

**ETHNICITY, ELECTORAL EXPECTATION AND ELECTORAL VIOLENCE
IN NIGERIA: A PROGNOSIS OF 2011 PRESIDENTIAL POST ELECTION
VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The 16th April 2011 presidential election in Nigeria is the fourth in a series of elections since Nigeria's transition to civilian governance began in 1999, where widely considered to be substantially transparent and credible than the three preceding elections in 1999, 2003 and 2007, in the eyes of both domestic and foreign election observers, was dented by post-electoral violence, which broke out in some northern states of Kaduna Kano, Gombe, Bauchi, Adamawa and others as the presidential election results were announced. This resulted to killings, destruction of both government and private prosperities, as well as displacement of persons. Thus, this is reflection on ethnicity-based political expectation and domination against perceived rigging and manipulation in the electoral process in Nigeria. This paper, therefore, aims at analysing the aftermath of 2011 presidential post-electoral violence in northern Nigeria, to enable stakeholders prevent and manage electoral programmes that can forestall future recurrence. The theoretical framework adopted is 'frustration-aggression theory' propounded by Dollard in 1939 and applied secondary source of data collection. The findings of the study tilt towards failed ethnic expectations by those who supported the principle of zoning in the People Democratic Party (PDP) triggered the post- election violence in northern Nigeria and recommend amongst others the need for political parties to do away with ethnic sentiments to promote internal democracy and ensure good governance on the basis of equity to reward it citizenship.

Keywords: democracy, ethnicity, ethnic expectation, electoral violence, and 2011 presidential election.

Introduction

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FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES JOURNAL 2022

The presidential election that was held on April 16th, 2011, making it the fourth in a series of presidential elections since the restoration of civil administration in 1999. In contrast to the previous elections, which were marked by fraud and shortcomings, the 2011 presidential general elections in Nigeria were largely regarded as the most credible election conducted by the independent national electoral commission (INEC) since 1999. According to a former US Ambassador to Nigeria, the National Assembly and presidential elections gave a historic chance for Nigeria to deepen its democracy and broaden its voice on the global arena since the election was "credible, transparent, free and fair" (Nkwachukwu & Uzodi, 2012). The ECOWAS observation mission rated the presidential election as "fair and transparent," and the EU election observation mission to Nigeria noted that "the 2011 general elections indicated an improved step towards improving democratic elections and consolidation in Nigeria, although difficulties remain" (Abiodun & Adisa, 2012). In the words of Clement Nwankwo, the head of the policy and legal advocacy centre (PLAC) in Abuja which works with more than 20 civil society groups (CSG) in the Nigerian civil society election situation room to monitor elections in that country. "We have not seen large-scale reports of malpractice or collusion between electoral officials and politicians,"

Despite the kin issues of political thuggery encountered during election that disrupted to a large extent the democratic process, a greater violence erupted soon after the presidential election results were announced, dealing a setback to the largely acclaimed 2011 elections (Okolo, Agbai & Boubai, 2022; Badmus 2014). In the eyes of many Nigerians, the 2011 post-election violence was the bloodiest ever in the country's electoral history (Bekoe 2011, Ajayi 2011, HRW 2011, ICG 2011, Shuaibu and Iroegbu 2011; Okolo, 2021). Post-election violence in the Northern States, including Adamawa, Kano, Kaduna; Yobe, Niger; Jigawa; and Bauchi; killed a significant number of people. An undisclosed number of NYSC personnel were also slain (Shuaibu and Iroegbu 2011, HRW 2011). Tens of thousands of people were forced to flee their homes as a result of the post-election violence.

According to Kaduna based civil rights congress (CRC) reported that over 500 persons died in Kaduna State alone, while about 40,000 persons were displaced (Efebeh & Okolo, 2016). Thus far, the 2011 post-election violence is blamed on perceived ethnicity, failed electoral expectation and rigging or manipulation of the presidential elections to favour the PDP candidate, former president Goodluck Jonathan who won the presidential election created a fertile ground for people to exhibit their pent up anger, just as it created a rallying point of mobilisation (Oyelere, Ibrahim, Micheal, Shobayo & Laleye, 2011, pp 1-2 & 53). The interface between the violence and the controversy which surrounded the PDP rotation of power and zoning policy, and the immoderate utterance of political leaders and actors who contested the propriety of the zoning policy (Ibaba 2012, p 1).

