

Theoretical Understanding of Conflicts and Violence in Nigeria: The Niger Delta Militant and Northern Islamic Sect Boko Haram in Perspective

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Abstract

The concept of conflict management and violence has attracted academic scholarship in international politics. In Third World Countries, the causes of conflict are usually associated to leadership failure and revenue allocation, Nigeria is no exception. Most literature on conflict management focused mainly on peace and terrorism in international politics ignoring and paying little attention to the dynamics of theories that explain the creation of violence activities in modern societies. The paper explores relevant and suitable concepts and theories that explain violence activities been perpetrated and inspired by some variables in Nigeria. And, it further gives detailed explanations how conflict can be managed. However, the paper concluded that unemployment, poverty and high rate of corruption in Nigeria has been identified as major cause of violence in the country.

1. Introduction

Currently Nigeria is divided into six geopolitical zones namely: the North-West comprising Kaduna, Katsina, Jigawa, Sokoto, Kebbi, Kano, and Zamfara; the North-East comprising Bauchi, Gombe, Borno, Taraba, Adamawa and Yobe; the North Central comprising Federal Capital Territory, Abuja (FCT), Plateau, Nassarawa, Niger, Kwara, Kogi and Benue; the South-West comprising Lagos, Osun, Ogun, Oyo, Ekiti and Ondo; the South-East comprising Enugu, Anambra, Imo, Abia and Ebonyi and the South-South comprising Rivers, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Delta Edo and Bayelsa. None of these zones is spared from possibility of ethnic, electoral and religious violence nonetheless; the trigger, machinery and strategy employed might differ and the remote cause may as well vary across zones and states. Also, Nigeria is a pluralistic society with different and overlapping regional, religious, and ethnic divisions. Nigerian culture is as diverse as its population, which is estimated to be over 150 million. With the regaining of political process in 1999 and after over three decades of military rule, Nigeria looked set for a return to stability and the regaining of its position in the comity of nations particularly in Africa. Wrongly so, this was not to be (Aniekwe & Kushie 2011).

Since the 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 elections, the Nigeria electoral and political landscape has fallen from par to below par and has moved from violence to greater violence. The level and magnitude of electoral, political, regional and religious violence have risen and the political elites have often converted poverty ridden unemployed Nigerians into mercenaries for the perpetration of electoral, regional and religious violence. Moreover, the situation of insecurity in Nigeria right from the onset of this democratic dispensation has become an unending debate among academia and policy cycle in the country. The act of armed-robbery that happened to be a breakfast at the beginning of civilian rule in 1999, follow by the Niger Delta militancy that gave birth to kidnapping/pipeline oil vandalisation in the Niger Delta region that assumed its ugly face during late President Musa Yar'Adua administration and currently the Islamic Sect act of terrorism popularly known as Boko Haram, all these and among others have described Nigeria as a failing State or a failed State.

However, the violence perpetrated by the *Boko Haram* sect and the attendant security challenges faced by the country as a result of the activities of the *Boko Haram* Islamic sect is, no doubt, having a negative effect not only on the national security of the country but also on its image in the international system. For instance, the country was denied the right to host the Global Food Security meeting in October, 2011, due to the apprehensions expressed by the Food and Agricultural Organisation as a result of the insecurity generated by the *Boko Haram* activities and the incessant kidnapping menace in the Niger Delta. The country has been classified by some international agencies among the terrorist and violence prone states in the world (see The Punch Feb., 7 2012; Mordi 2011).

In a nutshell, the onslaught of the Boko Haram sect and coupled with Niger Delta militancy involving kidnapping/oil pipeline vandalisation in the country has done serious damage to the safety of ordinary Nigerians as well as socioeconomic and political development of the nation as a whole (The Punch Sept.,23 & Nov., 25 2011). Hence, this paper explores relevant and suitable theories that explain the brain behind the sudden rise of the Boko Haram in the Northern region and the incessant kidnapping/pipelines oil vandalisation in the Niger Delta region in Nigeria. Moreover, it will identify the mechanism that the Nigerian government has utilised to

manage the crises and it will further suggest conflict management mechanism to permanently curb the crises. However, in achieving this, this paper will exclusively examines Ted Robert Gurr Relative Deprivation Theory, Karl Marx concept of class and capitalism and Emile Durkheim Anomie theory of normlessness vis-à-vis the Boko Harm and the Niger Delta kidnapping/pipeline oil vandalisation in the country. It will also review literature on the concepts of conflict and violence.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 The concept of Conflict and Violence

