Causes and Effects of Political Violence in Nigeria; 1980-2015.

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Abstract

Political violence is a major impediment to Nigeria's national development. With the restoration to democratic rule in May 1999, high expectations were raised that the new democratic dispensation would resolve the risk of Nigeria's political violence, while speeding the country's economic and social transformation. It's worrying that since democratic rule returned, Nigeria has experienced a degree of unprecedented political violence that has crippled the efforts of national development. The fundamental thrust of this paper is to investigate the incidence of Nigeria's political violence and assess its national development consequences. In-depth review of literatures on the subject, findings reveals that political violence in Nigeria dates back before the independence and continued to rear its ugly head till the present democratic dispensation. Also political violence in form of religious crisis, electoral violence, militancy etc has many economic determinants such as social exclusion and equality and many more. The paper shows that political violence dissuades domestic and foreign investment in our economy, triggers government loss of revenue and resources, and results in the election of unqualified representatives to the detriment of the country's economic and social progress. This paper proposes reducing wages paid to political office holders, and politicians should strive to achieve national unity instead of growing religious and ethnic tensions. Lastly, National resources should also be equitably distributed by the government. There is need for advocacy and concerted action from all quarters towards minimizing the incessant eruption of political violence in Nigeria

Keywords: Political Violence, Development, National Development, Transformation.

1. Introduction

Violence is nebulous because it often means more than what meets the eye and for that reason calls for down to earth explanation in order to get at what it really means. The need for this is to avoid narrow notion of what it stands for and connotes in all its ramifications. It has served as a common and effective tool used by both the oppressors and the oppressed in their efforts to achieve their respective aims. In other words, it has been conceived and used differently by different persons or group of persons for different ends. Therefore, it is important to begin with a question about its meaning. What is violence? The term violence is derived from another term violate which is its verb form. To violate means among other things: to hurt, injure, break, disobey, infringe, invade, desecrate, pollute, profane, abuse, debauch, defile, deflower, outrage, ravish, transgress, damage, etc. Each of these synonyms of 'to violate' brings out the meaning of violence.

Thus simply put violence means an act of destruction-any act of man that involves willful destruction. Man's belonging which could be destroyed range from his dreams, his work, his property, his freedom, his rights, his dignity, his moral principles, his life, his beliefs to other things he values, cherishes and works for their enhancement, advancement and protection. Or they could be things imposed on him such as harmful ideas, unjust principles, warped beliefs, laws, practices, structures, etc, which depreciate his human worth, enslave and dehumanize him to the level of toys and beasts of burden. He sees them as detrimental to his cherished values and decides to wage war against them in order to restore his endangered liberties and dignity. Both of them are victims of violence because willful destruction of what the victim has is involved. Throwing more light on what violence is, Robert McAfee Brown, an American human rights activist defines violence as:

> *Whatever violates another, in the sense of infringing upon or disregarding or abusing or denying that other, whether physical harm is involved or not, can be understood as an act of violence…. In the broadest sense then, an act that depersonalizes would be an act of violence, since… it transforms a person into a thing (1987:7).*

2. Political violence

Political violence is the use of threat or physical act carried out by an individual or individuals within a political system against another individual or individuals and/or property with the intention to cause injury or death to persons and/or damage or destruction to property and whose objective, choice of target or victims, surrounding

circumstances, implementation and effects have political significance, that tend to modify the behaviour of others in the existing arrangement of power structure that has consequences for the political system" (Anikawose 1984).

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. Political violence is form of violence relations and crisis of interest, goals and ambitions between individuals, groups, and political structures in the process of attaining power and keeping it (Johnmary 2012). The Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution (cited in Nweke, 2006) observed that "political conflict emanates from power struggles, within the political class and often involves the manipulation of the people, who are inevitably less informed about the essence of the political struggle". Therefore, political violence "takes place in the process of power struggle aimed at certain very players in the political system."

Political violence has been identified as a common feature of the Nigerian political system. An analysis of the Nigerian political journey has shown that "political violence has been part and parcel of the country's chequered history". According to Nweke (2006) "the emergence of political violence in Nigeria is sourced through the nature of party formation, which was ethno-regionally based. This was followed by the regionalization of Nigeria as created by Richard Constitution of 1946". Since attainment of independence Nigeria has witnessed unprecedented political violence which is a serious impediment to National Development.

