Effect Of Political Violence In Nigeria

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Abstract: Political violence is violence outside of state control that is politically motivated. Some political scientists see political violence as part of “contentious politics” or collective political struggle, which includes such things as revolutions, civil war, riots and strikes, but more peaceful protest movements. Crime and warfare share some attributes with political violence, but political scientists do not define them as political violence. Political violence is violence perpetrated by people or governments to achieve political goals. It can describe violence used by a state against other states or against non-state actors. It can also describe politically motivated violence by non-state actors against a state or against other non-state actors. Political violence is violence perpetrated by people or governments to achieve political goals. ... At other times, governments use force in order to defend their country from outside invasion or other threats of force and to coerce other governments or conquer territory. For democracy to be at equitable standard and delivery politicians that improve masses welfare and mensch must be informed to vote and hold politicians accountable in the event of any eventual pitfall because most politicians often manage to secure votes by stirring up greed, rivalry, or fear. Improving democracy therefore requires that we must find ways to reduce the role that greed, rivalry and fear play in the electoral process, especially in young democracies such as those in Africa. However, the study aimed at determining the causes and level of the effect of political violence in Nigeria.

Keywords: Crime, Democracy, Election, Offence, Political violence, Politicians, Rivalry, Vote.

1. INTRODUCTION
1.1 Background of the Study

Greed, rivalry, fear or egomania, few among others in politics have been among causes of political violence. Critical examination of the causes of the political violence in Nigeria revealed that the immediate causes of the phenomenon in the country include imposition of candidates on party members. Others are, lack of democratic institutions and culture; the prevailing political mind of- set of do – or die and winner takes- all; partisanship of law enforcement agencies; lack of prompt judicial response to the cases of electoral offences, the general socioeconomic downturn that has rather remained unaddressed over the years. The fundamental question is: what can be done to reduce the role of malefashion electoral strategies like vote-buying, lack of democratic institutions and culture; the prevailing political mind of- set of do – or die and winner takes- all; partisanship of law enforcement agencies; lack of prompt judicial response to the cases of electoral offences, ethnic polarization, or
violent intimidation? However, encouraging empowerment and creating awareness campaign encouraging Nigerian voters to oppose electoral violence may reduce it to a minimal level.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Nigeria is a country of overlapping regional, religious, and ethnic divisions. Rifts between the North and the South of the country, ethnic groups, and Islam and Christianity often coincide and have sometimes resulted in political or sectarian violence.

Since the end of military rule, Nigeria’s elites have largely cordoned off national presidential elections from sectarian divisions by predetermining presidential and vice presidential victors. Their People’s Democratic Party (PDP) nominates one southern Christian and one northern Muslim for the presidency and vice presidency. Every eight years the party rotates the office for which it nominates Christian and Muslim candidates. Excluded as it is from this process of political horse-trading, known as zoning, Nigeria’s ethnically and religiously fractured public has become increasingly indifferent to the country’s national electoral politics. The question is why it must always be Muslim/Christian candidates and why not Muslim/Muslim or Christian/Christian? Evidence we find suggests political parties formed along ethnic divides are more prone to violence, which leads us to argue in favour of the reciprocal-vote approach.

Another disturbing thing is the political class continues to arm the youths, employ and deploy them to commit heinous crimes, shed blood at every critical point in our political life especially during election period; water the streets with blood of the youth themselves, innocent by-stands passers-by. Politicians themselves are assassinated in broad day and in cold blood; bodies, souls and destinies and wantonly destroyed in the Manichean quest for political power. The continually deteriorating economic conditions also continue to throw up new dynamics and nuances, which alter the pattern of political violence. For instance, bombing was non-existent in 1999, 2003 and 2007 general election. Thus, the specificity of terrorism is new phenomenon of political violence in Nigeria.

