



Electoral Violence in Nigerian Polity: Causes and Consequences

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ABSTRACT

Nigerian polity over the years has witnessed several electoral processes and elections which have been characterized by various forms of violence. These have equally resulted into negative indices such as political apathy among the electorates, loss of lives and properties, low economic growth, poor standard of living and stunted political development. The paper examines electoral violence and its prevalence in Nigerian polity. The paper focuses on the factors behind the continuous occurrences of electoral violence in almost all the elections conducted in Nigeria at the federal, state and local government levels since independence. The study is a qualitative research which relied on secondary sources of information and anchored on elite theory as its theoretical framework of analysis. The paper finds that poverty, unemployment, financial inducement of elective positions, bad governance and loose security architecture among others are the causes of electoral violence in Nigeria. The paper further reveals that electoral violence creates fear among the electorates and some interested candidates which hinders their political participation and interests resulting in political apathy. The paper posits that electoral violence is an obstacle to good governance, peaceful coexistence and political development in Nigeria. The paper therefore recommends among others, that political education, public enlightenment, eradication of poverty through people oriented government policies and creation of jobs for the idle youths will help to ameliorate the occurrences of electoral violence in Nigeria polity.

Keywords: Electoral Violence, Good Governance, Poverty, Unemployment, Security, Political Education.

INTRODUCTION

Transiting from one government to another in a democratic setting requires one form of election or the other. This means that political transitions involve various forms of preparations for the conduct of elections to choose representatives who will occupy different positions of leadership. This process enables politicians and political parties to involve themselves in different ways to gain advantage towards winning elections. Politics in Nigeria has been very attractive and lucrative to politicians making them to device different means at their disposal to win elections at all cost. In ensuring that their aims of winning election at all cost are achieved, the young unemployed youths are used as instruments to help them to carry out their illicit ventures. These young ones use offensive weapons to bully, intimidate, harass and attack political opponents. In other words, they apply physical force to kill and cause electoral violence.

Electoral violence is the type of violence that is committed during election periods. Igbuzor (2010) defined electoral violence as any act of violence perpetuated in the course of political activities, including thuggery, use of force to disrupt political meetings or voting units with dangerous weapons to intimidate voters. Since independence, the various elections conducted in Nigeria have been characterized by violence. The trends and records show that the phenomenon of electoral violence in Nigeria has continued to thrive unabated. Base on this background, this paper therefore examines electoral violence in Nigerian polity using the following research questions as a guide. What are the causes of electoral violence in Nigeria? Why has electoral violence continued to characterize the Nigeria polity unabated? What are the consequences of electoral violence in Nigeria polity? What should be done to tackle the incidence of electoral violence in Nigeria?

The paper is a qualitative research that relied on secondary source of information and anchored on elite theory as its theoretical framework of analysis. Elite theory is a political tool used to analyze realities within political system. The theory was developed from the popular writings of Mosca, Vilfredo, Pareto and Michel. The theory emanates from political sociology and it is used to explain the political and social relationship among individuals or groups in the societies with regards to decision making, power relations and resources. Kayode (2008) refers to elites in Nigeria as those citizens who have either an occupational or a vocational interest in issues of governance. He further stressed that elites are naturally those inside and outside the apparatus of government, those in the media houses, nongovernmental organizations, and educational institutions whose attitude towards

democratic rule has been informed. This research is timely as it will help to understand the issues of electoral violence and how to stop its occurrences in Nigerian polity.

1.1 Conceptual Clarifications

1.1.1 Violence

It is difficult to have a single and generally accepted definition of the term violence. Rather several definitions of violence have been given by different authorities at different times. World Health Organization (WHO) define violence as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation. Violence is the use of physical force so as to injure, abuse, damage or destroys. The damage inflicted by violence may be physical, psychological or both.

The World Health Organization (WHO) categorizes violence into three, such as self directed violence, Interpersonal violence, Collective violence.

Apart from the above, there are other forms of violence such as Physical abuse, Psychological abuse, Domestic violence, Emotional violence, Sexual violence, Cultural violence, Spiritual violence. In most cases, violence has lifelong traumatic effects which could be physical or mental and also retards economic, social and political developments.

