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The Impact of Social Identities and Public Goods on Electoral Violence in Africa:Lessons for a Better Election Administration

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Abstract - The long period of colonial rule in Africa came to an end in the four decades between 1950 to 1990 and revolutionized the political landscape of the continent. Apart from the springing up of independent states in the continent these four decades witnessed the resurgence of nationalism, not against colonial rule but within the new states as ethnic and religious enclaves which were isolated during the colonial period saw the new state as one in which its objective within it is to gain political hegemony and control the resources for the benefit of its own enclave – a situation which has become the primary source of political competition and violence. Armed with this observation, this study examined the linkages between social identities (ethnicity and religious polarization) and public goods (dividend of political office) and electoral violence in these emergent African democracies drawing evidence from Nigeria and Kenya. The methodology adopted in the study is content analysis based on data obtained from the POLITY IV and State Failure Datasets. This data was augmented with information obtained from electoral bodies – the Independent National Electoral Commission and Independent Electoral and Boundary in Nigeria and Kenya respectively and some other secondary sources (books, periodicals etc). Result of the data analysis revealed that there is a linkage between ethnicity, religious polarization, dividends of political office and electoral violence. Based on this the study made recommendations to alleviate this problem which includes the institutionalization of fiscal federalism and reorientation of the electorate on the prerequisite of peaceful elections.

Keywords: ethnicity, religious polarization, election, dividend of political office, electoral violence, democracy.

I. Introduction

Since the 1990's Africa has been in the process to chart its path towards the institutionalization of sustainable democratic institutions as a prerequisite for accountability in governance and to lay the foundation for sustainable development. This is so because support for democratization has primarily being used as an instrument to achieve accountability, install broadly legitimate governments and help in mediating disputes among the diverse ethnic groups that were put together by colonial powers under one political umbrella (Dercon & Gutierrez-Romero, 2010: 2). This is necessary for the building of institutional frameworks which are expected to improve economic performance and act also as a framework for dispute settlement to reduce the occurrence of political based violence (Soudriette & Pilon, 2007; Fearon & Laitin, 2003). But one imagine characteristics of modern day democracy is election. Election is the process through which the people upon whose shoulders the burden of sovereignty rest directly or through their representative choose through a competitive and legitimate means holders of public office for a specified period of time. for there to be an election in a credible sense the following criteria must be observed:

- Election as a process must involve the people (populace) or representative (adults, electoral colleges, etc).
- Election must be competitive in that two or more candidates must be involved; each capable of wining.
- Election must be legitimate in that there must be a legal framework with which a winner must be declared and there must be rules governing the pre-election, election proper and post-election conducts of candidates and their supporters.

While this process has been the bedrock of the success of western democracies it has turned out to be the "root" of most "political evil" in Africa. to this, Dercon & Gutierre-Romero (2010: 20) observed that:

> With few exceptions the recent record of African elections has raised concerns that in ethnically divided societies. Competitive electoral processes could in fact be destabilizing by widening existing divisions and deepening divisions between winners and losers.

In a similar vein, Collier and Rohrer (2008) opined that elections in poor African countries have tended to significantly increase proness to civil war and various manifestations of violence. This is so because according to previous studies the high stakes of the dividends of political offices makes politicians to resort to a variety of means including vote buying, intimidation, invoking of ethnic sentiments, electoral violence among others to ensure victory in the poll (Lindbery, 2003; Wilkinson, 2004, Schaffer, 2007; Vicente, 2007). Since there is no institutionalized framework to mediate over

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who gets what, how and why from the land and the resources controlled by the state, ethnic and religious enclaves therefore sees winning an election by a member of the group as a quest for survival of their social group because elections in Africa is a "zero-sum game" and a "winner-takes-all" process. Since the social group whose "son" holds political power also control and invariably owns the resources of the state (Bratton, 2008; De Smedt, 2009; Peters, 2009; Thomson, 2004). These observations generates therefore some over-arching questions that will shape the forms of this paper:

i. Is there any linkage between the politicization of ethnic cleavages and electoral violence in Africa?
ii. Do religious polarization increase the tendency of electoral violence occurring?
iii. Do the dividends of political office increase the likelihood of electoral violence occurring?
iv. Anchored around these questions our a-priori expectations are:

Hypothesis One: There is a significant relationship between the dividends of political office and electoral violence in Africa.

