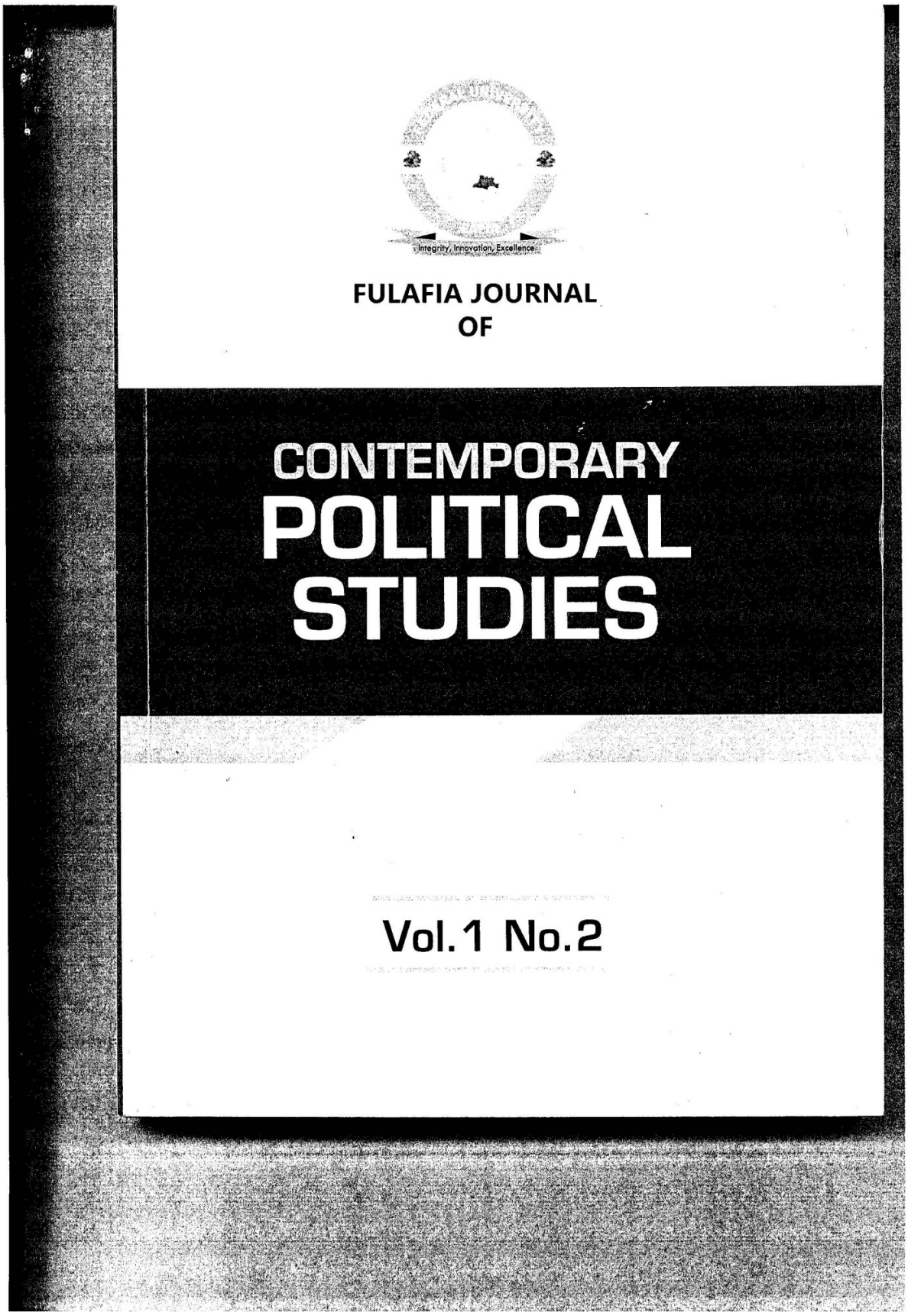
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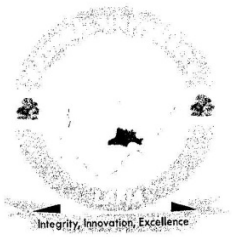

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Electoral Violence: A Theoretical Exploration

