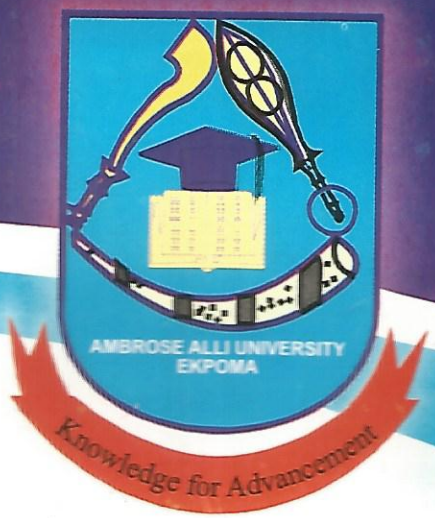

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URBAN VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA: THE PARADOX AND THE DIMENSIONS

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Abstract

The occurrence of intra and inter violence within and among nations is in a continuum. Nigeria has a fair share of this menace. The nature, trend and dimensions of urban violence are greeted with various levels of deep complexity par excellence. The shifting dimensions are the hydra-like nature of its occurrence. The dimension of urban violence in Nigeria has variousimplications ranging from political backwardness, economy dwarfism and social anarchism. This work proffers a buffer to the continuous effect of urban violence in Nigeria and applicable in other developing countries of Africa and the world. The tyre burning model is usedalongside the broken window and relative deprivation theories to give a vivid insight to urban violence. Peaceful coexistence with political accountability and social order development is recommended to the relevant stakeholders. Conclusion is premised on the inevitability of violence in the human community but buffer solutions are prerequisite to the mitigation of such menaces.

Key Words: Violence, Peace Mechanism, Democracy, Economy, Urban and Rule of Law.

Introduction

Violence is not typical to developing countries. Much complex violence takes place in the developed countries than any other part of the world. The major difference between the two countries is the method of checks and control. The general notion about urbanism is that the more developed a country is the more peaceful and blissful the level of interaction in the state will be. This is the idea phenomenon, a utopia conditions in most countries of the world and a lateral inversion of the reality. This lateral inversion of what ought to be is seen as the paradox of the reality.Most urban areas are the haven of violence. It serves as the laboratory where violence is breed and wean to maturity. It also serves as a geographical locationwhere advanced violence are taught and transported to the rural areas of the same country and further to other countries.

The phenomenon of urban violence is not an alien phenomenon in Nigeria. It is so ubiquitous that it is seldom overlooked as a usual phenomenon. The aim of this paper is to justify the assertion that violence in Nigeria is not of unilateral dimension but of multilateral dimension. Most cases of urban violence in Nigeria are seen as unilateral dimension whichsimply focuses on politically motivated violence or simply put governance violence.However, violence in Nigeria surpasses the notion of political dimensions only. It cut across all other facet of human's endeavour (Aluko 2016; Aluko 2017a; Aluko 2017b). Urban violence has become pronounced in different cities in each of the six geo political zones in Nigeria. Specific instances of urban violence across the countryshifted from ethnic violence, religious violence, political violence, illegal oil bunkering, kidnapping, burglary and 'spiritual' among other crises.

The instances of urban violence in northern Nigeria had claimed more than 40,000 lives as at 2014 (Aluko 2017b). Urban violence in central Nigeria, Kendhammer (2010) observed that Jos riots had claimed more than 3000 people between 2001 and 2004 and about 9000 as at 2014; such riots have been described as religious, ethnic, or between "settlers and indigenous" populations. Instances of urban violence in eastern Nigeria in the fourth republic, especially through the activities of the Bakassi Boys in Aba, Anambra, Enugu, Imo and Onitsha had wasted lives and properties. Similarly, the OPC has contributed to waves of urban violence in western Nigeria, particularly in Lagos and Ibadan. The instances of the Boko Haram terrorist group in the north east of Nigeria is a disaster on its own which has claim over 3150 lives in the year 2013 and over 4900 souls as at November 2014.

Conceptual Clarification

There are as many perspectives to concepts in social science as there are many scholars or writers. This makes it difficult to get a universal concept of issues. This problem is also witnessed in almost all concepts in Political Science fields of study. To this end some concepts will be vigorously interrogated as conceived by different authors with a view of proffering an hybrid of the same concepts. The concepts to be

clarified in this context are the concept of Violence Urban violence and Political Violence respectively.

