 General Election	1 0 6	Rivers, Kogi, Akwa-Ibom, Kaduna, Delta, Cross River.
6	2019 General Election	6 2 6	The deaths were recorded in all the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria from October 2018 to March 2019. But Benue, Borno, Rivers and Zamfara states recorded the highest number of deaths.

Source: John Campbell, "Tracking Election Violence in Nigeria" on <https://www.cfr.org>. Accessed 04/05/2019 and the Authors 2019 Field work.

The 1999 general elections recorded few cases of electoral violence. However, the election results, as argued by (Iyayi, 2007: 5) were predetermined and manipulated to favour Chief Obasanjo of the People's Democratic Party (PDP). The 2003 general elections that followed were massively rigged (Odey, 2004: 4). The elections according to the European Union, were the worst elections to be conducted in post-colonial Nigeria (Report of the European Monitoring Team: 3). The elections were characterized with irregularities and manipulations; they were highest number of court litigations, but particularly in the South West. This was because, former president Obasanjo was accused of using state power to dislodge the Alliance for Democracy (AD) (Omoruyi: 2005).

The 2007, 2011 and 2015 elections followed. Interestingly, the elections were all characterized by violence. For example, the 2007 elections were manipulated to favour the emergence of Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'adua. The late president himself confessed to Nigerians about the fraudulency of the election that led to his emergence (Rahman: 2016). What followed the "state confession" was the inauguration of the Justice Uwais Electoral Reform Panel with the view of mitigating the scourge of electoral violence and manipulations. In the South West, states like Ondo and Osun were beclouded with violence. Same was with states like Edo, Benue, Anambra, Rivers (INEC Report of the 2007 General Election: 38-39). However, the courageous stand of the nation's Judiciary by revalidating the mandates of Olusegun Mimiko in Ondo, Rauf Aregbesola in Osun, Adams Oshimohole in Edo built confidence in Nigeria's electoral architecture.

The 2011 elections were also beclouded in violence. Although, the European Union accorded credibility to the elections, the pre-and post-electoral violence that greeted Northern Nigeria questioned the free and fair applause the elections received from the European Union. The election witnessed a new voting pattern-it returned the fear of ethno-religious dominance.

The tensed ethno-religious climate that was created during the 2011 returned during the 2015 elections. Party campaigns during the 2015 elections were done along ethnic lines. Some People's Democratic Party stalwarts from the Northern region were accused of supporting Buhari who latter emerged as Nigeria's president (Alade 2015: 5). The 2019 general elections that returned President Muhammadu Buhari as Nigeria's president was also marred with violence. The violence that characterized the elections was unprecedented. In all the six geo-political zones of the country, violence was recorded and resulted to the death of people and the destruction of properties. For example, the North West geo-political zone recorded the highest number of deaths with one hundred and seventy-two killed during the elections; the North East recorded one hundred and forty-six fatalities while the North Central had one hundred and eleven deaths. The South West, sixty-three people were killed. The South East recorded fourteen deaths while the South-South recorded one hundred and twenty deaths (Situation Room Report: 2019).

Causes of Electoral Violence in Nigeria, 1999-2019

Since independence of Nigeria in 1960, the fear of ethno-religious dominance has informed and exacerbated electoral violence. Going down memory lane; the 1964/5 electoral violence that led to the death of one hundred and three persons and the destruction of over five thousand houses. The 1979, 1983, 1993 general elections that followed were equally marred with violence. With the return of democracy in 1999, the elections so far conducted in Nigeria are characterized with violence. In fact, (Albert, 2007:132) argued that electoral violence resulting from representational campaign, balloting, and results conflicts have been a terminal point of Nigeria's politics since the 1950's. Because of the prevalence of electoral violence in the nation's political and electoral history, several reasons are advanced by scholars as the precipitating factors of electoral violence in Nigeria (Ugoh, 2004: 16, Nyam, 2015: Nwolise, 2007: 162). One of such reason as stated by (Ugoh, 2004: 16-17) is the attractive nature of Nigerian politics that is evident with high wages and allowances for political office holders. The attractive nature of the country's politics has since the return of democracy in 1999 occasion violence. During electioneering periods, politicians

implore all manner of antics and violence to ride to power. The idea, as seen overtime is to have access to power so that state resources will be looted as evidenced in the high levels of cases of corruption in the country and the continuous tall stand of Nigeria on the list of Transparency International as among the five most corrupt countries in the world.

