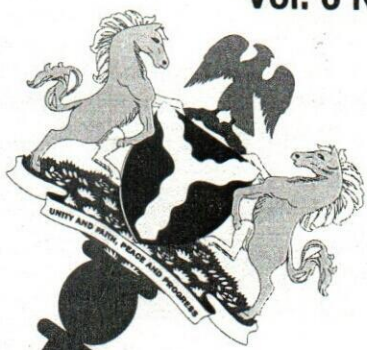




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Democratization, Governance and the Challenges of Nigeria's National Security: Lessons from Nigeria's Electoral History

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Abstract

One of the fundamental goals of any civilized society is to ensure the maintenance of law and order which in turn guarantees the general security of the entire citizenry. An important avenue for achieving this is to ensure a credible democratic process devoid of violent transition of power from one regime to the other. The national security dilemma in Nigeria today is an indication of the near failure of the Nigeria's democratization and governance processes. Given the strategic position and role of the Nigerian state in the West African sub-region and Africa in general, the national security situation has far reaching effects not only on the Nigerian state and its people but on the region as a whole. This paper examines the interwoven relationship between democratization, governance and Nigeria's national security looking at the countries electoral history. The paper contends that there is a link between democratization, governance and national security. While a violence-free electoral process enhances the democratization process and fosters national security, a violence-ridden democratic process does the opposite. The paper through a careful review of existing secondary information and a critical analysis of the country's electoral history submit that one of the challenges facing the countries national security is electoral violence which results from or leads to flawed elections. The paper, however, conclude that consolidating Nigeria's democratization process, ensuring effective governance and enhancing national security can be achieved through a vibrant and transparent electoral process.

Keywords: Governance, Democratization, National Security, Electoral Violence, Election, Electoral Process

Introduction

Governments all over the world are by virtue of the social contract theory, expected to guarantee law and order, social infrastructure and justice for their citizen. A country's national security is one of the major yard sticks for measuring the success or otherwise of the administration operating within its confines (Adekunle, 2012:137). The nexus between democracy, good governance and national security cannot be over emphasized, as national security forms the bedrock for democracy and governance and without which both lose their moral imperatives. There is no gain saying the fact that one of the most significant roles of the state is to protect its citizens and territorial integrity. As such one of the most important objectives of democratic regime is to guarantee general welfare and security for the entire populace. The attainment of democratic rule and good governance is a function of the dynamics of national security. It is also important to note that the correlation between national security, democracy and good governance remains inseparable in the sense that democracy and governance loses their moral imperatives when they are not premised on robust national security.

The Nigerian state since gaining independence in 1960 has struggled to establish a democratic government (Babatunde, 2012:113). Nigeria is an amalgam of various ethnic groups pitched against each other in a contest for power and resources that have reflected in the political process, occasionally threatening the corporate existence of the state (Babatunde, 2012:113). Since the commencement of the present Fourth Republic the entire electoral and governance processes have been major sources of threat to the country's national security and an important obstacle to the democratization process. The democratization process has been undermined by the nation's failure in the provision of adequate national security. As such the lack of good governance in the country can be connected to the absence of democratic ethos and the increasing threat of general insecurity (Okoroafor et al, 2012:135). This present situation

does not only hamper the democratization process but it also possesses a serious threat to the country's national security.

Informed by this position, this article examines the linkage between democratization, governance and national security in Nigeria with particular reference to the violent nature of the country's electoral history. The article commences with a general introduction which is followed by a conceptualization of the concepts of democratization, governance and national security. After this, the article looks at the historical antecedents of the Nigerian electoral process with much attention paid to its violent nature. The article also examines the impact of the nature of the electoral process on democratization, governance and national security with respect to Nigeria. This is followed by a critical examination of the nexus between governance, national security and democratization. The paper concludes by looking at the way forward.

Democratization, Governance and National Security: Conceptual Discourses Democratization

Democratization as a concept can be understood in three different ways. First, it is the introduction of democracy in a non-democratic regime. Secondly, it is the deepening of the democratic qualities of given democracies. Thirdly, it involves the question of survival of democracy. The deepening and the survival of democracy are distinct aspects of democratization. But they emerge in terms of sustainable democratization, that is, the emergence of democracies that develop and endure (Welzel, 2008:74). Democratization refers to the transformation process from a non-democratic regime to a procedural democracy to a substantive democracy, either as the first government in a newly independent country or by replacing an authoritarian system in an older one (Powell, 2005: 6). Historically a handful of countries had introduced institutions of democracy before 1900. But the twentieth century witnessed what Huntington (1991:3) called the three "waves" of

democratization. The first of these waves had its origin in the late nineteenth century. It grew slowly under demands from increasingly educated and urban citizens. By the late 1920's there were over 20 democracies among 65 independent nations of the world at that time. The late 1970's saw the beginning of a "third wave" of democratization which started in Southern Europe, spread through Latin America and Asia and accelerated with the collapse of the Soviet Union's control of Eastern Europe in 1989 (Powell, 2005:5).