Violence as a concept in social science does not lend itself to a single definition. However, violence or social disorganization as interchangeably used by Olutayo (1994) is perceived as natural phenomenon to all human societies and it becomes a social problem only where it increases to an intolerable level. This definition is quite rich in natural reasoning but it is empirically casual to be digested hook line and sinker because social problems at intolerable levels might still be in the limit of proportionality that is the elastic limit of human behaviour can hardly be exceeded as it will be further extended for a little accommodation no matter the extent of intolerability. The most common notion is that violence entails the use of physical force, usually aimed at injuring or damaging the object of the violence. The tools of violence can range from flying fists, to clubs, bullets, nerve gas, and nuclear missiles (Danzinger,1998). Nevertheless, violence may be related to political or non-political aspects of human life (Alanamu, 2005).

Political violence like the concept of violence only tries to classify and justify itself by the inclusion of politics. However, several scholars had put pen on papers to clarify what political violence means and others have try to strike a difference between political violence and other forms of violence including electoral violence (Saka, 2010; Aniekwe andKushie, 2011). It is important to note that each scholar only present the matter as it seems justified to them. In the opinion of Igbuzor (2010), Political violence is considered to be any act of violence perpetuated in the course of political activities, including pre, during and post political activities, and may include any of the following acts: thuggery, use of force to disrupt political meetings or voting at polling stations, or the use of dangerous weapons to intimidate political opponents and halt electoral process or to cause bodily harm or injury to any person connected with the political processes.

A well encompassing concept of political violence is portrayed by Anifowose (1982). He tries to include the actions, the perceived target(s) and the effect or the aftermath of the perpetuated political violence. He said;

> *Political violence can be taken to involve the threat and actual use of physical act carried out by an individual or group of individuals within a political system against another individual, groups and their property. Such use of physical act are carried out with the intent to cause injury or death to a person, destruction of property and in which the objective, choice of targets, surrounding circumstances, implementation and effects all have political significance. Such significance is often directed at modifying the behaviours of others or altering the prevailing power matrix* (Anifowose, 1982).

Other forms of violence can be identified in the opinion of Gurr (1970) as

i. **Turmoil:** This consists of low scale violence such as relatively spontaneous, unorganized political violence with substantial popular participation, including violent political strikes, riots, political clashes, and localized rebellions.

ii. **Conspiracy:** This consists of medium scale violence such as highly organized political violence with limited participation, including organized political assassinations, small-scale terrorism, small-scale guerrilla wars, coup d'états and mutinies.

iii. **Internal war:** This consists of higher scale violence such as highly organized political violence with widespread popular participation, designed to overthrow the regime or dissolve the state and accompanied by extensive violence, including large-scale terrorism and guerrilla wars, civil wars, and revolution.

iv. Finally, political violence can be mop-up in few lines as a brief summary; it is the whole gamut of issue that refers to all forms of collective attacks within a political regime, directed at effecting changes in the body politics.

Urban violence in the same room with political crises has it uniqueness in it concept as it pick-up some broad and overview concept of crises in the human society. Harroff-Tavel (2010) in his own view posited that urban violence is different from violence that it is purely criminal. He mentioned different forms of urban violence including social and political uprising, hunger riots, identity-based violence among ethnic or religious groups, clashes between territorial gangs, terrorism and acts of xenophobic violence directed against migrants. However, urban violence has intertwined with different forms of violence in urban areas. He goes further to say that;

> *Armed urban violence between groups that are generally considered as criminal (drug dealers, territorial gangs, mafia-type groups, etc.), or between those groups and government forces or private militias, raises some complex legal (and political) problems. This is particularly the case when that fighting is between groups engaged in a collective confrontation of major intensity, which testifies to a high degree of organization.*

Akinwale and Aderinto (2013) agreed that all forms of violence in urban areas constitute a serious social problem irrespective of their nomenclatures. Any form of violence that constitutes a threat to security of lives and property of a large number of people in an urban area is considered an urban violence. This conceptualization is

based on recognition of the fact that urban violence can be more devastating compared to violence in a rural setting.

In a recent study by Aliyu, Kasim and Martin (2011), urban violence was expressed in terms of ethnic and religious conflicts. Also, Penglase (2011) argued that representations of urban violence are often centred upon concerns with transgression to the urban settings norms and conducts. Kunkeler and Peters (2011); argues that urban violence is generally framed and interpreted as criminal violence. Within a context of state failure or the inability of state representatives to provide security, the lives of inhabitants of cities such as Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg are constituted by a culture of fear that is attached to issues of crime (Koonings and Kruijt 2007).

Krause, Muggah and Gilgen (2011)distinguish direct forms of urban violence which result in physical and psychological harmincluding intentional fatalities, assault and sexual violence and indirect manifestations that negatively affect other aspects of livelihoods, social relations and wellbeing. This concept agrees with the same trend of violence in general which may manifest in either the urban area or the rural area.