Similarly, the consolidation agenda of ruling political parties have equally precipitated electoral violence in Nigeria since the return of democracy in 1999. The consolidation agenda of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) occasioned the electoral violence that characterized the 2003 general elections. The consolidation is linked to what (Ibeanu, 2007: 6) has tagged "primitive accumulation of votes". The consolidation agenda and the primitive accumulation of votes by the then ruling PDP railroaded the party's victory to states such as Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ogun, Ekiti, Gombe that were won by opposition parties such as the All Peoples Party (APP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD) in 1999. This development was responsible for the electoral violence that characterized states like Ogun and Oyo during the 2003 general elections were the incumbent governors under the platform of the AD lost gubernatorial elections to PDP candidates. The consolidation agenda by now the ruling All Progressive Party (APC) and the attempt by the party to make inroads to states like Rivers, Akwa Ibom, for instance, is responsible for the violence that characterized the 2019 general elections. For example, the attempt by Kano State Governor, Alhaji Umar Ganduje to ensure his re-election as the governor of Kano State was responsible for the supplementary elections that were conducted in Kano. Same can be said of governors like Nyeson Wike of Rivers, Solomon Lalong of Plateau, Samuel Ortom of Benue, Aminu Tambawal of Sokoto who re-election bids occasion electoral violence in their respective states.

The perception of politics as a do-or-die affair is another factor that led to electoral violence in Nigeria This factor was chiefly responsible for the electoral violence that characterized the 2007 general elections. The genesis of the violence that marred the conduct of the elections as argued by Omotola (2009: 204) is linked to the declaration of the elections as a do-or-die affair by the then president; this ungodly declaration occasion massive manipulations and violence during the electioneering periods towards the election. The must win syndrome and winner takes it all that followed the declaration ensured the plunder of votes by the then PDP that in turn precipitated violence. Closely to the must win syndrome as a precipitating factor of electoral violence is rigging (Ojo: 2014: 11). Rigging which is the subversion of the electoral process by all forms of manipulation and sometimes ballot box stuffing as proved to be a constant factor that causes electoral violence in Nigeria. Rigging was a precipitating factor of the electoral violence that characterized the 2007 elections especially in states like Edo and Osun states (Ojo, 2014:11). The announcement of the 2007 gubernatorial in these states was greeted with violence as a result of perceived rigging that resulted into arson and loss of lives and properties. This development led to the imposition of curfew in Edo, Osun and states like Ondo, Kogi and Kano. (Ojo, 2014: 11). The overturn of the gubernatorial elections in states like Edo, Osun, Ondo by the judiciary confirmed the rigged nature of the elections that in turn ignited violence. Again, the use of thugs to subvert the electoral process and pave the way for rigging was responsible for the electoral violence that characterized states like Kano, Rivers, Akwa Ibom during the 2019 general elections (*The Punch*, 2019: 6).

Instructive to note, again, is the fact that the lack of trust in the country's judiciary is also a causative factor of electoral violence in the country. This is particularly true when viewed against the backdrop of candidates and their supporters' resort to violence instead of embarking on an endless legal venture that starts at the electoral tribunal and ends at the Supreme Court. In Nigeria, cases of electoral manipulation are either struck out on technical grounds or they are protracted for a long period thereby evading justice as evidenced in the case between Gabriel Suswam of the PDP and Steve Ugba of the defunct Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) during the 2011 general elections (*The Nation*, 2011: 59). Lack of party internal democracy and campaign of calumny indulged by the media have also proved to be exuberating factors of electoral violence in Nigeria (NDI, 2015: 7, INEC, 2011: 56).

Implications of Electoral Violence on Nigeria's Economic Development

The menace of electoral violence had thus had far reaching implications on Nigeria's economic development. The political uncertainty that is occasioned by acts of electoral violence has resulted to civil unrest that is seriously affecting the economic development of the country. For instance, the collapse of the first republic and the subsequent 'death' of the first National Development Plan was largely because of the Federal Election crisis of 1964/5 (Ojo, 2012: 8). The chaotic nature of Nigeria's political climate during the first republic affected business activities in the country especially in the Northern part of the country. The return of civilian rule after the 1966 military coup and the 1983 electoral violence that greeted the country equally affected business activities in the country especially in states like Ondo and Oyo. The consolidation agenda of the then ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN) and her attempts to make inroads to the South West dominated Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) exacerbated crisis that did not only led to the destruction of lives and properties but equally led to the shutting of economic activities especially in Akure, the capital of Ondo State (May, 1983). The 1993 electoral violence that greeted the annulment of the June 12 1993 presidential election equally hampered economic activities in Ibadan and Lagos. Nigeria was declared a rogue state by the United States and the United Kingdom (Fawole, 2003: 2). Nigeria was in danger of becoming what the UN Secretary General called "a failed State" (Fawole, 2003:3). The United States, United Kingdom and other European states like France placed sanctions on Nigeria and restricted economic aids to Nigeria.

