

## **POLITICAL POWER ALTERNATION AND ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN POST COLONIAL AFRICA: EXPERIENCES IN NIGERIA AND KENYA, 1999 - 2016**

**Netchy MBAEZE<sup>1</sup>, Chukwuma Rowland OKOLI<sup>2\*</sup> and Willy OKONKWO<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Political Science, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu, NIGERIA

<sup>2,3</sup>Department of Political Science and International Relations, Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu.

\* Email of corresponding author: [chukwumaroland@yahoo.com](mailto:chukwumaroland@yahoo.com)

### **Abstract**

*This study examines whether alternation in power has minimized the incidence of electoral violence in selected post-colonial African states. The study is anchored on the theory of Post-Colonial State. It adopted documentary method of data collection and content analysis of data. Based on evidence from Nigeria and Kenya which formed our case studies, we demonstrated that in post-colonial African states, where the political power alternation is achieved via rainbow coalition of opposition political parties, the emergent regime is bound to be consumed with the quest to consolidate their hold on state power and to annihilate the opposition. This will ignite vicious circle of battle for state power at all cost thereby escalating electoral violence in the polity. The study avers that focusing on democratic consolidation through strengthening the electoral institutions by the incumbent would mitigate the incidence of electoral violence and ipso facto stabilize the polity in post-colonial African states.*

**Key words:** Alternation in Power; Democracy; Development; Election; Violence

### **Introduction**

In its classical form, the term democracy simply means government in which the people are the source of state power and take part in authoritative decision making and enforcement (Ogban-Iyam, 2005; Agarwal, 2013). One indispensable feature of modern democracy that has endeared it to many is periodic elections which enable individuals to participate in governance by choosing public office holders and/or contesting for public offices usually under the platform of political parties. This informs why Huntington (1991) agrees that, democracy involves contestation and participation because the most powerful decision makers are selected through periodic elections in which candidate freely compete for votes and in which virtually every adult is eligible to vote. Essentially, periodic elections provide

opportunity for the people to change or retain the regime in power by casting their votes in favour or against the regime and therefore increase chances of political power alternation in the society.

Political power alternation is a situation where the opposition political party takes over power from the incumbent via a democratic election. Hence, where the incumbent party loses an election to the opposition party and hands over power to the opposition, then the country has experienced alternation in power. Political power alternation has come to be a measure countries' democracy in that it reveals the extent to which elections are free and fair, and the extent to which the political space is democratized to allow activities of the opposition parties. As noted by Huntington (1991), a system is undemocratic to the extent that the opposition is marginalized or harassed; the sustained failure of the major opposition political party to win office via election in any society puts to doubt the degree of competition permitted by the system. Democracy according to him provides channels for the expression of dissent and opposition within the system. This provides fewer incentives for both the incumbent and opposition to use violence against each other because there are opportunities for changing political leaders. Recent studies have demonstrated that alternation in power breaks the vicious circle of weak institutions and strong particular interests (Milanovic, Hoff & Horowitz, 2008). Conversely, Wahman (2012) argued persuasively that victory of opposition does not guarantee democracy because newly elected government also concerned with future re-election may not abolish incumbent advantages so as not to undermine future prospect of re-election. Citing instances from Africa, he demonstrated that alternation in power brought about by coalition of opposition political parties driven by the personalities of the leaders may not engender democratization.

Since the 1990s, there has been increase in the number of African countries transiting to democracy, for instance, between 1990 & 1994, thirty-one of the forty-one countries that had not held multiparty elections did so (Diouf 1998 cited in Ibrahim 2003). Interestingly, the past two decades can also be seen as the decades of power alternation in West Africa, as alternation in power was witnessed in countries like: Senegal in 2000, Ghana in 2000 and 2008, Mali in 2002, Benin in 1996 and 2006, Cape Verde in 2001, Liberia and Niger in 2005 and 1996 respectively (Ereke & Okoli, 2014). Yet, one major challenge of most African democracies is the incidence of electoral violence. Electoral violence is "any random or organized act that seeks to determine, delay, or otherwise influence an electoral process through threat, verbal intimidation, hate speech, disinformation, physical assault, forced 'protection', blackmail, destruction of property, or assassination' (Fischer cited in Orji & Uzodi, 2012). Ogban-Iyam (2005) articulated that violence may serve different contradicting purposes in a democracy, one of which is to destroy and/or weaken democracy especially when it is deployed by anti-democracy forces.