The combined impact of violence and the electoral system needs to be evaluated for how it influences representation, especially for contentious groups in conflict-prone societies. In such situations, the violence may not be limited to elections; in fact, a key condition for recurrent civil conflict discussed by Walter (2004) is the lack of a non-violent method to influence governance. As said previously, the continually deteriorating economic conditions also continue to throw up new dynamics and nuances, which alter the pattern of political violence. For instance, bombing was non-existent in 1999, 2003 and 2007 general election. Thus, the specificity of terrorism is new phenomenon of political violence in Nigeria and political violence has brought a lot conflicts in Nigeria among ethnic groups, nations, religions and tribes.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of this study is to investigate effect of political violence in Nigeria. The study strives to accomplish the following specific objectives:

➢ To ascertain extent the political violence can hinder with constituting an up to do, good, free and fair democratic Government.
➢ To ascertain the impact of political violence in Nigeria.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Different researchers have examined the link between election outcome, electoral participation and electoral violence but all have limited their theories and views to how they see it according to their perspective field of study. Hickman (2009) examines the impact of violence on voter turnout and election results in Sri Lanka. According to him, violence perpetrated by individuals associated with one political party, leads to a reduction in turnout for the opposition or another party. Another paper using the Afrobarometer data from Nigeria shows that vote buying is far more effective than violence (Bratton, 2008). Bratton also demonstrates that the most common response to any form of ‘illegitimate campaigning’, e.g. violence or vote buying, is abstention. We extend this literature by examining multiple countries and looking at heterogeneity in the impact of violence.
Political class continues to arm the youths, employ and deploy them to commit heinous crimes, shed blood at every critical point in our political life especially during election period; water the streets with blood of the youths themselves, innocent by-stands passers-by. Politicians themselves are assassinated in broad day and in cold blood; bodies, souls and destinies and wantonly destroyed in the Manichean quest for political power. The society and the political system are caught in a spider web or maelstrom of violence and death. Every election year, conferences are organized and held to pontificate on the negative of political violence. However, it does seem that the notification stops at the venue of such conferences or on the pages of newspapers reporting. Political violence as a means to propagate and maintain the status quo in Nigeria is historical and structural in nature. It has been with us since the early independence years and was deployed by the existing political parties then.

Political violence negates peaceful coexistence, law and order. In addition to security concerns, it militates against the consolidation of democracy and social coexistence. This in turn affects the social and economic wellbeing of the nation and creates imbalances in social relations (Howell, 2004). Political violence brings complex set of events such as poverty, ethnic or religious grievances that affect the social relationship of the people in the society. Marx, (1968) posits that violence, particularly political violence, represents a disturbance movement to the political equilibrium and peaceful co-existence of the system.

A political campaign is an organized effort which seeks to influence the decision making process within a specific group. In democracies, political campaigns often refer to electoral campaigns, by which representatives are chosen or referendums are decided. In modern politics, the most high-profile political campaigns are focused on general elections and candidates for head of state or head of government, often a president or prime minister. However, vigorous campaigns against electoral violence must be intensified and vigorously in other to reduce the rate of political violence considerably to a minimal rate in Nigeria. Electoral campaign must be flagged with peaceful campaign intentions and all hands must be at desk in order to see it work. Posters on peaceful campaign and election may be printed and distributed house to house if possible. The distribution of the posters should be by both private and public sectors in order to ascertain a nonviolent election. See example of posters to be printed and distributed below:

![Poster](image)

**Figure 1:** A poster distributed during the anti-violence campaign

### 2.2 Concept Of Violence

Those dissatisfied with the social structural 'status quo' often tend to define violence in terms of the human experience of 'violation'. The argument of Garver (1958) can serve as an example of this approach, which will be referred to as 'expansive' (Grundy & Weinstein, 1974). Garver begins his discussion by noting that violence is often connected with the use of physical force: "Violence often involves physical force, and the association of force with violence is very close: in many contexts the words become synonymous". However, Garver argues that the connection of violence with force is superficial. One does not say that a doctor is being violent when he is attempting to repair a dislocated shoulder. The core meaning of violence is the act of violating a basic right of the human being. For Garver, the two basic human rights are the right to one's body and the right to autonomy. Violation of these rights implies that violence has been done.
According to Mark Vorobej in his book, the Concept of Violence the study focuses on conceptual questions that arise when we explore the fundamental aspects of violence. Mark Vorobej teases apart what is meant by the term ‘violence,’ showing that it is a surprisingly complex, unwieldy and highly contested concept.