With the return of democracy in 1999, the menace of electoral violence has continued to have implications on Nigeria's economic development. For instance, during electioneering period, Nigeria is greeted with dwindling foreign reserves and foreign revenue (Ogeaga & Odejimi, 2015: 8). There is a shortfall in foreign reserves and huge amount of money is withdrawn from the Excess Crude Account for electoral purposes as evidenced in 2014 during the preparation to the 2015 general elections. Again, electoral violence, which often occasion political instability have led to high levels of unemployment rate in the country (Bureau of Statistics Report 2017). Similarly, the menace of electoral violence as argued by (Ogeaga & Odemiji, 2015: 9) have led to poor inflow of foreign investment, capital flight, poor electricity supply and high level of ethnic and hate politicking. This, they argue is particularly true of development that characterized the 2015 general elections where the chaotic political environment led to significant drop in foreign investment for fears of a possible disintegration of Nigeria as predicted by the US and the migration of about two

million people, representing 0.8 percent of Nigeria's total population of 160 million people two months to the election because of the pre-electoral violence that marred the conduct of the 2015 general elections. Electoral violence, again, often result to internal migration of people which affects economic activities. In Kano, for instance, there was mass exodus of Christian Igbos to states in Eastern Nigeria because of fears of possible attacks in events leading to the 2011, 2015 and 2019 general elections (The Nation, 2019). The migration of this group of people led to the drastic drop in the internal revenue of Kano state as most businesses especially in the Sabon Gari area are owned by the Igbos. Besides, the internal movement of Christians living in Muslims dominated Northern States to Christian dominated states and the migration of Moslems in southern dominated states to Northern states hampered economic activities. In fact, since the country reverted to democracy, cars, properties amounting to huge amount of monies has been lost as seen in table 2.

Table 2: Estimated Cost of Economic Facilities Destroyed During Electoral Violence in Nigeria

S/No	Year	State	Item (s)	Quantity	Estimated Amount (₦)
1	2003/2004	Benue	Flats	88	440,000,000
2	2003/2004	Benue	Bungalows	170	425,000,000
3	2004	Benue	Hotels	2	555,250,000
4	2004	Benue	Mattresses	2215	11,075,000
5	2002	Benue	Compounds	20	NA
6	2002	Benue	Car belonging to E. T. Shima	1	NA
7	2003	Ogun	Houses	3	NA
8	2003	Oyo	Houses	4	NA
9	2003	Oyo	Cars	2	NA
10	2007	Lagos	Food stuffs & begs of water	NA	NA
11	2007	Oyo	Compound	1	NA
12	2007	Gombe	Compounds	2	NA
13	2007	Nasarawa	Car	1	NA
14	2007	Nasarawa	Motorcycles	5	NA
15	2007	Ebonyi	Motorcycles	3	NA
16	2007	Anambra	INEC office	1	NA
17	2007	Anambra	Computers	NA	NA
18	2007	Ondo	Motorcycles	3	NA
19	2011	Akwa Ibom	Cars	3	NA
20	2011	Niger	INEC Office	1	NA
21	2011	Niger	Motorcycles	4	NA
22	2011	Bayelsa	INEC Office	1	NA

23	2011	Abuja	Houses	2	Worth Millions of Naira
24	2011	Katsina	House	1	NA
25	2011	Akwa Ibom	Cars	200 brand new Peugeot	Worth Millions of Naira
26	2011	Adamawa	Commercial Truck	1	NA
27	2011	Kano	Houses	3	NA
28	2011	Kano	Company	1	NA
29	2011	Akwa Ibom	Tricycles	500	Worth Millions of Naira
30	2011	Plateau	Bus	1	NA
31	2011	Kaduna	Cars & Motorcycles	More than 10	NA
32	2011	Bauchi	Churches	18	NA
33	2011	Bauchi	Houses & Cars	8	NA
34	2011	Sokoto	Vehicles smashed	7	NA
35	2011	Gombe	Churches	4	NA
36	2015	Osun	House	1	Worth millions of naira
37	2015	Enugu	Honda Car	1	NA
38	2015	Anambra	Primary School	1	NA
39	2015	Plateau	House of Hon. Mohammad Adam Alkali	1	Worth millions of naira
40	2015	Plateau	Smashed cars of Hon. Alkali	3	NA
41	2019	Kano	House	4	NA
42	2019	Kano	Motorcycles	2	NA
43	2019	Rivers	Car	1	NA

44	2019	Rivers	Smashed Car	1	NA
45	2019	Delta	Smashed Car	1	NA
46	2019	Kogi	House	1	Worth Millions of Naira
47	2019	Akwa Ibom	Car	2	NA
48	2019	Kogi	Motorcycle	2	NA
49	2019	Benue	Smashed Car	1	NA

Source: Compiled by the Authors using various Newspapers, August, 2020.

