

# Effect of Democratic rule on National security in Nigeria: Evidence from Post Election Violence in Nigeria (2007- 2011)

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## Abstract

This study identifies the effect of democratic rule and national security in Nigeria. Part of its objectives is to examine the relationships between democratic rule and national security, the study review literature on the concept of Democracy and National security. Three hundred and eighty four copies of questionnaires were administered to target the respondents from Kano state Nigeria. This is because Kano state has the largest population in Nigeria base on National Population Commission Census, 2006 and constituted the majority of post election violence of 2007 and 2011 General elections in Nigeria. Three hundred and twenty four copies of the questionnaire were completed and returned, giving a total responses rate of 84.4%. The study employed simple regression to analyse the data. Surprisingly, the finding of the study reveals that there is no significant relationship between democratic rule and national security. The study recommends that government should increase the size of Nigeria's security agencies, equip them with modern tools and technology, empower and motivate them well and strengthen neighbourhood watch and implications of finding were also discussed.

**Keywords:** Democracy, National Security, Kano State, Nigeria.

## 1. Introduction

Elections are critical aspects of the democratic framework for governing modern political societies. They serve as instrument of political choice, mobilization and accountability. In the context of liberal democracy that has become the most popular form of democracy in a unipolar world, elections are to facilitate the smooth transition from one civilian administration to the other and help in legitimizing sitting governments.

In a democratic system where elections are devoid of crisis, long term disputes or political violence, are amicably resolved. Such system enhances the prospect for political stability, peace, development and continuity in governance. But where elections are characterized by violence, thuggery, intimidation, rigging, ballot box snatching and stuffing and other forms of electoral malpractices, they bring to question the very essence of democracy and compromise the nation's security.

This dominant pattern of elections and electioneering threatens to tear the nation apart and put its tenuous peace at great risks. The 2011 general elections in Nigeria has come and gone but its aftermath threatens the very existence of the Nigerian state. The Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) has come out openly to reject the results of the presidential elections which it alleged its candidate, retired General Buhari won. While, the case was in court, political jobbers and miscreants seized the opportunity to create a state of insecurity in the country through the spate of bombing and communal violence in several parts of the north. The political uncertainty in the country creates avenues for aggrieved groups to revive their hitherto latent agitations for all manner of things; the most violent of them being the spate of bombing by the Boko Haram sect.

The security of the citizens is the primary duty of any government. National security is the podium of democracy and its values for the people. As such, there is no factor that provides meaning and legitimacy to democratic rule than security. It is the protective umbrella of all other sectors of the democratic system. It is also the pillar of political order, stability and development in all segments of societal values and aspirations. In strategic context, democracy and security are correlates because both are people centred. The chief end of every democratic government is to provide an assured welfare and security of its people. The survival of democracy is therefore depending among other things, on the dynamics of national security. It is expedient to note that synergy between security and democracy is inseparable to the extent that if democracy loses its security essence, it has its core

values. Barry Buzan (1983) posited that the concept of security binds together individuals, states and the international system so closely that it demands to be treated in a holistic perspective.

Furthermore, this democratic method of arriving at acceptable political leaders is well expanded in Schumpeter (1942) as the Institutional arrangement for arriving at political, legislative and administrative decisions. Political stability that this system spawns helps to promote the development in the body polity. However, for many years African States operated a misguided development paradigm which emphasized esoteric and aesthetic needs. This created stagnation or stunted growth and brought poverty to many Africa countries. Following the failure of the pursuit for modernization as development, a new paradigm of development that prioritizes the people as its centre piece is being propagated, particularly in the global south.

Generally, security could be referred to as “a measure that ensures peaceful co-existence and development at large (Adebayo 2011). Where there is security, there is likely to be absence of fear, threat, anxiety, tension and apprehension over loss of life, liberty, property, goals and values, among others (Ibid). From the foregoing, it is clear that security is vital for the development in any human collectively. However, as part of the colonial legacies in Africa, security tends to assume the militarists approach either because the political system inherently unstable or those in controls of state powers want to be there “*ad infinitum*”. In either case, emphasis is on the building of arms and ammunitions to the detriment of the basic necessities of life for the citizenry.