Drawing from the experience of Nigeria (West Africa) and Kenya (East Africa), this paper examines the link between political power alternation and the incidence of electoral violence

in post colonial states. The paper is divided into six sections, the next section presents our theoretical perspective, this is followed by methodology adopted, an overview of electoral violence in Postcolonial Africa with focus on Nigeria and Kenya, the fifth section presents discussion of our findings and lessons learnt from the two states, we submitted our conclusion and made recommendations in the last section.

### **Theoretical Perspective**

The study is anchored on the Marxian theory of Post-colonial state. Initially developed by Alavi (1972), other major proponents of the theory include Ekekwe, (1985); Ake, (1985; 1989; 2003). The theory has been shaped by the works of leftist historical materialism (notably Marxist political economy and dependency theories of history and political science) such as Fanon, (1965); Ake, (1982); Rodney (1972) which emerged as a critique of imperialist and nationalist historiographies on the *raison d'être* and consequence of colonialism. In expressing the organic unity among pre-colonialism, colonialism and post-colonialism in Africa, Ekekwe, (1985), observed that:

The post-colonial state rests on the foundation of the colonial state which, in turn had incorporated some important elements of the pre-colonial rudimentary state structures. The colonial state was an instrument of imperialism. However, much as it was an imposition, it had to have a modicum of support and acquiescence from some of the aristocratic and feudal elements who wielded economic and political authority in pre-colonial times. Gaining such support was imperative in order to minimize social dislocations.(Ekekwe, 1985, p. 56).

Omeje (2015) added that the post-colonial states “were in part conceived and constituted in the loins of precoloniality, mutated, incubated and produced in coloniality, and ultimately proliferated and aggravated through the incontinuity of the postcolonial”. Based on the foregoing, the crises of the post-colonial state can be deduced from the organic unity between pre-colonialism, colonialism and post-colonialism expressed above. Such crises are the cross-cutting, embedded and enduring contradictions and conflicts in the postcolonial states which are related to colonial heritage (political and economic structures, practices, modes of accumulation, education and cultural patterns) as well as the nature and constraints of postcoloniality itself.

In the light of the above, this study investigates how the postcolonial character of the states in Nigeria and Kenya weaken political power alternation due to the repression of opposition by the incumbent. This further increases the tendency for opposition political elites to use violence in their struggle for political power. Being that both Nigeria and Kenya are post colonial states, primitive accumulation has remained the major preoccupation of the political leadership who seek state power by all means. State power when captured is

used to reinforce primitive accumulation and to repress any form of opposition. The opposition lacking confidence in independence of state institutions resorts to violence to emancipate itself from repression and political annihilation. The struggle between the incumbent and opposition for state power at all costs manifests in the incidence of electoral violence in the polity.

### **Data and Methods**

This study employed case study design which enables us to carry out in-depth study of a small number of cases in their real-life context and understanding how the cases influence and influenced by their contexts (Yin, 2009). Thus, we selected Nigeria and Kenya from East and West Africa respectively. Beyond being the economic hubs of their regions, both countries have experienced power alternation and widely reported incidents of electoral violence. Documentary method was adopted for data generation. Documentary method refers to the analysis of documents that contain information about the phenomenon we wish to study. It is used for identification and analysis of the limitations of physical sources, mainly written documents existing in both private and public domains (Mogalakwe, 2006). Data on election results were drawn from African Elections Database (available online at [www.electiontripod.org](http://www.electiontripod.org)). The database provides comprehensive archive of past and present election results for about 49 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

