ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN KADUNA STATE: THE IMPLICATION FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

The goal of the paper is to examine electoral violence in Nigeria and how it has affected Kaduna State peace and development. By conducting a thorough interview, the study uses a qualitative methodology. The study used the political legitimacy and effectiveness theories. The concept of political legitimacy is inextricably intertwined with the issues of political change, regardless of whether governments, political systems, or institutions comply with the traditional standards of legitimacy as subscribed in a democratic process of free and fair elections. The study found that electoral violence has turned into a predictable occurrence in Nigeria's political system and should therefore not be escalated to destructive levels against people's lives and property, regardless of their ethnic or religious differences.The paper also found that there are a number of variables, such as poverty, unemployment, and inadequate voter education that contribute to election violence in Kaduna State. Loss of life and property, uncertainty, and illegitimacy are only a few of the effects of these circumstances. The paper suggests that the government should focus on the prevention in order to solve election violence in Kaduna State by reducing the number of firearms in the hands of unlicensed people and giving job chances to young people who are unemployed. Despite their disparities in ethnicity and religion, the paper's conclusion argues that Kaduna State's many subpopulations must work together.

Keywords: *Election, ElectoralViolence,Politics, Democracy,political Leadership*

Introduction

Since the country's independence, violent elections have occurred in Nigeria. With the sole purpose of intimidating and harassing voters to change their minds before, during, and after voting, it may be physical, emotional/psychological, or in any other way. This implies that there are multiple points throughout the electoral process where violence occurs, from voter registration to the post-election period. The majority of the time, electoral violence aims to manipulate the election results in favor of a certain candidate by altering, influencing, or changing the voting pattern forcibly (Ugoh, 2004).

Abah and Nwokwu (2015) define electoral violence as the use of force or the threat of force to alter voters voting patterns during elections. Election violence in modern times typically involves political parties, their supporters, journalists, government agents, election officials, and members of the general public and can take the form of threats, assaults, murders, property destruction, and physical hurt or psychological harm. Given the foregoing, it is clear that electoral violence, especially in Nigeria, is fundamentally an elitist phenomena resulting from the intense competition for positions within the power system. When ethnic, religious, and community groups or individuals are led to believe that their interests are about to disappear, this frequently escalates into open violence (Michael, 2012).

Election, according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English, is simply the process by which eligible electorates cast their ballots in order to select from among political contenders who compete for various elective positions with a view to providing effective leadership, high-quality representation, and effective government. (Isa et al., 2015). Furthermore, Heywood (2000) asserts that elections are a means through which electorates, or specified groups of individuals, fill positions in government. Similar to this, Dye (2005) describes elections as a fundamental tool for the recruitment of political leadership in democratic societies.Elections are also a key component of effective participation in a democratic system and a way for citizens to express their approval of the administration. (Kim et al.2004) Additionally, according to Abah and Nwokwu (2015), elections are unquestionably one of the hallmarks of representative democracy. It makes it possible for citizens who are of voting age in a nation to exercise their right to vote and choose their representatives.

Nigeria's political environment continues to be marked by electoral violence, and an analysis of the issue identifies a

number of causes, including small weapons proliferation, unemployment, and poverty, among others. It also examines the impacts on development, and peace in Nigerian society and suggests a number of alternatives, including sustainable growth, election changes, and anti-corruption initiatives. In modern democracies, changing the administration is only possible through elections. Election is a planned activity in which a person is selected by the results of a vote for something, often a public office. Elections, electors, or voters are all involved in an electoral process. Violence is also defined as the use of physical force to harm someone or destroy something. All types of violence that emerge, at any point, from differences in views, beliefs, and practices during the process of elections, could be classified as electoral violence, claims TafaBalogun (2011).

In Nigeria, there have been numerous reports of electoral violence in all three phases of the electoral process pre-election, election, and post-election and in a variety of forms. These have also been divided into two main categories, physical and psychological. Election-related violence can take many different forms, from simple assault to murder and assassination. Between 1999 and 2019, thousands of lives in Nigeria were reportedly lost as a result of violence, including electoral violence.Previous literature has shown variant perceptions and analysis of different scholars professionals among others on electoral violence. The literature reviewed shows thatelectoral violence in Nigeria especially in Kaduna occur in different number of modalities depending on the context andtiming. More so, it has been observed over the yearsthat the rate of electoral violence constantly occur in all most allpart of the stateandhas continue to be in an increasing rate. Most the reviewed literature acknowledgesthatelectoral violence in Nigeria is an exploitativeact to jeopardizepeaceanddevelopment. Base on the study carried out by different authors, the reviewed literature reveled that electoral violence is a public health challenge affecting the country in general with only a few programs to address it.However, these study just like any other has its shortcomingsand challenge, from the review and to the best of my knowledge, none of the study assesses the implication of electoral violence on peace and development particularly in Kaduna. It is on this basis that the study sought to conceptualize electoral violence in Kaduna state: the implication on peace and development.