Violence is defined by the World Health Organization as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal development, or deprivation," although the group acknowledges that the inclusion of "the use of power" in its definition expands on the conventional understanding of the word

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From this basis, Garver defines four types of violence as follows:

- Personal overt violence is the "overt physical assault of one person on the body of another".
- Overt institutional violence occurs when people obeying orders within an organization physically assault others. Garver notes that it is difficult to assign responsibility for overt institutional violence because while the individual is not acting on his own initiative, "the group does not have a soul and cannot act except through the agency of individual men".
- Quiet personal violence occurs when a human being deprives another person of autonomy through the manipulation of symbols; "If we fail to recognize that a real psychological violence can be perpetrated on people, a violation of their autonomy, their dignity, their right to determine things for themselves, to be men rather than dogs, then we fail to realize the full dimension of what it is to do violence".
- Finally, quiet institutional violence occurs when some people are systematically denied access to social options open to others. "The institutional form of quiet violence operates when people are deprived of choices in a systematic way by the very manner in which transactions normally take place". Garver notes that denial of options is an attack on autonomy and, therefore, constitutes violence.

The definition of violence as violating persuasion is not the most widely accepted usage in the West. It extends or expands the definition of violence to its widest reaches, subsuming a number of acts and conditions deemed immoral and heretofore not regarded as violence. As such, it is referred to as an expansive and ethical definition (Grundy & Weinstein, 1974).

The same viewpoint can be found well expressed in the works of Galtung (1959), Wertham (1966), and Bettelheim (1966).

2.3 Political Violence

Violence is "the illegitimate and unauthorized use of force to effect decisions against the will or desires of other people in the society"(Wolf, 1969). According to Gurr (1970), political violence refers to all collective attacks within a political community against the political regime, its actors including competing political groups as well as incumbents or its policies. From the foregoing, one can observe that there is a correlative relationship between the two concepts. In fact, they are complementary. The end, product of political violence is thuggery. Violence is the means through which thugs achieve their aims.

Political violence is violence outside of state control that is politically motivated. Some political scientists see political violence as part of “contentious politics” or collective political struggle, which
includes such things as revolutions, civil war, riots and strikes, but also more peaceful protest movements. Crime and warfare share some attributes with political violence, but political scientists do not define them as political violence.

Scholars who seek to explain political violence use three categories of factors: institutional, ideational, and individual.

- Institutional explanations for political violence focus on how state, economic, or social systems contribute to political violence.
- Ideational explanations focus on the effect of political, religious ideas in causing political violence.
- Individual explanations focus on what motivates individual people to engage in political violence—either because of rational or psychological factors.

Comparing Explanations of Political Violence the three approaches to explaining political violence—Institutional, Ideational, and Individual—may be compared on their view of free will versus determinism and on universal versus particularistic approaches. Institutional explanations are more deterministic, while individual explanations tend to afford more free will. Ideational explanations lie somewhere in between. Institutional explanations are more particularistic, while individual explanations tend to be universal; again, ideational approaches lie somewhere in the middle.