1.2 Electoral Violence

Electoral violence is usually associated with the period of electoral processes or democratic transition in a nation. This may not mean that electoral violence is seasonal or periodical, but the occurrences of it are higher during electioneering period of a nation. Electoral violence has gained currency and assumed a centre stage in political lexicon because of its inherent elements in its procedures. As a result, scholars have been attracted to it and have defined it in many ways. It is therefore difficult to accept a single definition for electoral violence. In other words, there is no single definition for election related violence or a commonly accepted terminology for it. Philips (2010) points to the main approaches and definition to electoral violence, which are mainly constructed around motives for influencing the election. Philips noted that some electoral killings are not motivated by an intention to influence an election in particular with killings in the context of riots or protests. He further pointed out that some violence are motivated by indignation, anger or disappointment with a result and are not necessarily intended to change that result. The United Nations (UN) sees electoral violence as a form of political violence which is often designed to influence an electoral outcome and therefore the distribution of political power. UNDP (2009) defines electoral related violence more broadly as acts or threats or coercion, intimidation or physical harm perpetuated to derail an electoral process.

Hoglund (2009) noted that electoral violence is separated from other forms of political violence by a combination of timing and motives. The time aspect relates to violence carried out during the election period. The objective of electoral violence is to influence the electoral processes and in extension its outcome. Fischer (2002) defined electoral violence as any harm or threat of harm to any person or property involved in the election period. The above definition of Fischer vividly captured the elements of electoral violence but did not explain the targets and the instruments usually used to carry out electoral violence. Igbuzor (2010) opined that electoral violence as any act of violence perpetuated in the course of political activities, including, pre-, during and post election periods and may include any of the following acts, thuggery, use of force to disrupt political meetings or voting at polling units/stations or the use of dangerous weapons to intimidate voters and other electoral process or to cause bodily harm or injury to any person connected with the electoral processes. The above definition showed that electoral violence happens mainly during political activities but unable to point out the perpetrators and the instruments of the perpetrators.

According to Reif (2010) electoral violence is any spontaneous or organized act by political gladiators, party supporters, electoral umpire, voters, or any other actor that occurs during an electoral process, from the date of voter registration to the date of inauguration of a new government, that uses physical harm, intimidation, blackmail, verbal abuse, violent demonstrations, psychological manipulations, or other coercive tactics aimed at exploiting, disrupting, determining, hastening, delaying, reversing or otherwise influencing an electoral process and its outcome. The above definition is very elaborate as it showed the perpetrators, target and their reasons for engaging in electoral violence. Albert (2007) sees electoral violence as all forms of organized acts or threats, physical, psychological, and structural aimed at intimidating, harming, blackmailing a political stakeholder before, during and after an election with a view to determining, delaying or otherwise influencing an electoral process. Ogundiya and Baba (2005) viewed electoral violence as all sorts of riots, demonstrations, party clashes, political assassination, looting, arson, thuggery, kidnapping, spontaneous or not, which occur before, during and after elections. The above definitions from different scholars may not be exactly the same, but has common string that runs across all of them and that is the fact that they all talked about acts that makes voters or opponents of their candidates or party to be uninterested to participate in the electoral process any more.

According to Nwolise (2007) electoral violence refers to form of organized acts or threats, physical, psychological and structural aimed at intimidating, harming, blackmailing a political stakeholder before, during and after an election with a view of determining, delaying or otherwise influencing an electoral process. Also, in the same way, Laako (2007) defined electoral violence as an activity motivated by attempt to affect the results of elections either by manipulating the electoral procedure and participation or by contesting the legitimacy of the results. It might involve voters and candidates intimidation, killing, attacks against their property, forceful displacement, unlawful attentions and rioting. Onuoha (2017) noted that electoral violence is a

recurring phenomenon which has become almost an integral part of the electoral process in Nigeria and other emerging democracies at the casting of ballot papers. It is use to attract undue advantage for an individual or group against another.

The above definitions by various scholars show that electoral violence has similar instruments and targets which the perpetrators of electoral violence use to stop the political aspirations and growth of their opponents. Electoral violence can therefore be defined as any illicit intentions of a political party, candidate or supporters of a candidate or party used to alter the election processes to gain undue advantage for the candidate or party of their choice. This illicit means that constitute electoral violence takes the form of intimidation, fighting with dangerous weapons, disruption of the elections during voting, sporadic shooting to scare the voters, disruption of party gatherings, forceful snatching of ballot boxes among others.

Some scholars see electoral violence as part of political violence. According to Bardel (2016) electoral violence is a subtype of political violence which is a means of controlling and oppressing an individual or groups right to participation in political processes and institutions through the use of emotional, social or economic force, coercion or pressure as well as physical and sexual harm. It may take place in public or in private, including in the family, the general community, online and via media or be perpetuated or condoned by the state.

