



# Perceptions On Training Of Adhoc Staff And Election Violence

\*Ndeue Kuapie; Eke Paul & Steve Wordu A.

Department of Sociology,  
University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria  
\*Email of corresponding author: [ndeeuekuapie@gmail.com](mailto:ndeeuekuapie@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

The study examined the Pattern of Management of Ad-hoc Electoral Staff and Election violence in Rivers State between 1999 and 2015. The specific objective of the study was to investigate the perceptions on training of ad-hoc staff and election violence. The study employed the survey research design. A total population of 18,438 was used for the study. The sample size of 1123 was drawn utilizing the simple random, purposive and chain-referral techniques. The research instruments consist of self-designed questionnaire, Focus Group Discussion, Non-Participant Observation and Key-Informant Interviews. Data were presented using the charts and the Chi-Square test of association for data analysis. The study found that since calculated value for  $\chi^2$  is 14.05 while the table value is 12.59, it therefore suggests that the hypothesis which states that “an increase in unethical practices in data computation of electoral votes will increase the propensity of election violence” was accepted. Since the margin between the computed  $\chi^2$  value is significantly higher than the table value. The qualitative data reveals that the inadequacy of ad-hoc staff is often complicated by the norms of substituting trained ad-hoc staff with untrained mercenaries to deliver the bargains for desperate politicians thereby undermining electoral peace and evoking aggression. The study concludes that the complexities surrounding the short-term training of ad-hoc Staff for elections in a dwindling and fragile democracy have increased the tenacity at which unethical practices are evolving especially, in data computation of electoral votes and increased propensity for election violence. The study therefore recommends a well-planned and intensive training program should be done routinely prior to the election periods and above to allow room for adequate coverage of all aspect of professional engagement in data computation of electoral votes in order to decrease the propensity of election violence.

**Keywords:** Election violence, training, adhoc staff

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Elections in Africa have been a competitive means of deconstructing power absolutism. However, it is a constructive process with common rules to choose representatives of the people. Robust democratic institutions in the world are usually understood as the ultimate guarantor for social peace hence election becomes a sine qua non for democratic ascendancy of power. Since electoral processes are intrinsically about the attainment of political power, often in high-stake contexts, elections as a process of competition for power thriving social norms of corruption, violence and indoctrination of mediocrity in the political process of the Nigerian state. According to Johari (2009), election is the most appreciated system prevailing in democratic countries of the world. Obakhedo (2011) posits that; election is an integral part of a democratic process that enables the citizens to determine fairly and freely who should lead them at every level of government periodically and takes decisions that shape their social, economic and political destiny and in case they falter, still possess the power to recall them or vote them out in the next election. It therefore follows, that the process legitimizes the political representatives and leaders as well and

gives power to the electorates to recall or voted out of office any erring or nonperforming custodian of political power. However, the conduct of a free fair and transparent election in Nigeria is an elusive goal fraught with challenges till present day. One major factor responsible for the non-conduct of credible elections is the complex delegation, manipulation and permutation of election process especially the complicity of ad-hoc electoral staff who are often times not properly trained and political planted for delivery of their interest through manipulative means.

Although election violence predates the current democratic dispensation, the magnitude of violence has rather increased with continuous discordant characterized by elections malpractices which often times is a root problem from the onset of recruiting and training ad-hoc staff that are not liable and inexperience by the dictates of the job and expected deliverables. According to the HRW report, between April and May 2003 about 100 people were said to have been killed and many more injured during the Federal and State elections in Nigeria (Egobueze and Callistus, 2017) due to intricacies traced to Ad-hoc Staff behaviors and unprofessional practices fostering electoral malpractices and electoral fraud.