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Abstract
Electoral violence has a remained a canker worm in the annals of democratic governments particularly in new democracies of Africa. Occurrences of electoral violence in Africa are usually accompanied by huge human and material loss. While studies have shown that violence in Africa's elections minimally affects about 25% of elections in Africa, the increasing number of deaths and the wanton destruction of properties associated with uncontrolled and incessant electoral violence generate widespread anxiety and concern about how to put an end to this menace. This paper attempts an exploration of theoretical expositions on electoral violence. Deriving data largely from secondary sources and analysing same through the historical qualitative method, it is deduced that the nature of politics, the character of electoral processes and the nature of electoral institutions are broadly responsible for the prevalence of electoral violence in Africa. Electoral violence however, has devastating effects on the democratization process in particular and the society in general. It is therefore, suggested that conducting elections under free and fair conditions among others will impact positively on the effort to control electoral violence in Africa.

Keywords: Democracy, Elections, Electoral Violence, Neo-patrimonialism, Patron-Client Relationship

Introduction

During the medieval period and prior to the seventeenth century elections have been used to elect public and government officials in Europe and America, particularly, ancient Greece and Rome as well as colonial and post-colonial America (Campbell et al., 1966; Lakeman, 1970; Clubb, 1972). Similarly, ancient Arabs also used election to choose their caliph, in the early medieval Rashidun Caliphate (Martin, 2004). However, the decolonization process which swept across Africa from 1950's to the 1970's did not immediately lead to the popularization of elections in the continent. Although the freedom achieved during this period was celebrated triumphantly, political instability unfortunately engulfed most of the independent states after decolonization. Coups, countercoups, and aborted coups were the order of the day and a means of changing political power (International Peace Institute, 2011). Following the third wave of democratization in the 1990's (Huntington, 1991) election became a common means of changing political power. This reflected in the growth of the number of countries holding democratic elections from 7 to 40 thus, elections have facilitated the emergence of democratic governments in Africa (Freedom House, 2010). In contemporary times, elections have become a popular democratic practice in the globe. Despite the world wide popularity elections have gained, its conduct have become a source of violence and insecurity particularly in new and developing democracies of Africa. As noted by Omotola (2008) the electoral process of Africa's new democracies, with few exceptions has been characterised by violence.

International Peace Institute (2011, p.1) observed that: "high-profile electoral crises in Kenya (2007-2008), Zimbabwe (2000 and 2008), and Côte d'Ivoire (2010-2011) has collectively led to at least four thousand deaths and hundreds of thousands displaced". In Kenya over 1,200 people were reportedly killed during the 2007-2008 post election crises (United Nations High Commission for Human Rights, 2008). In Zimbabwe in 2008, 36 politically motivated deaths and 2,000 cases of political violence including abductions, beatings, torture, and killings were

reported (Human Rights Watch, 2008). It was also reported that in Côte d'Ivoire during the 2010-2011 post-election crisis, at least 3,000 people were killed, 72 people disappeared, and 520 people were subjected to arbitrary arrest and detentions (United Nations News Centre, 2011). In Nigeria, it was reported that between June 2006 and May 2014, 915 fatal incidents relating to elections were captured. Out of these incidents a total number of 3,934 deaths were recorded (Nigeria Watch, 2014). Studies have demonstrated that violence in Africa's elections affects between 19 and 25 percent of elections (Bekoe, 2010). This proportion nevertheless, should not be neglected as election related violence as it occurs in Africa is usually accompanied by serious human and material causalities. Uncontrolled and constant occurrence of electoral violence puts the democratization process of African countries at the risk of relapsing to the initial autocratic regimes. It has been observed that the recent manifestations of electoral violence in Africa have assumed an unprecedented magnitude and a changing form and character which have tended to disrupt the democratization process in many African countries and threatening the prospects of democratic stability and consolidation (Omotola, 2008). This paper is a modest effort at exploring theoretical expositions on the concept of electoral violence. Following the introduction is the segment on the conceptualization of electoral violence. This is followed by a discussion of the typology of electoral violence. The next part discusses the factors which induces electoral violence. The fourth segment focuses on the consequences of electoral violence. The last part consists of the conclusion.