The introduction of democratic regimes in many countries that were previously ruled by military governments, one party and personal dictatorships has been one of the most dramatic political trends of the last 30 years (Powell and Powell, 2005:4). The concept of democratization is well covered in the extant literature. Apparently most of these existing works, especially since the mid-80 in Southern Europe and Latin America, and from the 1990's onward in the continent of Africa, emphasize a common trend in the sense that democratization is a process that implies a series of continuous actions and changes. These are geared towards the replacement of an existing order or system of authoritarian rule with one that is participatory and democratic in nature (Yagboyaju, 2011:94).

Gunther, et al (1995) contend that the democratization process has three phases i.e. the fall of authoritarian regime, consolidation and enduring democracy. There is however no specification of time frames for the actualization of the three highlighted phases. It connotes in essence that the peculiarities of each system would have a profound role in the process of democratic actualization (Yagboyaju, 2011:2). According to Welzel (2008:74) a typology of democratization processes include responsive democratization, enlightened democratization, opportunistic democratization, and imposed democratization. Responsive democratization has been the dominant type of democratization in the emergence of nascent democracies and in the global wave of democratization in recent time (Welzel, 2008:82).

Governance

The concept of governance has become a topical concept as evidence mount on the critical role it plays in determining societal well-being (Bruce and Plumptre 2003:1). The former Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Anan buttresses this when he asserted that "good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development" (Bruce, 2003:1). Governance as a concept has moved from obscurity to wide spread usage (Bruce, and Plumptre 2003:1) particularly in the last two decades. Governance has been described as a process whereby societies or organizations make their important decision, determine whom they involve in the process and how they render account (Bruce, 2003:1).

Fukuyama (2013:3) conceived governance as a government's ability to make and enforce rules and to deliver services, regardless of whether that government is democratic or not. He explained that governance is about the performance of agents in carrying out the wishes of the principal and not about the goals the principal's set. Governance is thus about execution of duties. Similarly, governance has been defined as the sum of many ways by which individuals and institutions, public and private manage their common affairs. It is the continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interest may be accommodated and cooperative action may be taken (Weiss, 2000:796). Court (2002:5) viewed governance as the formation and stewardship of the formal and informal rules that regulate the public realm, the arena in which state as well as economic and societal action interact to make decisions.

Governance according to the World Bank Report (1989) refers to the exercise of power in the management of a nation's affairs. The implication is thus, that governance encompasses the state's institutional and structural arrangements, decision making processes and implementation capacity and the relationship between the governing

apparatus and the governed i.e. the people in terms of their standard of living (Genyi and Euginia, 2013:51). A broader definition of governance is given by Kaufmann et al (1999: 1) as:

the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes: the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies and; the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them (Kaufmann et.al.1999:1).

In principle the concept of governance may be applied to any form of collective action. It is about the more strategic aspects of steering the larger decisions about direction and roles of the state. That is, governance is not only about where to go, but also about who could be involved in the decision process and in what capacity (Bruce and Plumptre, 2003:2). There are four areas or zones where the concept is particularly relevant. These include: governance in "global space" which deals with issues outside the review of individual governments. Governance in national space: i.e. within country, organizational governance which implies the activities of organizations that are usually accountable to a board of directors, community governance that is, governance in community space (Bruce and Plumptre 2003: 2). The concept of good governance emerged in the late 1980's and early 1990's, primarily through the World Bank which was concerned about the ways in which governance influenced economic performance (Landman, 2009:9). According to Odock (2006:3) good governance is a system of government based on good leadership, respect for the rule of law and due process, the accountability of political leadership to the electorate as well as transparency in the operations of government.

Although, the defining principles of good governance are complex and contestable, the UNDP on good governance and sustainable Human Development in 1997 enunciate a set of principles that, with slight variations appear in much of the literature on the concept (Bruch and Plumptre 2003:3).