The logical behind this hypothesis is that most African states are rentier states that depends largely on the exploitation of natural resources and the junk of this resources is appropriated by holders of political office. This makes this office to become a means to an end - the accumulation of wealth by the individual occupying the office and patronages to members of his ethno-religious enclave. The attractiveness of political office due to the dividends that accrue from it makes election to occupy this position a do-or-die affair and infact a matter of life and death. This provides a fertile ground which breeds electoral violence. Since ethno-religious enclaves enjoys the benefit of its member occupying a political office we therefore assume that ethnicity and religious polarization may increase the tendency of electoral violence occumsy. Hence we our a-priori expectation are:

Hypothesis Two: Ethnicity increases the likelihood of electoral violence in Africa.

Hypothesis Three: Religious polarization increases the tendency for violence occurring in an electoral process.

To validate these hypotheses, we shall analyze data drawn from two African countries that are noted for electoral violence and heterogeneous in terms of ethnic and religious composition, to this end Nigeria and Kenya will be used as cases.

Electoral Violence: A Conceptualization

Before discussing the state of the debate on the linkages between ethnicity and religious polarization in one hand and electoral violence, it is imperative here to first conceptualize election and electoral violence.

As a political concept, election is a set of activities leading to the selection of one or more persons out of many to serve in positions of authority in a society (Nwachukwu & Uzodi, 2012). It is the institutional technology of democracy and has the potential to make government both more accountable and also legitimate (Collier 2007). To Sodaro (2001) the essence of this concept is that people should have the right to determine who governs them, hold them accountable for their actions and also impose legal limits to the government's authority by guaranteeing certain rights and freedom. But, although it's the engine room of a democratic setting, its experiment in Africa has been one of controversies since rather than serve as a means of political cohesion, election has gradually become synonymous with violence in the continent. Sharing this view, Segun (2013) opined that:

> There seems to be a growing body of literature on the relationship between democracy and violent conflict… election an integral feature of democracy has equally generated much controversies.

Other studies have linked democracy with an increase in the risk of armed conflict in newly democratizing nations (Mansfield & Snyder 2007), it also heighten the probability of violent conflict in post-conflict societies (Jarstad 2008) and increases the risk of political violence in low income countries (Collier 2009). But of these controversies one that is most rampant is electoral violence. To Nwolise (2007) electoral violence refers to:

> A form of organized acts or threats – physical, psychological and structural aimed at intimidating, harming (or) blackmailing a political stakeholder before, during and after an election with a view of determining, delaying or otherwise influencing an electoral process (Nwolise 2007:133).

In similar vein, Laakso (2007) sees electoral violence as:

> An activity motivated by an 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 candidate's intimidation, killing, attacks against their property, forceful displacement, unlawful detentions and rioting (Laakso 2007: 227-228).

Ojo (2014) conceptualized electoral violence to mean:

> Any act of violence perpetrated 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 stations, or 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 (Ojo 2014:4).

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In his own definition, Anifowoshe (1982) sees electoral violence to involve:

> The use or threat of physical act carried out by an individual or individuals within a political system against individual or individuals/ property with the intent to cause injury or death to persons and/or destruction of property; and whose objective, choice of target or victims, surrounding circumstances, implementation and affects political significance.

It is a form of anomia participation in the electoral process (Elaigwu 2006) done with the intent to 'delay, disrupt or derail a poll and determine the winners of competitive races for political office" (UNDP 2009:4). Fischer (2002) operationalized electoral violence to include:

> Any random or organized act that seeks to determine, delay or otherwise influence an electoral process through threat, verbal intimidation, hate speech, discrimination, physical assault, forced 'protection', blackmail, destruction of property or assassination (Fischer 2002:18).