Muggah (2012) however concluded the whole gamut of urban violence by submitting that;

> *There is no agreed definition of what constitutes urban violence or how it should be measured.However, there are parameters to the discussion that hinge on its direct and indirect characteristics, its intensity and duration, its spatial--socio characteristics, its intentionality and context. It is generally agreed that urban violence often features interconnected forms of insecurity and that it challenges narrow categories and classifications.Multi-dimensional frameworks are emerging that attempt to explain different thresholds of urban violence.*

Theoretical Framework

This aspect of the research will dive into the word of theories so as to see the relevance of this research to some already confirmed and established facts. There are many relevant theories applicable for this research work, such include; Broken Window Theory, Relative deprivation Theory, Theory of social disorganization, Differential Association Theory (Learning Theory), Strain Theory and Control Theory among others.

But for the purpose of this research work, the Broken Window Theory will be used juxtaposing it with relative deprivation theory and therefore bring out the Tyre Burning Model. This is because they explain in a much better way why and how urban violence and political crises are formed, transmitted and how they become vulnerable tool against socio-political-economic development for the moulding and sustenance of a viable democratic system.

Unlike the Learning theory that justify the class imbalance and a wish of the youths to break even quickly, Control theory merely tries to emphasized the restraining power of justice and stresses the effectiveness of social norms because people internalize them through a socialization process where formal sanctions are reinforced by informal sanctions. However, the Broken Window Theory and Relative deprivation Theory best captured the reason while urban violence and political crises are nurtured, financed and used to achieve the desirable agenda of perpetuators who blows its pipe.

Broken Window Theory

Wilson and Kellingn (1982) in The Atlantic publications were the first to coin out this theory. The theory is basically meant to explore the reason for the prevalence of crime and violence in the urban areas, the indicators the expected semiotics and the possible actions to curb this menace.

The theory assumed that at the community level, disorder and crime are usually inextricably linked, in a kind of developmental sequence. Social psychologists and police officers tend to agree that if a window in a building is broken and is left unrepaired; all the rest of the windows will soon be broken. This is as true in nice neighbourhoods rundown ones. Window-breaking does not necessarily occur on a large scale because some areas are inhabitedby determined window-breakers whereas others are populated by window-lovers; rather, one unrepaired broken window is a signal that no one cares, and so breaking more windows costs nothing.

A piece of property is abandoned, weeds grow up, a window is smashed. Adults stop scolding rowdy children; the children, emboldened, become more rowdy. Families move out, unattached adults move in. Teenagers gather in front of the corner store. The merchant asks them to move; they refuse. Fights occur. Litter accumulates. People start drinking in front of the grocery; in time, an inebriate slump to the sidewalk and is allowed to sleep it off. Pedestrians are approached by panhandlers definitely will lead to pandemonium in the urban areas.It was suggested that 'untended' behaviour also leads to the breakdown of community controls. A stable neighbourhood of families who care for their homes, mind each other's children, and confidently frown on unwanted intruders who can change, in a few years or even a few months, to an inhospitable and frightening jungle.

At this point it is not inevitable that serious crime will flourish or violent attacks on strangers will occur. But many residents will think that crime, especially violent crime, is on the rise, and they will modify their behaviour accordingly. Such an area is vulnerable to criminal invasion. Though it is not inevitable, it is more likely that here, rather than in places where people are confident they can regulate public behaviour by informal controls, drugs will change hands, prostitutes will solicit, and cars will be stripped.

This link is similar to the process whereby one broken window becomes many. The citizen who fears the ill-smelling drunk, the rowdy teenager, or the importuning beggar is not merely expressing his distaste for unseemly behaviour; he

is also giving voice to a bit of folk wisdom that happens to be a correct generalizationnamely, that serious street crime flourishes in areas in which disorderly behaviour goes unchecked. The unchecked panhandler is, in effect, the first broken window. Muggers and robbers, whether opportunistic or professional, believe they reduce their chances of being caught or even identified if they operate on streets where potential victims are already intimidated by prevailing conditions. If the neighbourhood cannot keep a bothersome panhandler from annoying passers-by, the thief may reason, it is even less likely to call the police to identify a potential mugger or to interfere if the mugging actually takes place (Wilson and Kellingn, 1982).

Unlike broken window theory, relative deprivation theory emphasized on the presence of poverty and politico-economic hardship which leads to the state of survival of the fittest and the winner gets it all. The tyre burning model simply depict a violence as a situation which warrants people burning of tyres on the road to obstruct the general peace so as to get the proper attentions of the powers that be.

Violence Incidence in Nigeria

The data presented in Table I show some instances of urban violence associated with political party conflicts, which have characterized the Nigerian fourth republic since 1999, a period that marked the beginning of the fourth republic.