Ani and Nwanaju (2011) observed that "at independence, political conflicts took over the centre stage of nation building in Nigeria and its multiplier effect gave birth to factors that led to the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970". With the return of civilian government in May, 1999, hopes were high that the new democratic order would tackle the incidence of political violence in the country thereby facilitating economic and social progress. It is a sad commentary that since the return of civil rule, political violence has reached a dangerous proportion. The Nigerian state and its fledgling democracy have been beset with phenomenal violence and atrocities ranging from those that come in the form of religious crises, like sharia. Niger-Delta militancy, ethno-religious conflicts, Boko Haram insurgency, electoral violence, politically motorated assassinations all with alleged political undertones (Omodia, 2009; Omotola, 2010). Therefore, the basic thrust of this paper is to examine causes and effects of political violence in Nigeria; 1980-2013.

Election, an integral feature of democracy, has equally generated much controversy. For example, Rapoport and Weingberg (2001) cited in Hoglund, 2006) contended that competitive election facilitates peaceful transfer of power and makes it possible to assign accountability to those who govern, to others, democracy come at a price because violence attend most elections. Thus, many people lose their lives in connection to competitive elections (Hoglund, 2006). Nigeria's fourth republic appears to be very chaotic, incessant violent conflict ranges from religious, identity to communal. Elaigwu (2005a) identified 17 major violent conflicts in Nigeria from May 1985 to May 1st 1999. However, from May 31, 1999 to June 2005 he identified at least 121 cases of conflicts in Nigeria. He attributed sudden increase in violent conflict in the country to: a strong central government; popular agitation for decentralised structure; dissatisfaction with the distribution of available resources; communal conflicts and demands by some sub-national groups for greater self-determination (Eliagwu, 2005b). He continued that the years of military rule suppressed these issues from exploding into uncontrollable conflagration. He likened the Nigerian polity as a bottle of wine, properly corked and airtight. With the dawn of democracy and the opening of the bottle, the wine explosively popped up (Eliagwu, 2005b). It appears the dawn of democracy provided the atmosphere to ventilate bottled-up frustrations, grievances and fears generously and often times recklessly (Adebanwi, 2004). Though there are several works on conflicts in Nigeria, few appear to link violent conflict in Nigeria to democracy with particular focus on the fourth republic. For example, Haliru (2012), focused on ethnicity, Onapajo (2012), focused on religion and political violence, Saheed (2012) emphasised economic dimension of social conflicts in Nigeria.

3. Political Violence in Nigeria

Political violence has been endemic feature of many developing countries like Nigeria (Ogar et al, 2018). It was a great achievement that Nigeria attained her independence with minimum violence, but is worrisome that since after independence, political violence has reached a dangerous dimension. It is imperative to note that political violence associated with election and electoral processes in Nigeria commenced with the 1959 federal elections designed by British to facilitate the transition from colonial rule to independence (Ogundiya & Baba 2005). This problem worsened in the elections held immediately after independence in 1960s. In Western Region, political violence popularly referred to as "Operation "Wete" were recorded in 1964 to 1965 following both federal and regional elections as well as rift between Awolowo and Akintola (Aver, Nnorom & Targba, 2013).
There were also political violence in parts of Northern Region especially between the supporters of the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and supporters of other parties, mainly the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and Action Group (Aver *et al*, 2013). Another political violence that emerged after independence was the military coup

of January 1966, where a group of young Nigerian army of officers seized power and assassinated the then Prime Minister Tafawa Belawa, Amadu Bello and Ladoke Akintola Premiers of Northern and Western regions respectively. This military coup led to political violence that caused the Nigerian civil war 1966-70. Following a protracted military rule that lasted for thirteen years, the Murtala/Obasanjo regime carried out a transistion programme and returned the country to civil rule in 1979 (Alfa & Otaida 2012) The 1979 election witnessed minimal cases of violence.