These are manifested in increasing poverty, diseases, unemployment, poor medical care, poor housing facilities, lack of portable water, epileptic power supply, lack of access to power and resources by minority groups and their exclusion from policy making (Onimode, 2007; Ake 2000; Ayeni 2010). However, the main objectives of the current study are as follows:

- i. To examine the relationship between democratic rule and National security in Nigeria.
- ii. To determine the effect of democratic rule on National security in Nigeria.

The paper is organized as follows: after the introduction, literature on democracy and national security were reviewed. The next section discusses on methodology and hypothesis to be tested, next is the discussion and analysis of result, and finally, conclusion, recommendations and limitation for future study.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Democracy and the New Development Concept**

Election is part of the democratic framework in the society 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 efficiently. But the nature and type of democracy necessary for development has been an issue in Africa. As part of the colonial project in Africa, liberal democracy was foisted on African political systems and societies in an ineffective manner that till date is difficult for African States to adapt it to suit their pluralistic cultural and political values. These institutions and structures together with their processes were uncritically integrated into the African political economy. For example, while western liberal democracy prioritizes individual rights, private property, liberty and so on, African cultural values emphasize communalism and collective security (Osaghae, 1999).

In Nigeria, elections have always been hotly contested under party politics that is intemperate and violence rite-large. The 2007 and 2011 general elections were no different as the two presidential candidates- Goodluck Jonathan of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and General Mohammadu Buhari Rtd of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) sloughed it out to the apex court in Nigeria, the Supreme Court. The court in its ruling in the petition filed by the CPC on the presidential elections, declared that President Goodluck Jonathan and Vice president Namadi Sambo were validly elected. It noted that the petitioners were unable to prove their allegation of violation of the electoral law. As the lead judgment put it “it is trite law that he who asserts must prove. A person must not only assert but also prove allegations of non-compliance. It is only then that the burden will shift to the person whom allegations of non-compliance are made against...” (The Sun 29th December, 2011). In his reaction, the plaintiff retorted that the judgment was “politically motivated and has little legal content”, (The sun 29th December, 2011).

Also, it would seem, the state is involved in too many things with little of them being done effectively. Over the years statist approach to development has led to the state chewing more than it can swallow; thus, leading to inefficiency and mal-development. Civil society has not been able to effectively take its pride of place in the scheme of things in the country. Perhaps, due to the totalizing effects of state that intervenes everywhere. Civil society should take its place in the affairs of governance by creating alternative avenues for wealth creation and power in order to de-emphasize the salience of the state in the life of the people that partly accounts for mismanagement and corruption in the public domain.

## **2.2 Concept of National Security.**

The concept of security of a nation goes back to the cradle of nation-states themselves. Armies for domestic peace-keeping and maintaining national sovereignty have existed since the dawn of recorded history. Civil and national police forces have also existed for millennia. Intelligence agencies and secret services of governments stretch back to antiquity such as the Roman Empire. While the general concepts of keeping a nation secure are not new, the specific modern English term "national security" it came into common parlance in the 20th Century. Methodologies and strategies to achieve and maintain the highest possible desired state of national security have been consistently developed over the modern period to this day. However, the concept of national security is very difficult to define because the root term, security, has remained a contested concept. In other words, it has no universally accepted definition due to its many-sidedness arising from ideology and time frame being addressed, as well as the locus of analysis.

In this work, we shall be adopting Gwarzo (1998) definition which sees national security as freedom from hunger, or from threat to a nation's ability to protect and defend itself, promote its cherished values and interests, and enhance the well-being of its people. From the above definition, it can be observed that national security is not restricted only to weapons and military preparedness but encompasses political, social and economic well-being of the people. As such, any threats to any of these constitute a threat to national security.

