

Political and electoral violence in Nigeria: a case of 2015 general election in Kogi and Bayelsa state of Nigeria

O. Abah emma, S. Ibeogu aloysius

Department of Public Administration, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki
ibeguas@gmail.com, emmabah@yahoo.com

Abstract

Objective: This paper is focused towards establishing the causes of electoral violence in Nigeria's democracy, with BAYELSA and KOGI State 2015 general elections as study areas.

Methods: The study adopted content analytical method and survey research design and is anchored on Frustration Aggression Theory.

Findings: The study pin pointed frustration, aggression, greed, poverty (hunger) and selfishness among the people (electorates) and contestants as some of the factors that gave rise to electoral violence in Nigeria's political activities. Recommendations were made that; elected representatives should live up to their campaign promises to avert the frustration and aggressions noticed among the electorates, that the electoral institutions (INEC) should devise a means of enthroning or conducting elections that would be devoid of fraudulent practices (rigging, intimidation of electorates and false declaration of results).

Applications: Polity threatened with political and electoral violence is usually accompanied with tension and anxiety, hence political apathy among the electorates. Therefore, the elimination of these threats (tension, anxiety and party apathy) should be one of the focuses of the electoral body (INEC) if true democracy where the electorate's votes should count is to be sustained.

Keywords: Election, Electoral Violence, Democracy, Electoral Commission, Nigerian States.

1. Introduction

The procedure of electing representatives of the people into public positions is a kind that turn out to be all the more perplexing in many nations of the world, particularly in the developing countries including Nigeria. The indispensability of election in the democratic system of government cannot be over emphasized. Election world over is seen as the heart of every democracy [1]. Election related issues are increasingly gaining currency and prominence, especially in the field of political science. The consensus among scholars of political science is that elections occupy central place and play immeasurable role in the democratic consolidation of every democratic state [2-3]. Election represents the main process through which people exercise their constituent power and sovereignty. The people decide at periodic intervals in order to determine who gets what, when, how and why. These efforts of deciding who gets what and how in the politics of the country have often led to election violence across the thirty-six states of Nigeria and other countries of the world. Electoral violence, resulting from representational, campaign, balloting and result conflicts, has been a terminal problem of Nigeria politics since the 1950s [3]. At least 58 Nigerians have so far died in election-related violence ahead of general polls that have been rescheduled for March 28 and April 11, a report released by Nigeria's human rights body said Friday [4].

The report on pre-election violence, compiled by national human rights commission, said that in the past 50 days, 61 incidences of election violence occurred in 22 states with 58 people killed [5]. The challenging situation has contributed to numerous deaths and a countless loss of properties in various parts of the country. General elections in Nigeria have always been a turbulent and violent affair, even after the return to civilian rule in 1999 that ended fifteen years of military dictatorship. Indeed, the 2007 polls were widely condemned as the most violent, poorly organized and massively rigged in Nigeria's trouble electoral history. Even the winner, President in, concede flaws, unlike in 2003, analysts and observers considered the April 2011 elections the most credible since the return to democracy, but over 1,000 people were killed in post-election protests [6]. This advocates the necessity to interrogate the import of election within the democratic rule in the sub-saharan Africa crumpling through violence over election related issues. Recently in Nigeria, between 2003 and 2015 general