According to Nwolise (2007) "the election was characterized by violence at three stages pre-election, during the election and post-election. In almost all the states, the results were contested or disputed." The major contending issue was that of 2/3 of 19 states which was resolved in favour of Alhaji Shehu Shagari, NPN presidential candidate by the Supreme Court (Alfa & Otaida 2012). The 1983 elections were not devoid of violence. The election was rigged in favour of ruling party, the National Party of Nigeria, (NPN). This led to violent demonstrations in some parts of the country. For example the landslide victory of the National Party of Nigeria NPN in Oyo and Ondo States considered to be stronghold of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) witnessed massive post-election violence. Several persons lost their lives and large scale destruction of property was recorded (Alemika 2011). The violent political activities in the country contributed to the overthrow of Shagari's regime on 31st December, 1983. In what could have ushered in the third republic by Babangida designed in 1993, was however aborted by the June 12 1993 annulled presidential election which created chaotic situation in the country (Alfa & Otaida, 2012). The cancellation of the election led to massive ethno-religious conflicts in the country.

Babangida stepped down in August 1993 which led to the formation of an interim government headed by Chief Shonekan. The interim government was dismissed following "the palace coup" led by General Sani Abacha. Abacha's regime was beset with oppressive policies and assassination of his political enemies. Chief among these was the murder of Mrs. Kudirat Abiola, wife of the acclaimed winner of the June 1993, presidential poll annulled by Babangida (Alfa & Otaida 2012, p.47). Later Abacha died mysteriously in the process of trying to "transform himself into a civilian President. General Abubakar who replaced Abacha supervised 1999 elections that ushered in the Fourth Republic on May 29th 1999. There were high expectations that the nascent democracy would help to reduce the menace of political violence in the country. It is worrisome that since the return of civil rule, Nigeria has witnessed unprecedented level of political violence which militates against economic and social transformation of the country.

For example, the introduction of Sharia law in Zamfara State which spread to other Northern States led to massive killing of people from Southern Nigeria and their corpses were brought back to their respective states. There were also reprisal attacks in some places such as Okigwe, Owerri and Aba. In Kwara State, supporters of the governor and leading gubernatorial candidate were involved in violent conflict which resulted in the killing of the state party chairman in August 2002. Other prominent politicians that lost their lives due to political violence include Chief Bola Ige of AD while serving as minister under PDP's government, Chief Harry Marshal, Vice Chairman of All Nigerian People Party, South-South, Asari Dikibo, Vice Chairman of PDP, South South, Luke Shigaba, Chairman of Bassa Local Government Area, Kogi State (Osisioma, 2007). An unprecedented political violence took place in Anambra State on 10th July 2003, when the former Governor of Anambra State was kidnapped with the intention of forcing him out of power. This plot was executed by the late Assistant Inspector General of Police Mr. Raphael Ige who later claimed he acted on the basis of an "order from above" though the principal actors to such act remain unknown till today (Adeleke, 2012).

Political violence associated with election was massive in 2007. There were violent political activities in different parts of the country. The declaration of 2011 presidential election result in which president Goodluck Jonathan emerged as the winner led to violent demonstrations in northern parts of country. The supporters of Congress of Progressive Change (CPC) unleashed violent protests and destroyed properties worth of millions of naira. The house of the Vice President Namadi Sambo was looted and raised and palaces of prominent traditional rulers in the North were attacked (Alfa & Otaida 2012). The activities of Boko Haram in the Fourth Republic have also a serious security threat to our country. The crisis is assuming a dangerous dimension. The Boko Haram has unleashed grievous attacks on places of worship, media houses, markets, parks, telecommunication facilities etc. in many northern states. In the process, a lot of lives and properties worth millions of naira have been lost.

4. Causes of political Violence in Nigeria

Literatures on causes of violence in Nigeria identify many factors among them are selfishness, greed, injustice, do-or- die politics, love of money, wealth, accumulation of wealth, revolt, repression, immorality and ignorance. One or more of these factors bring about every violent event that has taken place in Nigeria.

On the preceding list the first factor is selfishness. Selfishness is a subtle but fertile soil for violence. Man is a social being-a being that lives, works and grows in the midst of others; a being that needs the assistance and encouragement of others to attain his goal. For that

reason he has to consider others' interest in taking actions and everything he does. But when selfishness takes over him, he ignores totally or considers less this important aspect of his social life and focuses on self, his actions often become offensive to others and arouse in them negative reactions which must be violent in varying degrees.