TABLE I: CASES OF VIOLENCE IN THE 2003 NIGERIAN ELECTIONS

Month	Number of Reported Violence	Political Parties Involved in Violence	Scene of Violence	Outcomes of Violence
January	9	AD, PDP vs AD, ANPP, PDP, PDP vs ANPP,	Lagos, Delta, Oyo, Edo, Ondo, Yobe	deaths, injuries, destruction of property
February	4	PDP, ANPP vs PDP,	Benue, Borno, Imo,	deaths, injuries, destruction of property
March	7	PDP, ANPP vs PDP, AD vs PDP, PDP vs AD, ANPP vs PDP	Plateau, Abuja, Katsina, Lagos, Delta, Ondo, Sokoto	deaths, injuries, destruction of property
April	18	ANPP vs PDP, PDP vs AD, ANPP, ANPP vs PDP, AD vs PDP, ANPP, UNDP, PRP,	Edo, Osun, Benue, Kwara, Bayelsa, Akwa Ibom, Enugu, Edo, Katsina, Plateau, Bauchi, Ondo	deaths, displacements, injuries, destruction of property
May	5	PDP vs AD, AD vs PDP, PDP vs ANPP	Lagos, Delta, Kaduna, Adamawa	deaths, injuries, destruction of property
July	11	AD vs PDP	Delta	deaths, injuries, destruction of property
2003	Varied	ANPP vs PDP, PDP vs AD	Lagos, Delta, Kaduna, Adamawa, Edo, Osun, Benue, Kwara, Bayelsa, Akwa Ibom,	deaths, displacements, injuries, destruction of property

2007	Varied	ANPP vs PDP PDPvs LABOUR	Lagos, Delta, Oyo, Edo, Ondo, Yobe Edo, Osun, Benue,	deaths, displacements, injuries, destruction of property
2011	Varied	PDP vs APC PDP vs LABOUR APC vs APGA	Imo, Lagos, Delta, Kaduna, Adamawa, Edo, Osun, Benue, Kwara, Bayelsa, Akwa Ibom, Ondo, Plateau, Abuja, Katsina,	deaths, displacements, injuries, destruction of property
2015	Over 20	PDP vs APC	Rivers, Kogi, Bayelsa	deaths, displacements, injuries, destruction of property

Source: Adapted from Peace and Development Projects (2004) updated by researcher (2017)

Additional time series of urban violence in the Nigerian cities are presented in Table II below.

Date	Incidence & State of Occurrence	Responsibility
July 27,2009	Attack on Potiskum Divisional Police Headquarters, Yobe State leading to the death of 3 Police Officers and 1 Fire Service Officer	Boko Haram
March 13, 2010	300 persons killed in an operation in the Northern part of Jos, Plateau State	Boko Haram
September 7, 2010	Bauchi Central Prison was set ablaze and leading to the setting free of Sect member	Boko Haram
October 1, 2010	Eagle Square Bomb Attacks, Abuja	MEND.
December 24 , 2010	8 people killed in a bomb attack in BarkinLadi. Jos, Plateau State	Boko Haram
December 31, 2010	10 persons killed in Abuja Bomb Attacks at Mogadishu Mammy Market	Boko Haram
January 21, 2011	8 persons killed by gunmen in Maidugri, Borno State	Boko Haram

March 2, 2011	2 Police Officers attached to the residence of the Divisional Police Officer, MustphaSandamu at Rigasa area of Kaduna State killed	Boko Haram
March 30, 2011	Bom explosion in Damaturu, Yobe State	Boko Haram
April 8, 2011	8 serving Corps Members killed in a bomb explosion at INEC Office, Suleja, Niger State	Boko Haram
April 22, 2011	Yola Jail Break (Boko Haram frees 14 prison inmates)	Boko Haram
April 29, 2011	Bomb attack at the Army Barracks in Bauchi State	Boko Haram
May 29, 2011	1. Bomb blasts in Zuba International Market, Abuja. 2. Bomb blasts in a market near 33 Artillery Brigade, Bauchi. 3. Bomb blasts in Zaria, Kaduna State.	Boko Haram
June 7, 2011	5 persons killed in a series of bomb blasts in Maiduguri, Borno State	Boko Haram
December 22, 2011	4 persons severely injured by explosions and gun shots in Borno State	Boko Haram
December 24, 2011	80 persons killed in multiple bomb attacks in Jos, Plateau State	Boko Haram
December 25, 2011	50 killed in bomb attacks at St. Theresa's Catholic Church, Madalla, Niger State.	Boko Haram
December 30, 2011	7 people killed in Maidugri, Borno State	Boko Haram
January 5, 2012	Bomb attacks in a Church in Gombi, Adamawa State	Boko Haram
January 6, 2012	Gunmen attacked a Town Hall Meeting by Igbo Traders in Mubi, Adamawa State.	Boko Haram
January 20, 2012	250 people killed multiple bombing of Churches and businesses in Kano	Boko Haram
January 22, 2012	2 Churches bombed, 2 military offices, a DPO and 8 others killed by gunmen at the Headquarters of Tafawa Balewa LGA, Bauchi State	Boko Haram
January 26, 2012	Bomb explosion in Sabon Gari, Kano State	Boko Haram
January 28, 2012	1 killed in Ngala, Borno State	Boko Haram
January 30, 2012	6 people killed in Maidugri including 2 Air Force officers	Boko Haram
February 4, 2012	2 people killed in Damboa, Borno State	Boko Haram
February 5,	SSS agent killed in Yobe State	Boko Haram