Conflict is a situation in which people, groups or countries are involved in a serious disagreement or argument. Conflict is a necessary process of life. Within the individual, there is always conflict of thoughts, choice and interest, to mention but a few. This is known as intra-personal conflict. This not only makes decision taking difficult, but also has been identified as one of the major sources of stress. On the other hand, the inter-personal conflict occurs between individuals, group, members of an organization and states. Conflicts can also be either constructive or destructive. If conflict is properly managed or resolved, there will be peace. If on the other hand, resolution and reconciliation fail, the conflict will degenerate to chaos, crisis or war (Ifeanyi 2006). Moreover for Gardiner and Simmons (1992) defined conflict as “any divergence of interests, objectives or priorities between individual, groups, or organizations or nonconformity to requirements of a task; activity or process”. Duncan (1975) opined that conflict implies some types of hostility and some desires to do harm which may be considered an extreme case of competition. Conflict is different from competition, although competition may result in conflict. This suggests that conflicts may occur without any specific reference to competition, as it could occur as a result of breakdown in the mechanism of decision-making. On this view DeCenzo (1997), described conflict as whenever two individuals come together, there are bound to be disagreements at time. That’s natural. However, sometimes these differences can grow to enormous proportions where they become detrimental to the involved parties and the environment. When that occurs conflict is present. Fischer defined violence (conflict) as any random or organized act that seeks to determine, delay, or otherwise influence a process through threat, verbal intimidation, hate speech, disinformation, physical assault, forced “protection,” blackmail, destruction of property, or assassination (Fischer 2002).

In a similar vein Igbuzor (cited in Aniekwe & Kushie 2011) views it as any act of violence perpetuated in the course of political activities, including pre, during and post electoral process, and may include any of the following acts: thuggery, use of force to disrupt the process (meetings or voting at polling stations) or the use of dangerous weapons to intimidate the processes (voters and other electoral process) or to cause bodily harm or injury to any person connected with processes. However, Fischer (2002 cited in Aniekwe & Kushie 2011) highlighted four descriptive categories of conflict and violence that emerge, suggesting a variety of motives, perpetrators, and victims which includes the following: Disgruntled voters against the state arising from perceived unfairness in the election process; The state in conflict with voters who challenges election results or hegemony of the state; Political rivals in conflict with each other in the quest to attain power; and A combination of two or more of the above categories. In the works of Fisher and Igbuzor (cit. Aniekwe & Kushie 2011), the concept of violence was anchored on electoral administration and its anomaly. Consequently, for them, electoral violence can occur at different stages in the election process starting with pre election period (registration) to post election period (after results). The crucial thing is for the monitors to understand deeply the context and concept of electoral violence for easy and comprehensive reporting of incidents in a way that will capture incidents across the stages without neglecting any stage.

2.2 Causes of Conflicts and Violence

All over the world, conflicts, crisis and violence are inordinate desires for political and economic advantages, greed, ego-related problems and plain mischief. Injustice and inequitable distribution of resources cause resentments, which invariably give rise to conflict situations (Asiyanbola 2010). These factors are much at play in contemporary Nigeria. Moreover, corroborating the analyses above, Okotoni O, and A, Okotoni (2003), carried out a research titled “Conflict Management in Secondary Schools in Osun State, Nigeria” identified the following as major causes of conflicts within the school system in the state and that it also has a bearing in other phase of Nigerian socio-political process. They are highlighted in order of their importance: Unimpressive Conditions of Service; Partial implementation of the minimum wage salaries approved by the Federal Government for workers; Forceful and compulsory retirement/retrenchment of workers; Administrative incompetence of principals; Misappropriation and embezzlement of school funds; Indiscipline (on the part of both staff and students); Negligence of duty; Personality clashes; Inferiority/Superiority complex; Favouritism; Role conflicts; Misunderstanding of motives; and Youthful exuberance. Additionally, case study of “Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria written by Asiyanbola (2010) and captured in a “Journal of Humanities of Social Sciences and Creative Arts”, A Case of Ife-modakeke in Historical Perspective” also acknowledged the above variables as a contributory factors that trigger conflict in modern society.

However a lot of factors have led to conflict and violence in Nigeria such as the imposition of tax as at 1929 that led to Aba riot, the Kano riot of 1953, the census crisis of 1962/1963, the electoral crisis of 1964, the Western Nigeria Elections of 1965, the military coup of 1966 that assassinated most northern personalities which cumulated to civil war of 1967, the Kaduna State Executive/Legislative crisis of 1981, the annulment of June 12 election of 1993, and currently the ongoing political democratic dispensation has taken its own share of violence that has attracted international bodies for salvation, “we’ll tackle Boko Haram, France” (see The Tribune Nov., 13, 2011). Presently, the Nigeria State is suffering from insecurity problem, poverty and the volume of unemployment increases annually. These and among others have led the Nigerians and as well as her leaders to justified military in politics in the past. In same vein, the military has been invited in several occasion to solve issues confronting the sovereignty and the nationhood of the country such as; the Odi case in Bayelsa state, the oil subsidy crisis that turns its ugly face in Lagos, the incessant murder cases and bombing in North, protection of oil pipeline in the Niger Delta and electoral administration during and post elections (see the Nigeria Punch April 20, 2011; The Punch Sept. 23 2011). Consequently, in managing these problems, the Nigerian government has put in place various mechanism to tackle these issues such as poverty alleviation programme, establishment of more ministries and agencies (such as Niger Delta Ministry), scholarship programme for the youth, amnesty programme and so on. With this mechanism put in place by the Nigeria government right from the onset of civilian administration in 1999, the youths and the leaders still raise arms against each other (see the Nigeria Punch Nov., 25 2011; The Nation Nov., 14 2011 and Nigeria Guardian Feb., 23 2013)