### **Elections and Electoral Violence in Post-colonial Africa: The Case of Nigeria**

Post-independence elections in Nigeria have been characterized by various levels of violence which undermined democratic governance in the country. For instance, the series of electoral crises in the first republic contributed in paving the way for military to intervene in Nigeria's politics. A major character of most of the post independence elections is the suppression of opposition through violent means and the use of violence by the opposition to preserve itself. For instance, during the first republic, as the country prepared for the January 1965 election, the incumbent monopolized all machineries of the state and inflicted all forms of harassment on any opposition such that in Bauchi South-West, the constituency of the Prime Minister Alhaji Tafawa Balewa, there was no opposition. The first time the opposition tried to nominate a candidate, those behind the nomination were arrested, on the second attempt, the opposition was abducted and on the third attempt, the opposition candidates were detained until the time for nomination had elapsed. Two other opposition candidates for Binji-Tangza-Silame and Gwadabawa were simply killed (Ake, 1985).

With the return to civil rule in 1979, the opposition leaders who felt marginalized in the First Republic saw it as an opportunity to actively participate in elections and possibly take over control of the government through democratic means. The 1979 Presidential Election was won by the National Party of Nigeria (NPN). In order to retain itself in power, the incumbent adopted every strategy including repression and emasculation of the opposition.

This plan by the incumbent to remain in power manifested in the reported incidence of electoral malpractice witnessed in the 1983 General Election which led to widespread electoral violence in the country and the eventual collapse of the Second Republic with the takeover of government by the military in the coup of 31<sup>st</sup> December 1983.

Table 1: NIGERIA'S ELECTION RESULTS 1999 – 2015\*

Year	Contestants/Parties	Number of votes	% of votes	Remarks
1999	Olusegun Obasanjo (PDP)	18,738,154	62.78%	
	Olu Falae (AD/APP)	11,110,287	37.22%	
2003	Olusegun Obasanjo (PDP)	24,456,140	61.94%	No Alternation in Power
	Muhammadu Buhari (ANPP)	12,710,022	32.19%	
	Odumegwu Ojukwu (APGA)	1,297,445	3.29%	
	Jim Nwobodo (UNPP)	169,609	0.43%	
	Gani Fawehimi (NCP)	161,333	0.41%	
	Sarah Jubril (PAC)	157,560	0.40%	
	Ike Nwachukwu (NDP)	132,997	0.34%	
	Christopher Okotie (JP)	119,547	0.30%	
	Balarabe Musa (PRP)	100,765	0.26%	
2007	Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (PDP)	24,638,063	69.60%	No Alternation in Power
	Muhammadu Buhari (ANPP)	6,605,299	18.66%	
	Atiku Abubakar (AC)	2,637,848	7.45%	
	Orji Uzor Kalu (PPA)	608,803	1.72%	
	Attahiru Bafarawa (DPP)	289,224	0.82%	
	Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu (APGA)	155,947	0.44%	
2011	Goodluck Jonathan (PDP)	22,495,187	58.89%	No Alternation in Power
	Muhammadu Buhari (CPC)	12,214,853	31.98%	
	Nuhu Ribadu (ACN)	2,079,151	5.41%	
	Ibrahim Shekarau (ANPP)	917,012	2.40%	
2015	Mohammadu Buhari (APC)	15,424,921	53.96%	First Alternation in Power
	Goodluck Jonathan (PDP)	12,853,162	44.96%	

\*Table contains results for major political parties & candidates which obtained minimum 100,000 votes  
**Source:** <http://www.electiontripod.org> retrieved 15/01/2014); The Centre for Policy Analyses (2015: 2)

The advent of the Fourth Republic brought about great expectation and rising hope to the Nigerian populace and the political elites. For the masses, the return to democracy would improve standard of living, create jobs etc; for the political elites, the political space would be widened to enable them pursue their political ambitions. After a keenly contested election, Gen. Olusegun Obsanjo (Rtd) of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) emerged winner with a total vote of 18,738,154 (62.78%) (see table 1), the PDP also emerged majority in the Federal House of Representative and the Senate by winning 206 seats(57.49%) out of

360 seats and 59 seats (56.4%) out of 109 seats respectively. The 1999 election was characterized by widespread irregularities and was considered by electoral observers as being below minimum standard expected of an election (see reports of selected observers in table 2).