elections, these political icons have met their untimely death, resulting from political and party interest to occupy political positions, Engr. Funsho Williams, the P.D.P gubernatorial aspirant for Lagos State in 2003, Dr Harry Marshal, a Staunch P.D.P Stewart in River State between 1999-2003, but his fall out with the former governor of River State (1999-2007) led to his defecting to ANPP, this may have prompted his assassination in his Abuja residence on 5th March 2003; Chief Bola Ige, the former minister of justice and attorney general of the federation, during the OBASANJO regime was annihilated in his residence on 23rd December 2001, owing to the political misunderstanding and violence (political bicker) between him and then the deputy governor of his home State (OSUN) CHIEF IYIOLA OMISORE; CHIEF UCHE OGBONNA, a former P.D.P member who defected to ANPP to contest the ORLU SENATOIRIAL Position in 2003 against the incumbent, Senator Arthur NZERIBE, was murdered in a broad day light; in Anambra State in 2003, Barrister and Barrister Mrs Barnabas Igwe, were brazenly murdered for daring to challenge the callous administrative and leadership style of Governor Chinweoke Mbadiniuju, while a serving governor of Anambra State Dr Chris Ngige was on the 10th July 2003 kidnapped by unknown gun men on the orders of his political mentor, because he reneged on the agreement entered into prior to the elections in 2003. In Ebonyi State in 2011 and 2015 general elections, lives and properties valued millions of naira were destroyed across the political wards by party faithful who claimed that not only were they disenfranchised but their votes were stolen from them [7].

Also in Bayelsa State governorship election held on Saturday, 5th December 2015, the story was the same as few hours before the commencement of accreditation of voters, the country home of the former Minister of State for Agriculture and the Director General of the Syla/Igiri campaign organization, Sen. Heineken LOKPOBIRI came under attack by gunmen. The thugs believed to be loyal to a particular political party and aspirant were said to have stormed the residence of the Minister at EKEREMOR town in EKEREMOR local government area in the early hours of Saturday. In the ensuing encounter, the thugs were said to have overpowered the security men deployed to EKEREMOR and made their way into the minister's compound causing mayhem with Senator LOKPOBIRI and others trapped inside the house. One person was reported dead in the shootout between the military and the gunmen [8]. In a related development, a policeman and four others were killed on Saturday 5th December, 2015 by thugs suspected to be working for the all progressive congress (APC) during the governorship election in Bayelsa State. The policeman was killed in Famgbe, a suburb of Yenagoa, the state capital. According to sources, the hoodlums, who were led by a renowned political thug in the area, machete the deceased officer to death for his alleged refusal to allow alteration of results in the area [9].

2. Methodology

Content analytical approach and survey research design were adopted. Data was extensively obtained from the secondary sources via the instrumentality of textbooks, journals, magazines, newspapers, periodicals, as well as from government official publications. On a second note, another source of information is the survey method, which has to do with the information gained from direct observation, or media commentaries through televising of events and happening (documentaries). These assisted immensely in giving insight to the attitudes of the electorates, politicians, electoral body and government towards the development of the political and electoral system.

3. Theoretical framework

The theory of frustration aggression was used to explain violent behavior. The central thesis of the frustration aggression theory is that aggression is always the result of frustration. Given the requisite condition, an individual whose basic desires are thwarted, and who consequently experience profound sense of dissatisfaction and anger is likely to react to his condition by directing aggressive behavior at what is perceived as being responsible for thwarting those desires [10]. Furthermore, this theory employed in the study examines the relationship between democracy, sustenance of democracy and violent behavior expressed through electoral violence is the social reproduction and reproduction system [11]. This entails the understanding of the society through analysis of the societal economic infrastructure and superstructure; this is explained through the primacy of material conditions of the society [12]. The violent behavior expressed through electoral violence is undertaken by the people who are disadvantaged economically, wanting to change the existing economic inequality in the society. This is made manifest sometimes during the period of political recruitment, when the

structure of economic relations does not favor the poor and reduce inequality in the society; violent behavior will continue. This is because the fundamental concern of human beings is survival and security and so anything short of these, are to his dissatisfaction. The proponents of this theory includes: Arbrey Yates and John Dollard. This thesis sees electoral violence to emanate from frustration perceived in the political system. Previous work: In [13] adopted descriptive research design, and is focused to establish the philosophy behind the electoral fraud in Anambra state in particular and Nigeria at large. It established that too many evils and debasing electoral malpractices have too long been tolerated in this country and that they have remained unchecked, threatened national unity, peace and stability. The study recommended for hard work, honesty, fairness and just means to success; that without enthroning justice and fairness, and curbing the “End justifies the means” mentality in our electoral process, the stealing of the peoples mandate and imposition of inept and corrupt candidates on the people would continue to be our night mare, hence the upsurge in political killings, wanton destructions of property and political insecurity in the entire land.