In an attempt to deal with the problems of ethnicity- based political domination and ensure national unity, equality, justice and fairness, the PDP adopted the rotation and Zoning policy of party and elected public office which is contained in article 7.2 (c) of the party's constitution. Central to this agreement is the rotation of political office of the president between the Southern and Northern region by geo-political zone (GPZ) of Nigeria, on a two-term basis of four years' tenure. The southern part of Nigeria took the short in 1999, as former president Olusegun Obasanjo, who hails from the South-West GPZ took office in 1999 and ended in 2007. He was succeeded by late President Umaru Yar'adua in 2007. Death of former president Yar'adua in May 2010, punctuated the tenure of Northern Nigeria expected to end in 2015, as he was succeeded by the then Vice President, Dr Goodluck Jonathan, who hails from the South-South geo-political zone, following the adoption of the principle of necessity (Ibaba 2012, p 2).

The decision of former President Goodluck Jonathan to contest for the office of the President in the 2011 general elections generated a North-South debate on the propriety of his decision, given the PDP's zoning policy. The paper argues that some politicians from northern Nigeria to preserve the zoning policy by ensuring that president Jonathan did not contest the primary elections to the PDP and the selection of a northern consensus candidate to compete with him at the primaries, when the PDP decided that he could contest and the counter tactics of those who supported President Jonathan, whipped up ethnic consciousness and brought ethnic expectations to the fore, thus creating conditions for violence. In line with this, the paper set out to analyse the April 2011 post-election violence in Northern Nigeria. Knowledge utilized in this paper was mostly based on materials, including books, government records, and news articles.

The rest of this paper is divided into seven (7) sections; beginning with this introductory problem, is followed by aim, and objectives. The third section examined relevant literature and the theoretical framework, while the fourth section analysed the prognosis of post- 2011 electoral violence in northern Nigeria, the fifth, section analyses ethnic voting behaviour in Nigeria. It is concluded with far-reaching recommendations toward ameliorating future post-election violence in Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives

The major objective of this paper is to interrogate ethnic expectation as a source of electoral violence in 2011 presidential post elections violence in northern Nigeria. The specific objectives

- i) Examine Nexus between Ethnic Politics and Ethnic Voting Behaviour in Nigeria.
- ii) Analysis the prognosis of 2011 post- presidential violence in northern Nigeria and the backlashes of PDP zoning policy in Nigeria.

Conceptual expositions

There are basically three terms or concepts that are fundamental to this paper. These are ethnicity, election and electoral violence. Their operational definition shall be provided as an operating guide.

Ethnicity: In heterogeneous societies like Nigeria, having a strong sense of ethnic identification is a benefit that comes from belonging to a particular community. It's possible to define ethnicity in several ways in social science. Ethnicity, according to Nnoli (1978, p. 5) is a social phenomenon that occurs when people of different ethnic groups interact. It is assumed that a group's roots are found in its shared history, heritage, religion, culture, nationality, language, and geographical location as defined by Afkhami (2012: p 6).

In light of these criteria, it appears that ethnicity is defined by social and cultural factors such as shared ancestry and cultural norms, as well as a sense of belonging or nationality. Another example of the need of multiculturalism is this: ethnicity can only exist in a diverse society (Okolo, 2008). When it comes to defining ethnicity, Enloe (1978) thought of ethnicity as "man-made" and "a man-made foundation of identification and collective organization, dreamt up by foreigners searching for an economical tool of political and economic control" (see Osaghae, 1995; Okolo, 1997; 2014).

An ethnicity is a strategic weapon used by the disadvantaged or the privileged to seek political redress, or to safeguard their advantages, according to Azeez (2009, p: 2). For the same reason, Oladiran (2013, p.698) argues that the phenomena of ethnicity is to be expected in any context in which a group employs a shared sense of oneness to connect with others, regardless of size and cultural differences (Isiaq, Adebisi & Bakare, 2018). When it comes to defining ethnicity, the term "ethnicity" refers to a group's sense of unity and solidarity based on socio-cultural phenomena including language, traditions, and ancestral origins (Okolo, 2014). Accordingly, ethnic expectations are grounded on the degree of chance that something will happen, as well as a belief system and value system.