Electoral Violence: A Conceptual Discussion

Electoral violence as a concept has been conceptualized from various perspectives by several scholars. These perspectives however, have been influenced by socio-cultural milieu of the various scholars who attempt to define it. Electoral violence is a particular type of political violence. Political violence therefore, serves as the umbrella word of which electoral violence is a subset. According to Fischer (2002 p. 8) "electoral conflict and violence is any random or organized act that seeks to determine, delay, or otherwise influence electoral process through threat, verbal intimidation, hate speech, disinformation, physical assault, forced "protection", blackmail, destruction of property or assassination". Sisk (2008, p. 5) shared this view when he described electoral violence as "acts or threats of coercion, intimidation or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that arises in the context of electoral competition". In this perspective electoral violence is used to influence the process of elections such as efforts to delay, disrupts or derail a poll and to influence the outcomes. Albert (2007, p. 133) defines electoral violence as all forms of organized "acts aimed at intimidating, harming or blackmailing a political stakeholder before during and after an election with a view to delaying or influencing an electoral process".

These three perspectives on electoral violence have a common point of convergence. The authors see electoral violence as a tool for manipulating the electoral process in favour of a preferred candidate using some form of crude acts. However, while Fischer (2002) and Sisk (2008) categorise "random acts" as constituting electoral violence, Albert's conceptualization does not take into consideration random and spontaneous acts as constituting electoral violence. It is however, important to note that elections can also trigger off random or spontaneous acts of violence among various stakeholders most especially during the post-election period. In his own perspective, Laakso (2007, p. 227) viewed electoral violence as "an activity motivated by an attempt to affect the results of election either by manipulating the electoral process or by contesting the legitimacy of the results. It might involve intimidation of voters and candidates, killings, attacks against their property, forceful displacement, unlawful detentions and rioting". This definition presupposes two methods through which election results can be affected. These include manipulating the electoral procedure and contesting the legitimacy of the results. These two methods constitute what he refers to as electoral violence. It can however be argued that the legitimacy of election result can be contested without necessarily using violent means.

The United Nations Development Program (2009) refers to election related violence as acts or threats of coercion, intimidation or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that

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arise in the context of electoral competition. When perpetrated to affect an electoral process, violence may be employed to influence the process of elections, such as efforts to delay, disrupt or derail a poll and to influence the outcomes: the determining of winners in competitive races for political offices or secure approval or disapproval of referendum questions. The above conceptualization suggests that electoral violence can occur at all the stages of the elections. Ochoche (1997) argued that at any of the stages electoral violence can be physical or structural. In other words, electoral violence must not be seen in physical terms alone. Any attempt at any stage of the electoral process to corrupt, influence or determine the outcome of an election beyond what it could have being objectively, does damage to the election and could be said to amount to electoral violence (Ochoche, 1997).

From the foregoing it is observed that electoral violence is perpetrated for two distinct reasons. One is to influence or affect the electoral process and the second is to inflict harm on political opponents, probably to scare them away from contesting or to permanently incapacitate them from contesting. It is however, important to note that electoral violence can be perpetrated by an opposing camp when it is clear that such candidate will lose an election. Electoral violence however has been described as not being restricted to Election Day alone. Electoral violence can occur before, during or after an election. Pre election violence as has been described as including acts or threats against electoral stakeholders during voters' registration or electioneering campaigns. Election Day violence includes the snatching of ballot papers or boxes, assaults on opposition agents or parties, and harassment or intimidation by security agents. Post-election violence may take the form of violent protests against perceived electoral rigging (Omotola, 2008). In summary, electoral violence can be viewed as that aspect of political violence which occurs before, during or after electioneering periods and which is directed towards winning an electoral competition.

Typology of Electoral Violence

In literature, scholars have sought to establish a classification of election related violence. For instance, Nwolise (2007) opined that electoral violence can take three major dimensions. These include: the physical, psychological and structural dimensions. Each of these dimensions, according to him has its specific components or particular form of election related violence. The components of the physical dimensions include: "physical assault on individuals during campaign, elections and when election results are released, assassination of political opponents or people perceived as a threat to one's political ambition, Burning down of public or opponents' houses or cars, shooting and shoot-outs, killing of individuals, partisan harassment by security agents, arrests, forceful dispersal of rallies, or shooting, wounding or killing of people, kidnappings and hostage-taking, bombing of infrastructure, forceful disruption by thugs of political and campaign rallies, destruction of ballot boxes and ballot papers by thugs or partisan security agents, armed raids on voting and collation centres, and snatching of ballot boxes and papers from polling agents"(Nwolise, 2007, p. 159).