February 5, 2012	SSS agent killed in Yobe State	Boko Haram
February 7, 2012	Attack on Kaduna Markets and Military Barracks which resulted in the death of 5 people	Boko Haram
January 7, 2012	Attack in Kano State that led to the death of 10 persons	Boko Haram
April 8, 2012	Violent group bombed a Church in Kaduna on Easter	Boko Haram
April 26, 2012	Coordinated bomb attacks in ThisDay and Daily Sun Newspapers offices in Abuja and Kano	Boko Haram
May 2, 2012	Gunmen attacked Potiskum cattle market in Yobe States with explosives	Armed Robbery
June 3, 2012	Church bombing in Bauchi State.	Boko Haram
June 17, 2012	Coordinated bomb attacks in 3 different churches in Zaria, Kaduna and Yobe State.	Boko Haram
July 7, 2012	BarkinLadi and Riyom Villages, Jos attack	Fulani herdsmen
July 8, 2012	Matse Village, Jos Massacre in Plateau State that resulted in the death of Senator GyangDantong, Plateau State House of Assembly Majority Leader and 50 others.	Gunmen suspected to be Fulani herdsmen
December 31,2013	Fulani Herdsmen attacked a church killing three. One woman was left widowed for a second time by Fulani Herdsmen. Plateau State	Fulani herdsmen
December 21, 2013	Unknown gunmen stormed a village, killing a father and his daughter and injuring four others. The district head said that the attack was deliberately done to scare his people from celebrating Christmas. Kaduna State	Fulaniherdsmen
December 17, 2013	Eight Fulani gunmen killed six members of extended families in their home in Foron, five of them children. Four people were also injured. BarkinLadi, Plateau State	Fulani herdsmen
September 29, 2013	Boko haram miltants murdered 42 students at the College of Agriculture while they slept in their hostels, but then moved on into the community and murdered an additional 36 residents of the town. There were also 18 injured in the shooting. Gujba Yoba	Boko Haram
September 26, 2013	Boko Haram militants shot and killed 21 wards of the government while two others sustained serious injuries. Bornu State.	Boko Haram
August 24,2013	Reports state that between 35 and 44 people were murdered by suspected Boko Haram members. Boko Haram militants reportedly stormed the village of Dumba Bornu State and slashed the throats of at least 35 of the villagers and then proceeded to burn down many of their homes as the villagers fled to Maiduguri	Boko Haram

June 27,2013	State Task Force engaged them in a shootout for several hours as they intervened in an attack on villages in Langtang South. 20 Fulani Malitia were killed and 2 arrested. Attackers with drew towards Yamini. Patrols have now been set up. Langtang Plateau State	Fulani herdsmen
May 12, 2013	Fulani herdsmen in the Okpanchenyi and Ekwo Christian communities of Agatu killed 45 Christians. Church leaders said a massive number of Muslim Fulani herdsmen invaded the area on the Sunday night and killed 38 people, while the others were killed in another attack in the early hours of the next day. Benue State	Fulani herdsmen
February 17, 2013	Boko Haram attacked a factory and separated the Christian workers from the rest and murdered them in cold blood. Kano State	Boko Haram
January 19,2013	Gunmen attacked the convoy of the Emir of Kano, Alhaji Ado Bayero, killing four of his palace guards. Kumbotso Kano State	Gun Men
2014	20 Fulani Malitia were killed and 2 arrested. Attackers withdrew towards Yamini. Plateau State	Fulani herdsmen
2014	Reports state that between 15 and 25 people were murdered by suspected Boko Haram members. Boko Haram militants reportedly stormed the village of Dumba Bornu State	Boko Haram members.
27 October 2015	a military operation freed 192 children and 138 women being held captive in two camps in the Sambisa forest, and 30 militants were killed.	JTF and Boko Haram
2 October 2015	Two bombings on that killed 18 and wounded 41, one in Nyanya in Nasarawa and the other in Kuje, FCT.	Boko Haram
30 January 2016	At least 86 people were killed and at least 62 more injured in an attack by Boko Haram militants on Dalori Village	Boko Haram
April-June 2016	Johns Hopkins University figures indicated that Boko Haram killed 244 people in the second quarter of 2016 - the lowest quarterly figure for five years	Boko Haram
Mar 22, 2017	Three killed as suicide blasts rock migrant camp in Nigeria	Boko Haram