Another study [14] sees political violence as the use of illegitimate force of any kind, prohibited by the state (law) to achieve political end. The research argued, though that may be true, correct and acceptable if it has to do with the opposing or opposition party adopting it. That the reverse is usually the case if it is adopted by the ruling party (party in power), it then could be an acceptable phenomenon. For instance, the people’s democratic party (P.D.P) which is the ruling party could adopt political violence as a strategy to winning elections, and it will be termed acceptable and normal, but when the opposition party for instance, all progressive congress (APC) adopts that, it will be termed illegal since they are not in control of government machinery, and as such all manner of security agents will be deployed to cow them (Opposition) down and tame the situation. Recommendations were that both the ruling and opposite parties should adopt legitimate means to winning elections.

Furthermore, a study by [15] set to establish the best form and method to adopt so as to eschew electoral violence in Nigeria’s political system. The findings revealed that the best strategy for preventing conflict in our democratic system is by promoting democracy because democracy can ensure that Africans internal disputes are settled by voters casting ballots instead of soldiers wielding guns. To date, elections provide the essential mechanism for the orderly transfer of political power in response to the will of the electorates, but indeed the Nigerian electoral process since independence has gained an unenviable reputation for fraudulent practices. The study reiterated that the soul of the electoral system is the ballot system. In an ideal situation, which hardly operates in Nigeria and most developing countries because of the intervention of many factors including ignorance of their rights and responsibilities under a democratic system, what happens is that the politicians conscious of the value of the spoils of office, adopts various means to ensure that they capture power. They buy votes, rig peoples will to choose leaders capable of leading the state towards development and sustainable democracy. The study recommended that the will of the people should be the basis of the authority of government. This will, shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be made universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedure. It went further to recommend that the electoral process be situated within the context of democratic system since democracy gives freedom to individuals and group of people to associate, express and carry out projects in response to their own individual or collective requirements and inclination.

4. Conceptual review - election

Election in Nigeria or any other parts of the world are forms of choosing representatives or leaders based on the choice the electorates. Election is the act of choosing person or group of persons for the purpose of occupying a particular position or positions through the voting process. Election is used both in political and non political organizations as a process of selecting their leaders. Thus, apart from electing legislators, local government chairmen, governors and president, we now elect leaders of social clubs, church organizations, village committees etc. Election is a modernized democratic way of choosing leaders. Its application is based on the democratic principle that, rulers whom the people are expected to obey should rule in the interests of the people and therefore should be chosen by the people. Elected persons are therefore accountable to the people and should from time to time receive peoples mandate to govern [16]. Election is a symbol of democracy and election makes the expansive and comprehensive treatment of political matter possible and play significant role in the choice of government. Modern representative government is not feasible without an election. Elections

are neatly tied to the growth and development of representative democratic government. Election is the single most indicator of the presence or absence of a democratic government. It creates an atmosphere of excitement, battle and contest, victory and defeat, uncertainty, curiosity and speculations, hopes, and fears, all prevail as to the possibility of the outcomes [17]. According to [18, 19] opined that in whatever context the concept of election is used, certain basic element must be present:

1. An election usually entails the selection of a fewer people by a larger number to fill predetermined political vacancies;
2. Election implies an element of choice in that the electorates have options to select either from a number of individuals or a range of programmers;
3. Election also implies that each electorate exercises his/her right to choose independently of any other electorate.

Election which is an instrument for the determination and expression of variations or changes in leadership positions at all levels of governance in a political system particularly in Nigeria has some fundamental problems during elections, hence the political violence.