Several factors have accounted for election violence in Nigeria which includes outright desperation on the side of the political elites, corruption, ethnicity, poverty, lack of proper civic education, religion, lack of integrity, and mismanagement on the part of Staff of Election Management Body (EMB), in this case the Independent National Electoral Commission(INEC). It is worthy of note, that one major factor underpinning the lack of confidence in the electoral system in Nigeria is the pattern of recruitment and deployment of Ad-hoc electoral staff who are consistently been accused of being biased, corrupt and generally incompetent in carrying out its electoral duties. However, the task of conducting a transparent and credible election lies in the proficiency of the electoral body to effectively and efficiently manage its electoral staff. The success of INEC in conducting a transparent and credible election depends on its staff capacity and professionalism in personnel management of public trust. It is against this backdrop that this study therefore, intends to examine the pattern of Management of Ad-hoc Electoral staff and election violence in Rivers State in view of the increasing level of election violence in the State.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The nature of political participation and increased competition and collaboration of ad-hoc staff in electoral process in Nigeria has been a political process of responding to the leadership needs of the people. These changes have been the use of work teams as a preferred performance management technique. The increasing frequency of team-based forms of organizing ad-hoc INEC staff presents unique opportunities and creates its numerous challenges alike to sustainable democracy. However, challenges inherent to the use of ad-hocs exist which has remained a more contending debate. There is need for more studies on how electoral institutions should organize, compose, manage, and develop ad-hoc teams. This has been a huge dearth to sustainable democracy and institutional development in Nigeria. This study interrogates the credibility and neutrality of INEC designing and delivering team training to its ad-hoc staff with the ultimate aim of improving attitudinal competencies as well as manifest team processes and performance for violence-free elections.

Wordu (2014) affirms that: ‘Since 1960 when Nigeria became politically independent electoral malpractices and the resultant related crisis had constituted a stumbling block to consolidation of democracy, political stability and sustainable development, rarely any election is conducted in the country without one form of violence or the other, Similarly, Omololomoju (2016) observed that the violence trails the rerun elections in the state and claimed lives of members of the Nigeria Youth Service Corps who are often ad-hoc staff. These studies however, pay very little or no attention to interrogate the backdrops of routine training of ad-hoc staff to keep them professional in the delivery of free and fair election and to ensure that electorates' expectations and pre-existing perceptions about INEC staff influencing power through ad hoc teams and on how individuals seek help, speak up about concerns, and imagine its personal gains. Thus, this study leverages on the findings of Janss et al (2012) who investigated on what is happening under the surface? Power, conflict, and the performance of medical teams. We therefore argue that inadequate training and unprofessionalism of ad-hoc staff of INEC who are often perceived as implanted by political actors to subvert their votes and short-change their mandates thus makes them vulnerable to electoral violence. This situation has been worsened by the social norms of

corruption, poverty and injustice that have permeated the fabrics of both individuals and institutions in Nigeria thus ad-hoc staff of INEC are constantly exposed to victimization and aggression politically-induced by state actors and their agents. It is against this backdrop that this study investigates perception on training of ad-hoc staff and election violence.

### **Reviews on Electoral Violence**

Hoglund (2009) cited in Nyam (2015) developed an analytical framework which involves looking at three main areas in a given country where violence is taking place. These are the nature of politics, the nature of election and the electoral institution. In analyzing these three areas, he identifies two causative factors namely; the enabling factors or conditions that are likely to produce electoral violence and the triggering factors that is the things that trigger the violence. Enabling or conditional factors include; patrimonial politics, culture of impunity, conflict cleavages, competitiveness and political mobilization system. Triggering factors are: violent actors, participation, use of electoral administration, electoral fraud, unwanted or unexpected outcome of elections. These clusters of factors in Ngah and Kiven (2016) are important for understanding electoral violence in different societies and across elections in a specific country. In their study on causes of electoral violence in Africa, Nyam and Kiven (2016) adopted the Hoglund's analytical framework in explaining why electoral violence occurs and concluded that the enabling conditions and triggering factors lay in the nature of politics, the nature of elections and the nature of electoral institution. Similarly, the Nordiska African institute of policy notes 2012/2013 on electoral violence in Africa argue that the causes of electoral violence are multifaceted and can be divided into two broad categories. First, structural factors 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 center. Second factors related to the electoral process and the electoral contest itself such as failed or flawed elections, election fraud, weak or manipulated institutions, and then the Institutional rules governing the electoral process.