2.3 Stages of Conflict

There are four established stages of escalation of conflicts to crisis:

- **Dispute (or Latent) Stage:** when there is a bitter argument, but no fixed position taken. Conflict situation exists, but not yet recognized.
- **Polarisation (or Perceived) Stage:** When bitter arguments still go on and fixed positions are becoming discernible. We say conflict situation is recognized at this stage.
- **Segregation (or Tension) Stage:** When the disputants have taken fixed positions that cannot be compromised and they are ready to fight to maintain their positions.
- **Destruction (or Manifest) Stage:** The disputants take steps which are usually violent, to maintain their positions.

It is important to note that conflict is not the only factor responsible for crisis/violence and that crisis/violence is not just limited to breaking of limbs and bones and spilling of blood. In fact, violation of various constitutional and civil rights of individuals (and groups) constitute violence against these persons. Thus apart from physical violence, we have: Social Violence (social inequality; denial of right to education and so on); Economic Violence (state-induced poverty and so on); Environmental Violence (noise, degradation, pollution and so on); Mental/Psychological (keeping one in-communicado and so on); Sexual Violence (rape, weird sexual practices and so on); Verbal Violence (foul and aggressive language, curses and so on); Cultural Violence (unfair and discriminatory cultural practices and so on); and Intellectual Violence (plagiarism, using the intellect to glorify violence); Domestic Violence (child abuse, spouse battering and so on)

3. Conflict Management and Conflict Resolution

This deals on how to control or manage an existing conflict so that it does not escalate, thereby leading to chaos, crisis and war. At this, efforts are made to ensure that constructive conflicts do not degenerate and become destructive, in which case they will be difficult to manage. While Conflict resolution is the settlement of conflict that may have already taken shape. It can be by reconciliation or alienation. Conflicts should be resolved before they get to the destruction (or action) phase. Consequently, according to Ifeanyi (2006) there are two major classes or methods of resolving conflicts; Regular Dispute Resolution and Alternative Dispute Resolution.

3.1 Regular Dispute Resolution

This includes the regular system of reporting a case to the police, getting the offender prosecuted, convicted and sentenced. It also covers civil litigations. This is basically by litigation in court, that is, through legal process. Under this system, the winner takes it all. There is always a winner/loser ending.

3.2 Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

As its name implies, this includes the methods that are alternative to the regular system. In this type of dispute resolution strategy, people are encouraged to go for a win-win solution (instead of a win-lose or lose-lose situation).

3.2.1 Typology of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

ARBITRATION: The parties appoint a neutral person/body to adjudicate on their differences. The resolution (award) is enforceable by a court of law. However; the procedure is different from the usual court process.

MEDIATION: the parties appoint a neutral person who will guide them in their resolution of the conflict. The mediator does not adjudicate or give judgment. Mediation is guided by negotiation. The mediator is not a party

to the negotiation but a contributory observer.

NEGOTIATION: The parties meet without a third party and work at resolving their conflict. One very popular negotiation strategy (especially at the international and diplomatic levels) according to Ifeanyi (2006) is the Harvard Negotiation Project. This strategy has the following four cardinal points:

- Separate the people from the problem
- Focus on interests not positions
- Generate a variety of possibilities before deciding on what to do
- Insist on some objective standards

4. Why Resolve Conflicts

There should be sincere and continuous dialogue amongst all stakeholders where issues threatening peaceful coexistence should be resolved. It is always better to talk over it than to fight over it. According to a special report by the World Bank (cit. in Ifeanyi 2006), crisis and violence arising from unresolved conflicts have very high costs, destroying past development gains and leaving a legacy of damaged assets and corrosive mistrust that impedes future progress. Conflicts, crisis and violence beget more conflicts, crisis and violence. They destroy our present and our future. They are ill winds that do not blow anybody any good. And while conflicts are natural and even crisis to a lesser extent, we can minimize and manage conflicts and by so doing eliminate crisis/violence or reduce them to an insignificant minimum.

5. Reconciliation Principles

Another important element in conflict resolution is Reconciliation, it is an activity within the practice of conflict resolution and focuses on transforming relationships at the personal level and therefore refers to reconciliation as a process. It is rooted in the theological tradition as well as psychological concepts of reconciliation but does not refer to specific programme activities. According to Ifeanyi (2006), Reconciliation is a Christian concept, but it is also found in many other religions and takes on different characteristics in different cultures. Co-existing in a multi-cultural and multi-religious society like ours there is the need to explore some of the diverse approaches to reconciliation. Hearing other traditions and faith perspectives on reconciliation and forgiveness often helps us understand our own tradition more fully.