Election: Elections are a formal procedure by which voters pick governmental officials. In terms of democracy, it serves as a helpful and fundamental indication of its practice (Itu &Atiye 2020, p 24). Elections are the means through which citizens may take part in their country's political processes, and they serve to legitimize a state or country's right to rule. Elections are widely seen as the most appropriate method of changing the government in democracies like Nigeria's (Okoye: 2013; p 35). Okoye goes on to say that an election is the process through which a country's inhabitants choose which candidates will represent them in politics. As a result of elections, according to Georges et al (2008:298), presidents can be replaced without being toppled. Elections, according to Oyediran et al (2002: p 100), provide the government and the individuals legitimacy. A free and fair election is a precondition of democracy, and establishing an atmosphere conducive to that goal necessitates meeting four essential requirements, which includes:

- i) The independent national electoral commission (INEC), a nonpartisan election administration agency that is known and should be for its integrity, competence, and objectivity.
- ii) Acceptance of basic guidelines for the struggle for political power by the political establishment and its members.
- iii) A well-established system of political parties, customs, and teams of candidates that may be presented to the public as different options; and
- iv) Electoral law interpretation and dispute resolution by an independent judiciary.

Since 1954, Nigeria's general elections have been divided into two categories: consolidation and transition. For example, 1954 and 1959 transition elections were held by the exiting colonial government; 1979, 1993, and 1999, *transitional elections* were also held by military administrations. Elections held under a civilian administration, such as the 1964/65, 1983, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2019 elections, are called "*consolidation*" elections (Agbaje & Adejumobi 2006, p.37) and below in Table 1-1 showed the years of transition and consolidation election.

Table 1: *Transition and Consolidation Election in Nigeria*

S/N	Transition General Elections	Consolidation General Elections
1	1954 General election	1964/65 General election
2	1959 General election	1983 General election
3	1979 General election	2003 General election
4	1993 General election	2007 General election
5	1999 General election	2011 General election
6		2015 General election
7		2019 General election

Source: Comply by the Authors 2022

From available reports, transition elections tend to be more peaceful than those towards consolidation. Some pre-election violence between political party supporters and thugs, as well as reports of intimidation (such as wrongful detention) of opposition politicians, were recorded in certain locations through Abdullahi Smith centre for historical research in 2002.

Electoral Violence: Election violence refers to any acts of hostility or aggression that occur before, during, or after the voting process. UN/DPA, (2016; p: 4) sees election violence as a kind of political violence, "which is frequently meant to affect an electoral outcome and hence the distribution of political power," and urges all countries to take steps to avoid and mitigate it. According to Egbueze

and Ojirika,(2017: p 3) these activities include making physical or verbal threats to those who will be voting, interfering with the voting process, or even harming those participating in the voting process. Similarly, UNDP (2009) state that in the context of an election contest, electoral violence may be defined as any act or threat of coercion or bodily injury intended to influence the outcome of an election. It is possible that violence can be used to affect an election's outcome by disrupting or delaying polling places or efforts to disrupt or derail them. Many instances of political power takeover have been attributed to undemocratic measures such as the use of violence to frighten opponents in order to prevent them from freely expressing their preferences for candidates; in other cases, violence was a response to election manipulation (Okolo, 2021).

Theoretical Framework

The post-election violence in northern Nigeria in 2011 was seen as a result of the failed inability or blockage of goal accomplishment, according to the frustration-aggression hypothesis proposed by John Dollard in 1939. Failure to meet expectations, according to this theory, leads to feelings of anger and aggressiveness, which in turn lead to acts of violence. The theory argued that perpetrators of electoral violence target people they consider to be accountable for the failure of their expectations or those who are associated to them. Theory of aggressiveness have reinforced this by noting that violence happens as an intrinsic response to frustration, but have also pointed out that it may be started by instinct or taught behaviours (Berkowitz, 1988; Gurr,1968; Faleti 2006). This study does not want to clear the perpetrators of the violence, nor does it intend to ignore the possibility that the violence was planned ahead of time. When ethnic expectations are not met, there is a tendency to turn to violence.

A condition Ted Gurr calls "relative deprivation"—the perceived disparity between one's own wealth and the wealth of one's opponents—could lead to violence in the aftermath of the 2011 presidential elections, where politicians and ethnic groups in the Northern Nigeria, who failed to win resort to violence against electoral institutions and officials, members of their competitors' home communities, or any other group that they think contributed to their defeat. INEC's capacity to organize the 2011 elections became much more doubtful after cancelling the legislative election scheduled for April 2, 2011, because of the Commission's organizational and logistical challenges. INEC Chairman Attahiru Jega made a televised announcement to the dismay of many Nigerians that the accreditation and election results papers came late and were not given to all polling places, resulting in a lack of participation, which also lead to aggressive behaviours, according to Nkwachukwu and Uzodi. (2012) and Akhaine(2012, p. 653).