Source: Adams and Ogbonnaya (2014) and Author's compilations (2017)

Shifting Dimension of Urban Violence in Nigeria

The notion of violence in Nigeria has a changing sinusoidal complexity. The oxymoron of it is in various hydra shapes it has in it occurrence and effects on the polity. It is such complex that as a trend is submerged by the government of the day another style of the old is been replicated. The policies adopted in the various regions in the country seem to be unique to each state as it is inadequate to curtail the same menace with the same policy in other areas of Nigeria. The enigma is more prominent when such issues of urban violence are taking place at the same time in any other part of the country. The following are some of the changing conundrum of urban violence in Nigeria;

Kidnapping

The kidnapping of all manner of persons has gained ascendancy in Nigeria. A malaise previously unknown to the people has rapidly become domesticated. Davidson (2010),illustrate it as a group of criminals armed with guns and cell phones apprehend unsuspecting victims and drag their victim into a secluded spot and begin to make phone calls to whomever and demand for a ransom.

Ngwama (2014) explains literarily the word kidnap which has become notorious, putrid and nauseating in the ears of virtually everyone is derived from "kid" meaning; child and "nab" which means; to snatch. Adewale (2009) pointed out that kidnapping now appears to be an emerging concern in Nigeria though it is not a new phenomenon. It is as old as the word itself. But the motive may vary from country to country. Not only does kidnapping affect the psychology of the direct victims and their families, it spread a fear that hinders direct economic investment in the area where such evils are perpetuated.

This in the short and long term leads to declined economic productivity and unemployment and a threat to the government's efforts in wooing investors into the country. Ngwama (2014) noted some Socio-Economic Factors Facilitating Kidnapping in Nigeria include the following: Leadership Failure, Poor security system, Work Place Insecurity, Threat to Industrial Harmony and Unemployment, Destabilisation of Labour Market.

Illegal Oil Bunkering

Nigeria is the world's sixth largest oil-producing nation. However, mismanagement by successive military and civilian governments has left the country poverty-stricken (Badmus2010*)*. The Niger Delta Region (NDR) is the oil producing area in the country and is an unstable area where violent inter-ethnic clashes are common. Often access to oil revenue is the trigger for the violence. Pipelines are regularly vandalized by impoverished residents, who risk their lives to siphon off fuel. Vandalism is estimated to result in thousands of barrels of crude oil wastage every day - a loss to the Nigerian economy of millions of dollars each year.

Ugor (2013) posited that one of the major fallouts from the crisis in the Niger Delta was the dramatic rise in illegal oil bunkering or oil theft. Bunkering itself, as the oil industry's related activity, involves the transfer or siphoning of fuel from highly protected storage facilities into ship bunkers for onward transportation abroad. In Nigeria, oil bunkering describes the subterranean and unlawful extraction of crude oil products from Oil Company and NNPC pipelines and storage facilities into large containers for onward transportation via speed boats and badges into the high seas.

By the oil bunkerers assessment, oil theft was a counter strategy aimed at redeeming people from slavery and recouping what had been taken away from them for years without their consent by the Nigerian state and multinational oil companies (Ugor, 2013). They told me about high ranking army officials, naval officers, politicians, and oil industry big shots that had used them for oil bunkering. These

products are then sold to invisible but powerful international cartels run mostly by foreigners.

At the local level, a vibrant and thriving "black market" had opened up in Ore, Ogun State, where most of the young militants found a veritable market in which to sell crude oil to local manufacturing and big construction companies who preferred the cheap and easy crude peddled by the Delta youth for running huge production machineries.Access to the crude was often made possible through a network of intelligence both within and outside the oil companies. According to a report commissioned by Shell in 2003, it was estimated that "a staggering 275,000 to 685,000 barrels per day of crude were being stolen by oil thieves in the Delta" (Shaxson, 2007).

Between 2003 and 2008, the Nigerian government was losing an estimated "$22.5 million daily (on $90/barrel price)" (Clarke, 2008). Bunkering alone accounted for at least 15% of annual output losses for the oil majors in the region, losses that translated into "billions of dollars a year for the bunkerers' (Mass, 2009). Much of this underground wealth was funneled back into the conflict in the form of liquid capital for the purchase of weapons by the militants. These barrels were later delivered to mobile oil syndicates run by foreigners in the Gulf of Guinea, close to the Atlantic Ocean.