For example, the third term bid of the Obasanjo administration was a product of selfish desire. The former president Olusegun Obasanjo loved power borne out of his selfish-desire to remain in power until death strikes him in order to protect and preserve his wealth. That was why he and the people who were stupid to believe him worked to amend the constitution midway to elongate his tenure in office. Some Nigerians noticed that the bid was a naked violence to the nation's constitution and their dignity, rallied round and said no. The rest is now history.

The second factor is greed. Greed is a social cancer said to be at work in a person when that person has excessive desire for something be it food, money, wealth or anything else, which in reality he or she does not need or needs as much. Often it is excessive and selfish desire for money, wealth, power, influence, etc., without thought about the after effects. Nothing is so stomach turning, soul sapping, morally revolting and violently provoking like the victims of these social viruses at parade. For in the national Assembly this cancer is noticed when the members of that legislative body begin to urge among themselves as what should be appropriate amount for their seating, standing, sleeping, awaking, talking, traveling, eating, drinking, womanizing, and other sundry allowances leaving the primary duty of legislation to suffer.

Also, when the people who by their education, position, influence, etc., are better placed to tell our leaders to stop destroying the only country we have but prefer to keep quiet having accepted money, or property or hope to get such from them. When voters who are supposed to use their votes to decide who should lead them and thus change their present and future of their children for better prefer to sell their votes for some cups of salt, rice, pepper or things like that from some politicians who are specialists in wrecking people's homes and lives. When lecturers prefer to award marks based on who among his students purchase his book or handout to who answer examination questions correctly. When the leaders of the Niger Deltans used their position to divert some money meant for the development of the region for their personal enrichment at the impoverishment of the people. Events such as these provoke anger and righteous indignation in the people against the perpetrators of these wicked acts.

The third is injustice. The common runs of mankind hold the view that nothing that makes easier and quicker a destruction of human society more than injustice. Once by omission or commission it is allowed to rear its ugly head in the society, its first port of attack is the web of human relations; second is the moral values like trust, truth, integrity, honesty, equity, peace, love, sincerity, respect for life and human dignity, for common patrimony; live and let live, etc., being the building bricks of the edifice called society; and third is justice which is the foundation of every human society. Society was built on the stone of justice and members of the society work to continue to maintain a just society. If out of negligence, selfishness, greed or the likes, justice develops winds and flees the shores of the society in question for injustice to take its place the society becomes vulnerable to violence and its disintegration is just a question of time. Odey (2006) supports this view when he writes: "If justice is put on the throne, peace and love will take their normal course. But if peace and love are planted where injustice is rooted, they will be choked".

Injustice as a social monster- as a cobra snake, it bares its fangs in many diverse ways in a society that harbors it. When leaders cease from rendering selfless service, pursuing common goals, making policies and engaging in activities that enhance, promote and advance people well-being and instead engage in corrupt practices to enrich themselves and build empires of wealth with public funds, injustice is on the throne. When a citizen of Nigeria who is qualified for a job on the basis of merit but he or she is deprived of it on the basis of his or her State of origin, sex, religion, tribe, lack of godfather or any other variable, it is a naked injustice. When the federal government started tinkering with the sharing formula between it and regions (now states) as provided in the constitution before the discovery of oil at commercial quantity from 50-50% to 100-0%, to 87-13% respectively, it is injustice which gave birth to the Niger Delta crisis, now a heavy moral burden on the nation. When Nigerian masses are deprived of the right to choose their leaders at polls and told to go back to their houses, as their votes no longer count, it is violence on their human rights. When Nigeria is reduced to a pariah nation and Nigerians become common suspects and criminals in the international community due to the activities of their leaders, it is injustice on their humanity.

When Nigerian masses are forced to make peace with hunger, poverty and despondency in the midst of wealth cornered and monopolized by the elite and leaders who have at their disposal instruments of coercion to suppress the hapless masses in their righteous agitations, it is pure injustice. When the people in authority design salary scales in such a way that a scandalous big gap exists between the highest and the lowest public servants in a manner that bestows affluence and higher standard of living on the former and poverty, misery and lowest living conditions on the latter, injustice is the case. Chinua

Achebe confirms this scandalous disparity between public servants in Nigeria when he says: "The gap between the highest and the lowest public servants in Nigeria is one of the widest in the whole world. Certainly nothing like it occurs in any country worthy of respect" (1998). Each of these arouses ill-feeling, anger and grudges and builds up as well in the victims the will to destroy the sources of these studied and executed violence on their human worth.