5. Political violence

Political violence is usually informed by conflict which is any action oriented intentionally to carry out actors own will against the resistance of the other party or parties. In [20] refers to political violence as the use of force or threat of it to change the voting behavior pattern of electorates during election. It may be physical, emotional, psychological or otherwise, solely with the intent to intimidate and harass voters to change their minds with matters that relates to electoral issues. For [21], political violence is the use of threat, humiliation, intimidation or physical act carried out by an individual or individuals within a political system against another individual or individuals, or property with the intent to cause injury or death to persons and or damage or destruction to property. Political violence which is usually associated with politically related matters have some political significance which tends to modify the behaviors of others in existing political structure. Political violence in a democratic set up which is conflict among competitive parties may turn into the use of such as machetes, rifles, clubs and guns to cause destruction and achieve a desired political goal, thereby capturing power at all costs, hence the resultant effect of undemocratic culture of intolerance, political assassination, thuggery, arson, kidnapping and electoral violence.

Electoral violence on the other hand, could refer to party disagreements which results in election motivated crisis employed to alter, change, or influence by force the electoral behavior of electorates or voting pattern or possibly reverse the electoral decision in favor of a particular group or political party. Account of elections in Nigeria in Pre-Independence, Independence and Post Independence Era; the 1958 – 1959 Election. The federal electoral commission (FEC) conducted the 1959 general election. The election which preceded the Nigerian Independence in (1960) was adjudged free from electoral irregularities [21]. Though, the election was rated relatively free and fair, it did not go down well with Nigerians because it introduced into our political system the crisis and violence that have swallowed our electoral system. This is most worrisome because irrespective of the supervisory roles of the British officials (R.E Wraith) during the elections, it was not devoid of violence, stuffing of ballot boxes, obstruction and incidences of intimidation though very much minimal [3].

6. The 1979 election – Federal electoral commission (FEDECO)

The formation of political parties in Nigeria's second republic was as a result of nationwide broadcast made by the then head of state, General Murtala Mohammed on 1st October 1975 during the 15th Independence Anniversary of the country. General Murtala Mohammed announced a five stage programmed leading to the military handover of power to civilians by Monday, October 1st, 1979. Consequent upon the death of General Murtala Mohammed on 13th February 1976 in a military coup master minded by Colonel Sumka Dimka, General Olusegun Obasanjo inaugurated a new federal electoral commission (FEDECO) with Mr. Michael Ani as the Chairman. By 23rd December 1978, FEDECO announced that five political parties might contest the 1979 elections, they included; National Party of Nigeria (NPN) Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), Nigerian people's party (NPP), Great Nigerian Peoples Party (GNPP) and peoples redemption party (PRP). The parties were registered because they were adjudged to have met the state criteria especially that of having membership in at least "Two

third” of the states of the federation. The election was however held as follows: Senate(7th July 1979), House of Representatives (14th July, 1979) State House of assembly (21st July, 1979) Gubernatorial election, (28th July, 1979) and Presidential election (11th August, 1979). The election which was conducted under Mr. Michael Ani and strict supervision of the military was relatively violent free.

7. The 1983 elections – Federal electoral commission (FEDECO)

The 1983 general elections were conducted on 6th August and 3rd September 1983. Six (6) political parties participated in the elections for the following positions (Presidency, Governorship, Senate, Reps, and State Houses of Assembly) they are: NPN, GNPP, PRP, UPN, NPP, and NAP (National Advance Party). The elections were conducted by FEDECO under the chairmanship of Mr. Ovia Whisky (Rtd Judge). Crisis of confidence loomed high as FEDECO’s impartiality and capability in conducting the elections could not be guaranteed due to some observed lapses which include:

1. Poor handling of voters registration during which some individuals and communities could not register;
2. The possession of multiple voters card by some party supporters especially the NPN;
3. The bundling of voters list in which many people did not find their names, while those who did, discovered their names in constituency far away from where they registered;
4. The rejection by FEDECO to register new political parties which was viewed as NPN’s strategy to subdue effective opposition;
5. The order of elections which FEDECO revised to make the Presidential election the first to be held instead of last as in 1979 [7].