This has four main characteristics:

- It occurs in other to achieve a specific political objective which is to affect the various aspects of the electoral process and thus its outcomes (Hoglund 2009:415; FES 2001:1).
- It may occur in any stage of the electoral process. Three of these stages are the pre-election period, the Election Day and the post-election period (Sisk 2008; IPI 2010).
- It provides different actors. These include government forces (police and ministry), political parties (leaders, members and sympathizers) and non-state armed groups like militia, rebels and paramilitary (Laakso 2007; UNDP 2009).
- It includes such activities as threats, coercion, obstruction, abduction, detention, assault, torture, and murder as well as rioting, plundering and destroying properties, distracting campaign activities and destroying materials, disturbing public gathering and educational activities, shutting down offices, establishing 'no go' areas (Marco 2009; UNDP 2009).
- It is target specific. Usual target includes electorates, candidates, election officers, observers and media groups, electoral materials such as ballot boxes, campaign materials, registration data, polling results, electoral facilities such as voting and tallying stations and electoral events such as campaign meetings and demonstrations (Hoglund 2009; USAID 2010).

Evidence from existing studies show that electoral violence is a recurring phenomenon and has come to become almost an aspect of the electoral process in Africa as the casting of ballot papers. In his study of 57 countries that held elections in 2001, Fischer (2002) observed that violence occurred in 14 of them which represent 24.5% of the poll data. This observation is consistent with Bekoe's later findings that showed that 19-25% of elections in Africa was marred by electoral violence, chief among the affected countries and those that have deep-rooted ethno-religious cleavages with Egypt, Nigeria, Liberia and Zimbabwe topping the list (Bekoe 2012; Sisk 2008; IDEA 2006). Several attempts have been made to explain this phenomenon. To some scholars electoral violence occurs because political office is considered a resource which must be fought for and acquired at all cost, which once acquired is a perpetual gate-way for the betterment of the individual consolidating and wielding it, his clan and those that comes from his ethno-religious cleavage. Sharing this opinion, Fortman (2000) posited that:

> In the Asian context, political power is considered as a major social good because those who hold it, also have a significant control over a variety of other social goods.

So violence becomes meritable when elections pose a real probability for transforming the prevailing power configuration (Fortman 2000; EISA 2010). Further evidence shows that both ruling and opposition political parties use violence (Mehler 2007) while opposition groups also employ it to express their grievances over the electoral process or outcomes when they loss. The ruling elite are not exceptions to this, studies also indict them. It is suggested that the ruling elite take arbitrary and suppressive measures against their political opponents due to deep-seated fears of losing political power (Mehler 2007; Laakso 2007). In sum, this shows that competitive elections are prone to conflict and violence due to the stakes involved. The stakes of winning and losing a political office becomes extremely high within the contexts of patronage and identity politics (Sisk 2009) and when the benefits of office is put into consideration (Sisk 2008; Chandra 2007; Thompson & Kuntz 2006; IDEA 2009; Hoglund 2009).

Adolfo et al (2012) in their own study identified two root causes of electoral violence. The first is structural factors which are related to the underlying power structures prevalent in new and emerging democracies, such as informal patronage systems, poor governance, exclusionary politics, and the socio-economic uncertainties of losing political power in states where almost all power is concentrated at the centre. Secondly, factors related to the electoral process and the electoral process itself, such as failed or flawed elections, election fraud and weak or manipulated institutions and institutional rules governing the electoral process.

Taking a step further in the attempt to explain electoral violence in Africa, several studies have linked

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electoral violence to ethnicity and religious polarization (Segun 2013; Thomson 2004; Osita 2007; Harris & Reilly 1998; Adebanwi 2004; Abbass 2008; Cervellati & Sunde 2011; Jega 2002; Onapajo 2012; Adeyemo 2009; Alemika 2001; Obakhedo 2011; Agbehonou 2014; Nwachukwu & Uzodi 2012). This is so because the resources of the state in Africa are concentrated at the centre and each ethnic group compete for its control which can only be achieved legitimately through the acquisition, consolidation and use of state power. As a result of this, political mobilization rather than to have an over-arching nationalistic tone is more of an ethno-religious mobilization. Drawing similar conclusion, Hoglund (2009), Seifer (2012) and Oyugi (2000) posited that existing ethno-religious cleavages within the society in Africa remains the most important factor which determine whether elections become peaceful or violent.