Applying the idea of frustration-aggression to the 2011 presidential election, four key concerns present the chance for electoral violent mobilization.

- i) In the context of Nigeria's severe poverty, there are a large number of people eager to protest (Nkwachukwu and Uzodi 2012, p; 28)
- ii) Weak state security and law enforcement capabilities as a result of decades of corruption, bad management and economic collapse have undermined Nigerian government's power to prevent or punish massive election violence (Orji 2012).
- iii) Inciting words, statements, and messages from political leaders and members of the public all contribute to the escalation of hostilities.
- iv) In many places of Nigeria, simmering ethnic/communal tensions offer a strong foundation for the breakout of post-election violence in 2011. Since the return of civilian rule in 1999, at least 18,000 people have been killed in more than 600 violent incidents in Nigeria (Peter 2011), ranging from low-intensity electoral violence in the Niger Delta, which has occasionally resulted in fatalities, to large urban electoral violence in Jos, Lagos, Kano, and Kaduna, which has claimed thousands of lives (Lewis 2011: 9, Orji 2011).

The Nexus between Ethnic Politics and Ethnic Voting Behaviour in Nigeria

Nigeria is a country of over 250 ethnic groups, with the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo as the dominant groups (Enegwea&Umoden, 1993, p.3; Coleman, 1986, pp.18-35), and was formally created by the British in 1990 during the era of colonialism (Ekekwe, 1986). Nnoli (1978) has located the emergence of ethnic consciousness in the colonial urban setting. Due to the economic motive of colonialism and the resultant deprivation policies of the colonial government, the urban areas were characterized by socio- economic scarcity. The struggles for survival led to ethnicity – based competition for the scare resources, as evidenced by the emergence of ethnic associations that had the protection of the interests of their members, including their socio-economic well-being as the primary objective. This engendered ethnic consciousness as ethnic identification promoted the achievement of material interest and security. This implies that the struggle to access state resources is the main cause of ethno nationalism in most Nigerian elections (Okpako & Okolo, 2020). Table 1.2 demonstrates ethnicassociation in the majority and the minority ethnic groups.

Table1 2: Ethnic Association in the majority and the Minority Ethnic Groups

Majority Ethnic Group Association	Minority Ethnic Group Association
Northern People’s Congress (Hausa: Jam’iyyar Mutanen Arewa).	Ibibio State Union
Descendants of Oduduwa (Yoruba: Egbe Omo Oduduwa).	BiromProgressive Union
Ibo State Union	Middle Belt Forum
Northern Elements Progressive Union.	Ijaw People’s League
Oodua People’s Congress	Idoma Union
Arewa People’s Congress	Ilorin Youth League
Association of the Igbo Assembly (Igbo: Ohaneze Indi Igbo).	Tiv Progressive Union
	Egbema National Congress
	Ijaw National Congress
	Forum of Ikewe Ethnic Nationality (Ikwere: OgbakoIkwere)

Source: Compiled from Ikelegbe, 2001; Tamuno, 1998; Nnoli, 1978; Coleman, 1986; &Dappa-Biriye 1995)

The Nigeria youth’s movement (NYM) was founded in 1936 to champion Nigerian nationalism during the colonial era. But the personality contest between Mr. Ernest Ikoli, an Ijaw ethnicgroup and the publisher of the Daily Service, and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, an Igbo ethnicgroup and the publisher of the West African Pilot divided the NYM along ethnic identities. Although the contest was reported to have started as business and professional conflict, it snowballed into politics, as elections into the vacant seat of Governors Executive Council, vacated by Dr. K.A Abayomi, a former President of the NYM took ethnic dimension. The election which was conducted in 1941 was won by Ernest Ikoli, who defeated Chief Samuel Akinsanya, an Ijebu of the Yoruba ethnic group. Chief Samuel Akinsanya blamed his defeat on ethnic considerations and left the NYM with his supporters of Ijebu origin and his ally, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, who also left the movement with his supporters of the Igbo ethnic group. The events which followed made the nationalist movement to assume an ethnic character (Nnoli, 1978, Dappa- Biriye, 1995; Coleman, 1986)

The nationalist movements were affected by the politicization of ethnicity and this resulted into ethnic-oriented political parties emerging. Adewale, (1981) and Coleman, 1986) argued that, Action Group (AG), the Northern people’s Congress (NPC), and the National Council of Nigerian of Citizens(NCNC) were all part of the first republic; the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Nigerian People's Party (NPP), the Great Nigerian People's Party (GNPP), and People's Redemption Party (PRP) were all part of the second republic (William, Lynne & Kathryn 2012). Political parties in the third and fourth republics had a greater nationalist slant, yet ethnicity served as a crucial unifying element for political mobilization. Alapiki (1995), utilising the results of the presidential elections in 1979, 1983, and 1993, accurately identified the significance of ethnicity in

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES JOURNAL 2022

Nigerians' voting patterns. Table 1.3 shows the ethnic voting behaviour for the 1979 presidential election in Nigeria.