Kehailia (2014) distinguished eight categories of electoral violence based on who the perpetrators are and why the violence is occurring namely; Party on party electoral violence, Party voter electoral violence, Party state electoral violence, Voter on voter electoral violence, Voter on state electoral violence, State on voter electoral violence, State on party electoral violence and State on state electoral violence.

1.3 Electoral Violence in Nigerian Polity

The history of electoral violence in Nigeria can be traced to the pre- independence era. The various elections conducted in Nigeria before 1960 had evidence of electoral violence. According to Umar (2019), since pre-independence general elections of 1959, politics in Nigeria has been characterized by electoral violence. Nigerian electoral history cannot be told without narrating the incidences of electoral violence which has threatened the corporate existence of her nationhood. Abubakar (2015) noted that the electorates and politicians alike have continued to perpetuate the worst forms of political processes characterized by ugly incidents of electoral violence and electoral malpractice, both at political party level and general elections, unending law suits, crisis of legitimacy, instability and chaos. Odofin and Omojuwa (2007) observed that the various elections held in Nigeria's post independence period have been marked by sharp divisions and distrust and a zero sum attitude which manifest in electoral fraud, serious disputes and high level of violence. The above corroborates the fact that the various elections held in Nigeria between 1999 and 2019 were characterized by electoral violence.

According to Olaniyi (2017) the elections held in 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 were marked by violence as a result of corruption and falsification of results in many places. In a special report issued by Human Rights watch in 2004, it was observed that both Nigeria's federal and state elections in 2003 and local government election in 2004 were marred by serious incidents of violence, which left scores dead and many others injured. The report indicated that in a number of places, elections simply did not take place because of the activities of thugs linked to political parties and candidate who intimidated and threatened voters in order to falsify results. Ojeifo and Okoli (2004) noted that the mayhem unleashed by political thugs in Anambra state following the 2003 elections in which Dr Chris Ngige, a serving Governor was confronted and engage to the extent of being kidnapped in an unprecedented political fisticuffs that set the entire state ablaze was a case of pure electoral violence. They noted that weapons were randomly used and in broad day light, political thugs invaded Awka, Onitsha and Nnewi destroying whatever was in sight. Olaniyi (2017) further noted that the widespread fraud that were recorded during the 2007 elections was the worst in the country's political history, that even the person that was announced winner in the presidential polls admitted the exercise were flawed.

The April 16th 2011 Presidential polls were equally marked by unprecedented violence. A report and document indicated that in many state in the North, people were killed, but the major killing took place in Kaduna were 50 deaths were recorded Kano 30, Gombe 17, Bauchi 16. And Katsina 8, while about 1,500 persons were displaced during the violence act. (Leadership, 2011). Ploch (2012) noted that on the eve of the National assembly elections held on the 9th of April, 2011, a bomb attacked the INEC office in Suleja, Niger state killed at least 10 people and injured several others. Bekoe (2011) opined that there were bomb explosions in the Northern city of Maiduguri, Borno State, where the Boko Haram Islamic militant group is most active. Amnesty international (2011) observed that a few months before the 2011 general elections, over 200 persons had cost their lives in communal unrest of election related matters in plateau state.

The 2007 elections were mostly characterized by electoral violence. In River state, a police station was attacked and burnt down. In Anambra State, the INEC office in Onitsha North, Onitsha South, Nnewi South and a local government office in Awka North were burnt down. In Ekiti State, the 2007 elections equally were characterized by serious electoral violence where the supporters of PDP and AC clashed over the results of the election. Violence also erupted in the Northern states of Kastina and Nasarawa states where soldiers clashed with angry voters. In Oyo State, PDP thugs beat up opposition party official and hijacked ballot boxes (Nwolise, 2007).

The election of 2015 looked a little different from other previous elections because it recorded less violent especially during and after the election. This happened because the incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan conceded defeat even before the counting and announcement of final result was done. Onuoha and Ohumba (2017) remarked that political thuggery and electoral

violence has become a recurring part of the democratic experience of Nigeria, the case of 2015 election presented a sharp contrast by conceding victory to the opponent which averted colossal electoral violence.