However, the 1983 elections were characterized by this political and electoral violence:

1. Intimidation of operators and participants in the electoral process by the use of thugs and law enforcement agents: This was witnessed in Imo and Anambra State where NPP had control while members of the opposition parties were denied access to FEDECO’s compound;
2. Stuffing of ballot boxes: There were established cases of ballot stuffing especially in the village of Modakeke where the 170,000 votes cast for Shehu Shagari suggested about 500 votes per household based on the available census figure;
3. Some FEDECO officials absconded from duty thereby giving opportunity to party militia to swap ballot boxes;
4. Electoral violence noted in Ondo State, the FEDECO office considered to be the centre of rigging was razed down with explosives and grenades even though it was heavily guarded by 50 mobile policemen. Similarly, two NPN members were killed in Ondo State; while Mr. Olapo was soaked in P.M.S (petrol) and set ablaze to die; Mr. Sheto Akinkugbe had a nail driven into his head for allegedly being in possession of multiple voters card;
5. In Ondo State, already prepared results by the NPN were allegedly presented in places of the authentic ones [15, 17].

8. The 1990 – 1993 election – National electoral commission (NEC)

The 1993 general election was conducted under the chairmanship of Prof Humphrey Nwosu. The election which was adjudged free and fair, and a remarkable improvement from other elections conducted in Nigeria in the recent past were between the national republican convention (N.R.C) and the social democratic party (S.D.P). However, the elections started in 1990 with the conduct of the local council polls. The outcome of the results revealed that across Nigerian local governments S.D.P won more local governments than the N.R.C. in the state assemblies and gubernatorial position held by 1991, N.R.C won 16 states while S.D.P had 14 states out of the thirty (30) States of the Federation. In the S.D.P primaries held in 1992 for the Presidency between Alhaji Babagana Kingibe and Chief M.K.O Abiola, Chief Abiola defeated him and became the S.D.P flag bearer, for the N.R.C presidential race, Alhaji Bashir Tafa, emerged the flag bearer, having won the party primaries.

However, the presidential election scheduled for 12th June, 1993, adopted the option A4 method. It states that the option A4 is a significant departure from what has been in use in Nigeria. It is a unique voting process which required voters to queue up behind the photographs of the candidates and the political parties of their choice; then the counting of the votes for each candidate is done by the electoral presiding officer in-charge of the polling booth in the presence of everybody; and the result announced immediately. Though the option A4

seemed to have taken care of most of the previously experienced electoral malpractices that marred the past elections, it has the major weakness of exposing the identity of the voters [13]. When the result was announced on Monday, 14th June 1993, Chief M.K.O Abiola (S.D.P) had a landside victory. The result was acclaimed by both national and international observers, to be the most credible, free and fair elections in the history of elections in Nigeria. Subsequent upon the announcement of the result, on June 23, 1993, General Ibrahim Babangida (The Head of State) annulled the elections throwing Nigerians into turmoil. This led to riot and killings of innocent Nigerians, especially those who took to the streets to demonstrate their grievances on the annulment of the elections by the federal military government [16].

9. The 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 general elections – Independent national electoral commission (INEC)

Sequel to the death of General Sani Abacha on 8th June 1998 and the emergence of Major General Abdulsalami Abubakar on 9th June 1998 as the Head of State, the Independence national electoral commission (INEC) was inaugurated, and subsequently, Justice Ephraim Akpata was appointed as the chairman. INEC, under Justice Ephraim Akpata successfully conducted the 1999 elections at all levels (Local Governments, Gubernatorial and State Assemblies, House of Representatives and Senatorial positions and Presidency).

INEC had further conducted the following elections under these personalities as the umpire, with this electoral violence;

1. 2003 general elections – Dr Abel Guobadia
2. 2007 general elections – Prof Maurice Iwu
3. 2011 general election – Prof Attahiru Jega

In all these elections conducted by INEC in Nigeria, (2003 – 2011) media reports adjudged them as free and fair". Apart from the media, international observers from reputable organizations notably; International Fund for Electoral System (IFES), the Carter Centre, the Common Wealth, the European Union, USAID among others gave their reports and concluded that INEC had done wonderfully well in the conduct and management of elections in Nigeria [10]. According to [11], he rightly asked, can we rely on these reports to conclude that INEC has done well in the conduct of elections in Nigeria? Where those elections free from manipulations? What about thuggery, alterations, falsifications, coercion, rigging and corruption?