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These principles include: legitimacy and voice, direction, performance, accountability and fairness (UNDP, 1997). Governance typically emphasize leadership which suggests the way political leaders use or misuse power to promote social and economic development or to engage in those agendas that largely undermine the requisition of the good things of life for the people. Good governance is in tandem with democratic governance which is largely characterized by high valued principle such as rule of law, accountability, participation, transparency, and human and civil rights. These governance qualities have the capacity to drive the development process of a country (Genyi and Euginia, 2013:57).

National Security

The issue of national security is very important to any nation. This is because the well-being of a nation's citizens is greatly influenced by her status on national security (Okoroafor, et. al. 2012: 137). It is the nature of man to always try to safeguard his personal safety and the security of his property. A nation on the other hand, also needs to protect itself from both internal and external forces that try to undermine or harm its collective interests, sovereignty, independence integrity as well as its citizens wherever they may be in the world. This is why nations cannot afford to be indifferent or uninterested in issues bordering on national interest, in particular national security (Okoroafor, et. al. 2012:138). National security according to Igodalo (2012:29) implies the appropriation and deployment of state apparatus of coercive force to deal with situation of crisis, nationally or internationally.

It has also been described as the sum of what a nation does in order to safeguard itself as a sovereign entity and this includes every aspect of a nation's life and existence. This implies that national security of a nation can extend to the well being of its citizens, institutions, interests, development plans, economy among others (Okoroafor, et. al. 2012: 138). It is a concept which borders on the posture, well-being, stability and development of a nation. It defines the whole picture of a nation's efforts in socio-political, cultural, economic and international perspectives. Therefore, the issue of national security is one that expresses the status of a nation in terms of its standing in the global arena, in areas such as citizen protection and well-being, safety of property, national

integrity and sovereignty and the protection of national interest (Okoroafor, et al. 2012:138). Tadjibakhsh cited in Adebakin (2012:4) explained national security from seven perspectives. These include: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security. These dimensions of national security can be summarily described as protection from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards (UNDP, 1994: 229).

The Nigerian Electoral History

The commencement of electoral politics in Nigeria can be traced to the 1922 Clifford constitution which made provision for the elective principle. Through the elective principle Nigerians were given the opportunity to be involved in the electoral process even though it was highly restrictive. The elections were held to occupy seats in the legislative councils in the then colony of Lagos and the city of Calabar. The elections were contested by the Nigerians National Democratic Party and the Lagos Youth Movement. The Lagos Youth Movement won all the seats in Lagos (Adebayo, 2006:67). Several other elections took place before independence, precisely between 1951 and 1959. While the 1951 regional legislative elections took place under the Macpherson constitution of the same year. The 1954 elections took place under the new federal constitution (Iyayi, 2004:6). The last election held before independence was in 1959. The election was characterized by violence.

According to Nwolise (2007:162) the country began to experience exacerbated electoral violence orchestrated by the 1954 Macpherson constitution that confirmed the regionalism introduced by the 1946 Richard's constitution as the basis for running the Nigerian federal system. The equation of key ethnic boundaries to matched regional boundaries (North for Hausa, West for Yoruba, and East for Igbo) set the stage for violent electoral battles among the three ethnic groups. The first post-independence election was held in 1964. Three sets of elections were held in the period from 1960 – 1965. These were the elections in the newly created Mid-West Region in February 1964, the federal elections of December 1964 and the regional elections of 1965 (Iyayi, 2004:6). The election was characterized by manifest and profound electoral violence. The October 1965 election into the Regional Government in the West

was no less farcical (Iyayi, 2004:6). The following comments were passed in describing the election

The election rigging of 1964 (at the federal level) and of 1965 were seen by the majority of Nigerians as despicable acts and the victory of anti-democratic forces. So people reacted first by the general boycott of 1964 and secondly, by the famous operation "wetie" in 1965 in which properties of those suspected of selling out were set ablaze (Ige, 1992).

These developments, including the political impasse at the centre, the resulting mass revolt in the western Region by the people who felt rightly, that they had been cheated at the polls set the stage for the first military coup of January 15, 1966. (Iyayi, 2004:7).