2.4 Forms Of Political Violence

- Revolution is a public seizure of the state in order to overturn the existing government and regime. Unlike a coup d’état, where elites overthrow the government, the public plays a key role in a revolution. Revolutions often, but not always, involve violence.
- Earlier scholars focused on individual explanations for revolutions, such as the relative deprivation model, which argued that revolution occurred when there was a gap between public expectations and actual conditions in a country. Later work focused on institutional explanations, including how competition for power in the international system can lead weaker states to institute reforms that may breed discontent and thus incite revolution. Today, scholars tend to incorporate both arguments in their explanations for revolution.
- Though revolution can bring new forms of government and economic systems, it can also result in increased state power and dictatorship. One general observation is that the greater the violence associated with bringing down the old regime, the more likely it is that violence will continue under the new one.
- Terrorism is the use of violence by non-state actors against civilians in order to achieve a political goal. State-sponsored terrorism is violence (genocide, war crimes, torture) perpetrated by a state as an instrument of foreign policy. In contrast to terrorism, guerrilla war involves violence by non-state actors targeting the state.
- Drawing from institutional explanations, some scholars point to weak economies and low levels of education as explanations for terrorism; however, many terrorist leaders and followers come from economically advantaged backgrounds. Ideational explanations (blaming a particular ideology or religion) are common but do not sufficiently explain cause and effect. Individual explanations focus on the feeling of injustice or humiliation that, some feel, comes at the hands of oppressors. Some scholars point to nihilistic and apocalyptic viewpoints—beliefs that all values and institutions are meaningless, and that violence can destroy a corrupt world and usher in a new order—as causes of terrorist violence.
- Though most scholars argue that terrorism has not been successful at achieving its long-term goals, it does have a significant political impact. Terrorism has been successful at disrupting economies and destabilizing politics in some countries and can be a tool to provoke international conflict. Fighting terrorism may lead to a weakening of democratic institutions and civil rights, which may result in less trust in government and less public control over it. At an extreme, terrorism can help bring down a regime.
- Religious, regional and ethnic division: In Nigeria always with overlapping regional, religious, and ethnic divisions. Rifts between the North and the South of the country, ethnic groups, and Islam and Christianity often coincide and have sometimes resulted in political or sectarian violence.
2.5 Types Of Political Violence

- Terrorism: - premeditated, politically motivated violence by non-state actors targets a non-combatant.
- Domestic: Terrorism: Where the source and the target are citizens of the same country
- Ethnic: - group political violence resulting in the murder of many members of one ethnic group by its rival. An ethnic conflict is fought between ethnic groups. While at times a specific ethnic group may have the backing (whether formal or informal) of the state (or conversely, a specific ethnic group may be targeted by the state), ethnic conflict can also take place between two groups without the direct intervention of the state, or despite the state's attempts to mediate between groups.
- Establishment violence: - when the state organizes the campaign against an ethnic group, such genocide can also be classified
- Class conflict: - violence linked to an ethnic or religious cleavage
- Riots: - Spontaneous and relatively disorganized group violence against property, agents of the political system, perceived opponents in the society or random targets. A group of individuals formed to protest perceived wrongs and/or injustice can describe a riot as a violent disturbance. These can range from poverty and inequality to unemployment and government oppression. They can manifest themselves in a number of ways but most commonly in the form of property damage. Riots are characterized by their lack of predictability and the anonymity of their participants. Both make it difficult for authorities to identify those participating.
- Capital punishment: - Is the sentence of death upon a person by the state as a punishment for an offense. This does not include extrajudicial killing, which is the killing of a person by governmental authorities without the sanction of any judicial proceeding or legal process. The use of capital punishment by country varies, but according to Amnesty International 58 countries still actively use the death penalty, and in 2010, 23 countries carried out executions and 67 imposed death sentences. Methods of execution in 2010 included beheading, electrocution, hanging, lethal injection and shooting.[11] In 2007 the United Nations General Assembly passed the UN moratorium on the death penalty which called for worldwide abolition of the death penalty.
- Famine: - can be initiated or prolonged in order to deny resources, compel obedience, or to depopulate a region with a recalcitrant or untrusted populace.
- Rebellions: - More frequent, premeditated and widespread violence involving more people. Many of those engaged in violence have lost faith in the likelihood that the system will respond to their problems.
- Separatist violence: - Violence to achieve substantial (or total) political autonomy from an unresponsive political system.
- Torture: - Is the act of inflicting severe pain (whether physical or psychological) as a means of punishment, revenge, forcing information or confession, or simply as an act of cruelty. Torture is prohibited under international law and the domestic laws of most countries in the 21st century. It is considered a human rights violation and is declared unacceptable by Article 5 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.
- Police brutality: - Is another form of political violence. It is most commonly described in juxtaposition with the term excessive force. Police brutality can be defined as "a civil rights violation that occurs when a police officer acts with excessive force by using an amount of force with regards to a civilian that is more than necessary.
- Civil war: - Results when a significant proportion of the population in a region actively supports a separatist movement and political violence emerges on a large scale. Also known as an intrastate war, a civil war is a war fought within the same state or country between organized groups. Less commonly, it can also be fought between two countries that have been created from one previously unified state. Often these conflicts involve one group wishing to take control of a region or expressing dissatisfaction with the government. There is typically a desire to overthrow the existing power or at least change some of their policies. In many cases, an outside power may intervene on behalf of one side if they share their ideology or condemn the methods/motives of their opponents.
- Coup d'état: - Occurs when top leader or part of the leadership group is replaced by violent means or the explicit threat of violence. Those carrying out the... have no intention of overthrowing the...
political order although their opposition to the existing leadership can be based on differences in policy as well as on personal rivalry