2. CAUSES OF ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIAN POLITY

Electoral violence used as instruments in the hands of political actors cannot be absent in the political processes in Nigeria. Gboyega (2004) noted that thuggery and political violence are indispensable instruments in the hands of hungry power seekers. Electoral has become serial and recurring decimal that has become synonymous with Nigerian political processes and transition. Various factors which could account for the use of violence during elections in Nigeria includes among others

1. **Widespread Corruption:** Corruption in Nigeria has become a phenomenon and one of the greatest problems seen in almost every part of Nigeria's life. Corruption seems to overpower all means devised to control it in Nigeria. In other words, corruption fights back all the fights against it in Nigeria. It has rather damaged Nigeria's political culture and caused negative effects on the life of Nigeria citizen. According to Olaniyi (2017) corruption can set the stage for structured violence which can make people feel desperate enough to seek any means of revenge against political authority including violence. Small and light arms proliferate in Nigeria through corrupt access ways. Political thugs are confident in their illicit activities because of the weapons that are readily available for them to carry out various violence activities especially during electoral processes. There is an obvious correlation between corruption and electoral violence in Nigerian polity.
2. **High rate of Unemployment:** Unemployment has been one of the major problems affecting Nigeria as a nation. Rather than reducing, the high rate of unemployment, it continues to increase unabated. The availability of large unemployed persons creates opportunity for the over ambitious Nigerian politicians to recruit able bodied young men and women for their selfish aspirations. The politicians mobilise and recruit the unemployed persons especially the youths as ad hoc workers for electoral violence to intimidate their opponents. The youth remains vulnerable and ready to accept to be used to execute electoral violence activities they are commissioned to do because of the financial inducements from the politician. Mbaya (2013) noted that the cause of political thuggery ranges from joblessness, illiterates with no means of livelihood and impoverishes. According to Olaniyi (2017) nothing is more dangerous than having young educated unemployed youths in millions, who are capable of organizing themselves, they are not only willing tools in the hands of promoting political violence, they are in actual fact capable of over throwing the government of a country. No doubt unemployment which makes the youths to be tools in the hands of overzealous politicians is a major cause of electoral violence in Nigerian polity.
3. **High level of poverty:** Poverty is a situation whereby an individual is not able to meet the basic necessities of life. Most Nigerians finds it difficult to meet the basic needs of life which are feeding, clothing, having shelter. Under these conditions, they cannot afford to send their children to school. This agrees with the claims by some findings that Nigeria is the poverty headquarters of the World. People are mainly poor because they do not have what they are doing for a living. Unemployed youths who are poor and their parents who are supposed to give them support pending when they get job are also poor. The young graduates, who are unable to find jobs, remained poor and impoverished with high tendency to submit themselves to commit electoral violence.
4. **Sit-tight syndrome** – When most Nigerian politicians has tasted power, they find it difficult to transfer as they forget that power is supposed to be transient. Rather, they spend everything at their disposal to remain in power even when the voters are tired of them as their leaders. This is sit- tight syndrome which is very prevalent in most developing nations. Sometimes too, they embark on building a dynasty and family line of leadership. Most political leaders wish and fight for their offspring to continue from where the constitutions require them to stop. They recruit thugs to carry out the exercise of tenure elongation as against the constitutional provisions which usually results into electoral violence.
5. **Politics of god fatherism:** The politics of godfatherism had been very popular in Nigeria polity since her independence. Politicians whom the constitutional stipulations has ended their legitimate administration, constitutes themselves into a legion of king makers and deciders of who must be where politically. These chosen political leaders become stooges in the hands of the past leaders as they reward them as agreed from the beginning. The saying that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely fits into the prism of Nigerian electoral processes. Politics of godfatherism makes mediocrity rather than meritocracy becomes the parameters of recruiting rulers in the polity. Political thugs are recruited as agents by the leaders and their godfathers to carry out the biddings resulting to electoral violence. Okolue (2011) noted that since the returned of democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999 the godfathers have remained a force to be reckoned with as no contestant of political office could achieve his ambition without the blessing of the godfather. Aliyu (2018) remarked that it is the godfather who recruits, finance and empower the political thugs who engages in electoral violence to satisfy the wishes of their sponsors.
6. **Lack of adequate security:** it is the statutory duty of the state is to provide adequate security so as to guarantee the protection of life and property of the citizens. Absence of security in any society gives room to, thuggery and violence. In Nigeria, the enforcement of law and maintenance of order is visibly very weak. Political thugs perpetuate electoral violence during elections with little or no resistance from the law enforcement agents. The police either collude with those who recruit the political thugs to cause electoral violence or close their eyes on the various forms of crimes committed by the thugs and their pay masters. Omojolomoju (2003) noted that most perpetrators of electoral violence and the brains behind them are more often than not, never brought to book as no one has been comprehensively prosecuted for election violence in the country, which has continued to embolden the perpetration to become entrenched in the act. HRW (2011) remarked that the architects, sponsors and perpetrators of electoral violence generally enjoy complete immunity because of both the powers of intimidation they wield and the tacit acceptance of their conduct by

police and government officials at all levels. Nigeria political gladiators capitalized on the loose security architecture to recruit political thugs to carry out electoral violence which characterized the Nigerian polity.