II. Theoretical Framework of Analysis

This study examines the role of dividends of political office, ethnicity and religious polarization in the reoccurrence of electoral violence in Nigeria and Kenya. To this end, the relative deprivation theory is adopted as a framework of analysis because of its ability to encapsulate the competition for power and resources between ethnic and religious enclaves in Nigeria and Kenya and the resultant violence.

The relative deprivation theory uses the frustration-aggression modelexplain why ethnic competition give rise to violence. The main tenet of this ubiquitous theory is that the potential for collective violence varies strongly with the intensity and scope of relative deprivation among members of a collectivity (Gurr 1970:24). The key to this postulation is 'deprivation' which has been identified as an essential source of discontent. To Dowse & Hughes (1986) 'deprivation' as used by relative theorists refers to:

> The ideas that people have on the gap between what they believe they are entitled to and what they receive or believe they can attain, whether or not objective observes would consider the deprivation real or apparent (Dowse & Hughes 1986: 412).

To Esman (1994) the concept of relative deprivation refers to:

> The gap between a group's current status and prospects and what appears to be reasonable and legitimate expectations, or to a gap between what comparable groups are believed to enjoy and what is available in material, cultural and political satisfactions to the collectivity and its members (Esman 1994:293).;

The theoretical prospects of this theory are derived from three assumptions:

- The resources in a given political scenario are limited. for example political office.
- One ethno-religious group's gain is a loss to the other. As Gurr (1971: 125) puts it "the benefit of one's group is an automatic loss for all others. Life is an inelastic pie".
- The frustration of being deprived access to state resources will prompt the losing ethno-religious enclave to be frustrated and then resort to aggression.

Developing these assumptions into a robust and encompassing theory, Ted Gurr in his seminal work "Why Men Rebel" conceptualized 'relative deprivation' as the:

> Tension that develops from a discrepancy between the 'ought' and the 'is' of collective value satisfaction and this disposes men to violence (Gurr 1971:23).

He went further to explain that the discrepancies between what people want, their value expectations and what they actually gain is the driving force for political discontent and by extension electoral violence. To Dowse & Hughes (1986) relative deprivation is the degree to which the individual feels deprived and, as such is related to anger and aggression. This existence of frustration to Gurr (1971) always leads to some forms of violence. But deprivation on its own do not directly lead to violence. Rather it depends on the collective intensity of the level of deprivation. To this, Ted Gurr averred that:

> The intensity of relative deprivation varies strongly in terms of the average degree of perceived discrepancy between value expectations and value capabilities… (violence therefore depends on) the severity of depression and inflation (Gurr 1971: 87).

Explaining this phenomenon further, Dowse & Hughes (1896) opined that:

> Whether or not deprivation eventually culminates in violence depends on a number of factors, among them the intensity and scope of the deprivation. Most people at sometime experience deprivation of one sort or another but this rarely leads to collective violence. The deprivations then must be sufficiently intense and experienced by a sufficiently broad sector or a strategically located sector of the society in order to create a potential for civil violence. As a corollary, the intensity of the perceived deprivation is related to the intensity of the violence (Dowse & Hughes 1986: 412).

This deprivation originate from the social processes which create the gap between what people believe they are entitled to and what they receive (Dowse & Hughes 1986: 413).

When deprivation reaches a high level of intensity it give rise to problems known as societal insecurity. Societal insecurity occurs when states are "undermined" or destabilized by "their' societies,

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becoming threatened or weakened in terms of social cohesion and identity. To Saleh (2013: 166) societal insecurity occurs when people within a certain geographically defined state assume that their identity is threatened. This perceived threat could be triggered and bolstered by a collective feeling of relative deprivation, be it social, economic, political or cultural. This also arose from a general sense of the failure of the state to meet people's value expectations which they believe they are rightfully entitled to which can eventually lead to disorientation amongst its members and discontentment on the part of the people towards the state (Saleh, 2013).