During the 2003 General Elections, even though the election was organized by a civilian government, it turned out to be one of the worst elections in the history of Nigeria as shown by reports of various election monitoring bodies contained in table 2. The Executive demonstrated its power of incumbency and retained itself in power by ensuring that Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo (Rtd) of the PDP swept the votes at the poll while the PDP also got majority seats in the National House of Assembly (see table 1). Similarly, in the 2007 General elections, having completed the maximum two terms of four years each, the incumbent President Obasanjo saw to it that his anointed successor, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua of the PDP won the Presidential election. Despite the strong internal crises in the party and the breakaway of Atiku Abubakar led faction to contest under the Action Congress (AC), the PDP still won 87 of the 109 seats in the Senate and 263 out of 360 seats in the Federal House of Representatives.

The 2007 General election was characterized by serious irregularities and inadequacies and condemned by various election observers both local and International (see table 2). The untimely death of Umaru Musa Yar Adua before completion of his tenure and the assumption of President Goodluck as the President led to widespread dissatisfaction among the Northern elites who felt that the North has not completed its turn in the Presidency and should be given another opportunity in 2011 to enable it complete its turn of at least eight years before power shifts to another region, ethnic or religious group. Nevertheless, Goodluck Jonathan got the PDP ticket to contest the Presidential election. Although, the 2011 General Elections were adjudged by many observers as the most credible election organized by INEC since 1999 (see table 2), there was widespread dissatisfaction and violence orchestrated by the opposition parties and some parts of the North who felt frustrated and cheated by the Southerners who have been ruling the country since the 1999 transition. For instance in about fourteen northern states, the post-election violence was so pronounced that protesters killed several people, including National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members, business, churches and houses were torched, looted or destroyed (Orji & Uzodi, 2012).

The repression of opposition and electoral violence also manifested in subsequent elections held after the 2011 elections. For instance, the 2014 gubernatorial elections in Ekiti and Osun states were characterized by massive deployment of security personnel who intimidated, harassed and arrested some members of the opposition political parties. In Ekiti alone, over 12,000 troops including soldiers, men of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, State Security Service and police officers were deployed during the election. The then Inspector General of Police (IGP), Mohammed Abubakar attested to this deployment when he stated that the police alone had deployed three helicopters for surveillance in the three

senatorial districts in the state with one Assistant Inspector General of Police and four commissioners of police for effective coordination of security operations as early as one week to the election.

**Table 2:** SUMMARY OF REPORTS OF ELECTION OBSERVERS ON NIGERIAN ELECTIONS, 1999-2011

Election Year	Observer	Report	Remark
1999	Transition Monitoring Group (TMG)	'The election saw marked increase in the number of electoral malpractices'. There were areas where the incidence of electoral fraud was great enough to completely distort the election result.	Election lacked credibility
2003	Transition Monitoring Group (TMG)	'There were scores of cases of alleged electoral fraud across the country, often with the collusion of election officials and security personnel'	The Election lacked credibility
	National Democratic Institute (NDI)	'Serious irregularities appeared more widespread in certain states; others concentrated in areas within the states'; 'There were irregularities committed by officials, activities, and supporters of the major political parties'	
	EU EOM	'In a number of states the conduct of the elections did not comply with Nigerian law and international standards'	
2007	Human Rights Watch	'Many seasoned observers stated that the 2007 polls were among the worst they had ever witnessed anywhere in the world'	The Election lacked credibility
	EU EOM	The 2007 State and Federal elections fell far short of basic international and regional standards for democratic elections'	
	TMG	'...the April 14 and 21 2007 general elections are the worst election that ever took place in the country'	
2011	EU EOM	'The 2011 general elections marked an important step towards strengthening democratic elections in Nigeria, but challenges remain'	The Election was an improvement over the past ones
	NDI	'Nigeria's 2011 general elections...were significantly more transparent and credible than the three preceding polls in 1999, 2003 and 2007	

**Source:** Culled from Agbo, H. A. & Okoli, C. R. (2016). Election management and disenfranchisements in 2015 general elections in Nigeria: The unexplored issues, *International Journal of Research in Arts and Social Sciences*, 9(1), 78-89.