7. **Ethnic politics:** Nigeria is a heterogeneous society parading not less than 250 ethnic groups. The existing affinities between the majority and minority groups in Nigeria have reduced the ethnic to regional based politics. Nigerian politics has in most times followed regional lane which to a reasonable extent has also been defined along religious lane. Ethnic, tribal and religions based polity has caused tremendous electoral violence in Nigerian polity, as each groups tries to outwit the other to be in power to control others.
8. **Failure of Justice System:** There is problem of lack of enforcement of existing laws governing electoral processes in Nigeria. As a result, electoral violence culprits are hardly practically punished for their criminal offences in Nigeria. Even when they are punished, the punishments given are not commensurate with the offences they allegedly committed probably because there is no clear strong legislation against most electoral offences. Any society where penalties are not commensurate with offences committed, impunity thrives. Olaniyi (2018) noted that penalties for acts associated with electoral violence like assault and arson are generally weak, a few years imprisonment at most. He further noted that this contributes to the culture of impunity and underscores the need to review the extant laws. This results in unabated electoral violence.
9. **Bad governance:** Good governance is lacking as poverty, unemployment, infrastructural decay, insecurity, poor standard of living and high mortality rate thrives in Nigeria. Absence of good governance causes lack of confidence and trust by the people which gives rise to electoral violence. In other words electoral violence evolves when there is no good governance and people only wait for the period of elections which gives them the opportunity to express their dismay over the governance even when the channel of expression is not legitimate. Njoku (2012) noted that political violence might occur at different stages of the electoral process either before, during or after the election.
10. **Desperation in Politics:** The Nigerian politicians have developed a culture of impunity and desperation in politics, which to a large extent instigated electoral violence. The humongous salary and allowances of the Nigerian parliamentarians makes the politicians to develop the culture desperation in politics. They fight with every instruments at their disposal to ensure that they get the positions they sought for. Olaniyi (2018) observes that the humongous salary that elected representatives of the people collects every month has been identified as one of the reasons the electoral process is always marred with pervasive violence as every contestant in the electoral process wants to win at all cost and also get a share of the huge emoluments elected officials collect from the national treasury.
11. **The culture and character of greed;** the politicians obstructs others from entering the corridor of power by all means and ensure that only their puppets or family members enters there. In Kwara state, the Sarakis maintained a political dynasty that allowed members of the family to aspire to any position they wish. In a bid to change the dynasty through a slogan called "Otoge" meaning "enough is enough", a lot of electoral violence characterized the 2019 elections in Kwara state. Also in Edo State the gubernatorial election of 2020, Oshomole, Ize Iyamu and Obaseki employed various forms of electoral violence to carry out their intentions. This is also linked to money politics, religious intolerance and refusal to accept defeat.

3. Effects OF Electoral Violence In Nigeria Polity

Electoral violence has caused adverse effects in the Nigerian political environment, in several ways. Electoral violence has resulted into various forms of unrest and violent protest across Nigeria. This is to the extent that electoral violence has become the norm in Nigerian's political processes. It has become a type of "new normal" in Nigerian political process to the extent that its absence is seen as abnormal in any election in Nigeria. Election observers from international community are usually comments on its occurrence and magnitude. It was only in the 2015 presidential election that electoral violence recorded a low rate primarily because the People Democratic Party (PDP) presidential candidate decided to accept defeat early enough and appeal to his supporters to eschew violence. PDP supporters did not feel happy with Jonathan's action but it has saved national electoral violence.

Electoral violence results in loss of lives which has caused anguish, tears of sorrow and devastation. Most victims of electoral violence survive with serious injuries that they suffer till the end of their lives. This causes burden to their family members as some remains incapacitated for life. Unfortunately, their pay masters whom they committed the atrocities for usually, abandons them to suffer. Electoral violence causes death of innocent lives. This gives trauma to the families of such victims. Abubakar (2015) noted that thugs affected innocent people as they hardly lay hands onto their target; they attempt to attack everybody they come across. There is loss of properties associated with electoral violence. Government properties, vehicles, houses and individual investments such as buildings, petrol stations, farm lands and other valuables are lost to electoral violence. Electoral violence leaves some persons homeless and unnecessary dependants on friends and family members. Some children are rendered orphans and remained hunger with little or no sure means of source of fund to feed or attend schools.