Consequently, the country witnessed for the first time thirteen years of military rule. The 1979 elections marked the commencement of the Second Republic. It was in this year that civilian politicians got another shot at governance (Adebayo, 2006:67). The form and character as well as the nature of political parties did not change from what was obtained in the First Republic. The new parties where re-incarnations of the parties in the First Republic (Adebayo, 2008:67). Five political parties contested the elections. These included the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), National Party of Nigeria (NPN), The Peoples Redemption Party (PRP), the Great Nigerian Peoples Party (GNPP) and Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP). There was a reduction in the manifestation of violence during the election. But it was observed that the election attracted a lot of criticism as the Supreme Court delivered a controversial decision in relation to the winner of the presidential election, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, based on a questionable mathematical theory introduced to determine the winner instead of the use of an electoral college as provided for in the constitution (Nwoliise, 2007:164).

The general election, held in 1983 was characterized by all sorts of electoral malfeasance, as a result of this, the elections were therefore, criticized and rejected. Violence persisted before, during and after the

election. Violence re-emerged and the elections were rigged even by the Federal Electoral Commission of Nigeria officials with the support of the police. The people reacted once more by pouring into the streets in anger and government ordered the police to shoot at sight (Nwoliise, 2007: 164). As a result of the break-down of law and order, the military again struck through a military coup, which resulted into another ten years of military interregnum.

What could have been regarded as the journey to the Third Republic was terminated by the initiator Gen. Ibrahim Babangida (Rtd) through the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election which was adjudged by both local and foreign observers to be free, fair, credible and violence-free. The nationwide demonstration and riots which followed the annulment forced Gen. Ibrahim Babangida to "step-a-side".

Consequently, there was the inauguration of an Interim National Government which was headed by Chief Ernest Shonekan. The interim National Government was soon over-thrown by Gen. Sanni Abacha through a palace coup. The mysterious death in office of Gen. Abacha paved way for Gen. Abubakar Abdulsalam to become the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. On assumption of office Gen. Abdulsalam made his intention to return the country to democratic rule known by announcing a transition programme which will bring in a democratically elected government. In achieving this, elections were held in 1999. Three political parties contested the general elections. These were the Alliance for Democracy (AD), All peoples Party (APP), and the People's Democratic Party (PDP). Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, who was the PDP presidential flag bearer won the presidential election and was sworn-in as the president and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces on May 29, 1999.

In 2003 elections were held to commence the second phase of the Fourth Republic. Unlike the 1999 elections the 2003 elections were characterized by are all sorts of violence. There were incidence of kidnapping, assassination and abduction. The elections were also characterized by rigging, fraud, and all dimensions of electoral malpractices. The incumbent president was however, returned as winner of the presidential election. Elections held in 2007 have been described as

the worst in the electoral history of the country. This was however, not unexpected of an election that was tagged as going to be a "do-or-die affair" (Obsasanyo, 2007). The elections were conspicuously rigged as there was a total breakdown of the electoral process. The Nigeria's electoral body was not left out of the rigging process. Commenting on the perversion that characterized the conduct of the 2007 general elections, Nwoli (2007: 165) notes that:

The state was grossly irresponsible during the 2007 elections, with the presidency promoting violence. INEC in collusion with the ruling PDP and the presidency with the help of the police rigged elections for the PDP and favoured candidates. The presidency, governor and ministers were personally involved in generating electoral violence in its physical, psychological and structural dimensions.

Hundreds of lives were lost and properties worth billions of naira were destroyed. The election process met with numerous negative reactions from both local and foreign observers, all of which condemned the election and the results emanating from in its totality. The reactions got to the peak when the principal beneficiary, the president elect, the late Umar Yar'Adua openly acknowledged that the election which brought him to power was not free and fair. Even though the 2011 general elections has being described as being free and fear, however, it has been regarded as the most violent in the history of elections in Nigeria. All the stages of the elections were particularly turbulent. The build-up to the general elections was characterized by politically motivated killing, kidnapping, maiming, assassination etc. Having polled 22,495, 187 votes which accounted for 58.89% of the total valid vote cast, the incumbent president Goodluck Jonathan was declared winner of the presidential election. The declaration was followed by unprecedented demonstration and riots in Northern Nigeria. The demonstration later turned out to be violent claiming hundreds of life and properties worth billions of naira.

Democratization, Governance and National Security: The Nexus

Democratization, governance and national security are distinct

concepts with close relationship. Democracy is a system of government in which the people exercise the governing power either directly or through elected representatives. It is a government established by the majority that protects the interest of the majority (Ahamegbu, 2001). Whether democracy is being practiced on participatory or representative basis it requires a stable, conducive and peaceful political space to thrive. It demands relatively calm and chaos-free society to be able to develop on a firm foundation (Okoroafor, et al, 2012:140). For the elements of democracy such as freedom, participation, equality, fairness, justice, free and fair elections, existence of opposition, rule of law respect for fundamental human rights etc. to thrive in any polity, it requires that the polity maintains some appreciable degree of socio-cultural, political and economic stability which falls within the domain of national security (Okoroafor, et al, 2012: 141).