Arising from the above table, it is important to note that during the ensuing violence, trading activities by traders are halted and goods worth millions are vandalized as evidenced in Ogbomoso, Oyo state in 2007 during the violence between supporters of the then PDP candidate Otunba, Adebayo Aloa Akala and the defunct AC gubernatorial candidate, Prof. Taoheed Adedjoja (The Sun, 2007: 4). Similarly, the invasion of the campaign rally of the then PDP candidate in Oregun-Ikeja and the violence that followed between supporters of Obanikoro of the PDP and Fashola of the AC disrupted economic activities in the area. (The Sun, 2007: 4). Traders scampered and left their goods in the hands of party thugs who did not only destroyed but vandalized goods worth thousands of naira.

In Azare, Jama'are and Misua, incidences of electoral violence paralysed economic and commercial activities during the 2011 post-election violence. In Jama'are, alone, shops worth thousands of naira were vandalized by irate youths. The shops vandalized included provision stores, medical stores and a pharmacy (Audu, 2020). The implication of the vandalization was that owners of these shops had to look for capital in order to restart their business. Besides, the traffic of trade in Jama'are decreased dramatically as it affects the per capita income of her residence who are predominately farmers and traders. The same situation was evident in Itas-Gadau Local Government Area were apart from burning of 10 churches by protesting youths following the announcement of the 2011 presidential elections, traders were looted and shops vandalized, thereby affecting economic activities and the income of her residence who also, are predominantly farmers and traders (Audu, 2020). In Abuja, the attempted bomb blast at the Wuse main market and the scampering of traders resulted to the lost in goods and commodities that were worth thousands of naira. Besides, the subsequent "closure" of the market because of fear affected the revenue that is often generated in the market for three days (Okafor, 2020). Apart from revenue generation, the closure also affected the per capita income of traders as most of them reverted to their hard-earned savings to purchase household utilities and other basic amenities.

There is inflation in the Nigerian economy during and after elections as a result of the huge amount of monies that are used in prosecuting electoral ambitions. For instance, prices of goods and services increased in all time rates in Nigeria to 85% during preparations to the 2015 general elections (Ojeaga & Odejimi, 2015: 15). The country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is also reduced during electoral violence situations. This was evident in the reduction of Nigeria's growth rate by almost 65% during the 2015 general elections.

The period of electoral violence is a period where development is often distracted (Peter & Abdulrahman, 2018: 24-25). The available infrastructures such as schools, hospital, pipe borne water facilities and other government institutions are being destroyed. The period of electoral violence usually takes a lot of money to security sector and this often-distracted developmental activities. (Peter & Abdulrahman, 2018: 24-25). Contributing on a similar issue, Ityonzughul (2017:376) succinctly discloses that:

The available infrastructures such as schools, hospital, pipe borne water facilities and other government institutions are being destroyed. The resources government is meant to use to development the system is be diverted to cater for security, rehabilitation of destroyed facilities which will resultantly hamper economic growth and development. For instance, in Nigeria, huge amount of money is budgeted on security as evidenced in the 2014 budget estimates.

Arising from the above quotation, huge amount of monies has been allocated to the defence sector since the return of democracy in 1999 as shown in table 3.

Table: 3 Budget Estimates for the Defence Sector from 1999-2019

Year	Proposed Budget Estimates in Naira
1999	45,400m
2000	37,490m
2001	63,472m
2002	108,148m
2003	82,413m
2004	85,047m
2005	111,869m
2006	98,000m
2007	122,314m
2008	444.6bn
2009	233bn
2010	264bn
2011	348bn
2012	921.91bn
2013	1.055trn
2014	932bn
2015	969bn
2016	1.063trn
2017	1.142trn
2018	1.323trn
2019	1.03trn

Sources: Clifford Ndujihe (2018), "Security: FG Spends ₦ 6trn on Defence in 11 Years" <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2008/07/security/-fg/spends/n6trn-on-defence-in-11-years/>.

(2018) "Proposed Security Budget" <https://youbudget.com/wp/content/uploads/2018/06/security-proposed-208-budget.pdf>. Hazen, J. M. and Horner, J. (2007), *Small Arms, Armed Violence, and Insecurity in Nigeria: The Niger Delta in Perspective*. Switzerland: Small Arms Survey, Graduate Institute of International Studies.