The contacts with this guerrilla market opened up new vistas of prosperity, quick wealth and survival for the struggling youth, a reality that ultimately became the game-changer for the conflict in the region. Many of these youth renegotiated with the offshore cartels for direct supplies under cheaper terms and in many cases accepted weapons, gunboats, cars, Blackberries and I-phones, and other small and portable postmodern technologies in lieu of cash for the crude oil they supplied. In less than six months, cities like Port Harcourt, Yenagoa, Warri, Benin, and Uyo became awash with not just guns and drugs but big cars like Lincoln navigators, BMW and Hummer jeeps, Range Rovers and other accoutrements of postmodern life (Ugor, 2013).

The bigger picture that the illegal oil bunkering culture offers us, then, is an amazing example of how deprived, exploited and disempowered youth could be engaged in new and subversive postcolonial existential politics marked by reversals, renovations, and reinventions of apparatuses and structures of criminal domination. These youths redeploy existing economic and military capital and knowledge(s) gained from local and global oppressive forces in recalibrating not only their own lives but also the lives of people around them.

Gang Violence

The urban areas have been a site of constant struggles where the state and local communities were at each other's throats. The scale of violence witnessed in Nigeria in the 1990s became worrisome to the international community. In the 1990s and the decade that followed there had been the emergence of social movements that were at

the forefront of resistance against exploitation. Prominent among these movements are the OoduaPeoples Congress (OPC), Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), the Ijaw National Congress (INC), the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), and the Egbesu Boys of Africa (EBA) (Atere and Akinwale, 2006; Badmus, 2009; Aluko, 2014; Aluko et. al, 2015).

The activities of these groups, despite the fact that they have been able to place their demands on the national agenda and become popular beyond the shores of Nigeria have as a result become threats to the survival of the Nigerian post-colonial state. The Ogoni resistance, championed by MOSOP, is interweaving around the struggles against environmental degradation and social marginalization.

The struggles clearly unveil the intensity of the restiveness of the local population as well as its negative implications for the Nigerian state. Another important conflict in the oil delta is the ethnic Ijaw struggles against perceived state suppression and socioeconomic marginalization. The rise of Ijaw struggles was coincided with the seemingly decline of the Ogoni resistance following execution of Ken SaroWiwa and others and direct state repression of the Ogoni.

Table III: Select Militant Groups Operating in the Nigeria

Group	Description	Activities
Egbesu Boys of Africa	• Militant arm of the Ijaw Youth Council • Seeks justice and equity for the oil bearing Ijaw communities in the Niger Delta • Not a cohesive militant movement; members are active in other groups	Egbesu involvement in Ijaw-Itsekiri conflicts (Delta); various kidnappings and attacks on oil installations.
Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Forces (NDPVF) and other fractions	• Led by Mujahedeed AsariDokubo • Founded in 2003 • Members mainly Ijaw • Demands more control over resources for the Niger Delta states • Modelled on Isaac Boro's Niger Delta Volunteer Force (1966)	Declared all-out wars vs. Nigerian government in 2004 and was subsequently outlawed; violent confrontation with NDV mid-2003 to late 2004, kidnappings and attacks
OoduaPeoples Congress (OPC)	• Members are mainly Yorubas from the south-west Nigeria	Violent confrontation With government officials and some traditional institutions perceived anti-Yoruba within the Yoruba domains.

Sources: Sesay et al 2003, ICG 2006 and Researcher's update 2017

Terrorism

Armed groups have increased their use of violent tactics over the past year in the form of kidnappings, battles with security forces, clashes with one another, and car bombs, which is a more recent tactic. Such groups are demonstrating increasingly sophisticated tactics and weaponry, raising concerns about future violence. They are creating conditions conducive to an escalation of violence(Hazen and Horner, 2007).

As can be daily witnessed, such violence has reached a deadly level that glaringly reveals the incapacitation and helplessness of the Nigerian government, particularly with the bombing activities of the Boko Haram Sect (Amnesty International, 2011; Omilusi 2013; Aremu and Aluko 2016). The sect's membership cut across the broad spectrum of society, but a preponderant number of members came from its poorest groups.

Thus, beyond former university lecturers, students, bankers, a former commissioner and other officers of Borno State, membership extended to drug addicts, vagabonds, and generally lawless people. Although the common denominator among all members was their desire to overthrow the secular government and to propagate Islamic law, the oratorical prowess of Yusuf arguably contributed to their mobilization and participation (Adesoji, 2010).

The governments and the elite are unable totackle Boko Haram that has morphed into a terrorist organization. Not only is the sect on rampage and the governments clueless, the problem has reached a point where the authorities are sadly and shamelessly pleading for dialogue. The government is desperate, and the people themselves are consumed by fear (The Nation, 2012:64).