## **2.3 Election and Democracy**

Election is central to the effective functioning of modern representative democracy. Since direct democracy has become almost impossible to practice on account of the large population in every modern political society, electing or selecting political leaders through periodic elections has become the norm. This is particularly so under liberal democracy. As Schumpeter (1942) puts it "democracy means only that the people have the opportunity of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule them". Since everybody cannot make such decisions at any given point in time, they have to select those to represent them. An extended version of this argument on liberal democracy and election is put forward by Sandbrook in (Adejumobi, 2000) "political system characterized by regular and free election in which politicians organize into parties, compete to form the government by right of virtually all adult citizens to vote and by guarantee of a range of familiar political and civil rights". It means that there is an organic link between democracy and elections. For this linkage to be productive, it has to meet certain essential conditions. These include: the people have to be empowered to make political choice without hindrance, and the political atmosphere under which this choice is made should be free from threat, intimidation and manipulation. Also, the practice of choosing political leaders should cohere with the cultural values of the people which should safeguard their exercise. In other words, elections must be compatible with democracy that is being practiced in a given country. For election to make meaning to a democratic system, it must go beyond a ritualistic exercise carried out periodically.

## **2.4 Democratic Elections and National Security**

Credible elections are necessary to stem the tide of political decay and renewal in the country. This is because in the view of apologists of liberal democracy, once elections are gotten right, democracy is on its way to being consolidated and in consequence enduring peace and security will be instituted in the country. In essence, credible elections produce security, development and political stability. Security could take different forms. There is human security, national security, and so on. National security implies the appropriation and deployment of state apparatus of coercive force to deal with situation of crisis, nationally or internationally. Human security involves protecting the citizenry from hunger, disease, poverty, unemployment, natural disasters, etc. However, all these can only take place where there is peace and stability in the polity. Experience has shown that it is human security that presents the most effective instrument for national security and not the building of arms and weapons of warfare.

Empirical evidence has shown that in elections conducted to public offices, all contesting parties are involved in one form of electoral malpractices or other (Joseph, 1987; Osaghae, 1999, Iwu, 2008). Where the opposing parties fail to win elections, they create one form of electoral crisis or the other. This includes: long litigation in court, political propaganda, use of militant groups, and mobilization of religious sentiments, among others. In more extreme cases, violent politics ensues such as: bombing, kidnapping, political assassination and youth restiveness.

More than ever before, the country's security has come under threat. Indeed, the climate of fear pervades the country as politics of impunity pervade the polity. Never before has the country's security being so stretched in peace time. Yet, this threat to national security is not unconnected with injustices which dominate the body polity. Faulty development policies pursued since independence have left the people pauperized and decimated. Also, failure to play by the rules of the game of party politics brings the country close to the state of nature. These are manifested in increasing poverty, diseases, unemployment, poor medical care, poor housing facilities, lack of portable water, epileptic power supply, lack of access to power and resources by minority groups and their exclusion from policy making (Onimode, 2007; Ake 2000; Ayeni 2010).

### **2.6 Synergy between National Security and Democratic Rule.**

The association between national security and democratic rule is that of mutual transmissibility of impacts and repercussions. Therefore, with prolonged years of military rule, it is expedient to note that only a democratic framework can provide succor to Nigerians at this critical security juncture, and create space necessary for the transformation of the state from the authoritarian form experienced under the military rule to people-centered one. This will open up channels hitherto blocked for dialogue, negotiation and peaceful settlement of conflict. Even though democracy has several definitions and colourations based on varying values, experiences and history of nations, the central issue in democracy is the people. Democracy offers the best platform for resolving the national security questions. More fundamentally, the interest of the people becomes the basis of security policy. Cyril (1997) observed that a democratic ethos is better placed to deal with and negotiate better terms of equitable interactions than authoritarianism or civilian dictatorship.