A recent Mercy Corps research in the North central region also highlights the divide in Nigeria that has laid the groundwork for an incendiary election season. In their findings the study identifies competition for scarce resources between identity groups as the most pressing source of tension, limited confidence in government institutions and perception of social exclusion, local power struggles among identity group. Others include electoral misconduct, party competition, corruption and bribery, voter intimidation and property destruction (Mercy Corps, 2015).

Prof. Ujo, while presenting a paper on "Election violence in Nigeria: issues and challenges", at the International Institute for the study of election and election management, identifies socio-political factors that spark election violence. Using "the ecological theory", he argues that electoral competition in Nigeria is not based on ideological orientation, rather it is monetized. Victory in electoral competition into representative institutions goes to the highest bidder. It also opens the gate to primitive accumulation. He further argued that the behaviour of political actors in the socio-political environment influences the conduct of elections. He identifies variables that created the fertile ground for violence as; corruption, godfatherism, use of ethnic-religious fanaticism, recruitment of thugs, circulation of small arms, inability of the security apparatus to enforce law and order, lack of political and civic education, corruption in the judiciary, mass unemployment and monetization of the political and electoral process (Igidi, 2015).

Frimpong (2012) In his work, entitled Electoral violence in Africa... causes, implications and solutions argue that electoral violence in Africa is caused by poverty. According to him; "poverty in Africa is very alarming and this gives room for the unemployed majority to be manipulated to perpetuate all forms of electoral violence". When the economic hardship becomes too unbearable, the propensity for violence increases. "Army of unemployed youth" then becomes a tool for electoral violence. To this end this study argues that besides these factors identified as responsible for electoral violence there is much to the current nuance of perception on training of ad-hoc staff and election violence in Nigeria and Africa. This assumes a complex turn as a result of the several factors influencing violent behaviors against the state and its electoral institutions that have failed to assume independence and neutrality in delivery of fair and credible elections.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employed the survey research design method in collecting and analysing the data for the study. The locale for the study was Rivers State. The state is made up of 23 Local Governments, three (3) Senatorial Districts with 319 Electoral Wards, 4,442 polling units, 32 State constituencies and 13 Federal constituencies. The population of the study consists of 18,438 ad-hoc staff recruited for the conduct of the 2015 general election in across the 23 LGAs of Rivers state based on the number of electoral wards, number of Polling Units, number of State and Federal Constituencies in each Local Government.

**Table 3.1: Population Distribution of Adhoc Electoral Staff who participated in the conduct of the 2015 General Election in the three Senatorial District of Rivers State.**

Senatorial District	LGA	No. of Registration	No. of Polling Units	Population of Ad-hoc Staff
Rivers Southeast	Khana	19	295	1,220
	Gokana	17	219	911
	Eleme	10	92	389
	Tai	10	91	385
	Oyigbo	10	109	457
	Opobo/Nkoro	11	142	591
	Andoni	11	173	715
	7	88	1121	4,668
Rivers East	Etche	19	207	868
	Omuma	10	130	541
	Ikwerre	13	181	751
	Obio/Akpor	17	359	1,473
	Port Harcourt	20	587	2,393
	Okrika	12	151	629
	Ogu/Bolo	12	123	517
	Emohua	14	210	869
	8	117	1948	8,041
	Rivers West	Asari Toru	13	226
Akukoturu		17	210	876
Degema		17	130	555
Ogba/Egema/Ndoni		17	268	1,108
Bonny		12	104	441
Abua/Odual		13	181	751
Ahoada East		13	154	641
Ahoada West		12	100	425
8		114	1373	5,729
Total		23	319	4442

The sample size for this study was 1,123 selected using the simple random, purposive and chain-referral sampling techniques. Six (6) Local Government Areas (Two from each of the three Senatorial Districts of the State) were selected for the study using the simple random technique. Twelve (12) Management staff of INEC and three (3) major Stakeholders involved in the electoral process were purposively selected for interview and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) respectively. The three Stakeholders are the political parties, Electorates and Civil Society representatives. The Taro Yamane Formula was adopted  
 Where  $n$  = sample size,  $N$  = Population of the study,  $I$  = constant  
 $E$  = margin of error of significant (accepted error at 5% i.e. 0.05)