Table 1 3: Ethnic Voting Behaviour for the 1979 Presidential Elections in Nigeria

Ethnic Groups	States	Election Results (x)	Preferred Party
Yoruba	Ogun	92.6	UPN
	Ondo	93.5	UPN
	Oyo	85.5	UPN
	Lagos	82.3	UPN
Ibo	Anambra	83.0	NPP
	Imo	96.7	NPP
Hausa/Fulani	Bauchi	92.2	NPN + PRP + GNPP
	Benue	75.3	NPN + PRP + GNPP
	Borno	95.7	NPN + PRP + GNPP
	Kaduna	89.3	NPN + PRP + GNPP
	Kano	97.8	NPN + PRP + GNPP
	Niger	95.1	NPN + PRP + GNPP
	Sokoto	96.5	NPN + PRP + GNPP

Source: Alapiki, 1995, p.93

The 1979 presidential elections result of the election primary reveal that ethnic concerns play a significant role in determining which parties win. The Yoruba-led UPN obtained the most votes in Yoruba states, just as the Igbo-led NPP and the Hausa-Fulani-led NPN, PRP, and GNPP received the most votes in their leaders' ethnic enclaves. (William, Lynne and Kathryn (2012). A similar pattern played out in the 1983 presidential elections (see Table 4 below)

Table 1 4: Ethnic Voting Behaviour for the 1983 Presidential Elections in Nigeria

Ethnic Group	States	Election Results (x)	Preferred Party
Yoruba	Ogun	95.0	UPN
	Ondo	77.3	UPN
	Oyo	60.0	UPN
	Lagos	83.4	UPN
Ibo	Anambra	58.0	NPN
	Imo	67.0	NPN
Hausa-Fulani	Bauchi	85.0	NPN
	Kaduna	60.0	NPN
	Niger	65.2	NPN
	Sokoto	92.0	NPN

Source: Alapiki, 1995, p.93

The election of 1993 was largely regarded to have departed from "ethnicity-based support," by state-created political parties of Social Democratic Party (SDP) and National Republican Convention (NRC) (William, Lynne & Kathryn (2012). There is evidence to the contrary, according to Alapiki (1995:95) the results of SDP indicated 61.6 percent of the votes in the Southern part of Nigeria and 38.4 percent in the North. Similarly, the North voted 56% in favours of the NRC, while the South voted 43% in favours of it. 87.8% of the votes cast in Ogun, Lagos (85.5%), Ondo (84.4%), Osun (83.5%), and Oyo (83.5%) went to the SDP's Yoruba candidate, who received the highest numbers of vote cast. The SDP nominated a Yoruba candidate as its presidential candidate, whilst the NRC chose a Hausa-Fulani. Although other variables may have had a part in the outcome of the election, ethnicity appears to have played the most significant influence.

The People's Democratic Party (PDP), the Alliance for Democracy (AD), and then the All-People's Party (APP), which was subsequently renamed ANPP in the results of the 1999 presidential elections,

have a high preference among ethnic minorities/majority relation as their political party of choice (Saka 2010). The elections had two candidates since the APP endorsed the candidacy of the AD. Both candidates were of Yoruba descent due to the fact that the presidency was allocated to the southern region of Nigeria. The Yoruba were in charge of the AD, while the Hausa-Fulani were in charge of the PDP (Saka 2010). Niger Delta remained loyal to Hausa-Fulani, whereas the Ibo had no choice in their presidential selection process this time around. Chief Olusegun Obasanjo and Chief Olu Falae are both Yorubas, but Chief Obasanjo was generally perceived as a puppet of Hausa-Fulani rule in the North, which prompted the overwhelming support of the Yorubas for Chief Olu Falae (Mohammed, 2008).