- **Revolution:** A revolution is a rapid fundamental transformation of the state organization and class structure the explicit objective of a revolution is to destroy the existing political system and establish a new one
- **War:** Interstate violence that is sustained and organized and (usually) involves hostilities between the regular military forces of the state. War is a state of organized, armed, and often prolonged conflict carried on between states, nations, or other parties.
- **Counter-insurgency:** Another form of political violence, describes a spectrum of actions taken by the recognized government of a state to contain or quell an insurgency taken up against it.

### 2.6 Reasons For Political Violence In Nigeria

- Many have argued that the immediate causes of political violence in the country in both the current as well as past political dispensation include lack of internal democratic structures and processes within the individual political parties – leading to imposition of candidates on party members. Others are, weak democratic institutions and culture; the prevailing political mind-set of do-or die and winner takes-all; the weakness and alleged partisanship of the law enforcement agencies during election times; the lack of prompt judicial response to cases of electoral offences; the general socioeconomic downturn that has rather remained unaddressed over the years, among others.
- Inadequate voter education: The electoral umpire has a major task to carry out educating the voters on the dos and don'ts before, during and after elections. There must be a conscious effort to reach the voters physically to demonstrate and educate them on the need to carry out their franchise within the ambit of the law.
- In a country that has one of the most unequal distributions of wealth in the world the rebellion was much about the fair and equitable access to economic resources as it was about the political power. Youths face lack of social and economic opportunities; youth’s unemployment in the country has become a national crisis, as many as 70 per cent of youths who graduated from universities cannot find jobs. Extreme poverty, misinterpretation of religious tenets, religious intolerance and fanaticism/bigotry, bad governance all these contributed to the political violence phenomenal emergence of Boko Haram Nigeria faces today. In fact, western education was not the real problem, the real problem as highlighted is the corruption and bad governance that responsible for the joblessness and unemployment of the youth in the country. Nigeria is a country where government directive are wilfully distorted; services rendered to fellow citizens are systematically commercialized, or sold as commodities. (6) A typical example is the conduct of The Nigerian Immigration Service’s boss Rose Uzoma that was alleged of conducting a recruitment exercise without advertisement, allotting slots to president wife, and favouring applicants from the South-East where she comes from.
- Failure of the justice system: A situation where politicians who have been indicted for electoral violence in the past are still working freely till this day tend to promote impunity among the political class, who has developed the mind-set that they can get away with violent acts during the electioneering period. There is a need to look into the justice system to fashion out ways to prosecute electoral offenders.
- The details of the allegation is as followed: 250 slots to the presidency, president mother 40 slots; president’s wife 100 slots, interior minister, Abba Moro, 100 slots; two commissioners of the Immigration board, 30 slots each ; and the federal character commission, 250 slots.
- Unemployment: Majority of the mass number of youths who are unemployed are a readymade army in the hands of unscrupulous politicians. The desperation of the political class to grab or retain power is consistent with the desperation of some of the unemployed youths to survive at all cost.
- Corruption: Corruption is a menace that has eaten deep in virtually all strata of the Nigerian society. Indeed, the electoral system is not free from this menace as monies constantly change hands during electioneering period to induce, silence or influence the process as the case may be.
- If not that, the country is under civilian government that is how the exercise would have been conducted giving the opportunity only to those who know that cabal. Uzoma was invited to appear...
before the House committee to defend the accusations she said that the service did not advertise the jobs so as not to unknowingly employ terrorists.