Electoral violence encourages political apathy. This is a situation whereby citizens develop low interest in political process because of what they witness during elections. The people are no longer interested in taking part in electoral activities such as registration of voters, attending political rallies and voting.. Electoral violence makes people to stay away from voting thereby allowing unwanted candidates to come to power. Electoral violence characterizes the electoral process; it leads to various forms of insecurity that threatens the peace of the people. This affects the peace; harmony and mutual coexistence and breeds disunity among various groups in the country Businesses are threatened and insecure thereby leading to poor income. Electoral violence discourages foreign investment. Foreign investors are usually being scared to invest when the security in place is not guaranteed.

Electoral violence creates humanitarian crises and derails government lofty economic and social policies. A harsh situation of electoral violence leads to destruction of home which makes people homeless, thereby creating internally displaced person. Electoral violence reduces the credibility of electoral system, and the entire democratic system. The rule of law, the electoral law and other political architecture becomes doubtful to be relied on. The political leaders' losses legitimacy, as people do not have confidence on the election results any more. It leads to bad governance and creates bad political culture where illicit ways of carrying out political processes becomes the order of the day. Electoral violence leads to militarization of politics. Small and light weapons becomes proliferated which creates a situation of warlord districts and survival of the fittest. Most African nations such as Somalia, Ethiopia, Egypt Libya, and Algeria among others are experiencing the consequences of electoral violence.

It disenfranchises the electorates as they are discouraged by what they see happening. This is another way of violating fundamental human rights of the people. It portrays the country's bad image before other countries. This affects the tourism sector. It also stimulates brain drain, a situation where the highly educated personnel of the country leaves the country for greener pastures. The adverse effects of brain drain to a country cannot be underestimated.

4. CONCLUSION

The paper examined electoral violence in the Nigerian polity. The paper looked at the meaning of electoral violence and, the factors propagating the phenomenon. The paper anchored on elite theory as its theoretical frame work of analysis. The paper observed that poverty, unemployment and lack of security among others are the root cause and propelling factors behind electoral violence in Nigeria. The paper concluded that electoral violence has serious effects on Nigeria polity in various ways ranging from bad governance, disenfranchisement, heightened insecurity, bad image and discouragement of foreign investors. The paper is of the opinion that political education and aggressive public enlightenment, good governance and employment of the youths will help to discourage electoral violence in Nigeria political processes.

Nigeria political processes have been characterized by various degrees of electoral violence. This has done serious harms on her democracy while her image has been dented both locally and internationally. Nigeria's democratic integrity has been on the low ebb as a result of the effects of electoral violence. It is therefore imperative to abate electoral violence that bedevils the nation so as to rejuvenate the confidence on democratic processes. This could be done if the following is taken into consideration.

1. Political education should be given adequate attention in the country. This will enable the electorate especially the youths that are usually used as instrument of violence and thuggery to refrain from their illicit activities. Experts on political education should be engaged to be part of political and electoral processes aimed at carrying out professional jobs and why they should participate on the political processes in a legitimate way. They should educate the citizens on the dangers of electoral violence on the individuals and the nation in general.
2. Independent electoral malpractices Tribunals should be set up to investigate and try all known cases of electoral violence and punish the perpetrators that are found guilty. This will deter intended persons from involving themselves in such criminal acts in the future.
3. Government should initiate policies that will help to generate employment for the youths and discourage the youths from making themselves a readily available instruments of electoral violence. Government should create conducive atmosphere for entrepreneurs to create jobs as it is obvious that government alone may not be able to provide jobs for the teeming populace.
4. Government should enable political socialization that will involve religious leaders and traditional rulers in preaching to the people against electoral violence. Other stakeholders such as civil society and the media should be part of the public enlightenment as a form of sensitization exercise that will help in discouraging youths from making themselves available as instruments for electoral violence instruments.
5. Security agents should do their jobs professionally by remaining neutral when carrying out their jobs. Units should be created to monitor the security agents especially during the electoral every period.
- 6 The electoral umpire must try to be non-bias and neutral when discharging their duties. This will make people to have confidence in them. Corruption which is notice in all aspects of life of the average Nigeria should be adequately controlled through modern digital mechanism..

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