6. The Do and Don't of a Good Mediator during a Mediating Processes

Bearing in mind that the essence of mediation is to reconcile the disputants, as well as maintain or improve on their social relationship, the mediator must not do or say anything that can escalate the conflict. Furthermore, the mediator has no authority to lay down decisions or enforce verdicts. He should therefore not force his opinion on the disputants. Consequently, a good mediator must observe the following in the course of the mediating process: Maintain neutrality; Be diplomatic but honest; Be kind and friendly but firm, calm and disciplined, patient and optimistic; Treat contenders as matured equals and give each person an opportunity to express him/her self in a calm manner and controlled environment; Be a good listener and observer; Withdraw as soon as you become emotionally involved; Be confident; and Know when to withdraw. These are the points a good mediator must avoid during the process. The mediator must not: Accept any form of gratification from any of the disputants; un-Stretch and un-focus on the issues; Discuss the issues with any of the disputants in the absence of other party; Mediate on matters he has personal interest in, prejudice or bias against; Assume authority or pass judgment; Dabble into any conflict without invitation; Recount what you heard somewhere else; Call the attention of the law enforcement agent/agency to the conflict; and Advise them to go to court.

6.1 Steps to Proper Mediation

- Remember that all conflicts are all about power
- Take into consideration the cause and urgent purpose of each conflict. What people want to accomplish through a conflict has to be understood properly and taken seriously
- Take into cognizance the extended and complicated series of happenings
- Observe and consider the actions and reaction of the people involved
- Select details and choose your words carefully.

7. The Radicals conceptions of Conflicts

7.1 Karl Marx and Ralf Dahrendorf's Perspectives and the Nigerian Experience

However, one of the most powerful socioeconomic explanations of social conflict is that of Karl Marx, who posited a class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie inherent in the capitalist-industrial society. This conception is powerful in being dynamic, instinctively convincing, and appearing to fit well with history. It is powerful in providing in one package a description, an explanation, and a prediction of contemporary problems, and a remedy. The historical events and trends notwithstanding, the sociological outlines of Marx's approach

have much value. His emphasis on conflict, on classes, on their relations to the state, and on social change was a powerful perspective that should not be discarded. The spirit, if not the substance, of his theory is worth developing.

For Marx, the division between classes will widen and the condition of the exploited worker will deteriorate so badly that social structure collapses: the class struggle is transformed into a proletarian revolution. The workers' triumph will eliminate the basis of class division in property through public ownership of the means of production. With the basis of classes thus wiped away, a classless society will ensue (by definition), and since political power to protect the bourgeoisie against the workers is unnecessary, political authority and the state will wither away. Overall, according to Marx (cited in Rummel 1977) there are six basic elements of class conflict.

- Classes are authority relationships based on property ownership.
- A class defines groupings of individuals with shared life situations, thus interests.
- Classes are naturally antagonistic by virtue of their interests.
- Imminent within modern society is the growth of two antagonistic classes and their struggle, which eventually absorbs all social relations.
- Political organization and Power is an instrumentality of class struggle, and reigning ideas are its reflection.
- Structural change is a consequence of the class struggle.

Consequently in Nigeria for instance, there is a wide gap between the rich and the poor emanating from the contradiction that exist within Nigeria capitalist mode of production, distributions and services. Several time Nigerian have complained about dubious and exploitative activities of some investors such as the Oyinlola sue case against "MTN, a telecommunication service provider" serve as a reference point and the Nigeria Communication Commission (NCC) banned on MTN, Globacom, Airtel, Multilinks, Visafone, Intercellular and others (see the Tribune Nov., 16 2012; The Nation Nov., 13 2013), and other unethical and corrupt cases by some companies such as British Airways, Virgin Atlantic and Halliburton case (The Guardian Aug., 16 2011; The Punch Sept., 20 2012). Concluding this section in view of Marxian's postulations vis-à-vis Nigeria situation, however, one notable force that came with modernization is capitalism, and the main effect of this has been the wholesome destruction of communalism, collectivity, and the spirit of togetherness found in most Nigerian communities. Today, what we have in the place of these noble virtues are selfishness, individualism, parochialism, sectionalism and greed for material possession. Since corruption is a short cut, it is easier to get rich quickly through it, and most people prefer this avenue to the slow policy and insincerity of the government. Corruption has become an issue that leaders in Nigeria enjoy and celebrate which has further prompt the Nigerian youth to engage in act of violence and indiscipline in the Nigerian political system, the recent presidential pardon given to Diepreye (formal governor of Bayelsa State guilty of money laundry in UK and decided disguise himself and escape from UK prison) and others serve as point of reference.