The employment of this theory as a framework of analysis in this study lays on the robustness of the theory to explain political violence arising from discontent in a heterogenous state. it is a general principle that state resources are scared and the political configuration of most African states makes it difficult to distribute these resources equitably among all ethnic groups due largely to the zero-sum nature of politics in these states. As a result the resources whether social, politica or economic is not as Gurr (1970) said an "elastic pie" hence there is a sense of "do-or-die" in the competition for power during the electoral process. This gives a solid foundation for the study of electoral violence along ethno-religious lines.

III. Research Methodology

Data for this study was obtained from secondary sources. The main source of information on electoral violence was the POLITY IV and State Failures Datasets. The POLITY IV dataset is a widely used data series in political science research (Gretchen & Tufis 2003) and contains annual information on the democratic condition and processes of all countries with a population greater than 500,000, and covers the period between 1800-2013. With population estimate at 150 million and 45 million respectively, both Nigeria and Kenya are adequately represented in the dataset. The State Failure dataset is complied by the Political Instability Task Force and catalogues information on nearly 1,300 political, demographic, economic, social and environmental variables for all countries of the world from 1955 to 2015. The dataset includes major episodes of state failures which consist of five different kinds of internal political crisis-political (electoral) violence, revolutionary wars, ethnic wars, adverse regime changes and genocides. The State Failure dataset is compiled from existing databases provided by the World Bank, United Nations, US Censes Bureau and other organizations and independent scholars along with data developed specifically by the Political Instability Task Force.

The data obtained shall be augmented with information from other sources like the database of the Independent National Electoral Commission (Nigeria) and Independent Electoral and Boundary Commission (Kenya). The reports from the agencies of the Nigerian and Kenya government, gazettes, reports of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), periodicals, journals, books, monographs, newspapers among others shall be adequately consulted. These will be compared to ensure consistency and correctness after which it shall be analyzed using qualitative and quantitative method of data analysis.

IV. Data Analysis

The empirical analysis of electoral violence in this study uses the Polity IV and State Failure datasets. The Polity IV datasets, compiled through the Polity IV project, covers all major, independent states with a total population of over 500,000 between the years of 1800 and 2009. Polity IV codes data concerning democratic and autocratic patterns of authority as well as regime changes. The State Failure dataset is compiled by the Political Instability Task Force and catalogues information on nearly 1,300 political, demographic, economic, social and environmental variables for all countries of the world from 1955 to 2002. The dataset includes major episodes of state failures which consist of five different kinds of internal political crisis – political (electoral) violence, revolutionary wars, ethnic wars, adverse regime changes and genocides. The State Failure dataset is compiled from existing databases provided by the World Bank, United Nations, US Census Bureau and other organizations and independent scholars along with data developed specifically by the Political Instability Task Force. The State Failure dataset was chosen because of its robust nature including numerous variables and cases from which to draw from. The dataset is very large, comprehensive and have been used in several studies concerning violence arising from ethno-religious diversity.

This study gathered data from the ethnic violence section of the State Failure dataset and specifically the variables of religious diversity index. The unit of analysis for the State Failure dataset is a violent electoral year. A violent is coded separately for each electoral year the violence occurred including partial years in which the violence began or ended. For control variables, this study uses data concerning political tolerance and levels of democracy taken from the Polity IV datasets. Data concerning ethnic political mobilization is computed using data obtained from the electoral commissions of Nigeria and Kenya which are the Independent National Electoral Commission (Nigeria) and Independent Electoral and Boundary Commission (Kenya). The electoral violence variable is a discrete dichotomous variable. This variable is measured simply by noting if there was electoral violence in a given election year. Cases in which electoral violence

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occurred are coded with a 1 and cases in which it did not occur is coded with a 0.