Components of psychological violence include: "threats against and harassment by security agents of opponents of the ruling regime or party, which create political apathy, shoot-at-sight orders that breed fear in voters, terror inflicted by political assassinations, which makes scare people away from elections, publication or broadcast of abusive, insulting, or intimidating material or advertorials, threats to life through phone calls and text messages" (Nwolise, 2007, p. 159). The forms of structural violence include: "coercion of citizens by government to register or vote, exclusionary acts and policies, unequal opportunities for political parties and candidates, deliberate changes in dates, venues, or times of events to the disadvantage of others, partisan delimitation of electoral constituencies and location of polling booths, excessive fees for collecting party nomination forms, unfree campaign, reliance on money and brute force instead of moral integrity and competence, restraints imposed on voters, use of the incumbency factor to give undue advantage to some candidates, announcement of false or fraudulent results, lengthy delays in announcing election results, absence of (adequate) voting materials and election result forms, delays in voting, absence of electoral officers from pooling booths, partisan behaviour of

police and other security agents, discriminatory acts and policies" (Nwolise, 2007, p. 159).
In another typology, Kehailia (2014, p. 31) offered six classification of electoral violence based on two questions: who are the perpetrators of electoral violence, and why is the violence occurring? His classification includes the following: party-on-party electoral violence, party-on-voter electoral violence, party-on-state electoral violence, voter-on-voter electoral violence, voter-on-state electoral violence, state-on-voter electoral violence (Kehailia, 2014). Party-on-party electoral violence is viewed "as any action or threat of violence exerted by an organized political group on another organized political group in response to electoral results or to influence the electoral process in favour of the inciting group. It can take shape in attacks on militants of a party by militants of another party or through the destruction of political party premises and resources" (Kehailia, 2014, p. 31). From this perspective, this form of electoral violence is basically inter-party violence. Party-on-voter type of violence has to do with any action or threat of violence perpetrated by an organized political group on a citizen or group of citizens for reasons other than their political affiliation. This type of violence is directed at tampering with the electoral process or serves as a reaction to electoral results.

The party-on-state electoral violence connotes "action or threats of violence exerted by an organized political group against the representatives, employees, properties or symbols of the State, in seeking to influence the electoral process or as a reaction to electoral results. Such violence can be observed in cases where defeated political parties form guerrilla movements to contest election results" (Kehailia, 2014, p. 31). Voter-on-voter electoral violence "involves any act of violence between citizens during the electoral process. Such violence can be seen in incidents between religious or ethnic groups that take place without political party control (Kehailia, 2014). He further opined that "it is difficult to "certify" concrete instances of spontaneous voter-on-voter electoral violence that political violence and social violence are frequently connected, and tensions between groups for competitive access to resources can quickly erupt under the pretence of ethnic rivalry" (Kehailia, 2014). Vote-on-voter violence often takes the form of party-on-voter violence. This is a situation where political party members perpetrate violent acts in disguise. This can be in the form of the use of discriminatory community organizations, politicised religious groups and party affiliated media. Voter-on-state electoral violence include "any action or threat exerted by an individual or a non-organized group of people against the representatives, employees, properties or symbols of the State, to influence the electoral process or as a reaction to electoral results"(Kehailia, 2014, p. 33).

The state-on-voter electoral violence is defined as "any abusive action or threat of violence exerted by representatives of the State, be they civil servants or members of security forces, to intimidate, physically harm, blackmail or abuse a citizen or a group of citizens in an attempt to influence the results of an election or to punish citizens for the results" (Kehailia, 2014, p. 3(This variety of electoral violence can be noticed in the negative use of free speech by government officials and security forces. State-on-voter violence and party-on-voter violence largely converge when the perpetrator is the ruling party. Therefore, state-on-voter violence can overlap with state-on-party violence. This type of violence tends to discourage political party from participating in the election. For this study, Nwolise (2007) classification of electoral violence is adopted. This is because his classification scheme explains the typical Nigerian experience of violence during electioneering periods.