Conversely, however, the philosophy of Marx generated a lot of intellectual debate between and among scholars especially the prophesy that underline his thesis; much of it is polemical and political, but some writers have tried to avoid the historical or empirical errors Marx committed, to learn from changes since his time, and to apply the spirit of his sociology to contemporary industrial society. One of the best of these efforts is that Ralf Dahrendorf's *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society* (1959). He sees Marx's defining characteristic of class (as property ownership) as a special case of a more general authoritative relationship. Society grants the holders of social positions power to exercise coercive control over others. And property ownership, the legitimate right to coercively exclude others from one's property, is such power. This control is a matter of authority, which Dahrendorf defines, according to Weber, as the probability that a command with specific content will be obeyed by certain people. Authority is associated with a role or position and differs from power, which Dahrendorf claims is individual. Authority is a matter of formal legitimacy backed by sanctions. It is a relation existing between people in imperatively coordinated groups, thus originating in social structure.

Authority, however, is dichotomous; there is always an authoritative hierarchy on one side and those who are excluded on the other. Within any imperative group are those who are super-ordinate and those who are subordinate. There is an arrangement of social roles comprising expectations of domination or subjugation. Those who assume opposing roles have structurally generated contradictory interests, to preserve or to change the status quo. Incumbents of authoritative roles benefit from the status-quo, which grants them their power. Those toward whom this authoritative power is exercised, and who suffer from it, however, are naturally opposed to this state of affairs. Super-ordinates and sub-ordinates thus form separate quasi-groups of shared latent interests. On the surface, members of these groups and their behaviour may vary considerably, but they form a pool from which conflict groups can recruit members. With leadership, ideology, and the political (freedom) and social conditions of organization being present, latent interests become manifested through political organizations and conflict.

Summarily, for Marx's conceptions, it is people distributed on the bases of differentiated property ownership and

sources of income; for Dahrendorf, it is differential power, norms, and roles. Class struggle or conflict, the active opposition of classes, is of course the meat of class theories. The utilization and importance of political power in the struggle is also recognized. Moreover, the three theories equally recognize the importance of the superimposition of class interests in contributing to the intensity of the struggle. Marx puts this in terms of the generalization of separate factory-specific class conflicts, and the increasing homogenization of classes; Dahrendorf refers to the superimposition of role incumbents, such that the same people are generally in the same authoritative relationship across organizations.

7.2 The Anomie Theory of Conflict and the Nigerian Experience

Anomie is a term meaning "without Law" to describe a lack of social norms or normlessness. It describes the breakdown of social bonds between an individual and their community ties, with fragmentation of social identity and rejection of self-regulatory values. It was popularized by French sociologist Emile Durkheim in his influential book suicide (1897). Anomie occurs when there is discrepancy between common social goals and the legitimate means to attain those goals. Moreover, an individual suffering from *anomie* would strive to attain the common goals of a specific society yet would not be able to reach these goals legitimately because of the structural limitations in society. As a result the individual would exhibit deviant behaviour. In other words, Anomie occurs as soon as there are no clear standards to guide behaviour in a specified area of social life. In these conditions, people feel at a complete loss and worried; a state of 'normlessness' sets in and the people begin to do whatever they like. Consequently, this situation described the failure of Nigerian government to conduct free and fair election, policy failure (such as Poverty Alleviation Programme, Scholarship Packages for students, low pay of government officials such as the Nigerian Police, Civil Servants and so on), tribalism, Nepotism, etc, these and among others have triggers Nigerian youths to take up arms against the Federal Government of Nigeria. These aforementioned scenarios have breed prostitutions, arm-robbery, thuggery, hooliganism, kidnapping, these and among others have tend to legalised corrupt actions in the country. This state of affair has led the Nigerian Police to be inefficient and ineffective. Policemen are ill-equipped to function effectively and ill-remunerated to be able to resist attempts to corruption. The effect is that first transgressors are not apprehended either because the Police are bribed to look the other way or because there is not resources. However, the Nigerian Judiciary, which is touted as the hope of common man, has not lived up to its billing. The wheel of justice grinds slowly and with an unsure gait, which aggrieved parties find both frustrating and expensive. The breakdown of order in society makes people call for extreme solutions such as "Bakassi Boys, Odua Peoples' Congress, Egbesu Boys, Arewa Peoples' Congress" (vigilantes) in Nigeria and military repression. But such solutions may only make things worse by weakening the State and diverting attention from the need to improve basic institutions of governance, notably the police. At the long run some of these ethnic militias become a menace to the government such as the incessant armd- robbery cases in the West, oil pipeline destruction and kidnapping menace in the Niger Delta, child trafficking/kidnapping in East and the destruction of property and killing in the North in Nigeria (see The Nation Feb., 18; Oct., 18, 2012).