- **Lack of internal democracy in political parties**: Nigerian political parties have failed in their primary duty to re-orientate politicians within their fold on the need to play by the rules. Worst still, electoral violence is consciously or unconsciously encouraged at the party level when candidates emerge for the main elections. This is due to the flawed processes instituted internally by the parties.

- **In the North and South of the country there are potential combustible human materials to destabilize the democratic regime and the transition process that fits into patterns of ethnic competition; but most often, such conflicts pit members of the same ethnic group against each other in struggles for leadership posts.**

- **Inadequate security**: The Nigerian security agencies are most times overwhelmed by the spate of political violence that has been witnessed in the society over time. Several media reports have detailed how security personnel were on ground when these acts were committed, but look the other way because of their limitations in terms of their numbers or tools they need to carry out their duties effectively.

- **Misinterpretation of politics**: Quite a lot of people in the Nigerian society believe that violence in politics is a norm. In addition, they have unfortunately, gotten accustomed to the violence that spring up during the electioneering period. In fact, many youths who are recruited into the private armies of politicians, already have the mind-set that their duty is to cause mayhem, foment trouble, intimidate voters and engage in a brawl with political opponents. This kind of mind-set clearly shows that politics have been greatly misunderstood by the political class, the large section of the public and party followers.

- **Poverty**: The mass poverty in Nigeria is capable of turning a decent man into a beast within a twinkle of an eye. The political class in the country are aware of this fact, and they use it to their advantage, knowing that getting people on their side is not a big deal, so far they can flash the cash. It is also the norm to influence voters' decisions with cash and gifts in order to gain their support.

- **President Jonathan has set a target of four to five years- apparently targeting the period of his own existence from office- for the revolution. Given the grim picture of the unemployment situation in the country and pervasive level of poverty the warnings of a revolution by the two leaders came with a tinge of irony. As former president, what did Obasanjo do to provide jobs for the teeming unemployed youths? And, as the current president, what is President Jonathan doing to stave off the revolution? His declaration is actually an admission that the government has failed to meet the needs of its citizens.**

- **Thus, conflicts spurred by competition over economic opportunities have been part of life in Nigeria. Such competition has long been managed with varying degrees of success in many places in the country, but it has always erupted at unpredicted moments into violent confrontations.**

- **Lack of democratic culture**: Decades of military rule has affected the psyche of the average Nigerian and indeed Nigerian politicians. Indeed, many are still struggling to come to terms that we are now practicing democracy. Lack of democratic culture is evident in all the stages of the electioneering period from internal party wrangling, to campaign rallies, to political debates and to the interactions between politicians and the public. Efforts need to be made by civil society groups to instil democratic culture in the Nigerian populace. During the military rule, the military colossi consolidated its hegemony of managing the country, breaching its ability to control, administrate, and implement state plans and counterinsurgency policy. This form of governance led to the formation of powerful civilian-military groups through which political parties and other institutions helped legitimized their hegemony. In some cases, important groups of civilians linked to the economic and political system played a significant role in managing government and developing government affairs and ultimately, in planning and developing government policies.