On the same vein, general assessment of the decade under review reveals that the political liberalism that accompanied the re-emergence of democratic rule since 1999 allowed people to vent their pent up tension and disaffection with the existing social, political and economic order (Dunmoye, 2009). This consequently led to the proliferation of militant ethnic and religious movements collectively referred to as militias. Starting from Odua Peoples' Congress (OPC), Arewa Peoples' Congress (APC), Bakassi Boys, Egbesu Boys of Africa (EBA), Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Movement for Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), and other various groups that often do not have a specific label or designation. The factors responsible for the upsurge in the formation of these groups could be above all things but most importantly traced to the neglect or perceived neglect by government to attend to their social responsibilities to the people and nationalities that constitute the federation.

However, the common attributes of all these groups is that they tend to be ethnically based and either employ militant methods in the pursuit of their goals or could readily resort to such methods in self defense. The activities of these groups posed considerable economic, social, human and political threats to democratic rule. More-so, the activities of these groups also posed threat to rule of law which is one of the fundamentals of democracy. For instance, section 6 of the public Act cap 382 laws of the federation 1990, outlaws the activities, of any groups which may threaten public order and peaceful coexistence among Nigeria's multi ethnic population. A general look at the activities of the member of these ethnic and religious groups, not only of usurping the law enforcement functions of the police, but also fly, wear provocative uniforms, and openly brandish offensive weapons without any authorization. Their activities therefore seriously violate general laws that were made for ensuring due processes in law enforcement and criminal justice administration and for preserving public order and peace in the Nigerian society. Such grievous subversion of the rule of law can only provide an atmosphere for the eventual breakdown of law and in the country.

### **2.7 Assessment of National Security under Obasanjo Democratic Rule (1999-2007).**

There is a general assumption especially within the realist paradigm that the world is anarchical in nature in which the use of force remains the ultimate means of guaranteeing security. The realist sticks to the classical postulation which places a lot of emphasis on military threats and concentrates on the various form of military

response on the management of such threats. The cold war and even the post cold war sustained this militaristic perception. However, the end of the cold war also marked the beginning of a debate on the need to redefine and re-conceptualize national security to respond to new global challenges. This is because as (Nwolise,2008) observed, the world was deceived during the cold war into believing that security is all about high defense allocation, amassment of awesome weapon system and large military personnel. The view of John Mroz (1991), Ian Bellany (1991), and Peter (1983), on national security are typical of the perceptions of the concept which propelled the practice and processes throughout the cold-war era. Luard (1988) argues that that a state level of security is measured largely on the basis of military capabilities such as the number of nuclear warheads, Missiles, Tanks, Men under arms military expenditure and others. These scholars have viewed security within the context of defense thereby relegating other important issues such as economy and welfare of the people. Most developing countries built their security doctrine around this approach and as such, a lot of their security problems still remain unsolved.

## **2.8 State of National Security under the Yar’adua’s Democratic rule (2007-2011).**

The 2007 elections, therefore, presented an opportunity to revert to the old order, which the Action Congress (AC) seriously worked for. But this was not to be so – as a result of the abuse of power of incumbency to alter the people ‘swill. The violent response was spontaneous, including the burning of houses, killing, looting and general breakdown of law and order in Ondo, Ekiti, Osun and Oyo states as the most volatile.

Structurally, violence manifested in the form of systemic disequilibrium predicated upon double standards. In Nigeria, for example, all the parties were not given equal access to the state-owned media, particularly the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN). Moreover, the anti-corruption agencies of the state, particularly the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), were being used as a political weapon by the ruling party to harass, intimidate and frustrate the opposition out of politics. A notable case in point was the ordeals of Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, the AC presidential candidate, who was hurriedly indicted for corruption without a fair hearing by the EFCC, which formed the basis of his purported disqualification from contesting the election. The overall ineffective governance of the elections, which included the late arrival and shortage of electoral materials and officials, falsification and announcement of false results and the massive disenfranchisement of the people that were the hallmarks of the 2007 elections in Nigeria, represent other dimensions of structural violence.