The police chief added that the number of troops, armoured tanks and helicopters deployed in Ekiti were the highest ever to be deployed in any state in Nigeria for electioneering purposes. With the aid of the security personnel, members of the opposition

like the Rivers State governor, Rotimi Amaechi, Edo state governor Adams Oshiomhole and Kano State governor Rabiu Kwankwaso were denied entry into Ekiti State as they attempted to attend the APC rally. Other opposition members like Imo State governor, Rochas Okorocha, and former governor of Lagos State Bola Tinubu were also barred from taking off at the Akure airport after the rally thereby forcing them to travel by road (Olaniyan & Amao, 2015). One disturbing dimension of use of security apparatus to intimidate members of the opposition as seen in Osun State was the use of hooded security operatives whose identity became difficult to know. Some members of the opposition were arrested by masked security personnel. This arrest of the opposition members by masked security personnel was reported by the Civil Society Group in their report which revealed that there were cases of unexplained arrests and detention of some politicians, arrest of voters by masked security operatives who yanked these voters off the lines (Olaniyan & Amao, 2015).

*The 2015 General Election and Power Alternation in Nigeria* For the first time in the history of Nigeria, there was alternation in power whereby the opposition political party – All Progressive Congress (APC) defeated the incumbent People’s Democratic Party (PDP) in the Presidential elections after the party has held power for over fifteen (15) years. Consequently, APC’s presidential candidate – Gen. Muhammadu Buhari (Rtd) was sworn in as the country’s President on May 29, 2015 while the PDP automatically became the opposition party. The APC emerged as a coalition of three (3) biggest opposition parties – the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the Congress of Progressive Change (CPC), the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), and a faction of the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA). The resolution was signed by Tom Ikimi, who represented the ACN (Action Congress of Nigeria); Senator Annie Okonkwo on behalf of the APGA (All Progressives Grand Alliance); former governor of Kano State, Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau, the Chairman of ANPP’s Merger Committee; and Garba Sadi, the Chairman of CPC’s (Congress for Progressive Change) Merger Committee. APC was duly registered by Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on July 31, 2013 to become a political party and subsequently withdrew the operating licenses of the three previous and merging parties (the ACN, CPC and ANPP). Following the formation and registration of APC, prominent members of the PDP who had some unresolved grievances with the party leadership defected to the APC. The formation of coalition by major opposition parties and defection of many PDP members to the APC contributed to the victory of the APC in the 2015 elections.

*Repression of Opposition in Nigeria by the Incumbent* Upon assumption of office, the APC led government seems to have adopted certain strategies aimed at repressing the opposition PDP through various strategies like selective arrests and investigations of PDP members on charges of corruption. Various teams of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Department of Security Service (DSS) were dispatched at various times to PDP controlled states like Enugu and Akwa Ibom to investigate the past governors on charges of corruption while no effort was made by these state security forces to investigate strong



allegations of corruption against some APC members serving in various offices of the current administration. As noted by Akuki, (2015), “recent events in Abia, Rivers and Akwa Ibom may have come to the PDP hierarchy and the senators as troubling, just as several of its leaders and former governors have become targets of the EFCC since May 29, 2015 when it lost control of the federal powers to the rival APC.”

Furthermore, the current administration’s fight against corruption has been criticized for targeting mainly members of the PDP while most former PDP members who defected to APC remain undisturbed even when there are alleged cases of corruption against them. According to Fayose Governor of Ekiti state, “President Buhari is sitting among corrupt people and he must first extricate himself from the comity of corruption that he is before his anti-corruption stance can be accorded respect” (Fayose, cited in Akuki, 2015). In view of the fear that the incumbent APC would want to repress them via various mechanisms, the opposition PDP has resorted to the campaign of calumny and expression of mistrust aimed at inciting its members against the incumbent. For instance, while reacting to arrests by state security operatives in PDP controlled states, Godswill Akpabio, a former governor of Akwa Ibom state remarked that: “we condemn these arrests, describe them as illegal, a total misplacement of priority, a waste of tax payers’ money in an economically challenging time, and a serious threat to democracy” (Akpabio, cited in Akuki, 2015). The implication of the foregoing is that the opposition PDP and its supporters, having lost hold of state power at the federal level and feels that its members are being harassed by state security operatives would want a recapture of state power by all means to recover all they may have lost during the regime of APC.