Causes of Electoral Violence

In literature the causes of electoral violence can be classified into two (Dunaiski, 2015). The two classifications are pioneered by different groups of scholars. The first group consist of those who place emphasis on the incentives and motives of political actors who use violence strategically in order to manipulate the electoral process for their personal gains (Chaturvedi 2005; Wilkinson, 2006; Collier and Vicente, 2012). The second group underscore structural 'enabling' factors that make some countries more susceptible to electoral violence than others (Höglund, 2009; Taylor and Straus, 2009; Linebarger and Salehyan, 2012). Dunaiski, (20 however, observed that scholars have recently endeavoured to study the causes of electo

violence from the two perspectives (Hafner-Burton et al., 2014; Fjelde and Höglund, 2015). Hoglund in her insightful work on electoral violence: "Electoral Violence in Conflict-Ridden Societies: Concepts, Causes, and Consequences" highlighted three broad structural perspectives of the causal factors of electoral violence. These include: the nature of politics, nature of elections and electoral institutions. The nature of politics as a broad driver of electoral violence is classified into three, these are: patrimonial and neo patrimonial politics, nature of actors participating in politics and political conflict cleavages and cultures of violence and impunity (Hoglund, 2009). She added that the patrimonial and neo-patrimonial nature of politics (particularly in post-conflict societies) is a strong causal factor of electoral violence. While observing that various predominant modes of authority do exist in several conflict, post conflict and newly democratizing countries, she is also of the opinion that patrimonialism and neo-patrimonialism are prevalent phenomena in the politics of many post conflict societies (Høglund 2009). This view was also shared by (Bratton &Van de Walle 1994) when they opined that "neo-patrimonialism has become a peculiar institutional attribute of African political regimes". They further observed that "the right to rule is ascribed to a person rather than an office" (Bratton & Van de Walle 1994, p. 458) also, there is no line of demarcation between public and private sphere. All sorts of authority relations that have to do with political and administrative interactions between the governor and the governed are treated as personal issues (Erdmann & Engel 2007).

Unlike in patrimonialism where there is no clear-cut distinction between public and private sphere, neo patrimonialism provides for a formal distinction between the public and the private sphere. This implies that official rules and structures actually exist, but this happens only in principle. It is pretty difficult however, to observe these distinctions in practical terms (Erdmann & Engel 2007). This is because relationships of loyalty and dependence permeate the political system (Bratton & Van de Walle 1994). Therefore, neo-patrimonialsm "combines two coinciding and partly intertwined forms of power: patrimonial and legal-rational bureaucratic authority and characterizes the power relations within authoritarian political regimes" (Erdmann & Engel 2007, p. 105). Central to neo-patrimonialism is clientelism and patronage which can also be referred to as patron-client relationships (Hoglund, 2009). The patron client relationship(s) have been described as "relationship(s) in which the 'patron' provides protection, services or rewards to the 'clients' (usually individuals of lower status) who become the patron's political followers" (Hague, Harrop, and Breslin, 1992, p. 467).

In states where there is the prevalence of patron-client relationships, politicians gain political power through the informal networks they control through clientelism and patronage. Patron-client relationship tends to be more pronounced in countries with high levels of political and economic insecurity (Migdal, 1988). This is the case in countries experiencing conflict of identity and insurgency (Reno, 2007). Ohlson and So derberg (2002) identified three problems identified with patrimonialism. They posit that "only segments of society are included, and the system therefore risks alienating or marginalising part of the population", second, "it rewards loyalty over efficiency" and thirdly, "it encourages corruption and sidelines the rule of law" (Ohlson and So derberg, 2002, p. 10). In this context therefore, political power is the most important aim of the patron who has many clients whose interest is keeping the patron in power at any cost including violence

The nature of actors participating in politics as well as the existing cleavages within the society is among the causal factors of electoral violence. There is a high probability that elections which are conducted in a situation where the actors involved in a conflict have not been fully demobilized and disarmed will lead to violence. Actors in a conflict who have not been demobilized or disarmed increases the risk of reoccurrence of armed conflicts most especially when they are not satisfied with the outcome of the elections (Hoglund, 2009). She further stated that Democratic systems which are devoid of developed and highly democratic political parties are likely to employ violent means to achieve their interest. Existing political cleavages within the society are also among the important factors which determine whether elections will be peaceful or violent.