These elections conducted by INEC were equally affected by varying degrees of electoral malpractices. [15] Identified the varieties of malpractices in various parts of the country during the conduct of the 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 elections as thuggery, arson, vandalization and other illegal political behaviors widely reported in all parts of the country. He further noted that the incidents of malpractice and anti – democratic acts recorded should be used to underscore the gravity of the episode. For instance, in Eket, a party supporter was stabbed to death, in Bayelsa, the election were generally characterized by intimidation, manhandling of officials, snatching of ballot boxes and destruction of other election materials, in Benue, the most damaging problems was the burning of INEC local government office in Oju Local Government Area by some thugs. [13] also observed cases of arson, hijacking of electoral materials, beating up of opponents, thuggery and falsification of figures were also reported in Delta, Ebonyi, Jigawa, Kano, Kebi, Ogun, Ondo, Rivers, Taraba, Yobe and Zangara State. However, [15] narrated the level of political killings, snatching of ballot boxes, arson, vandalization and destruction of motor bikes and cars, destruction of holy mass vestibules and beating of a Catholic priest, all in Izzi Local Government Area of Ebonyi State in 2011 general elections.

10. 2015 Governorship election in KOGI state – 21st Nov, 2015 and 5th Dec, 2015

Kogi State is one of the states in Nigeria where scattered election was conducted for the gubernatorial race, hence the election between Prince Audu Abubakar (APC) and Captain Idris Wada, Rtd (P.D.P) on Saturday, 21st Nov, 2015. At the early hours of Sunday 22nd Nov, 2015, it was reported that the APC flag bearer, Prince Audu Abubakar passed on at about 5am and part of the reason why the election was declared inconclusive and called for supplementary election slated for Saturday, 5th December 2015 between Alhaji Yahaya Bello (APC) and Rtd Capt Idris Wada (P.D.P). Prior to the election on Saturday, 5th Dec, 2015, there were reports of violence in some parts of the state. Barely few hours to the controversial supplementary governorship election in Kogi State, the office of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was razed down by some thugs in Dekina, Dekina

local government area of the state as shown in Figure 1. Out of 91 polling units, where the election was supposed to take place, 29 units are in Dekina. According to an eyewitness, some thugs invaded the office at about 5am and set it on fire in anger in the early hours of Friday. The eyewitness account revealed that the thugs came in a bus, shot sporadically before razing down the office. The resident electoral commissioner Mallam Halidu Pai, confirmed the incident but added that it would not affect the conduct of the election. He reported that the commission had relocated to a temporary office and that the burnt material would be replaced by INEC for the election (The News and Nation, 5th Dec, 2015). The Nigerian civil society situation room that monitored the Bayelsa Polls said that politicians are majorly responsible for the violence that erupted from elections. On Sunday December 6th, findings by the situation room made up of more than 70 different civil society groups had it that poor security arrangements led to the lapses and breach of security which in turn led to political and electoral violence. It stated; "Situation room findings indicates that political parties stoked the fire of violence in the state during the election leading to incidents of violent clashes between their supporters, occasioning deaths, injury and mayhem" it said, adding that the conduct of politicians defied the peace accord they signed ahead of the polls.