Democratization cannot thrive in a polity that is insecure. The nature of governance in such polity is also directly related to the democratization process. Good governance promotes democratization process while governance not based on the principles of good governance hinders the democratization process. And as such national security cannot be

guaranteed in an underdemocratic setting. This is because the people will lack freedom, respect for human rights, rule of law, participatory governance, justice and equity etc. and in reaction to this situation, likely become unhappy, restive and riotous. This could degenerate into lawlessness, chaos, conflict, social disorder or anarchy (Okoroafor, et al 2012: 141). It is uncontested that there is a strong correlation between the nature of governance and the state of security in any society (Goerge-Genyi, 2013: 56). Good governance is a pre-requisite for achieving a smooth democratization process and in fact democracy can only be effective when the welfare of the people is guaranteed. The concepts of democratization, governance and national security are intricately linked to one another because one serve as a prerequisite for the other and that none can be fully achieved in the absence of the other. These concepts according to Okoroafor et al (2012: 142) are in support of common features and values such as political representativeness, enthronement of civil and political rights, public accountability, peaceful co-existence of different people and ethnic groups, freedom of association and speech, rule of law, and the notion of formal equality and sovereignty.

The fact that national security and defence establishment comes first in most cases in budget allocations of many countries is an indication of the importance attached to the issue of national security. While national security imperatives are significant pre-conditions for development, it forms the bedrock of any democratization and governance process. The African Union Declaration of 2001 recognized and resolved that democracy, good governance, peace, security, stability, justice are among the most essential factors in African socio-economic development. Without democracy and peace, development is not possible and without development, peace is unattainable. National security and good governance are preconditions for sustainable democracy. Democracy based on majority rule and participatory governance is essential in avoiding oppressive and authoritarian government which induce and aggravate poverty and social unrest which could lead to general insecurity.

Electoral Process, Violence and Nigeria's Security Challenges

Election is part of the democratic framework that if properly put to use, will produce socio-economic and political development. Credible elections, put the right people in government, manage conflict effectively and allocate resources effectively (Akhape, 2012:26). On the contrary elections and electoral governance not managed properly may spell doom for the democratization process. One of the major obstacles to sustainable and enduring democracy in Nigeria is ineffective electoral process which most times lead to conflict and legitimacy crisis.

Nigeria no doubt has a chequered electoral history. In Nigeria elections have always been hotly contested under party politics that is imperate and violence-ridden (Akhape, 2012:27). Election has always been associated with political tensions, crisis and violence (Babatunde, 2011:117). Kurfi (2005) observed that rigging is almost synonymous with elections in Nigeria. Elections have been so fiercely contested that the survival of the democratization process has been compromised (Babatunde 2011:118). The disheartening history of electoral process and accompanied violence has far reaching effects on the democratization process, governance and national security. With the exception of the June 12 1993 presidential elections, elections held since independence has been fraught with crass anomalies. According to Babatunde (2011:119) the principal forms of rigging and fraud were perfected in the elections of 1964, 1965,

1979, 1983, 1999, 2003 and 2007. These elections were also accomplished by high level of electoral violence, the worst in terms of violence been that of the 2011 general elections. Elections in the past Republics bears much semblance with those of the Fourth Republic. This is so because violence which occurs during these elections threatens the national security of the country and has even led to the collapse of some of these Republics.

The political unrest and spate of insecurity pervading some parts of Northern Nigeria have their links to the disputed 2011 presidential elections (Akhape, 2012:27). The aftermath of the 2011 general elections has continue to pose major threats to the socio-economic and political development of the country (Akhape, 2012:27) as well as the country's national security and the democratization process. The Boko Haram insurgency has led to the loss of thousands of life and destruction of properties worth billions of naira. Experience has shown that elections conducted to public offices in Nigeria have contesting parties involved in one form of electoral malpractice (Osaghe, 1999). From 1999 till date the country has experienced considerable erosion of domestic security which arises from the inherent deficit in governance. This is evident in the increasing proliferation of private security firms (Mijah, 2000) to address the problem of insecurity in Nigeria.