Fifth is poverty. Poverty is of two forms: material poverty and spiritual poverty. Poverty simply defined is a lack of what a human person needs to live a normal, true and genuine life. It is seen as a disease because it distorts person's worth and destroys his dignity and pushes him or her to live a miserable life. In material poverty a victim whether a person or a country lacks basic needs of life like food, shelter, clothing, access to health and education. In spiritual poverty a victim lacks love for others, does not have regard for others' interest, is always concerned with his own interest and prepared to ride roughshod over others to achieve his or its selfishness. Lying, dishonesty, blackmailing, conspiracy, greed, murderous impulse, etc, are his or its constant companions. In Nigeria where poverty is accommodated and crowned as a king, courtesy of bad managers of the country's abundant resources, the bitterness it arouses in the people has made the country vulnerable to violent eruptions with enormous costs in terms of lives and property.

Sixth is ignorance. Some people hold the view that injustice is the root cause of violence in human society. Reason? Justice is the foundation of society as well as its lubricant. Where it is ignored and made to flee, leaving its opposite – injustice around such a society is in a big trouble. It will be complaints, grudges, bitterness, fight and sometimes war. For justice says all must share what belongs to all. But injustice says might is right. It upholds survival of the fittest and panders to the interests of the powerful and makes a burn fire of the interest of the weak and needy. Injustice destroys social web of human relations and sows seeds of bitterness, rebellion and war. It is the fundamental source of violence.

It is obvious that injustice does a lot of havocs to human society but it is not true that it is the root cause of violence in the society. In human society ignorance is a primary problem and every other problem is secondary. Ignorance is lack of knowledge. The world is very large and man has known a few aspects of it. Also his knowledge about himself is next to nothing. And the little he knows intoxicates him and he loses it or impairs it in the course of his intoxication. Socrates said: "There is only one good that is knowledge, and one evil that is ignorance" (Dawaki, 2005). There is a place called TOMORROW). In his view knowledge is virtue and through it other virtues such as love, honesty, integrity, respect for others, respect for life, live and let live, justice, patience, humility, hardwork, etc., are

revealed and their importance understood and appreciated. He equally said that evil is borne out of ignorance and no one knowingly does it (Uduma, 2000). Hence his advice to mankind expressed in these immortal words: "Man know thyself".

All the evils man has suffered, is suffering and will continue to suffer is because he does not know who he is, why he is, what he has come to do in the world, where he came from and where he goes after life. Also, man has little knowledge about all the consequences of his actions. If the Jew – the owner of the estate who asked his dogs to chase out the young and innocent Adolf Hitler of Germany who approached him for a job, knew that his action would make the adult Hitler to hate his race with passion and to kill six million of his kinsmen and women, he would not have done that. If Hitler too knew that his action would make him to live all his life in fear and die untimely by his own hand since his friends refused his request to get him killed, he would have refrained. Also the moral burden the federal government of Nigeria is now carrying on its head over the Niger Delta crisis is another example. If it had known that selfish tinkering with the sharing formula of 50% each for the central and regions – the regions producing the resources respectively, would present to it a situation of considering to declare war as the president Yar' Adua is doing now on that parts of Nigeria oil is coming from, because of their insistence that justice must be done and seen to be done by all concerned, it would not have done that. It is the same with all other things done in Nigeria that have combined to make Nigeria unsafe for Nigerians.

Election rigging equally contributes to electoral violence in our country. Experience has shown that rigging has been a single most important cause that pervades free and fair election and this has been responsible for grave consequences for democratic stability in Nigeria. More so, electoral maladministration is also one of the causes of electoral violence in Nigeria. The insincerity of the electoral officers seem to over shadow the inadequate control mechanisms and poor logistics which all enhance manipulations through electoral fraud. Political intolerance and the tendency to see election as a do or die affair also contribute to electoral violence at the detriment of democratic stability.

In Nigeria, but only of recent as demonstrated by His Excellency, Ebele Goodluck Azikiwe Jonathan, hardly do election losers accept (even in those elections that are seen as transparent) the verdict of the ballot box. Our politicians should learn lesson from the developed nations where losers of election embrace and congratulate those who defeat them in elections. Personal bitterness and existing rivalry between two contenders can eventually degenerate into serious political violence in Nigeria.