Electoral Violence in Kaduna State 1999 - 2019

Election procedures in Kaduna State Since the beginning of the democratic system, Nigeria has experienced

various degrees of electoral violence. For instance, this was seen during the election campaigns and elections in 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2019. The situation in the 2011 elections was more obviousduring the 2011 election, there were frightening instances of intimidation, harassment, and murder; nevertheless, the situation in 2015 and 2019 was not as obvious as it was in 2011. (Isa, 2018).These features, corroborate the findings of scholars like Scott 1969, Lawson 1999, Anugwan 2005, Broten and luwis 2007,Joseph 2014, Harff 2018, who found out in their study that must election in Africa are characterized and marred by high level of conflict, violence, insecurity, vote buying, rigging, division and the fractionalizing of members and voting patterns on the basis of religion, negative ethnicity, also other forms of configuration that tends to be totally inimical to the basic ideas and principle on which liberal and electoral democracy are found.

The main causes of political and electoral violence in Kaduna State since its formation, particularly during the 2011 elections, have been identified as ethnic and religious factors, which are exacerbated by young unrest. During the 2019 governor's race, this phenomena gained traction. Since then, every election has given the phenomena a new depth. It was clear that the "Yan'Bangasiyasa," a new phenomena of youth restlessness, was on the rise. This development has a direct detrimental impact on the political process in both of the state's 23 local governments.

The following are some of the main causes of electoral violence in Kaduna State:

i. Regional politics and ethno religious issues.

ii. Using political thugs to influence elections.

iii. Unemployment and poverty

iv. Inadequate voter education.

Table 1: Some Reported Cases of Electoral Violence in Kaduna State, 2011

S/N	NATURE OF VIOLENCE	AREA	DATE
1	A group of pro-Buhari youngsters cornered and killed four students and a lecturer in the staff quarters at NuhuBamalli and attacked them with rods, clubs, and machetes.	Zaria	April 17, 2011
2	On the main route going north to the city, Muslim mobs slaughtered Christian travelers after dragging them out of their cars. Muslim drivers were killed when Christian mobs set their cars on fire on the freeway that runs through the city's southern areas.	Kaduna city	18th April, 2011
3	Marauding mobs killed Christians and Muslims who were on the wrong side of the river during the riots by beating them to death. Mosques and churches in the city were set on fire.	Kaduna city	18th April, 2011
4	Numerous homes and businesses were destroyed, and the major mosque was set ablaze. Anti-Islamic vandalism and the words "Jesus is Lord" were written on the mosque's burned-out walls. Hundreds of people left the area, and many died.	MarabaRido, in Kaduna	April 28, 2011
5	Six mosques in the town, along with residences, businesses, and cars, were set on fire.	Zonkwa	April 18 2011
6	311 Muslims, 10 Christians, and 24 others many of whose bodies had been burned beyond recognition were buried in a well in the village.	Zonkwa	April 18, 2011
7	According to reports, some locals were slain, and 224 of their homes and 837 businesses many of them in the central market were set on fire.	Kafanchan	April 18 2011

Source: Human Rights watch Kaduna State (2021)

The frequency of electoral violence in Kaduna State, specifically in 2011, is seen in the above table. These occurrences took place around the state in various locations. The records revealed a certain distribution of the incidences among several of the state's 23 local government areas. It is evident from the data in the table above that electoral violence is more prevalent in the Southern region of the State.

Implications of Electoral Violence on Peace and Development

Numerous elements that repeatedly have an impact on the socioeconomic activities of the affected individuals cause electoral violence. The widespread use of small guns in the nation is undoubtedly a contributing element, as is the allegedly widespread illegal possession of small and light weapons in Nigeria. These weapons fuel violent conflict and start new escalations in crime and violence. As suggested by Aribisala (2004). The armaments also hinder the efforts of aid and humanitarian organizations and work against sustainable development.Small armaments pose the greatest threat to democracy, human rights, and peace and development, according to the proliferation of these weapons has also been linked to electoral violence, which has led to terrorism-related problems like banditry, abduction, and many others, all of which are problems throughout Nigeria, including Kaduna State.The election-related violence must be utterly denounced since it serves no one's interests. Elections are similar to games where victors and losers must emerge and where participants must acknowledge both success and failure as inherent to the game.