Multiple variables are used to control for various factors discussed in the large body of literature. The first two control variables are state/region and elite influence both derived from the Polity IV dataset. State/region is a discrete variable ranging from 1-5 where each category represents a distinct state or province. Elite influence is a continuous variable that measures the capacity of the elite class to mobilize the masses and rally support. This variable is measured in terms of votes they are able to win for their political parties in a defined state/region. The third control variable is political tolerance as measured in terms of the openness of the electoral process, freedom of the media, existence of credible opposition and impartial judiciary system. Political tolerance is an important aspect in measuring a nation-state's democratic progress and is used to control democratic factors discussed by earlier studies. The final control variable is democracy, as measured in the Polity IV dataset. Democracy is measured on an eleven-point scale (0-10), where 10 represents full democracy. The democracy indicator is based upon the four different coding of competitiveness of political participation, openness of executive recruitment, competitiveness of executive recruitment, and constraints on the chief executive.

The first independent variable, religious diversity, is measured using the religious diversity index and is a continuous variable. The religious diversity index is calculated from the seven largest religious groups present in the state. The index is the sum of the square population fractions and ranges from 0 to 1. Lower values indicate religious heterogeneity and high values indicate religious homogeneity (Bates et al., 2003). Religious diversity is derived from census data and measures are therefore available for only once every ten years. To replace missing values, the religious diversity variable was interpolated. For this study, the religious diversity variable is recoded to represent a non-linear relationship. We recorded the variable turning it into a dichotomous variable. Religious diversity scores lying between the 25th and 75th percentiles were coded as a 1. Religious diversity scores outside of this middle range were coded as 0. In recoding the variable to distinguish between moderate levels of religious diversity versus highly homogenous or heterogeneous levels, we were able to measure if a non-linear relationship exists between it and electoral violence as predicted in my second hypothesis. The second independent variable, ethnicity, is a simple continuous variable that uses a ratio measurement. The variable is coded by accounting for the number of ethnic groups par state/region we classify this as the 'ethnic density' of the state/region. The variable ranges from 0, meaning single ethnic group, and increasing depending on how many groups are recorded par state/region. In this study, it was found that the highest number of ethnic groups in a state/region measured a 7. Data for this study was sourced from the report of the Willinks commission for Nigeria and Middleton's 'Encyclopedia of Africa South of the Sahara'. The third independent variable is elite influence within an ethnic enclave. The variable is a continuous variable that measures the level of support a political dynasty, cabal or godfather is able to get in a given state/region at a designated election year.

The main issues with the validity of this dataset concerns internal validity. Since the State Failure dataset contains information from census data, some variables were only coded once every ten years. By using census information, this dataset may be subject to history effects, or is affected by the passage of time. The measurements used in this study were chosen because of their simplicity and scope. The measures of ethnicity and religious polarization and electoral violence in a country were largely in agreement with previous literature. Furthermore, measures of state/region, political tolerance and democracy are consistent with previous studies. These measurements were used because they are straightforward and unlikely to vary from country to country making it appropriate for the comparative method adopted for this study. The only modification to the data was with the religious polarization variable. The measure was changed to be a squared value because this study looks at the possibility of a non-linear relationship, something that has not been addressed in previous literature.

V. Data Presentation and Discussion

The correlation analysis found that religious polarization and electoral violence were not significantly related with an R-value of -0.0167, meaning low levels of correlation. However, this was expected because religious polarization was predicted to be a non-linear relationship and correlation tests only measure linear relationships. In terms of the ethnicity variable, the analysis presented an R-value of 0.2070 indicating a positive correlation between ethnicity and electoral violence. Analysis showed the dividends of political power to have a positive correlation with an R-value of 0.1753. The logistic regression analysis took into account all the variables including the non-linear squared religious polarization variable. As presented in Table 1, the logistic regression shows a log likelihood of -577.59 and a Wald Chi-square value of 52.27. Furthermore, the degrees of freedom was measured at seven and the significance was 0.00, indicating that models fits reasonably well. The final results showed that several variables were statistically significant including religious polarization, ethnicity and dividends of political power. The first variable found to be significant is elite influence. The B coefficient of 0.01 for

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population shows a positive relationship in that as elite competition for control in an ethnic enclave increases the likelihood of electoral violence also increases. Political tolerance was also found to be significant at the $p \leq 0.05$ level with a B coefficient of -0.12, meaning there is a negative relationship between political tolerance and electoral violence.