From the table, the amount of money expended by the government on defence, as earlier stated is alarming. From 1999-2007, the above estimates were tagged as Nigeria military expenditure

(Hazen & Horner, 2007: 29). From 2014 to 2018, the figures presented in the above table represented the entire budget of the defence sector. It comprises allocations from the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Interior and the Office of the National Security Adviser (Budget office, 2018). The huge allocation of sums of monies to the defence sector has affected budget allocation to other sectors like mining and agriculture that will have catapult Nigeria's economic development. Similarly, the displacement of people that is sometimes occasioned by incidences of electoral violence affects rural economy. This development was evidenced in Benue during the 2004 electoral violence that led to the displacement of people in Kwande Local Government Area of the state and the significant drop in the production of agricultural produce like rice in the area. The long-term impact was the general reduction in the internal revenue of the state.

Electoral violence has also occasioned the Proliferation of arms and Light Weapons (SALW) that has continued to mar Nigeria's economic development. Since the return of democracy in 1999, there has been a high increase in the number of arms and ammunition during electioneering periods. For instance, in preparatory to the 2003 general elections, three former governors of the Niger Delta states were named as those who provided money to militants and Mr. Henry Okah for the purchase of weapons in 2002 (Adeniyi, 2011: 63). The procurement of the weapons such as GPMGs, Sterling SMG, Bren LNG, AK 47 rifles, Uzis, FNs, 3G, Cetme, M12 She Berettas, grenades, rocket launchers, and several fragmentation jackets were linked to the governors' preparation for the 2003 re-election campaign (Adeniyi, 2011: 63-64). The 2003 elections therefore witnessed the re-election of the six governors in the region; namely: Obong Victor Attah, James Ibori, Peter Odili, Donald Duke, Lucky Igbinedion and Diepreye Alamieyeseigha of Akwa Ibom, Delta, Rivers, Cross-River, Edo and Bayelsa states respectively. What followed their re-election was the increase in the high levels of crisis and other criminal activities that resulted, for instance, in the kidnapping of foreign nationals, oil bunkering, pipeline vandalism that occasioned the drop in the production of oil which is the country's major export and the underdevelopment of the region.

Electoral violence, since the return of democracy in 1999 has occasioned the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons. Thus from 1999 to 2007, security agencies have intercepted arms worth billions of naira that are purchased by politicians for election purposes (Hazen & Horner, 2007: 7). This is corroborated by (Adeniyi, 2011:65) who decried the huge amount of money that is used for unlawful purchase of arms by the political class. Interestingly, the arms are purchased with tax payers money at the detrimental of the country's infrastructural deficit. Surprisingly, once the arms are giving to political thugs, they do not return them thereby using the arms arbitrary, and for unlawful economic gains. The Niger Delta, for instance, is replete with conflicts that are triggered by the unlawful possession of arms that were bought for purposes of "forced" electoral victories. Similarly, as (Hazen & Horner, 2007: 109-119) argued, the region, which is the economic hub of the country houses the highest number of armed groups in the country. The high concentration of armed groups such as the Bush Boys, Deebam, Deewell, Icelander in the region and their sponsorship by political leaders in the region during elections and the subsequent "de-patronization" of these groups by the same elites have informed the chaotic nature of the region and the destruction of economic activities. Once the region is tensed, the economy of the country

is affected because of the fundamental drop in the production of oil which is the nation's major export.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria has gravitated from one problem to the other since the era colonialism. These problems have manifested themselves in many ways and one of the most critical among them is electoral violence. The preceding analysis argued that the menace of electoral violence is a recurrent decimal in Nigeria's electoral history since independence in 1960. However, the propensity of electoral violence in Nigeria's fourth republic has assumed catastrophic dimensions. The paper examined the menace of electoral violence within the context of its implication on the economy of the country. Electoral violence has overtime, hampered the development of the Nigeria's economy. In order to salvage the nation from eminent collapse as a result of electoral violence, the recommends the granting of full autonomy for the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). This autonomy would engender administrative efficiency and professionalism of the Body. The paper also recommends the reduction in the wages and allowances of political office holders in the country to make politics less financially attractive and calls for the creation of job opportunities to Nigerian teeming youths who because of unemployment are used for purposes of electoral violence. The paper also recommends the establishment of Election Offences Commission as suggested by the Justice Uwais Committee to try those who flout the Electoral Law by committing offences such as rigging that most times necessitate virulent elections in Nigeria.

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