### **Elections and Electoral Violence in Post-colonial Africa: The Case of Kenya**

Immediately after her independence on 12 Dec 1963, the stage was quickly set for ethnic politics, winner-takes-all politics among political elites and electoral violence that would plague the Kenya in her post-colonial days. Jomo Kenyatta who was of Kikuyu tribe together with the Kikuyu dominated KANU party immediately pushed for and obtained constitutional changes which further centralised the government despite the protest of the breakaway opposition party, the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU), which controlled three of the then 7 semi-autonomous regions in the country. Members of the KADU party suffered serious political repression from the Kenyatta led KANU such that members of the opposition party who were mostly of smaller ethnic groups, abandoned the party and joined the ruling KANU party due to fear of marginalization and deprivation. Consequently, KADU as an opposition political party was dissolved by 1964. By 1966 Kenya People’s Union (KPU) emerged from KANU as a new opposition political party led by former vice-president Jaramogi Oginga Odinga who is of the Luo tribe. The KPU members were harassed and repressed by the incumbent KANU party until the party was annihilated and Kenya continued to be ruled as a one-party state. While ruling Kenya as a de facto one-party

state, Kenyatta used state powers to enrich and empower members of his Kikuyu tribe. For instance, most of the plantations formerly owned by white settlers were collected and distributed to Kikuyu farmers, with their allies from the Embu and Meru tribes. By 1978 most of the country's resources were in the hands of the three dominant tribes - the Gikuyu-Embu-Meru Association (GEMA), which made up 30% of the total population in Kenya. As a result of this, the other groups, a 70% majority, felt marginalized and deprived, setting up long-term ethnic animosities in the country.

With the death of President Kenyatta in August 1978, Vice President Daniel Arap Moi took over leadership of the country as an interim President, and formally became the President on 14 October 1978 after being elected as the head of KANU ruling party. In order to retain control of state power, the National Assembly amended the constitution in June 1982 officially making Kenya a one-party state. Just like his predecessor, Moi who was a member of the Kalejin ethnic group quickly used state power to transfer state resources to members of Kalenjin tribe and other allied ethnic groups. Following pressures from the international community, the state was returned to multi-party state in 1991. However, Moi continued to repress all the opposition political parties which were also ethnically based. For instance, the Kikuyu, Luo and Luhya ethnic groups continued to suffer serious harassment and repression including systematic disenfranchisement.

*The 2002 Political Power Alternation, Opposition and Violence in Kenya* Attempt by Moi to transfer power to Uhuru Kenyatta in the 2002 elections failed due to the emergence of a rainbow coalition of opposition political parties which wrestled power from the incumbent in the 2002 elections with Mwai Kibaki, a member of the Kikuyu ethnic group emerging as the President. Having captured state power, the Mwai Kibaki led coalition could not maintain cohesion for a long time. Wahman, (2012) gave insights on how disputes erupted within the NARC coalition soon after the party assumed power when President Mwai Kibaki revealed that he has no intention of sharing power with rival political forces within the coalition. Consequently, Kibaki gave key political appointments to his loyalists and fellow tribesmen and failed to implement the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the coalition. One of the major agreements contained in the MOU which Kibaki failed to implement was the creation of office of Prime Minister for Raila Odinga. Again, Kibaki delayed to review the existing constitution which favoured the party controlling the presidency. After pressure for constitutional review which would give more power to other members of the coalition, in 2005 a draft constitution was put forward for referendum but failed to address the major issue advocated which is the power relations in the state. As a result, other members of the coalition together with the opposition KANU successfully teamed up to reject the draft constitution in the 2005 referendum.