Kim and others 2004 opened that a nation's criminal or penal code outlines offenses and the consequences or punishment for those who violate the code. There are no particular prohibitions against certain electoral offenses, only connected crimes like arson, assault, and murder, like the common crime of stealing ballot boxes from polling places during elections. The goals of penalties and punishment are rectification, recompense, and deterrent. But there are no such laws in Nigeria. Additionally, the punishments for electoral violence-related crimes like assault and arson are typically like few years in prison at most. This has strengthened the necessity for reviewing the current legislation and led to the culture of impunity.

Additionally, poverty and unemployment are conditions in which a person cannot meet their basic needs for survival (maslow, 1975) According to Gurr's relative deprivation theory, such a person is more prone to engage in violence than a wealthy person (1970). The likelihood of violence rises when a "youth bulge" exacerbates the situation. Demographic and environmental variables have been linked to the impending collapse of nation-states. This statement effectively described the situation in Nigeria, where an army of unemployed youth has evolved into a tool for electoral violence. This issue was the root cause of the 2011 election-related violence in

Kaduna State, Nigeria, which culminated in the burning and destruction of lives and property.

Methodology

This study employed qualitative methods by conducting an in-depth interview. Interviews with chosen experts mostly involved stakeholders, practitioners in the subject, and documentary sources. A number of the identified respondents were interviewed in 45 (45) interviews. A total of fifteen (15) conversations with teenagers, gang leaders, and security personnel were held. The responders were all carefully chosen. Describe the research's goal, which is to examine electoral violence in Nigeria and how it affects the state of Kaduna's peace, and development. In order to suggest potential answers to the problems, the qualitative approach used gave an understanding of the variety of problems the State was facing. The experts was questioned between November 10 and November 26. The questions for the in-depth interview were devised by looking at the literature on electoral violence in Kaduna State. Each interview session lasted, on average, 30 to 35 minutes. Each expert and stakeholder has at least 15 years of expertise in election administration. Before each interview, the researcher thoroughly explains the purpose of the study and requests consent to record the conversation. The study makes use of both the audio recordings and the interview notes.

Theory of political legitimacy

The study's theoretical framework was chosen to be the theory of political legitimacy. It was proposed in 1975, and its proponents include Dowling, Pfeiffer, and a large number of others. It is based on the premise that political scientists' interests go beyond the study of authority in and of itself and also include the issue of power being accepted by the people it is used to rule.

The issues associated with political transformation are thus inextricably linked to the concept of political legitimacy. Governments, political systems, or institutions may lose their legitimacy by breaking these rules, regardless of whether they follow the conventional rules of legitimacy as established through a democratic process of free and fair elections, electoral reforms, or even revolutionary ones. When he stated that legitimacy is related to a set of conceptions held by significant members of the polity about the rightness of a political pattern, David Apter (in Johari, 2006:395) provided a particularly interesting notion of the interconnectedness of this theory as well as a good enough framework of analysis of the topic at stake. These conceptions, in turn, give the patterns a set of properties. One institution that ensures efficient participation in any form of government is the electoral system or process.

As a result, when a nation or state has a corrupt election process or system in place, the results are frequently far from being free and fair and, to a greater extent, invalid.

The study had to adopt this strategy because elections and electoral institutions in Nigeria were set up to favor the rise of undemocratic and predetermined candidates, psychologically discouraging many from actively participating and frustrating participating efforts, making such elections and regimes unacceptable and ineffective and, as a result, causing tension, conflicts, and agitation for electoral reforms meant to enshrine democracy.

Discussion

Based on the analysis of the data collected through Interviews with chosen experts mostly involved stakeholders, practitioners in the subject, and documentary sources.it was revealed that: There are certain socio-economic and cultural factors responsible for electoral violence in Kaduna state;some of the socio-economic and cultural causes of electoral violence in Kaduna state include poverty, peer pressure, lack of adequate information and unemployment. This corroborate the findings of TafaBalogun (2011) who found out in his study that Nigeria's political environment continues to be marked by electoral violence, and an analysis of the issue identifies a number of causes, including small weapons proliferation, unemployment, and poverty, among others. It also examines the impacts on development, and peace in Nigerian society and suggests a number of alternatives, including sustainable growth, election changes, and anti-corruption initiatives. In modern democracies, changing the administration is only possible through elections. Election is a planned activity in which a person is selected by the results of a vote for something, often a public office. Elections, electors, or voters are all involved in an electoral process.