The People voted massively for the PDP in Hausa(Fulani-dominated north) and AD in the north won a large number of votes because of the influence of tribal leaders, who led the APP in their states, such as Sokoto, Zamfara, Kebbi, Borno, Gombe, and Kogi are examples. As a result of the political elites' party connection, which was bolstered by ethnic interests, votes tended to favour the political parties and their candidates because the Ibo had no candidate. For instance, in the Ibo region of Imo State, where renowned indigenes were leaders of the APP, the APP received the largest number of votes (42,70%). Massive support for the PDP in the Niger Delta may be traced back to the region's longstanding ties with the North. According to Niger Delta political leaders, the North is perceived to be less ruthless in ethnicity politics than the South (William, Lynne & Kathryn 2012). For the 2003 election, the Yoruba-led AD did not nominate a candidate for president, but instead asked its members to vote for the PDP nominee, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. It is imperative to note that, the PDP was able to garner a significant number of votes in the Yoruba-majority states this time around. Having a preference for political patronage above national progress was a result of ethnicity. Elections are abused as a vehicle for democratic choice and good government.

Prognosis of Post- 2011 Presidential Electoral Violence in Northern Nigeria: the PDP Zoning Policy of Controversy and the Backlash

The zoning (rotation) policy of the PDP is contained in article 7.2(c) of the party's constitution. The PDP was formed in 1998, the commencement of a new era of party politics after the military cancelled presidential elections that shook the foundation of the country's corporate existence, took a decision to shift power to the South and made rotation and zoning of power a cardinal policy and objective of the party. Thus, it provided in its constitution, "rotation and zoning of power and public elective offices, and mandated its appropriate executive committee to enforce it at all levels," as clearly stated in Article 7.2 (c) of its constitution as amended in 2009. Although the constitution did not provide details on how this should be done, by practice, it zoned and rotated power and public elective offices between the North and South in the context of the colonial division of the country into Northern Nigeria and Southern Nigeria. The six geo-political zones were used as the power centres of the zoning policy (Jerry, O. 2011, p. 13). At the state level, senatorial districts were used as the baseline for zoning and power rotation. Table 1.5 provides an insight into the pattern of zoning offices at the federal level of the PDP.

Table 1 5: Zoning Policy of Political Offices by the PDP to Geo-Political Zones: 1999-2007 & 2007-2011

Political Offices	1997- 2007	2007-2011
	<i>Geo-Political Zone</i>	Geo-Political Zone
President of the Country	South-West	North-West
Vice President of the Country	North-East	South-South
Senate President	South-East	North-Central
Speaker of the House of Representatives	North-West	South-West
Deputy Senate President	North-Central	South-East
Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives	South-South	North-East

Source: Ibaba 2011

This underlying principle of the rotation and zoning policy is that the president and Vice President must not come from the same region, either North or South. Thus, once the Presidential candidate is chosen from the Northern for example, the Vice-Presidential candidate must be from the Southern region. For this reason, other office would be zoned to other geo-political zones. The principle of rotation requires that at the end of a particular term of office, in this case two terms of four years each, the zoned offices will rotate, and thus shift from one region/zone to another. Thus, whereas the President for the period 1999-2007 hailed from the South-Western part of the country, the Vice President was chosen from the North- Eastern Zone. For the period 2007-2011, the holder of the office of the President was shifted to the North- West Zone and the Vice President to the South- South Zone. At the state level, the offices of Governor, Deputy Governor and Speaker of the State House of Assembly are zoned and rotated among the Senatorial Zones to promote “federal character principle,” which is anchored on fairness and equity. No particular zone is allowed to have more than one of these offices at any particular period.

The people Democratic Party zoning policy is in line with the federal character principle which implies that, Nigeria's multi- ethnic character, and as a policy of national integration it requires the representation and management of the affairs of the country in such a manner that precludes the dominance of one group over another (Afigbo, 1989). Section 14 subsection 3 and 4 of 1999 constitution give effect to the requirements of the composition of government and its agencies at the state and local levels to reflect the diversity of the people, in order to promote loyalty and a sense of belonging. In practice, it requires each state of the federation should be represented in the federal cabinet.