Following rejection of the draft constitution, Kibaki dismissed the cabinet and formed a new one excluding all former ministers belonging to the other parties in the coalition especially the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) where Odinga primarily belonged. The defection of LDP and other members from the coalition radically undermined the strength

of the incumbent NARC party. Aware of this and its implication for the 2007 elections, Kibaki resorted to manipulation of the electoral processes to win the 2007 election and remain in power. The declaration of Kibaki as the winner of the election by the electoral commission despite evidence widespread manipulation of the electoral process as reported by both opposition and international observers led to monumental post electoral violence considered one of the worse electoral violence experienced in Kenya (Wahman, 2012).

**Table 3: KENYA'S ELECTION RESULTS 1997 – 2013\***

Year	Contestants/Parties	Number of votes	% of votes	Remarks
1997	Daniel arap Moi (KANU)	2,445,801	40.12%	No Alternation
	Mwai Kibaki (DP)	1,895,527	31.09%	
	Raila Odinga (NDP)	665,725	10.92%	
2002	Mwai Kibaki (DP) [NARC]	3,646,277	62.20%	Alternation in Power
	Uhuru Kenyatta (KANU)	1,835,890	31.32%	
	Simeon Nyachae (FORD-P)	345,152	5.89%	
2007	Mwai Kibaki (DP) [PNU]	4,584,721	46.42%	No Alternation
	Raila Odinga (ODM)	4,352,993	44.07%	
	Kalonzo Musyoka (ODM-K)	879,903	8.91%	
2012/2013	Uhuru Kenyatta (Jubilee Alliance/TNA)	6,173,433	50.51%	No Alternation
	Raila Odinga (Coalition for Reforms & Democracy/ODM)	5,340,546	43.70%	
	Musalia Mudavadi (Amani Coalition/UDF)	483,981	3.96%	

\*Table contains results of the three leading political parties in each election

Source: <http://www.electiontripod.org> (retrieved 24/12/2015);

In preparation for the 2013 general elections, a strong coalition was formed by Uhuru Kenyatta's party, The National Alliance (TNA), William Ruto's United Republican Party (URP), Najib Balala's Republican Congress Party (RCP) and Charity Ngilu's National Rainbow Coalition party to form the Jubilee Alliance coalition. Under the umbrella of this coalition, Uhuru contested for president in the elections held in March 2013 alongside another formidable coalition was the Coalition For Reform and Democracy (CORD), led by Raila Odinga. Uhuru emerged winner of the election and was therefore declared the fourth President of the Republic of Kenya by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC). Table 3 presents summary of Kenya's elections between 1997 and 2013. With his assumption of office in 2013, Kenyatta has also been reported to be repressing and harassing opposition. For instance, the Mr. Eliud Owalo-Key aid of former Prime-Minister Mr. Raila Odinga who called for the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission

(IEBC) to be disbanded has been intimidated and harassed by state security forces (Ambuka, 2013).

In a bid to ensure that no form of opposition sees the light of the day, the government of Uhuru has also continued to use state security agencies to disperse various forms of demonstrations by civil society organizations and human right activists calling for end to corruption and bad governance in the state. To illustrate, the regime articulated the Miscellaneous Amendment Bill 2013 which sought to amend the Public Benefits Organization (PBO) Act 2013 so as to enable the state repress the CSOs by emasculating their sources of funding and their freedom of association. Specifically, the bill proposed 13 amendments which includes among others: “altering the composition of the PBO Regulatory Authority’s governance body in favour of the executive branch; prohibiting NGOs and PBOs from receiving their funding directly from donors and imposing that all funds be channeled through a new “Public Benefits Organizations (PBO) Federation”. Though the PBO Amendment Bill was not passed by the house, in 2013 the government signed Information and Communication Act 2013 which provide the government unrestricted powers to impose penalties on media practitioners, including revocation of accreditation and seizure of property (FIDH, 2014).