Dividends of political power were also found to be significant at the $p \leq 0.1$ level with a B coefficient of -0.55. Religious polarization was found to be statistically significant at the $p \leq 0.05$ level with a B coefficient of 1.48. This indicates that there is a relationship between religious polarization and electoral violence in that moderate levels of religious diversity increase the likelihood of conflict occurring. The two contagion variables were also shown to be statistically significant. Ethnicity is significant at the $p \leq 0.01$ level with a B coefficient of 0.33. The number of refugees coming into a state is significant at the $p \leq 0.05$ level with a B coefficient of 0.07. Both indicate a positive relationship in that increases in the feeling of depravity of ethnic groups increase likelihood of electoral violence.

Table 1: Ethnicity, Religious Polarization and the Likelihood of Electoral Violence in Nigeria and Kenya using Logistic Regression 1960 – 2015

	Model 1
Independent Variables	
Religious diversity (dichotomous variable)	1.48*
	(0.73)
Ethnicity (dichotomous variable)	0.32**
	(0.11)
Dividends of political power	0.07*
	(0.03)
Control Variables	
Elite influence	0.01***
	(0.003)
Federalism	-0.55 ^
Political tolerance	(0.31)
	-0.12*
Democracy	-0.01
	(0.04)
Constant	
N	-5.42
	(1.09)
Log likelihood	-577.59
Wald X^2	52.27

*$P \leq 0.1$, **$P \leq 0.05$, *** $P \leq 0.01$, **** $P \leq 0.0001$*

The effects of the coefficients for the ethnicity, religious polarization and dividends of political power variables on electoral violence can be interpreted using a metric or logistic function where all the other variables are kept constant. The following metric was used:

$$P = e\mu 1 + e\mu$$

Where P is the probability of an electoral violence occurring, e is a constant (2.718), and μ is the logit. When all the other variables are kept constant, the effects of the B coefficient of the ethnicity variable can be measured to see how the probability of an electoral violence occurring changes with each change in the ethnic groups involved in an election. Keeping all other variables at their mean, it was found that states/regions in Nigeria and Kenya with moderate levels of religious diversity are approximately 4.39 times more likely to experience an electoral violence than those with high levels of religious heterogeneity or homogeneity. This supports the hypothesis that stated that religious polarization has a non-linear relationship with electoral violence.

The first contagion variable of ethnicity was also significant, and its effect can be measured using the same metric. Again, keeping all other variables at their mean, it was found that states/regions in Nigeria and Kenya having at least three ethnic groups are approximately 9.80 times more likely to experience an electoral violence than those that are largely homogeneous. It is evident that the number of ethnic groups have a significant impact on the likelihood of electoral violence occurring.

The same metric is applied to the dividends of political power variable to determine what the likelihood of electoral violence would be for every increase pay-off in acquisition of political power. Keeping all other variables at their mean, it was found that states/regions with high resources and allocations are approximately 39.35 times more likely to experience an ethnic conflict than other states/regions in Nigeria and Kenya.

In general, the evidence shows that; first, religious polarization has a non-linear relationship with electoral violence. Analysis indicates that states/regions in both Nigeria and Kenya with moderate levels of religious diversity are more likely to experience electoral violence than those that are highly homogenous or heterogeneous. This supports the literature that religion is an important factor in any conflict in Africa, but goes against previous findings that religious polarization has a linear relationship with electoral violence. Second, the evidence shows that context and environment matter in terms of electoral violence. Analysis of data confirms that as the ethnic cleavages increases, there is an increased likelihood of electoral violence occurring. Furthermore, analysis also shows that an increase in the dividends of political power also increases the likelihood of electoral violence occurring. This data supports theories of electoral violence in Africa.