**Table 3.2: Sample Size Computation using Taro Yamane Formula**

TARO YAMANE	RIVERS SOUTH EAST	RIVERS EAST	RIVERS WEST	TOTAL SIZE
	N = 4,668	8,041	5,729	18438
	(e) <sup>2</sup> =0.5 x 0.5 = 0.0025	(e) <sup>2</sup> =0.5 x 0.5 =0.0025	(e) <sup>2</sup> =0.5 x 0.5 =0.0025	
$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$	0.0025 x 4,668 = 11.67	0.0025 x 8041 =20.10	0.0025 x 5729 x 14.32	
	1 + 11.67=12.67	1 + 20.10=21.10	1 + 14.32=15.32	
	n=4668 ÷ 12.67 =368	n=8041 ÷ 21.10=381	n=5729 ÷ 15.32=374	1123

Source: Computed by the Researcher (2018)

The sample size of the study was drawn from two Local Governments areas across each of the three senatorial districts of the State, using the simple random sampling technique. From each of the selected Local Government, a sample size was drawn proportionately by determining the ratio of Ad-hoc electoral staff to the sample size of their respective senatorial districts. Finally, the individual or sample element to be included in the study from each of the selected Local Government was selected using the purposive and chain-referral sampling techniques. Respondents (Ad-hoc Staff who conducted the 2015 General Election in the State) were traced through their addresses and phone contacts obtained from the INEC list of Ad-hoc Staff. Data were sourced through primary and secondary sources. The primary sources of data collection used in the study were the administration of self-designed questionnaire, personal interview, Focus Group Discussion and Participant Observation while the secondary source of data collection include information obtained from various empirical studies done by scholars. The study made use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. For the quantitative method, the study made use of tables and charts to reflect frequency distribution. Simple percentages were used to present the demographic characteristics of respondents. The Chi-square was used to sort out relationship between variables. Qualitative method was employed in analysing information obtained from FGD/in-depth interview with INEC management staff.

## RESULTS

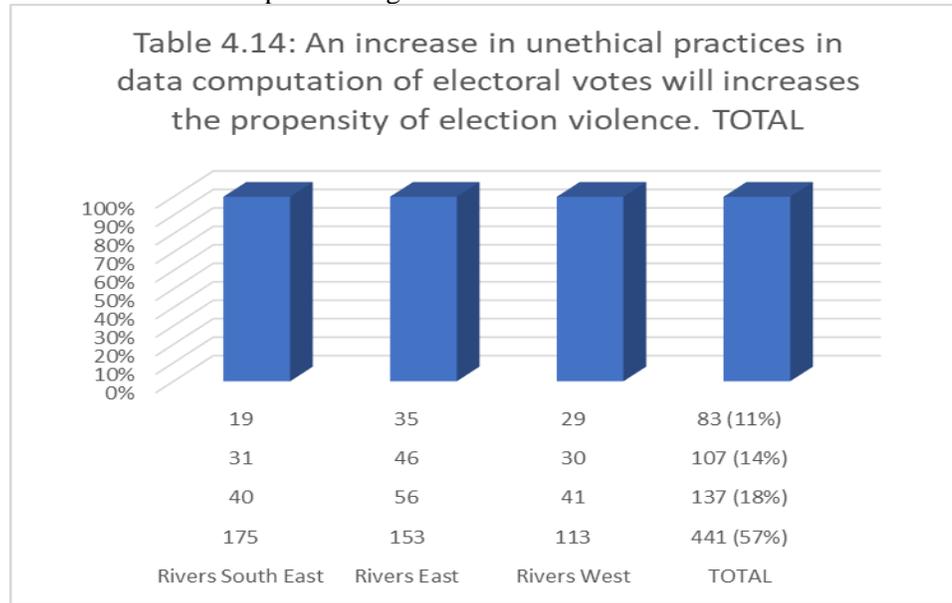
**Hypothesis: An increase in unethical practices in data computation of electoral votes will increase the propensity of election violence.**

**Table 4.14: An increase in unethical practices in data computation of electoral votes will increase the propensity of election violence**

Respondents	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
Rivers South East	175	40	31	19	265
Rivers East	153	56	46	35	290
Rivers West	113	41	30	29	213
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>768</b>

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2018.