Furthermore, despite lip service paid to stumping out violence successive governments in Nigeria have made little significant effort to ensure that government officials and members of the security forces implicated in violations of civil and political rights, including election-related violence, are held to account. While only small minorities of the human rights abuses that have been documented were directly carried out by federal government officials, the federal government's failure to combat widespread impunity for abuses orchestrated by government and party officials at the state and local level has fostered the unabated continuation of those abuses. Throughout the country, there is an entrenched culture of impunity at all levels of Nigerian government which stated under the military rule and has remained a source of the country's worst human rights abuses since the return to civilian rule in 1999 till date. No one has been held to account for ordering or participating in those atrocities. The Nigerian police routinely torture criminal suspects without trail. The governments' rhetoric and acknowledgement of the problem does not translate to tangible actions to bring those responsible to account or prevent future abuses. More than 11,000 Nigerians were killed in hundreds of separate outbreaks of inter-communal and political violence during the Obasanjo administration in 1999-2003. Many of those deaths came about in large scale and apparently highly organized massacres along ethnic and religious lines. No one has been held to account for their role in organizing or inciting those massacres. During the same period several high profile Nigerians were assassinated in attacks widely believed to be politically motivated, including Attorney General Bola Ige in December 2001.

However, electoral violence in Nigeria is most often carried out by gangs (commonly called thugs) whose members are openly recruited, financed and sometimes armed by public officials. These gangs, comprised primarily of unemployed young men are mobilized to attack their sponsor's rivals, intimidate members of the public, rig elections and protect their patrons from similar attacks. Often, sponsors of electoral violence take time and again to the same criminal gangs, violent campus-based "cults" and other sources to recruit agents of political violence. Those recruited are paid, often very little, and sometimes armed for the sole purpose of

carrying out violent abuses on behalf of their political sponsors (see *The Punch* April 20, 2011). Many individuals facing credible allegations of electoral violence and myriad forms of corruption have been rewarded with positions of influence and power by the government. Anambra State political God-father Chris Uba during President Obasanjo administration remained a member of the PDP board of trustees. Chris Uba's brother Andy received the presidency's political support for his bid for the governorship of Anambra State despite his implication in corrupt activities and his campaign team's open recruitment of cult gangs to intimidate electoral opponents during President Olusengun Obasanjo administration all these serve as a reference point.

Moreover, according to the Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) and UNDP (2003 cited in Aniekwe & Kushie 2011) the most important common factor in the causes of conflict today is the phenomenon of political corruption. The concentration of resources in the state makes the possession of political power very lucrative and the competition for political positions very intense. As Richards Joseph observed Nigeria's present and future depend upon a prior understanding of the nature, extent and persistence of a certain mode of political behaviour, and of its social and economic ramifications (quoted in Aniekwe & Kushie 2011). This mode of political behaviour is the 'prebendal culture' which sees politics as the clearing house for jobs, contract, and official plunder. In Joseph's words: Democratic politics and prebendal politics are two sides of the same coin in Nigeria; each can be turned over to reveal the other...The system of prebendal politics enables divergent groups and constituencies to seek to accommodate their interest ... The system is often wasteful, unproductive, and contributes to the increasing affluence of the relative few, paltry gains for a larger number, and misery for the great majority of people. Since it is a self-justifying system which grants legitimacy to a pattern of persistent conflict, and since its modus operandi is to politicise ethnic, religious and linguistic differences, it serves to make the Nigerian polity a simmering cauldron of un-resolvable tension over which a lid must regularly be clamped, and just as regularly removed (Joseph 1991 quoted in Aniekwe & Kushie, 2011).

7.3 Ted Robert Gurr Relative Deprivation Theory and Nigerian Experience

Ted Robert Gurr explains in *Why Men Rebel* (1970) that instead of an absolute standard of deprivation, a gap between expected and achieved welfare creates collective discontent. This theory also applies to individuals who find their own welfare to be inferior to that of others to whom they compare themselves. "Relative deprivation' is the term... used to denote the tension that develops from a discrepancy between the "ought" and the "is" of collective value satisfaction, and that disposes men to violence." This gap between an individual's expected and achieved welfare results in collective discontent. However, the concept of relative deprivation dates back to ancient Greece. Aristotle articulated the idea that revolution is driven by a *relative* sense or feeling of inequality, rather than an *absolute* measure. According to Gurr (quoted in Aniekwe & Kushie 2011) "For Aristotle the principal cause of revolution is the aspiration for economic or political equality on the part of the common people who lack it, and the aspiration of oligarchs for greater inequality than they have, that is, a discrepancy in both instances between what people have of political and economic goods relative to what they think is justly theirs." According to Walter Garrison Runciman (1966) defines the prerequisite of "relative" deprivation as follows (where individual A feels deprived of object X): individual A does not have X; individual A wants to have X; individual A knows of other persons who have X; individual A believes obtaining X is realistic. For Ted Robert Gurr (quoted in Aniekwe and Kushie 2011) further asserted that: "The primary source of the human capacity for violence appears to be the frustration-aggression mechanism... the anger induced by frustration... is a motivating force that disposes men to aggression, irrespective of its instrumentalities." However, Gurr was not the first in his field to propose a link between frustration and aggression. Dollard, Millard, et al. (cited in Aniekwe & Kushie 2011) were the first to propose the theory, postulating that frustration leads men to act aggressively. Looking at the rate of unemployment and corrupt activities in Nigeria, it can be deduced that the high rate of unemployment in the country is a function of leadership failure and there is significant relationship between unemployment and youth unrest in the country, consequent this notion can be link to cause of Niger Delta militancy and the Boko Haram violence activities in Nigeria. That is Nigerian youth are frustrated due to insincerity of her government and the resultant effect is aggression and wicked act manifested as terrorism like the Northern Islamic Sect popularly called Boko Haram in the North and the kidnapping menace in the south-south (see *The Nation* Nov., 14 2012; *The Punch* Nov., 30 2012).