Taken into a broader perspective, this evidence adds to a larger knowledge base of electoral violence overall. Considering the prevalence of electoral violence in Africa, it is vital to know what causes this phenomenon. Knowing what causes these violence could possibly help in preventing electoral violence from

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occurring in the future or help alleviate and settle it more efficiently.

VI. Conclusion

The study of the linkage between ethnicity, religious polarization and electoral violence in the emerging democracies in Africa is not a new issue in the study of the socio-political dynamics of the continent. This phenomenon exist because rather than integrate at the national level the various ethnic groups did not only maintain their distinct identity which they place ahead of their allegiance to the state but rather the 'fracturing' nature of these differences have been used as the basis of political mobilization by the elite during elections. This was inherited from the policy of colonial powers as an instrument to sustain control over their spheres of interest. This institutionalization of ethno-religious cleavages in the political landscape have dare consequences. Nwosu (1999) explained this timeously. He opined that:

It is not surprising that years after colonialization (these) states (in Africa) remained lowly integrated. This low level of integration has precipitated crises in many countries. The African continent for instance has witnessed many conflict situations leading to shooting wars, political and economic instability as well as social disequilibrium.

In a similar vein, Thomson (2004) noted that:

Ethnic diversity (has) lend to increase civil strife. This perception is fostered both by some graphic individual scenes of interethnic violence, and by an aggregate correlation Africa has not only the highest ethnic diversity but also the highest incidence of civil war (Thomson, 2004: 20).

This conclusion has been given sufficient credence in the literature as most scholars admit that there exist linkages between ethnic diversity and religious polarization in one hand and electoral violence in Africa.

Adopting the framework of the relative deprivation and elite theories, this study agrees with these conclusions. The empirical evidence from its comparative analysis of the experiences of Nigeria and Kenya suggested the following:

i. There exist a linkage between the politicization of ethnic cleavages and electoral violence in both Nigeria and Kenya.
ii. There exist a linkage between religious polarization and electoral violence in both Nigeria and Kenya.
iii. The dividend of political power is shown to be the main cause of ethno-religious competition in the electoral process of Nigeria and Kenya.
iv. Ethnic cleavages and religious polarization have similar implication as causes of electoral violence in both Nigeria and Kenya.

Furthermore, it was discovered that the existence of ethno-religious differences is not a sufficient pre-condition for electoral violence rather it is the irreconcilable differences in the preference and interest of the elite across the ethnic cleavages that is fundamentally the essentially ingredient that translate ethno-religious competition during the electoral process into electoral violence.

VII. Recommendations

In the face of diversity, there is need to find a common ground to ensure the sustenance of the society. With this in mind, the following recommendation are made as important ingredients in a policy framework to check the impact of ethnicity and religious diversity on the electoral processes in general and electoral violence in particular in emerging African democracies like Nigeria and Kenya:

i. There should be an institutionalization of fiscal federalism as the structure of government in heterogeneous states like Nigeria and Kenya. By lowering the 'pay-off' at the center ethnic and religious cleavages will find the 'center' unattractive and therefore limit the tendency for an all out 'do-or-die' competition for power at the center.
ii. Electoral commission should discourage political parties from playing ethnic oriented politics and developing strongholds that is based on ethno-religious considerations.
iii. The benefits accruable to political offices should be reduced to make them less attractive. This is because the large incentive attached to political offices makes office seekers to go extreme in their quest to acquire such office. this extremities includes political mobilization along ethno-religion lines, electoral violence etc.
iv. The judiciary and the electoral commission should be made to be truly independent of the influence of the executive in order to operate efficiently without bias or prejudice.
v. The National Orientation Agency, the mass media, stakeholders and other relevant agencies should embark on massive and sustained civic education of the citizenry on the negative consequences of electoral violence.
vi. Electoral laws should be amended to give harsher punisher for people that perpetuate violence during or after elections.
vii. Security agencies should be well equipped and trained to detect possible hotspots for electoral violence and avert it.

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