5. The Nexus between Political Violence and Democratic Stability

There seems to be a growing academic discourse on Political violence and democratic stability. It is argued in many quotas that democracy is a panacea to Political violence; in fact, it is one of the measures the United Nations (UN) often advocate in their intervention efforts in war torn countries (Paris, 2004 cited in Segun, 2013). However, Keane (2010) in Segun (2013) argued that democracy rather than been a solution to violence, is a major driver of Political violence because elections which are cardinal features of democratization often generate violence in democratic countries. For example, Rapoport and Weingberg (2001), Hoglund (2006) cited in Segun (2013) contended that competitive election facilitates peaceful transfer of power and makes it possible to assign accountability to those who govern, to others, democracy comes at a price because violence attend most election. Rapoport and Weinberg (2001) in Segun (2013) further stated that the situation immediately after elections is often very sensitive as the acceptance or otherwise of the outcome of elections by contenders can produce outbreaks of violence. Elaigwu (2005) in Segun (2013) identified 17 major violent conflicts in Nigeria from May 1985 to May 1st 1999. However, from May 31, 1999 to June 2005 he identified at least 121 cases of conflicts in Nigeria.

Democracy midwives peace, however, democracy alone cannot bring about peace as evidenced in some countries undergoing democratization such as Nigeria. The intense nature of competition for political power has made violence to be associated with democracy. Nigerian politicians, over the years, have become more desperate and daring in taking and retaining power and more intolerant of opposition, criticism and efforts at replacing them (Alemika, 2011 in Segun, 2013). Obasanjo for example asserted that: we fight and sometimes shed blood to achieve and attain political power because for us in Nigeria, the political kingdom has for too long been the gateway to economic kingdom (Obasanjo, 2002 in Segun, 2013). Similarly, Omoweh and Okanya (2005) in Segun (2013) noted that, political competition for the control of the state and its political power is now a bloody warfare as the state holds the key to wealth. The above scenario explains why election which is the means of political power acquisition in democratic governance has been violent ridden. Abbass (2008) in Segun (2013) corroborate this views when he stated that election period in Nigeria is best described as warfare. According to Human Right Watch (2011) in Segun (2013) at least 100 people died in federal and state election in 2003; not less than 300 people were killed in violence linked to the 2007 elections and well over 800 people were victims of electoral violence in 2011 presidential elections alone in the North with more than 65,000 people displaced.

6. The Effects of Political Violence on Social Development in Nigeria

The Nigerian political scene is bedeviled 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 in periods leading to elections, during the elections themselves, and in the period immediately following elections such as during the counting of ballots.

According to Dudley (1973), the possession of political power leads directly to economic power. Those who hold positions in the power struggle determine the location and distribution of scarce resources. Therefore, politics in Nigeria is the struggle for more money and this means that to get into politics, there is always a price to pay. Since politics entails spending huge sums of money, one will have to be involved in some competition which may precipitate political violence. Echoing in the same vain Adeyemo, (2000) maintained that political violence develops as a feature of struggle for power. He further opined that, the employment of violence in the struggle for power has some negative implications for the realization of the collective well-being of individuals and society as a whole. In Nigeria, political violence has become highly disruptive to social life, thereby causing divisions in families and communities as well as causing antagonisms among and within social groups. Nigerians have witnessed several cases of political violence in the form of assassinations, bomb-blasts, intimidations, murders, and destruction of properties in time past and now on the increase.

The effect of this menace in Nigeria is tending in some respects towards social disaggregation into its constituent ethnic and sub ethnic groups divisions. Killing, harming and intimidating persons trying to vote during elections in order to destroy ballot boxes in areas where the perpetrators lack supporters or in order to snatch ballot boxes so as to stuff them with ballot papers illegally obtained and thumb-printed creates a social division in Nigeria. The current surge of political violence is a very disturbing trend towards social progress and prosperity. In fact, the political violence is creating difficult living standards for Nigerians. For instance many people cannot live in the northern part of the country (Nigeria) where violence has become volatile. Political violence, conflict and terrorism destroy human lives, physical assets and reduce people's social relationships. This trend

has created a divisible life among the people as a result of the hitherto mutual trust that Nigerians used to experience in the past between Muslims and Christians, Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba, Tiv, Fulani among the ethnic groups. Sum to here melted array Nigeria is now at the precipice of fashioning along religious and ethnic affiliations.