### **Discussion of Findings and Lessons from our Case Studies**

Nigeria and Kenya are multi-ethnic post-colonial states with fledgling democracies. While Nigeria has experienced years of military rule, Kenya has been ruled by authoritarian civilians who attempted at various times to rule the state as one-party state since independence. Both countries have experienced alternation in power (Kenya in 2002, Nigeria in 2015). However, electoral violence remains widespread in both countries. For instance, the 2007/2008 electoral violence in Kenya is reported as one of the worst electoral violence in Africa. Nigeria has witnessed pockets of electoral violence in all the elections conducted in its current fourth republic. The experience of Nigeria and Kenya in their democratic experiments simply shows the penchant of political leaders in post-colonial states to use state power for primitive accumulation. This is refracted in the centralization of governance in both states by the leaders. For instance, Nigeria’s first republic was characterized by existence of strong regional governments but successive leaders, especially beginning with the military regimes, have continued to ensure stronger central government in their quest to use state power for personal aggrandizement. Similarly, immediately after independence in Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta and his KANU members pushed for centralization of governance in Kenya to ensure the opposition in control of three regions of the state does not have much control over state resources. As a corollary, this existence of strong central governments has engendered a zero-sum politics in which politicians struggle for the control of the central government because it affords them the opportunity to annihilate opposition and to enrich themselves and their cronies. This explains the continuous repression of opposition parties

and ethnic groups by the incumbents in both Nigeria and Kenya, and the constant electoral violence that ensues before, during and after elections.

Furthermore, the excessive struggle to capture state power by all means reflects in the nature of party politics in both states. Political parties are not institutionalized, politicians defect from one party to another any time in their quest for state power. There is also constant formation of rainbow coalition by opposition groups who struggle not only to emancipate their selves from repression of the incumbent but to capture state power in order to redistribute state resources in their favour. Thus, the alternation in power experienced in both states was result of such political gimmicks of coalition formation by opposition parties and alignment of ethnic groups, and not as a result of emergence of institutionalized political parties which offered better alternative to governance. This being the case, the alternation in power experienced by both states did not end the incidence of electoral violence in the states as the emergent incumbents turned into repressive regimes attempting to silence all forms of opposition. The experience of these two states therefore shows that where a victory of opposition results from coalition of opposition parties, alignment of ethnic groups and party defections by politicians from defeated incumbent, just for the sake of capturing state power and for redistribution of state resources in their favour, internal disputes would always erupt within the coalition in their attempt to share state power and resources. Again, the victorious coalition would attempt to suppress any opposition so as to retain state power. This internal crisis within the coalition in power and the repression of opposition would continue to incubate future electoral violence in the polity.

### **Conclusion / Prognosis**

The study examined whether the 2015 alternation in power can assuage the incidence of electoral violence in Nigeria. The experience of Kenya shows that alternation brought about by coalition of opposition political parties and alignment of ethnic groups for the purpose of capturing state power and redistributing state resources would not assuage incidence of electoral violence. This is because, absence internal party cohesion within the victorious coalition, continuous harassment and repression of opposition may create conditions for electoral violence. Nigeria's alternation in power tends to follow the trend of events in Kenya and may therefore not reduce the incidence of electoral violence in future elections. Therefore, alternation in power in post-colonial states resulting from coalition of political parties and alignment of ethnic groups made up of self-seeking politicians may engender vicious circle of electoral violence.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the analysis and projections of this study, we recommend that where opposition parties capture political power via elections, appointments to key political positions should also be democratized to ensure fairness to all geo-political zones

irrespective of where the incumbent got most of its support. Again, while formation of coalition is not entirely wrong, the parties involved in the coalition should not just focus on capturing state power should have long term goal of sustaining strong a formidable party that goes beyond alliance of ethnic groups and power seeking politicians.

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### **Bibliographical Notes**

**Netchy MBAEZE** is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Enugu, NIGERIA

**Chukwuma Rowland OKOLI** is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science and International Relations, Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu and a post graduate candidate in the Department of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, NIGERIA. Email: [chukwumaroland@yahoo.com](mailto:chukwumaroland@yahoo.com) Phone: 08034304649

**Willy OKONKWO** is a Lecturer Department of Political Science and International Relations, Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu State, NIGERIA