Nigeria's national security is threatened especially at periods close to elections (Kurfi, 2011:346). This is as a result of many security challenges that come to play as a consequence of the faulty nature of the nation's electoral process. The irregularities which characterize the electoral process are sometimes resisted with fierce violence, the result being a threat to national security. Where the irregularities were allowed to stay, the result is the emergence of bad leaders, who are largely responsible for bad governance which is another challenge to national security (Kur, 2011: 346). Another challenge facing Nigeria's national security is the winner-takes-all and sit-tight syndrome of the nation's political leaders. Nigerian leaders have in the past demonstrated overt ambition of sticking to power through the conduct of charade elections. The winner-takes-all politics is also a defining characteristic of the Nigerian electoral process. According to Akhake (2012:31) it is a system where the winner at election takes all and the loser is vanquished. Since everybody want to be in the mainstream of the subsisting politics elections become a "do-or-die" affair. As a result

elections are rigged. The security challenge posed by electoral malpractices cannot be underestimated. This is because the Nigerian civil war which has been a major minus in Nigeria political history, find its casus belli in violence (Orji, 2011:325). This does not however imply that the civil war was solely caused by electoral violence. In the words of Babatunde (2011:126) the outcome of Nigeria's elections have deepened rather than mended the division in Nigerian society. Babatunde (2011) reiterated further that the scope and scale of the problems associated with the electoral process have exposed serious weaknesses in the electoral system and pose risk not only to the country's fragile democracy, but to Nigeria's national security and development.

Flawed electoral processes characterized by all sorts of electoral malfeasance have aggravated political tensions and crisis both in the Northern and Southern parts of the country. These include the Boko Haram militancy in the North and the Niger Delta crisis in the South. The Boko Haram militancy is one that is closely associated with failed political leadership or what could be referred to as elite-mass divide. As a matter of fact the Boko Haram activities are a manifestation of total loss of confidence in the secular nature of governance in the Nigerian state (Omodia, 2012:94). In the Niger Delta, militancy also became an option because the people particularly the youth felt that their demand for resource control could best be achieved when they have more political power at the federal level that would place them in a position of strength (Omodia, 2012: 94). As noted by Babatunde (2011:127) during the 2003 elections, the level of violence in the Niger Delta region was the highest in the country (Human Rights Watch, 2004; (Human Rights watch, 2005).

Failed electoral processes and elections in Nigeria have also dented the country's image and political standing in the international arena. Nigeria has always been a major force to reckon with in African affairs given the roles that nation had been playing in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution, economic integration, good governance and promotion of democracy (Babatunde 2011:129). The country plays leadership role within the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS), provide troops for peace keeping missions, acted as troubles shooting mediator in conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan (Dafur), Guinea and other troubled spots across the continent (Babatunde, 2011:130). All these

point to the fact that Nigeria is a country that cannot be ignored in the international realm. The incidence of faulty electoral process and the violence that characterized elections in Nigeria since the return to civil rule in 1999 have worked to negate the good image that the country sought to create for itself and position of leadership it crave in African Affairs.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This article has demonstrated that there is an uncontested nexus between democracy, governance and national security. It has also shown that the Nigerian electoral process has not for once been devoid of rigging, malpractices and violence. While the concepts of good governance, national security and democratization are closely related, the effect of the nature of electoral process in Nigeria on these concepts cannot be underestimated. The electoral history of the country has affected the nature of governance, national security and the democratization process. Since independence the country has been struggling to establish democratic rule that will take into consideration the interest and aspirations of its citizens. It is however not enough to say that the attainment of adequate national security, good governance and the establishment of democracy are not achievable. They are attainable through some certain measures and strategies.

Firstly, improving the quality of leadership will go a long to improve the nature of governance and national security. One of the basic challenges confronting the Nigerian state is that of bad leadership. The present situation in the currently today is a testimony to this. Secondly, there should be a comprehensive electoral reform to cleanse the country's electoral process of its ills. When this is done, effective leadership will be guaranteed as free and fair election will ensure the voting into power of diligent and committed leaders. The alleviation of poverty and unemployment is another way of ensuring good governance and adequate national security. One of major source off election-related violence is hungry and unemployed youths. These youths with a meager amount of money are easily induced to engage in all form of electoral malpractices and violence during elections. Lastly, avoiding social vices such as ethnicity, nepotism, godfatherism, immorality etc. which are ways through which insecurity can be increased can guarantee good governance as well as national security and foster the democratization process.

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