Figure 1. Inec office burnt In Dekina, Dekina L.G.A, Kogi state On 5th December 2015



To buttress the above, a policeman and four others were killed on Saturday 5th Dec 2015, by thugs suspected to be working for the All Progressive Congress (APC) during the governorship election in BAYELSA State [18]. The policeman was killed in Famgbe, a suburb of YENOGOA, the state capital. The source revealed that the hoodlums who were led by a renowned political thug in the area, machete the deceased officer to death for his alleged refusal to allow alteration of results in the area. The visibly angry governor, SERIAKE Dickson immediately condemned the spate of violence unleashed on voters by thugs across the eight local governments of the State. In places like OKPOAMA, EWEAMA, Town Brass and OPOROMA, headquarters of southern IJAW, thugs shot sporadically into the air, forcing voters to run helter skelter. The governor (SIERAKE DICKSON) reported that after his accreditation at ward 2 in Toru Orua, his home town that security operatives refused to heed the alarm

earlier raised over plot by the APC to attack his party supporters. “We warned security agents before the election that the APC was not prepared for election but war. Now, they have seen for themselves.

Though, the Bayelsa state police command made some arrest of the persons involved in the shooting at Southern IJAW but their names were not disclosed by the police public relation officer, Mr. ANSLEM BUTWATS. Expectedly, both the P.D.P and the A.P.C are trading words over the violence that characterized the election in the state. While the P.D.P claimed that a member of the House of assembly Hon Ingo IWOWARI, was attacked and stripped of her belongings, including money; the A.P.C accused the P.D.P of unleashing violence on its supporters with many of them injured [19]. In NEMBE BASSAMBIRI, P.D.P further claimed that an ex – militant leader, Eris Paul, led the attack in OPOROMA. Four persons were said to have been killed during the shootout which prevented the distribution of election materials to polling units in the local governments of the state.

11. Misguided ideology in political party formation; hence the failure of democratic ideals in Nigeria’s politics

The political parties that were established in 1978, preparatory to the 1979 elections, political parties of the 1990’s (S.D.P and N.R.C) and the political parties of 1998 (PDP, APP, A.D) preparatory to the 1999 elections came into existence through a rushed process in order to get the military to hand over power. The tendencies to oust the military from public governance took the priority attention of the political actors that there was little time to form political parties that were genuinely democratic [20]. According to [19], the parties reflected a combination of different tendencies with little or no shared ideological commitments. What is worthy of note is that these parties are essentially composed of strange bed fellows, relations are mostly informed by self-interest of the amalgamating associations, which gives rise to internal cohesion and unhealthy political rivals. The exhibition of dearth of ideology, with the influx or harvest of political parties, especially close to every election, saw aspirants carpet crossing from one political party to another for the flimsy and often selfish reasons to satisfy their ambitions. This prompts politicians without party identities to become party flag bearers or last minute joiners to become party flag bearers or state chairmen of political parties.

A notable example is the case between Senator Ahmed Markafi and senator Alli Modi Sherrif over the power tussle of the national chairman of P.D.P. Alli Modi Sherrif without P.D.P identity card was made an acting chairman of the P.D.P at a 2016 Port Harcourt convention, while another round of 2016 convention made senator Ahmed Markafi, caretaker chairman of P.D.P, this was contested between Ahmed Markafi and Alli Modi Sherrif over the authentic leadership of P.D.P up to the supreme court level, the Supreme Court on Friday 14th July 2017 ruled in favor of Ahmed MARKAFI. In Ebonyi state [7], Chief Lawrence Nwuruku and senator sylvanus Ngele, who were staunch P.D.P members, close to the 2003 elections, defected to A.N.P.P to become the gubernatorial flag bearer and running mate to a party that they have never belonged to or know anything about their ideology, when they lost the governorship race, they returned back to their formal political party, P.D.P [9].

12. Nature of politics in Nigeria and benefits thereto, politically, socially and economically

It is already clear from the introductory remarks that politics and election is the process which culminates in the emergence of leaders who would manage the affairs of a given community or people for a specified period of time. It pertains to the exercise of the functions vested in those charged with the conduct of governmental affairs. In Nigeria, players of partisan politics form or belong to registered political parties. The institution, whose duty is to organize, undertake and supervise all elections, was created by section 153 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999. It is charged with the duty of registering political parties as well as monitoring the organization and operation of political parties.