Moreover, when a large group of highly educated individuals enter the work force and levels of unemployment are high, the individuals may feel over-qualified and disappointed relative to what they expected to gain from their education. Presumably individuals pursue higher education with the expectation that additional studies or training will help them find better jobs. As a result, well-educated individuals may feel greater discontent from unemployment than those who did not expect such grand employment opportunities. This socioeconomic discontent, in turn, may result in political violence. Consequently, "Economic Globalization and Transnational Terrorism: A Pooled Time-Series Analysis," by Quan Li & Drew Schaub (2004), asks whether economic globalization increases or decreases transnational terrorist incidents inside countries. Globalization may be tied closely to relative deprivation, in the sense that greater access to information about people in other countries

increases awareness of one's relative standing in the world. Li & Schuab hypothesize that increased globalization leads to greater levels of international terrorism because trade makes it easier for terrorists to carry out attacks across borders. Based on a sample of 112 countries from 1975 to 1997, their findings show that the economic development of a country and greater trade openness reduce the number of terrorist incidents inside the country. Their finding that economic development decreases the likelihood of terrorism is an interesting example of an economic indicator's effect on terrorism. Corroborating the above view, S. Brock Blomberg & Gregory D. Hess (2008), provide a more nuanced empirical analysis of economic development as a determinant of terrorism:

They find that economic development is positively correlated with transnational terrorism, particularly in higher income countries. However, in lower income countries this trend reverses, and economic development is negatively related to transnational terrorism. The authors point to the importance of considering terrorist groups' political motivations. They say "interestingly, radicalism, separatism, and other ideological motivations for terrorism that appear to be intrinsically noneconomic may actually stem from underlying economic conditions." They make the case that economic factors are important in different ways for higher- and lower-income countries. This could be due to a phenomenon similar to relative deprivation theory, in which those of different economic brackets view changes in economic factors differently.

Consequently, the above position might have informed the belief in some quarters that the rise of the Boko Haram and militancy in the Niger Delta cannot be separated from the chronic poverty swimming in the country. The terrible economic condition arising from years of neglect and deprivation on the part of the political class against this part of the country. Additionally, statistics has shown that there is a wide gap between the North and other parts of Nigeria in terms of economic development, thus, the Northern states and core states in the Niger Delta rank low in all economic indices and this has prompted youths to engage in act of violence (Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013).

The annual increase of unemployed and without corresponding industries (space) to adsorbed the youths in Nigeria is largely responsible for the emergence of conflict groups such as the Boko Haram, Kidnapping and other social vices. It is very uncommon, if not totally impossible, for someone with a gainful employment to engage in irrational killing and willful destruction of national properties. Thus, groups like Boko Haram and Niger Delta militancy draw their mercenaries from the thousands of unemployed and illiterate youth in the society. Due to this prevailing low economic atmosphere groups like Boko Haram and Niger Delta militancy draw their foot soldiers mainly from the unemployed youths who have been pushed into a condition of poverty by the social and economic contradictions which exists within the capitalist mode of production and by extension deprive the workers their values, that is , a configuration that pass wealth to the few. The point to be tense out in the above observations, the insurgency of Boko Haram and the incessant oil pipeline/kidnapping activities in Niger Delta emerges not only because of the religious fanaticism of western ideals or the crisis of federalism as some literature have claimed but rather because of the prevailing socio-economic situation rocking the country. This much has been confirmed by different statistics relating to the economic situation of the country. According to Subair (2012 cit. in Adebisi 2012) quoting the figures from the National Bureau of Statistics, submitted that: Poverty in Nigeria is rising with almost 98% individuals living less on \$1 a day despite the strong growth of GDP.....the percentage of Nigerians living in absolute poverty those who can afford only the bare essentials of food, shelter and clothing ---rose to 60.9 per cent in 2010, compared with 54.7 per cent in 2004. *Moreover under the Jonathan administration domestic and foreign debt have risen to unprecedented proportion such that as at March 2011, foreign debt rose to \$5.23bn, March 2012 \$5.91, 13% while domestic debt as at march 2011 rose to #5.07 trillion* (see The Punch July 7, 2012)