Social activities such as inter marriages, worship, and sports among others are often disrupted as a result of political violence, invariably denying Nigerians access to social interaction and relationships. Fundamental human rights like freedom of movement have been grossly violated because of the restriction of movement or curfew limiting most Nigerians to a time framed movement under a forced confinement that is not good for social life. This condition hampers' social activities and limits bilateral and diplomatic relationship among Nigerians. Political violence as creates movement of people leading to mass movement of people from northern to southern part of the country Nigeria. This leads to loss of human lives and destruction of assets and property. Human life which is considered valuable and sacred is often hunted, maimed and killed like wide animals as a result of politics. Fear of violence has been imbibed in the hearts of Nigerians, especially during electioneering times. Most Nigerians fear of the unknown of has part of their life because of the reoccurring of the past tension, the state of insecurity and social instability among the citizens.

Consequently victims and non-victims of the crisis appear to be in a relative state of panic in Nigeria. It has contributed significantly to the ethnic, religious, communal conflicts that Nigeria is witnessing today. For instance in places like Plateau, Kaduna, Kano, Bauchi, Yobe, Borno States among others people are targeted clearly on the basis of their religion or ethnicity. A Christian man who found himself among the Muslim dominated area would be killed or vice versa. This has seriously affected the social relationship in this area that children are socialized to be relating along religious lines. Any chaos is an opportunity to settle scores and exact revenge on personal foes. These adversely affect the human security and social development of the country (Vilela 2009). Political violence helps in propagating the ongoing cycle of violence in the country. The acts impact negatively on the children living in such societies as they grow up to take the same root. Bandura and Walters (1963) maintained that such children would likely end up being violent in nature. They further explains human behaviour in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioural, an environmental influences.

Educational activities often bring to a halt and consequently school calendar is extended. This adversely influences the duration a students would spend in school, attracting more expenditure on the parents, more worrisome is exposing students to social vices like drugs

addiction, alcohol, armed robbery, prostitution among other vices. Nigerian society has now been characterized by conflicts, incessant case of armed robbery, terrorism, sea piracy, assassinations, kidnapping/hostage taking, homicide, rape, and gang violence (including cultism) that are increasingly becoming rife and promoting a climate of fear, impurity and insecurity in the country as a result of political violence.

The political unrest has worsen the internal security situations in Nigeria due to this reason business activities are often closed for a long time leading to government lost of revenue. People no longer engage in social activities that will prolong their lives for instance wherever there is a display of this political dominance there will always be a curfew. Aver (2012) asserted that political violence has led to the emergence of criminal group like Boko Haram who has, been terrorizing religious organizations living in some parts of the northern Nigeria resulting in the death of innocent citizens. For example on the June 17, 2012 over seventy people were killed and thirty other wounded in coordinated attacks on shalom church Trikayiya, Christ the King Catholic Church, Sabon Geri Zaria and ECWA DCCC also in Zaria all in Kaduna State. This political violence has led to division of the country into factions which contributed greatly to the underdevelopment of social relationship. Therefore, the significance effects of the political violence it has affected social and economic activities. Apparent affects the pace and direction of societal peace.

In Nigeria violence have promoted a sense of global integration and induced the spread of a universal culture the state system and the experienced growth of particularism and localized violence, accompanied by the empowerment of groups seeking socio-political fragmentation like Boko Haram, Ombatse Cults, among others. For instance the Vanguard (13, July 2013) reported that the chaos in the rivers state assembly the police simply watched while the law was being broken with impunity by the law makers. The paper reported further that people are living witnesses to the horrors the nation went through as a result of the activities of political thugs and cults groups who later became militants and went into the creeks to disrupt the peace, economics and social wellbeing of the country Nigeria.

7. Recommendations

Political violence manifest in acrimony, assault, assassination, intimidation, harassment, maiming and killing consequently these affect the existing social relationship in the society. This paper has significantly discussed the effects of political violence in Nigeria using the conflict theoretical perspective. The political violence is an ill wind of social phenomenon, which blows no one any good. In its aftermaths both its perpetrators and victims are losers. Also, that violence is not native to man but rather a consequence of his fallen nature, his

actions against the grains of his nature. 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.

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