In Nigeria, money not only chooses who participates in electoral politics, but it also muffles voices and votes. It is known that "godfathers" openly admit to unethical business dealings, financing or sponsoring elections for "godsons," and buying electoral success. The end effect is that, very infrequently, the citizens' ballots are not counted. There appears to be a culture of political/electoral violence among Nigerians This is in line with the study of Gurr's relative deprivation theory, such a person is more prone to engage in violence than a wealthy person (1970). The likelihood of violence rises when a "youth bulge" exacerbates the situation. Demographic and environmental variables have been linked to the impending collapse of nation-states.

Since its independence in 1960, Nigeria has held ten general elections. In 1964, 1979, 1983, 1993, 1999, 2003, 2007, and in 2011, 2015, and 2019 the elections were held. These elections were all severely tainted by various forms of electoral violence or violence connected to election administration, party politics, and many other things. Therefore, preventing violence before, during, and after elections is one of the main issues of managing the electoral systems in Nigeria. This is inline Kim and others 2004 opened that a nation's criminal or penal code outlines offenses and the consequences or punishment for those who violate the code. There are no particular prohibitions against certain electoral offenses, only connected crimes like arson, assault, and murder, like the common crime of stealing ballot boxes from polling places during elections. The goals of penalties and punishment are rectification, recompense, and deterrent. But there are no such laws in Nigeria. Additionally, the punishments for electoral violence-related crimes like assault and arson are typically light—a few years in prison at most. This has strengthened the necessity for reviewing the current legislation and led to the culture of impunity.

In the majority of cases of election violence and electoral malpractice in Nigeria, youths are exploited as party thugs, party employees, and who are made to create youth wings used by party henchmen for political violence and criminal crimes. Youth involvement in electoral violence has a tremendous impact on the culture of political violence that currently exists in the country and is undermining people's confidence in the electoral process and our system of governance. While some of these violent activities result in the destruction, injury, or death of youths, the futures of the youths are also badly impacted. Instead of engaging in things that would prepare them for future leadership and successful adult lives, they participate in violently destructive activities that could ultimately lead to their demise (Muhammad, 2018). This violence undermines the rule of law and peaceful cooperation. It seriously hinders progress and raises security issues. In turn, this causes imbalances and has an impact on the social and economic health of the country.

Conclusion

This study analyzes electoral violence in Nigeria, with special attention to how it affects peace, and development in Kaduna State. Political leaders appear to be the leading agents promoting the culture of violence in the state because of their selfish interests. Youth groups are mobilized and financially induced to engage in various forms of violence, especially snatching of ballot boxes, which is the spontaneous nature of

electoral violence. The neo patrimonial aspect of politics in Africa, including Nigeria, best describes this tendency. The material prizes offered by political leaders to urge youth who are generally uneducated, poor, and displaced out of poverty to show and defend party emblems at any costs. Additionally, it is believed that traditional and religious institutions serve as staging grounds for violent mobilization throughout the state. The framing of the violence discourse influences people's behavior by encouraging them to engage in violence or to justify various forms of electoral violence because of the great commitment that people have to these institutions, especially in Kaduna State, which leads to ethno religious crises.

Recommendations

All things considered, however, maintaining our leaders' transparency and accountability in all of their decisions and activities will help to prevent further crises. Give employment opportunities to the youth who are being used as weapons by these politicians. If given a paying job, the youth will refrain from taking part in the needless destruction of people's lives and property. Education and awareness campaigns on the need to abstain from violence could also help to reduce the needless losses incurred during the crisis.The issue is mostly the result of politicians' excessive ambition to defy the will of the people. Furthermore, their extreme ambition shows that they are not interested in attaining power on behalf of the people they claim to speak for. Instead, it is done out of self-interest, which is counterproductive to leadership. Security preparedness for any situation, including proper equipment and logistics, is also possible. Any inappropriate behavior by their wards should be the responsibility of the parents and guardians.Corruption has an impact on every element of life in Nigeria, hence any substantial development endeavor must incorporate anti-corruption measures. This could be accomplished by focusing on accountability and using previous corrupt political office holders as a deterrent through legal action. Government might address the issues of poverty, unemployment, and underdevelopment by taking practical actions to revive the national economy.

In order to maintain peace and order in any society, our security agencies play a critical role. However, it must be properly organized, taught, motivated, and equipped to accomplish this. Additionally, all of Nigeria's security agencies must be restructured, outfitted, and motivated to do their share to ensure the consolidation of the nation's democracy.Teenagers in Nigeria need to be adequately informed about their duties as the next generation of leaders and the dangers that electoral violence poses to them, their

communities, and Nigeria. The battle against election violence should be led by young people in their communities, classrooms, faiths, and organizations. In order to maintain their power, they should also take a great interest in electoral activities and work with other organizations in their local communities

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