This depressing economic indicators with the preponderant of Nigerians living below the poverty line, is no doubt, a possible cause of social discontent and the type of violence being witnessed in the North arising from the Islamic Sect (Boko Haram) and Niger Delta Militancy in south-south part of the country. The northern states of the country have feared worse in all indices of economic development in the country. A survey carried out by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS cited in Adebisi 2012) showed that the North-East and North-West Geo – Political Zones are the poorest regions in Nigeria. It is instructive to observe that the stronghold of the Boko Haram sect is in the North-East and North-West Geo-Political Zones of the country. Thus, so far in this review, there is a relationship between socioeconomic condition and violence in Nigeria. The connection between economic deprivation and tendency for violent acts affirmed the position of Robert T. Gurr, who credited for the theory of Relative Deprivation. Gurr has argued that a gap in the value expectation and value capability of a people, may lead to violence (Gurr 1970). Thus, people who are socially and economically deprived without the basic necessities of life, would in no distance time, challenge their perceived exploiters in the system.

Corroboration the argument above Adebisi (2012), while citing the publications of the World Bank and United Nations further stressed the dreadful economic condition prevailing in Northern Nigeria. According to him, the three Geo-Political Zones in the North are trailing their Southern counterpart in terms of Human Development

Index (HDI). “in terms of geographical distribution, the highest concentration of poverty, at close to 70 per cent of the population, is in the North-East, followed by the North-West and North-Central in approximately the same proportion of more than 60 per cent of the population. The zone with the least proportion of poverty incidence is the South-East at about 33 per cent, closely followed by the South-West at about 42 per cent, and South-South at about 50 per cent.” The tendency for an average person in the North who is poor and unemployed to resort to violence is very high, moreover, according to Farrell (2012 cited in Adebisi 2012), using a UNESCO report of March 2011, indicated that “GDP rates in the South of the country were double that of the North”, the main theme of his observations accentuate the need of dissatisfied youths parading in the North. The reality today is that a large proportion of Nigerians living in abject poverty reside in the Northern States. This situation is little quite different from those in the Niger Delta. The destruction of farm-land and the ecosystem by multilateral companies without reconstruction and development in the past has cumulated to all sorts of youth social unrest and youths picking arms against the Nigerian Government. From the foregoing literature, without much ado, the poor socio-economic condition rocking the country is a precursor to conflicts and violence in Nigeria and the act of aggressiveness and wickedness demonstrated by various groups show the act of frustration arising from the system against the government which has misappropriate and mismanage the resources of the country. This is against social contract conception that the entirety of Nigerians swore to defend and uphold.

However, in a study, “Kto Kogo?” Alan Krueger and David Laitin (2008), expanded the literature on economic determinants of terrorism by examining both target countries and countries of origin for terrorist events. To describe terrorist attacks, they look at who, to whom, and where. Their results suggest that economic status is of little importance for terrorist national origins, but an important characteristic of terrorist targets. Targets are generally better off economically, while political repression is a better determinant for the national origins of terrorism. “Those who are repressed politically tend to terrorize the rich, giving international terrorist events the feel of economic warfare [...] The *kto* [who] is political; the *kogo* [to whom] economic.” These findings serve as a useful point of departure from which to examine the economics of target countries. Additionally, the research reminds us that different factors may determine who becomes a terrorist and where attacks are perpetrated.

Conclusion

A historical appraisal of Nigeria political system reveals an entrenched culture of political and electoral violence juxtaposed with materialism and monetary inducement in voting. The preview also reveals signs of high violence than the previous years even though the level of political awareness over the past four years has risen marginally. Violence in Nigerian has been on the rise since the resurface of civilian government in 1999. The level, magnitude and the machinery applied and employed by perpetrators keep evolving. From the literature in this paper, the Nigerian government or the political class are behind various violence activities in the country arising from policies failure, celebrating and entertaining corrupt leaders, human rights abuse and so on. However, the political class seeks after their parochial and egoistic interest and undermining the Nigerian project. Cross-carpeting and political rift have become order of the day. This point explains the internal crisis rocking the PDP that has assumed its ugly face in President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan’s administration sends a danger signal to the nations stability, security and might propel the unthinkable return to military rule. Question then remained unanswered whether the prediction by Former United States Ambassador to Nigeria John Campbell is right or wrong. Whilst emphasis has been laid more on the PDP, the emergence of strong oppositions from ACN, CPC and other parties to form All Progressive Congress (APC) cannot be ignored and coupled with the emergence of New-PDP faction (led by Baraje, Oyelola, Atiku and others PDP bigwigs) that has vowed to unseat President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan for his 2015 presidential ambition (see Vanguard Sept., 4 2013; The Tribune Aug., 18 2013).

In sum, the national security of a nation will be better attained if cognizance is given to the economic and social well-being of her people. In other words, a holistic approach to the understanding of violence will help in the overall development of a country when its citizens are adequately taken care of. A country where the social security of an average citizen is guaranteed may likely be more secured than a country battling with high level of unemployment, poverty, cultural deformity and social discontent among its populace (Obah-Akpowoghah 2012).

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