Impacts of Urban Violence and Political Crises

The Emergence of Decolonization Movement

Urban violence constitutes a cause and consequence of colonialism, and it was instrumental to decolonization in Africa. The nexus between urban violence, colonialism and decolonization has been examined by Wilmot (1994):

> *Historically, violence was the means used to impose colonial domination on the peoples of Africa. Does this imply as Fanon argues that decolonization is necessarily a violent phenomenon? If it is not, what role does violence play in the process? Colonization was imposed and maintained by violence to further the interests of colonial powers. Historically it was the threat of violence, or its actual use, which forced the colonial powers to decolonize. There is, therefore a direct relationship between violence and decolonization.*

The connection between urban violence and decolonization appears to have promoted culture of violence in Africa. Unfortunately, Africa remains at the

periphery despite several efforts and social movements aimed at ensuring unity and development of the continent.

The Emergence of Military Intervention

The various resultant force of urban violence stimulated some psycho-dimensional alternatives to curbing the menaces. The military saw the civilian government as too weak to tackle the situation intervention was non-avertable. This situation became worse during the era of military intervention in politics. That era was a watershed in the history of urban violence in Nigeria. It was during that period that Nigeria was plunged into a three-year civil war (1967-1970) followed by much ethno-religious violence and civil unrest.

Massive Death and Destruction of Properties

Nigeria has witnessed a resurgence of violent conflicts that resulted in wanton death of several people and destruction of many properties since its political independence from Britain in 1960 (Albert, 2001). Urban violence has resulted in mass destruction of lives and property in Nigeria like the situation in other violence-prone countries such as Guinea Bissau, Kenya and South Africa. Unlike the above situations, the struggle for political independence in Nigeria was relatively peaceful although some persons and properties were destroyed during the Aba riots of 1929 and Kano Riot of 1953 (Wilmot, 1994). Nigeria has however suffered from wanton destruction of persons and properties following its attainment of political independence from Britain.

Gruesome Image of Nigeria within Local and International Communities

A major consequence of unprecedented history of urban violence in Nigeria is the gruesome image of Nigeria within local and international communities. For instance, the US Department of State (2008) has warned Americans of the risks in Nigeria, stating that over 44 foreigners in multinational oil-companies in the Niger Delta have been kidnapped from off-shore and land-based oil facilities, residential compounds, and public roadways since January 2008.It specifically directed their attention to violence in Lagos and the Niger Delta states of Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers. The above warning is not an aberration given the fact that the monumental records of urban violence in Nigeria are not hidden; many investors have refused to establish industries in the country despite the Nigerian government's repeated efforts at wooing them.

The Institutionalization of Political Thugs and Related Groups

The economy of violence in the context of the lingering political crises and youths' metamorphosis from political thuggery to militancy can be adduced to the prevailing situation in Nigeria. The use of thugs by political demagogues to hijack electoral materials and harras political or perceived opponents is seen as a normal thing within the polity. The political economy of this menace is that some youths' have seen this as a means of constant and consistent means of livelihood.

Perpetually Underdeveloped

Babawale (2006), opined that urban violence has robbed Nigeria's politics of her productive content, kept the people permanently divided, and the country perpetually underdeveloped. The overall implication of urban violence in Nigeria is the elongation of underdevelopment and perpetual backwardness of the country in the global community. While Nigeria has not been able to provide basic infrastructure, some American and Eurasian countries have formed a cartel in the monopoly of science and technology as well as financial systems, access to natural resources and armaments.

Continuous Security Reforms

The rising profiles of urban violence could adversely affect attempts made by some developed countries to assist Nigeria and other African countries. Kebonang (2007) reported that adherence to principles of good governance, liberal economic reforms, respect for human rights, the rule of law and the protection of intellectual property rights, and political pluralism is a major requirement for inclusion in the Africa's Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). To this effect some attempt had been made by the Nigerian government to stem the tides of urban violence while other measures are on-going.

Conclusion and Recommendations

There is no praise singing in the fact that urban violence had claimed many people's lives, property and had made the future to be deemed and at stake. Although, the fact that violence is inevitable in any human society, many a writer will suggest that fire should be for fire on any violent act committed by any institution be it private or public. Other had suggested that mercy should be tempered with justice when embarking on the urban cleansing sequences.

However, the following recommendations are mete out to the government and the community; the government should make everyone responsible for every act of violence committed by ensuring adequate sensitizations on the nemesis of any violent act committed. Also, regular and adequately equipped security personnel should be provided for both day and night patrol of each community. The community at large should also promote the culture of vigilance on their properties and government properties in their respective areas by regular monitoring of such facilities and reporting to the necessary quarters if there is any purported mishap on such facilities so as to generate adequate feedback mechanism for the societal progress.

Also, the communities should enhance good rapport with the security personnel provided for the community by ensuring that they give accurate or moderate information to the security sectors as at when due. This will cut-short trouble areas of secrecy and illegal hide-outs. It is strongly believed that if this is judiciously carried out the paradox and dimensions of urban violence will be drastically reduced in the society.

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