Political cleavages refer cultural and religious factors that affect political allegiances and policies (Eith & Mielke 2001).
Cleavages can be cumulative or cross-cut. Cumulative cleavages pit the same groups of people against one another on many issues. Cross-cut cleavages feature groups sharing common interests on some issues, but opposing one another on others. The culture of impunity as a driver of election related violence comes as a result of ineffective and partial security personnel and judicial system. The police and judiciary in a society based on political patronage are highly vulnerable to elite manipulation and political pressure. In the same vein, during a situation of violent conflict unequal powers are wielded by the security forces thereby leading to obscurity in the distinctions between the task of security forces and civilian tasks. In these conditions, the security forces are not in a position to provide adequate strategy to prevent and solve violent conflicts. These translates to the fact that perpetrators of electoral violence are not prosecuted simply because political parties fear losing support (Damm, 2003).

The nature of elections as a broad causal factor of electoral violence can also be categorised into three: competition and mobilization, close competitions and high stakes. The nature of elections in conflict societies has a great bearing on the ability of elections to generate election related violence. Elections require the mobilization and appeal to a very large part of the society. However, to win the support of the electorate differences (which distinguish members of the society) are emphasized rather than a focus on the common elements which bounds the people together. This portends great danger of reawakening the existing social conflicts and cleavages (Basedau, Erdmann, and Mehler, 2007). Indeed, theories which explain the nature and rules which guides political competition has been described as a viable stimulant to instigate or prevent conflict, electoral fraud and violence (Lehoucq, 2003). There is the possibility of the occurrence of electoral violence when there is a high expectation that the outcome of electoral competition will change the existing power structure. During electioneering campaigns politicians as well as radical groups champion ethnic interests so as to secure political support which has the tendency of further dividing the society and generating violent conflicts among the various ethnic groups (Sisk, 2009).

The closeness of electoral competition can also trigger electoral violence. The fact that elections produce winners and losers is an indicator of their capacity to catalyze or open "windows of vulnerability" to violence (Sisk, 2008). The import of this is that elections outcomes with close figures of electoral victory lead to anxiety about the final result which may eventually result to violence (Sisk, 2008). In other words, dominant political elites whose political power is under threat by such electoral contest may turn to violence as their last resort to claim their status (Jarstad, 2008). Thompson & Kuntz (2006) however, observed that holding public office is an important way of maintaining influence so as to secure political benefits. In doing this politicians may resolve to "stealing elections". This cannot be unconnected with the fact some political leaders grew from poverty and obscurity to power in a short time. Politics is their only profession for them to go out of office is in effect, for them to become unemployed. Therefore, such political office holders employ any means to keep themselves in power.

Another broad perspective put forward by from which the cause of electoral violence can be identified is the nature of electoral institution. This can also be classified into three: electoral system design, election administration and electoral rules. It has been noted that the institutional structures put in place for the conduct of elections are very important to uncover the driving forces behind electoral violence. The electoral system and election administration are central to understanding the attractiveness of violence in some societies and among certain actors (Hoglund, 2009). Sisk (2008) identified the negative nexus between electoral system choice and electoral violence. They posited that "electoral system choice has an impact on conflict dynamics in post conflict and fragile societies". It was also claimed that in these societies, the choice of such systems may facilitate conditions favourable for election related violence (Sisk 2008). Electoral system in a democracy performs some certain functions. "Electoral system translates votes cast into parliamentary seats. It also serves as a medium through which voters make their

representatives accountable. In addition, it arranges the limits of "acceptable" political dialogue and offers incentives for political parties to express their appeals to voters in various ways" (Reilly & Reynolds 2000, p. 425).