## **2.9 Theoretical framework**

There are several theories which might prove appropriate for a research of this nature, the structure-agency theory present us with a heuristic tool for interrogating the central issues of this study. The theory contends that agents such as politicians and state managers engage in politicking to get their interest promoted. However, they have to operate within structures that constraint or support their actions. For example, “ actions of ministries and government officers produce the structure that constrain junior civil servants and state functionaries, the effect of whose actions similarly constrain the rest of us” (Hay, 1988). This theory does indicate a unilinear determinism as the argument seems to suggest. While structure determines the actions of agents, agents also condition the structure in the process of carrying out their roles or simply to realize their parochial interest. Similarly, this theory serves as the theoretical basis of the research.

## **3.0 Methodology**

### **3.1 Sample and data collection**

The sample size for a given population of 2,000,000 youth in Kano state is 384 (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970). Kano is chosen as the area to be cover by the research. The city is one of the highest populated in the country and constitutes highest youth (Census, 2006).The study employs a simple random sampling techniques, in line with sample selection formulae, which is stated as follows, (Yamane, 1967).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}$$

Where: n = Sample size; N = Population of the study; e = level of precision.

### 3.2. Analysis method

Data were analyzed using SPSS 18 (PASW STATISTIC), through linear regression analysis to examine the effect of Democratic rule on National security; similarly the study tested the hypothesis below:

H1: Democratic rule is positively related to National Security.

## 4.0 Results and discussion

### 4.1 DEMOGRAPHY OF RESPONDENTS

Table 1.

Demographic Profile	Frequency	Percentages
<b>Ages:</b>		
1-10 years	-	-
11-20 years	90	27.8
21-40years	198	61.1
Above 40 years	36	11.1
<b>Level of education:</b>		
SSCE	-	-
Diploma	162	50
Degree/HND	90	27.8
Masters	72	22.2
Others	-	-
<b>Marital status:</b>		
Single	216	66.7
Married	108	33.3
<b>Monthly income:</b>		
1-10,000	108	33.3
11-20,000	72	22.2
21-30,000	36	11.1
40,000 & Above	108	33.3
<b>Working experiences:</b>		
< 1 years	54	16.7
1-5 years	144	44.4
6-10 years	72	22.2
11-15 years	36	11.1
15 & Above	18	5.6
<b>Participate on election violence:</b>		
Yes		
No	54	16.7
	270	83.3



The table 1 shows the profile of respondents, out of 384 questionnaires distributed, a total of three hundred and twenty four copies of questionnaires were returned completed, representing 84.4% rate which is superb. The result reveals that 61.1% of the respondents are between 21- 40 years: this implied that majority of respondent are youth who are virtually have basic literacy. In terms of education back grounds 50% of the respondents have diploma

Certificates while degree/HND respondents have 27.8%. With regards to married status majority of the respondents were not married representing 66.7%. Similarly, monthly income of the respondents reveals that those with 1-10,000 (naira) have 33.3% and 31 to above have same 33.3%. Furthermore, most of the respondents have working experience between 1-5 years while 6-10 years carry 22.2%. And finally, numbers of respondents that participate on election violence is 16.7%. (See table 1 above).

**Table 2: Regression Result**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients		
1	(Constant)	6.050	.4579		13.241	0.000
	DEMOCR	-.125	0.82	-.084	-1.521	.129

**P < 0.05 ; T > 1.96 ,**

The result of regression analysis indicates that there is no significant relationship between Democratic rule and national security (P = .129; t= -1 .521; β= -0.084) see table 2 and 4. This is inconsistency with the result of (Adebayo, 2011; Albert, 2011; Igbodalo, 2012). Thus, H1 is rejected. Finally, table 3, shows that R-square (R<sup>2</sup>) 0.007. This implies that 93% of variable are achieved. (See table 3 & 4).