- **Lack of integrity from electoral umpires**: A situation where the electoral umpire clearly shows bias for one group over another is a recipe for political violence. Over time, those whose duties are to conduct a free and fair have been at the forefront of electoral malpractices, which in turn results to civil disturbances by political parties that have been cheated. The onus is on electoral umpires to...
ensure the electoral process is credible in order to eliminate the constant cases of violence that is now associated with elections.

- The defence itself shows that in Nigeria, government and their official make public statements, not for the benefit of all Nigerians but for the benefit of the privileged few. In fact, the negative behaviours of government officials permeate every aspect of life in the country. And this is the case since political independence from Britain, many of the administrations that have ruled Nigeria have, by their policies and utterances, criminalized the citizenry. These observations are quite right and Nigeria leaders are not unaware of these facts. President Jonathan warned at PDP governorship campaign outing in Lokoja Kogi State capital, the president warned that the army of jobless youths currently roaming the nation’s streets might revolt against the government if their desire for jobs is not met in the next four years. Similarly, former president Obasanjo suggested at a workshop in Abeokuta, Ogun State, that an Arab spring-type of revolution that has already toppled governments in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, could be replicate in Nigeria.

3. CONCLUSION

This study was meant to find out the effect of political violence in Nigeria. From the study, it can be ascertained that political not only have effect in Nigeria but to the world as a whole. The 20011 general election marked another ugly milestone of political violence in the political history and culture in Nigeria. Comparatively, it is rather difficult to determine which the most violence afflicted general elections were since the return to civil rule in mid-1999. The 1999 general election was violent-prone; so also was the 2003 and 2007 general election. The number of deaths recorded in each general election was never accurately recorded. However, what became obvious was that there was progression in the number of causalities recorded after each general election since 1999. The Nigerian political scene is bedevilled by violence. This can be attributed to the culture of political activity during the pre-independence period and the early stage of political independence in 1960. Exploring the origins of political violence entails the analysis of the different domains and levels within which violence emerges. Moser and Clark (2001a) asserted that it is in the public domain where political violence, intertwined with economic and social violence, takes place. Political violence geared towards winning political competition or power through violence, subverting the ends of the electoral and democratic process. Its tool of trade is the intimidation and disempowerment of political opponents. Political violence takes place not just at election time, but also in periods leading to elections, during the elections themselves, and in the period immediately following elections such as during the counting of ballots.

The paper recommended that politicians’ should conduct their campaign on the basis of issues rather than attack on political opponents or mobilization of religious, ethnic and regional sentiments. The campaigns should focus on the implementation of the critical national economic, political, social, cultural, educational and health services. Political parties should evolve as mechanism of democratic governance rather than servicing as an organized criminal enterprise used for seeking, gaining and retaining power in order to rob public treasury. Critical examination of the causes of the political violence in Nigeria revealed that the immediate causes of the phenomenon in the country include imposition of candidates on party members. Others are, lack of democratic institutions and culture; the prevailing political mind of- set of do – or die and winner takes-all; partisanships of law enforcement agencies; lack of prompt judicial response to the cases of electoral offences, the general socioeconomic downturn that has rather remained unaddressed over the years.

Political violence can cause greed, acrimony, selfishness, assault, assassination, intimidation, harassment, maiming and killing. This can affect our coexistence, our relationship with one another and the society as a whole. It should be understood that this ill behaviour does not originate from our birth but rather a bad behaviour we picked and put on to ourselves because of greed and other bad behaviours we put to ourselves. The steps taking here are aimed at reducing or eradicating political violence such that social relationship will grow. There is no substitute to political violence without bitterness.

If you are also interested in advancing your career in effect of political violence in Nigeria then this research work will be of help one way or the order.
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