It was argued by (Reynolds & Sisk 1998) that designing a suitable electoral system for both homogeneous and divided societies involves taking into consideration some certain ends. These include: representativeness, accountability, inclusiveness & accessibility, stability of government, development of the party system and ability to engender reconciliation. Electoral systems which do not take into consideration these ends merely become ineffective instruments for promoting democracy and mitigating conflicts. It was argued that "the type of electoral system, the numbers, size, and form of the electoral districts can influence the proneness for violent behaviour and that in systems where a small number of votes can make a big difference on the outcome of the election, such as first-past-the-post arrangements, violence is more likely to occur" (Hoglund (2009, p. 422).

The type of election administration adopted by a government in a democracy can also trigger violence during elections. As argued by Lyons (2005) issues relating to impartiality and independence, efficiency, professionalism, and transparency of election administration are particularly important in the context of transparent electoral process. The way elections are conducted and managed can determine how peaceful such elections will be. Election management in post-conflict societies can induce violence most especially when it is perceived as bias. According to Sisk (2008: 16) "the structure, the level of competence and extents of balance of any electoral institution determine its capacity to administer credible elections". Lyons (2004) noted that virtues such as efficiency, professionalism, transparency, impartiality and independence are all significant pre-requisites which determine a legitimate, transparent and acceptable electoral process. In a situation where these virtues are not present the risk of political instability and electoral violence becomes high (Sisk, 2008). Similarly, election management bodies organised based on the partial-partisan models of election management and administration can induce electoral violence (Lopez-Pintor, 2005). The nature of rules which guides electoral competition possesses high potentials for inducing electoral violence particularly in new democracies. It is argued that, in these societies, electoral rules can prepare grounds conducive for election related violence (Sisk, 1998). The rules and regulations guiding the electoral process can be classified into two: "rules of electoral competition and rules of electoral governance" (Mozzafar and Schedler 2002, p. 7).

On the one hand, issues such as electoral formulas, district magnitude and boundaries, assembly size are all contained in the rules of electoral competition and are referred to as electoral systems rules. On the other hand, electoral governance rules include areas such as political party candidates', voter eligibility and registration, vote counting, tabulating and reporting techniques, election monitoring and conflict resolution mechanisms as well as campaign financing (Mozzafar and Schedler, 2002). These rules are however, seen as viable avenues for offering "structural inducements for modest and conflict-resolving character on the part of those playing the political game" (Reynolds & Sisk 1998, p. 4). Electoral rules are crucial requirement for consolidating democracy. Electoral rules are major determinants of the type of democracy that develop in democratic polity. In the words of Htun and Powell (2013) Electoral rules determine whether relevant issues are included in taking political decisions. Despite this, it has been observed that in electoral authoritarian regimes, particularly of post-conflict and democratizing states electoral rules are made and manipulated in such a way to favour a particular sect of the society, thus making electoral process undemocratic (Schedler, 2006). This increases the risk of occurrence of electoral violence. Such violence-inducing electoral rules according to Seifu (2009) have been given different nomenclatures by various scholars: Schedler (2006, p. 12) termed them "Nested Games", Wigell (2008, p. 242) named them "Norm Violations" and to Collier (2009, p. 45) they connote "Winning Strategies" but ultimately are "conflict-inducing in their very essence" (Seifu, 2009, p. 35).

Implications of Electoral Violence

Even though democratization in Africa suffers occasional set-back, there is no doubt about the fact that democratization in Africa is on course. One of the impediments to democratization in Africa is the accompaniment of electoral process by violence. However, uncontrolled electoral violence has grave consequences for the African continent in general and the Nigerian state in particular. According to Sisk (2008) election related violence has devastating effects on democracy and conflict dynamics within a society. He stressed that when violence occur, it hinders the function of the governmental institutions that emerge from processes where violence has characterised the fairness of the process and the legitimacy of election results (Sisk, 2008). Hoglund (2006) highlighted two perspectives from which the consequences of electoral violence can be felt. These include perspectives on democratic politics and conflict management. From the perspective of democratic politics, violence and insecurity affect the election results or the outcomes of elections in various ways. Threats and intimidation may be used to interfere with the registration of voters. Voter turnout may be influenced if large sections of the population refrain from casting their votes due to fear of violence. Assaults, threats, and political assassinations during the election campaign may force political contenders to leave the electoral process or prevent elections from taking place. From the conflict management perspective, it is noted that violence may have a negative impact by polarizing the electorate along conflict lines and in extreme cases lead to new outbursts of violence. In situations of insecurity, appeals for law and order are often a more tempting alternative than calls for reconciliation (Hoglund, 2006).