**Table 3 R Square**

<i>R Square</i>	<i>R Square %</i>
0.007	7

**Table 4 Model Summary**

<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the estim.</i>	<i>R Square change</i>	<i>F Change</i>	<i>df1</i>	<i>df2</i>	<i>Sig. F Change</i>
	0.84	0.007	.004	.27113	.007	2.313	1	322	.129

**ANOVA Result**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	.170	1	.170	2.313	.129 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	23.670	322	.074		
Total	23.840	323			

a. Predictors: (Constant), DEMOCRACY

b. Dependent Variable: NSECURITY

## **5.0 Conclusion, implications, limitations and suggestion for future research**

The findings of this study revealed that there is no significant positive relationship between: the democratic rule and national security. The focus of this research has been an attempt to examine the impact of democracy and national security in Nigeria. The researcher project has been taken a critical look at the post election violence in Kano state 2007-2011. The study examines the relationship between democracy and national security in Nigeria. Elections are important part of representative democracy. Individuals and groups have to compete in an open contest for the people's votes. Where this is done fairly and creditably, the wishes of the people would easily prevail. But the country's practice of liberal democracy with its emphasis on multi-party elections has produced socio-economic decay and a recurring political cauldron in the country. Mere reform of the country's political economy will not resolve the crises which have often threatened the very existence of the Nigerian state. The first major step toward resolving endemic problem of electoral conflicts and crises within the Nigerian state, we have argued, is to enthrone genuine democracy based on the people cultural values which contain what has been described as the universal ideals of democracy. Once this is realized, it will empower the people to bring to bear on the polity their innate potentials for development in various spheres of life and the frustration they presently experienced will be a thing of the past. Development can only take place where there is peace and the greatest guarantee of security is when the people are at peace with themselves and the government of the day.

Furthermore, any environment inundated with crime and insecurity is always accompanied with tensions and anxiety. The elimination of these threats and enemies of man should be the number one programme of the governments in Nigeria. This will give rise to human development and a habitable environment for us all. Apart from the governments' own role, all hands should also be on deck to eliminate this monster of insecurity in Nigeria.

The cost of insecurity is quite high both for individual Nigerians as well as the nation. For the former, it stunts personal development and interfere with his or her ability to develop his or her full potentials. The mind and energy of the average Nigerian is consumed with issues of safety and security that he or she has little energy left to contribute to Nigerian's development. The message should be clear to our government. Nigerians need a policy that is stable, peaceful, and safe enough from criminal assaults, murder, chaos, tyranny and breakdown of authority so that the populace can face issues of development with vigor and courage. To attain such a policy, the under listed recommendations are suggested: Governments at all levels should ensure that rising poverty indices be reversed and a realistic social security programme be pursued and systematically implemented to ensure that the populace meet their basic needs. Though there is a statutory limitation to what state government can do in the area of security, the states have something to contribute. The constitution places security on the exclusive federal list. The police and the Armed forces are all federal institutions, not legally accountable to state governments.

However, the research suggesting that there should be partnership between the state and federal government in the area of security agencies with needed logistics for optimal performance.

Secondly, as a complement to the services of the conventional security agencies, states should sponsor community-based vigilantes in addition to re-organization of the security agencies to take them through a new reorientation via re-training of security agents. People should be more security conscious, share information with the police and other security agencies. The populace should not leave security matters to security personnel only. All should be involved in security information and data gathering. Moreover, efforts should be put in crime prevention than control.

Furthermore, the government should increase the size of Nigeria's security agencies, empower and motivate them very well and strengthen neighbourhood watch. Governments should equally fix social infrastructures – roads, street lights, schools and skill acquisition centres.

Apart from the above, there is no gain saying that lack of youth empowerment programmes contribute immensely to social insecurity in the polity. The government should create programmes that would empower our youths technically. This will enable them to be self-reliant and avert their minds from criminal tendencies.

Finally, the practice of the rule of law, constitutionalism, avoidance of undue retrenchment of workers, payment of salary and allowances as and when due and payment of compensation for property destroyed are other means by which the question of insecurity could be avoided.



Thus, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to the entire Nigeria since its cross sectional in nature. In order to overcome these limitations, future studies should consider the possibility of increasing the sample size by including more respondents. In addition, future studies should employ a longitudinal research design, so that the direct effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables could be concluded.

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