Party politics in Nigeria as practiced in many other parts of the world is supposed to be free and fair in the spirit of sportsmanship but sometimes, it carries with it some unpleasant characteristics, one of which is corruption. Corruption compromises efficiency, merit, integrity and even the fear of god. By means of corrupt practices, national wealth becomes personal wealth. It is common knowledge that ill-gotten money is used to abuse the right to determine who the leaders should be through the ballot box. This has created a situation where office seekers buy their way to power. There is the unhealthy situation where money bags (political godfathers) use a candidate as a proxy and seek to control such a candidate once elected into office. As far as the moneybags are concerned, the allegiance of the political son should first be to them before the state. They

demand as a right the share of the states resources every month, and where this is not forthcoming, hell is let loose. This has severally and finally given birth to a new thinking that elections are not about choosing leaders for good governance but about selecting those who are mainly concerned with accessing public funds and spending them recklessly. It is this corrupt mentality that paves way for the election of unsuitable leaders who can use all means, legal or illegal to remain in power or even eliminate political opponents when they feel their power is being threatened [13]. As the 2007, 2011 and 2015 general elections drew nearer, politicians and their cohorts adopted new strategies in the battle against their opponents. Their use of thugs and hoodlums to kill, maim, and because all forms of harm including the destruction of property in order to have their way reached a dangerous proportion.

Another dimension was also added to the ugly development of political killings. Politicians have devised the use of bombs and other dangerous explosives to scare their opponents.

The residence of Chief Austin opera, the former deputy speaker of the House of Representatives was bombed on the 7th June, 2006, another explosion was at the residence of Kenneth Kabani, the former commissioner for finance in Rivers State, another bomb blast took place on 7th July 2006 in the home of Okey Nzenwa, a Port Harcourt based businessman and the brother in-law to former governor Peter Odili and in Enugu State, at W.T.C Primary School polling booth on 28th March 2015, prior to the presidential and national assembly elections, there was pandemonium as two bombs were detonated at about 8.56 am by operatives of the Anti Bomb Squad, Enugu Police Command. However, no causality was reported as the bomb exploded before the election commenced [12].

13. Conclusion

Any polity threatened with political and electoral violence is usually accompanied with tension and anxiety, hence political apathy among the electorates. Therefore, the elimination of these threats (tension, anxiety and party apathy) should be one of the focuses of the electoral body (INEC) if true democracy where the electorate's votes should count is to be sustained.

14. Recommendations

1. Campaign promises should be kept and maintained, especially with the provision of job opportunities for the teeming unemployed youths and graduates;
2. Provision social infrastructures across communities of the state because absence of these induce crisis, especially in communities where they are lacking, (Niger Delta);
3. The electoral body should as much as possible conduct transparent, free and fair election to reduce the level of aggression usually noticed upon the announcement of results (1993 presidential election in Nigeria as a good example);
4. The electoral body (INEC) and electorates should eschew money induced politics where votes and the peoples will should be subverted for money;
5. The politicians should avoid politics of acrimony, where lives and property are lost (the case of Bola IGE, UCHE OGBONNA, HARY MARSHAL) etc;
6. Increase of the Nigeria security outfit: The government should increase the size of Nigeria security agencies, empower and motivate them to forestall all forms of violence and insecurity;
7. The institution of impartial judiciary (election tribunal) where the electorates will and hope will not be subverted at election tribunal; Nigeria judges should copy from what happened in 2006 at the supreme court judgment presided by Justice Aloysius KATSINA ALUU in a case between Dr Chris Ngige (Governor, Anambra State) vs Mr Peter Obi (APGA flag bearer, 2003 Anambra State gubernatorial race);
8. The political parties should be well organized and conduct themselves not to enthrone violence;
9. The principle of "One man, one vote" must be adhered to, so as to avoid double or multiple voting (Rigging) hence forestall post election violence;
10. Ballot boxes must be secured from being dumped with ballot papers by party faithful or loyalists;
11. Announcement of results of election immediately after public counting of ballot papers;
12. Results should and must be capable of being challenged in courts (election tribunal) with evidence tendered;
13. There should be prosecution of electoral offenders and adequate punishment meted to the culprits.

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