The PDP held strongly to these principles of zoning and rotation. In 1999 for example, the Party returned nomination fees paid by some politicians of the Northern origin, who had purchased the Party's nominations forms for the Presidential election. It insisted that because the position was zoned to the south, no Northern politician would be allowed to join the contest. In 2003, a similar situation occurred. Although the party did not return the nomination fees paid by the Northern politicians, the Party machinery ensured that its candidate was of Southern origin. In 2007, the Party zoned the Presidency to the North. Significantly, several politicians of Southern origin joined the race for the Party's flag. Again, the Party ensured that its decision to zone the office to the Northern part of the Country was upheld. This resulted in the nomination of late Alhaji Umaru Yar' Adua as its flag bearer, and his eventual emergence as President of the country. The death of President Yar'Adua, three years into the first four-year tenure threw up new political realities as the Vice President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, an Ijaw from the Southern Nigeria took over as President. The decision by President Goodluck to contest the 2011 Presidential election stirred up a controversy which reactivated waning ethnic rivalry.

The PDP zoning controversy was predicated on two arguments. The first, advanced by the protagonist of zoning was anchored on the Party's constitutional provision and practice on zoning. Some politicians of Northern extraction insisted that President Jonathan cannot and should not contest the 2011 election on the basis that the Presidential slot for the period 2011-2015 was zoned to the North. Thus, in their view, as a matter of right and morality, it was the turn of the North to produce a presidential flag bearer of the Party. The second antagonists hinged their position on 49(9) of the 1999 Nigerian constitution which granted every Nigerian the right to contest for elections. With exclusions set out in section 137 of the same constitution that do not include zoning. They thus argued that a sitting President cannot be precluded from contesting an election on account of the zoning policy. Both side of the divide predicated their position on the constitution of the country, the PDP constitution, Precedence, morality, and equity. This threw up a number of developments.

One key issue was the fractionalization of the northern political elites into main camps that supported zoning or opposed it. Two noticeable groups emerged to drive the process. The northern political leader's forum (NPLF) and the northern political summit (NPS). These two groups were pitched against each other, and the unguarded utterances of the leaderships of both groups appear to have also fractionalized the masses that supported either view point. The NPLF insisted that President Jonathan should not contest the PDP Presidential primaries. But when the PDP took the decision to allow him contest, while still maintaining its rotation and zoning policy, the NPLF provided a platform for the emergence of a Northern consensus candidate for the primary election. Four candidates of Northern extraction, General Ibrahim Babangida, former Vice President Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, former National Security Advisor General Aliyu Gusau, and former Governor of Kwara State, Mr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki, presented themselves for the consensus arrangement (Ajani, 2010, p.1-5). Former Vice President Alhaji Atiku Abubakar was the consensus choice, however he was defeated in the primary by President Jonathan. Table 1-6 and 1-7 showed the 2011 general presidential election result in the southern GPZs and northern GPZs.

Table 1-6: The 2011 General Presidential Election Result in the Southern GPZs

Geo-Political Zone	Jonathan (PDP)	Buhari CPC	Ribadu ACN	Shekarau ANPP
South-West	2 786 417	321 609	1 369 943	30 906
South-East	4 985 246	20 225	25 577	20 357
South-South	6 118 608	49 978	144 141	11 026
Total South	13 890 270	391 922	1 539 601	62 289

Source: Isiaq, Oluwashina, & Adebola (2018)

Table 1-7: The 2011 General Presidential Election Result in the Northern GPZs

Geo-Political Zone	Jonathan (PDP)	Buhari CPC	Ribadu CAN	Shekarau ANPP
North-West	3 395 724	645 3437	146 216	612 514
North-East	1 832 622	3 624 919	84 273	198 837
North-Central	3 123 126	1 612 999	306 684	40 175
FCT	253 444	131 576	2 327	3 176
Total North	8 351 472	11 691 355	537 173	851 553
Total Country	22 495 187	12 214 853	2 079 101	917 012

Source: Isiaq, Oluwashina and Adebola (2018)

From tables 1-6 and 1-7 showed that PDP got 22,495,187 votes, CPC got 12,214, 853 votes, ACN got 2,079, 101 votes and ANPP got 917, 012 votes. Based on this figure putting together CPC+ACN+ANPP = 15,210,966, which clearly showed failed ethnic political expectation against the PDP that have limited numbers of votes in the northern GPZs.

Also, ethnic groups in the southern part of the country, particularly the Niger Delta, also mobilized in support of former President Goodluck Jonathan. The Ijaw National Congress (INC), the umbrella socio-political group of Ijaws, and similar ones drummed up support for the former President. For these groups, it was the turn of the Niger Delta to produce the President of the country, having been excluded since independence in 1960. The pro-zoning group countered this by emphasizing the need to uphold the precedence set by the party, and the honour of keeping agreements; noting that President Jonathan was a signatory to a document in 2002, that agreed on two term zoning for each region.