Uncontrolled electoral violence has been described as having serious security implications (Omotola, 2009). Notable security implications include: the collapse of public order, the increasing numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. These factors characterised the post-election period of the 2007 and 2011 general elections in Nigeria. It was claimed that more than 300,000 thousand people were displaced as a result of post-election violence in Kenya. Apart from the security risk involved in managing such multitude of people, the displacement of such a high number of people due to election-related violence has multiplier effect. For instance, it was noted that the congestion in most of these IDPs Camps gave rise to post-traumatic stress, contagious diseases such as tuberculosis, and sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS which have serious security implications healthy living. In addition to these, electoral violence creates legitimacy crisis. It is observed that the legality of new governments formed in the aftermath of an election which is generally perceived as not meeting the minimum international standards suffers serious challenges from both opposition camps and the people. Such scenario generates "peaceful demonstration and litigation in electoral courts, violent outbreaks resulting in killing, arson, looting, destruction of properties and the resultant imposition of curfew, and the militarisation of the state and society" (Omotola, 2009, p. 69).

Recurrent electoral violence has grave effects on promotion of democracy in particular and the entire society in general. Even though elections are not the only ingredients for sustaining democracy, they are important to the democratic process. Election process is one of the ways though which citizens are involved and participate in democratic governance. But when elections are tainted with violence the electorates may decide to stay away from the process in order to protect their lives. However, elections boycotted by the people cannot be adjudged as democratic. The danger lies in the fact that when an election period approaches the electorate may develop phobia for participation. This consequently leads to political apathy and a reduced political participation which increases the risk of the enthusiastic and visionary politicians to stay away from the country's political space. In a similar vein, endemic electoral violence leads to a general feeling of insecurity. Violent elections are often characterized by loss of lives which is a direct consequence of killing, murder and destruction of properties. Through these, fear is instilled in the electorates. Therefore electioneering period to them is nothing but a period of war. This definitely hinders the process of imbibing democratic values, norms and culture which are basic prerequisite for sustenance and development of democracy. Electoral violence is a precursor to political instability. Electoral violence exposes other political crises which manifest and which can result to political instability. Uncontrolled electoral violence can lead to large scale societal

violence and ultimately can lead to civil war. It would be recalled that the intrigues, politicking, electoral malpractices and fraud, electoral violence and the consequent breakdown of law and order led to the termination of the country's first political dispensation. Sustained electoral violence undermines the process of nation building. This thus, prevents the building of a strong, united and viable democratic polity.

Conclusion and Recommendation

It has been demonstrated that while elections have remained a norm in democratic countries across the globe, its conduct in some parts of the world have been marred by monumental electoral violence both before, during and after election results are released. African countries accounts for the large percentage of democratic politics characterised by exacerbated electoral violence. Apart from the human and material losses attached to uncontrolled and constant occurrence of election related violence, electoral violence reduces the pace at which democratic values, norms and culture are imbibed into the body politics of democratizing states. In the same vein, electoral violence erodes the possibilities of institutionalizing long-lasting and extensive peaceful coexistence of people within the society. Thus, electoral violence undermines democratic development and economic growth. However, managing and controlling electoral violence is significant to building strong and viable democracy. In many African countries the nature of politics serves as a strong causal driver of electoral violence. Many African new democracies find it difficult to manage properly political opposition, thus, opposition politics is played with scorn instead of serving as an alternative source for government policies. African new democracies therefore need to change the nature and character of political practices. Again, to control violence effectively, elections need to be conducted under free and fair conditions where perpetrators of electoral malpractices and fraud are brought to book and adequately sanctioned for engaging in such electoral vices. Furthermore, election management bodies saddled with the responsibility of organizing and conducting elections at regular intervals should be independent of the executive arm of government. Funding of such bodies should be generated from consolidated accounts such that the body will be free from all sorts of political interference.