The backlash of the mobilization by both sides of the divide was the whipping up of ethnic consciousness and expectations. The NPLF strategy of having a consensus candidate for the PDP Presidential primary election was a direct appeal to ethnic sentiments. The participation of the four leading Presidential aspirants of the PDP from the North, and the emergence of a consensus candidate that was accepted and supported by all those who took part in the process appear to have drummed a

Northern agenda of taking over power into the consciousness of the common citizens who had high expectations. Further, intemperate statements such as ‘we will stop him ‘(President Jonathan)’ made by some northern political leaders, and ‘whoever votes against President Jonathan in the South is a saboteur’, or ‘all the years, the North has been ruling. They didn’t know we will rotate the Presidency’ credited to some political leaders from the South- South zone (Azuatalam& Akintoye, 2010, p 1& 3; Akowe, 2010, p2; Fabiyi& Olatunji, 2010, pp.1-2; Adeola, 2010,p.12) fuel ethnic rivalry and set the stage for a North- South contest.

The Expectation from the presidential elections thus took an ethnic dimension. In the South, the expectation was that all would support President Jonathan to ensure his emergence as President for another four years. The protagonists of zoning in the North had similar expectations. Three expectations were discernible from the utterances of the pro-zoning political actors and comments by some Northern citizens who shared the same sentiments. The first was that the Northern elements in the PDP would support the emergence of Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, the consensus candidate of the NPLF as the flag bearer of the PDP. This was based on the view of a monolithic North, which is out of sync with present realities, as defined by ethno-religious and political interests of the fractionalized political elites. The second expectation was that the leading Presidential candidate in the North (General Muhammadu Buhari of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), Mr. Nuhu Ribadu of the ACN, and Alhaji Ibrahim Shekarau of ANPP) would agree to a consensus and present a common Northern candidate to square up with President Jonathan, and thus enhance the chances of a Northerner to win the election. The third was the expectation of CPC which had General Muhammadu Buhari, the leading northern candidate as its flag bearer, would enter into an alliance with the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN). The thinking here is that this could have resulted in a run-off election which would have brightened the chances of General Buhari to help the North retain office of the President. But all these expectations failed, as President Jonathan won the election.

In the view of the study, the frustration arising from these failed expectations created the conditions which supported the post-election violence followed the April 26, 2011 presidential election. The point is that the violence cannot be dissociated from failed ethnic expectations of retaining Presidential power in the North, ethnic expectation provided the conditions for violence, and as well served as a rallying point of mobilisation for those who took part in the violence. The attacks on fellow northern who supported President Jonathan, Youth Corps Members who took part in the elections, churches and Christians by the protesting youths is captured by the frustration-aggression theory which explains that in conflicts driven by the blockade of expectations, the targets of violence are those perceived to be responsible for the failed expectations, or those related to them.

Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

This paper interrogated the 2011 presidential post- election violence in northern Nigeria is anchored on the failed ethnic expectations which created condition for violence, located in the context of the frustration-aggression theory of violence which argues that violence to failed expectation and the controversy surrounding the zoning policy of the PDP, after the death of former president Umaru Yar’Adua and the decision of his successor, former president Goodluck Jonathan to contest the 2011 presidential election trigger up ethnic consciousness and reinvigorate ethnic politics to national fore. That the 2011 post-election violence in northern Nigeria that followed the presidential election cannot be separated from the failed ethnic expectation that acted as a vehicle for mobilization and actualization is argued in the study. Taking into account what has been said thus, the following: recommendations are made;

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES JOURNAL 2022

- 1) The judicial inquiry set up by the federal governments should publish reports of commissions 2011 post-election violence and implement as appropriate their recommendations as contained in government white papers to serve as deterrent violence perpetrators in future election.
- 2) In order to cope with any breakout of post-election violence, security agencies should prepare a coordinated security forecast and reaction strategy at both the local and national levels by improving their intelligence, investigation and capacity.
- 3) By the way enforcing the rules, INEC should guarantee that political parties and their members adhere to relevance legal provision of the Nigerian Constitution, the Electoral Act, and the political parties' Code of Conduct, particularly those constitutional provisions that relate to campaigns, political rallies and processions as well as involvement of party supporters in election violence
- 4) Civic and voter education programmes that create a democratic culture of peace and reduce election violence should be constantly monitored, initiated, and encouraged by civil society groups.
- 5) The application of the principles good governance could ensure that the rewards and burdens of citizenship are shared on the basis of equity can help to achieve this.

End Note:

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