The data from table 4.14 was computed using the chart.



Data from figure 4.14 shows the opinion of respondents on increase in unethical practices in data computation of electoral votes will increase the propensity of election violence. The data presented in the figure shows that a preponderant (57%) 441 of the respondents across the senatorial (Rivers South East, Rivers East and Rivers West) respectively, strongly agreed that an increase in unethical practices in data computation by Ad-hoc Electoral staff tends to increase the propensity of Election violence, 137(18%) agreed, 107(14%) disagreed while 83(11%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. The implication of the above shows that that unethical practices in data computation of electoral votes have been a major human factor undermining elections and evoking belligerence amongst party agents, electorates and politicians. This has often exasperated the landscape of complex political divide from desperate and unpatriotic politicians and their agents who adds conflagration to the vulnerable electorates and manipulatively ignite election violence. However, the frontline victims of these are often the Ad-hoc Electoral staff who are perceived to have been unethical, and bought over by the politicians to server their interest thereby undermining peace and electoral development in Nigeria.

The information presented in the Table above was further subjected to a Chi-square test of significance in Table 4.15 below.

**Table 4.15: Chi-Square computation for Hypothesis 2**

Category of Respondents	O	E	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	(O-E) <sup>2</sup> /E
Rivers South East	175	152.17	22.83	521.21	3.43
	40	47.27	-7.27	52.85	1.12
	31	36.92	-5.92	35.05	0.95
	19	28.64	-9.64	92.92	3.24
Rivers East	153	166.52	-13.52	182.79	1.09
	56	51.73	4.27	18.23	0.35
	46	40.40	5.6	31.36	0.78
	35	31.34	3.66	13.39	0.43
Rivers West	113	122.31	-9.31	86.68	0.71
	41	37.99	3.01	9.06	0.24
	30	29.68	0.32	0.10	0.00
	29	23.02	5.98	35.76	1.55
Chi-Square	$\chi^2 =$				14.05

Source: Author's field work, 2018.

The Chi-square  $\chi^2$  calculated value for research hypothesis

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(o_1 - e_1)^2}{e_1}$$

Where o = Observed frequency

e = Expected frequency

At 3df, the table value of  $\chi^2$  at 0.05 level of significance is = 12.59

The Chi-square calculated value was compared with Chi-square tabular value based on the calculated degree of freedom (df).

$$df = (R-1)(C-1)$$

$$= (3-1)(4-1)$$

$$= 2 \times 3$$

Therefore, df = 6.

**Decision rule:** The generally accepted decision rule for the application of Chi-square  $\chi^2$  test states that we accept null hypothesis if calculated value is less than the table value and reject hypothesis if the calculated value is greater than table value. Following the decision rule therefore, since calculated value for  $\chi^2$  is 14.05 while the table value is 12.59, it therefore suggests that the hypothesis which states that “**An increase in unethical practices in data computation of electoral votes will increase the propensity of election violence**” was accepted since the margin between the computed  $\chi^2$  value is significantly higher than the table value.

Similarly, data from the qualitative FGD reveals thus;

Discussants on this issue were of the opinion that training was conducted for ad-hoc Staff to prepare them for the task of conducting the elections. They pointed out that different categories of training were organized for the different categories of ad-hoc Staff. Often times the duration of training was perceived to be inadequate for the ad-hoc Staff to learn the processes, technicalities and skills required for the conduct of elections especially, with the introduction of new facilities and equipment for conduct of elections, the Interviewees agreed that the training period was not adequate, but have been stipulated by the authorities due to available finance and costs for hiring human resource trainers hence leaving the Commission to confine the training duration within the limits of available resources at its disposal. Information at the discretion of the researcher reveals that the inadequacy of ad-hoc staff is often complicated by the norms of substituting trained ad-hoc staff with untrained mercenaries to deliver the bargains with desperate politician. This was captured in a response by an interviewee

“I have seen scenarios where most trained ad-hoc Staff failed to report for election duties and the alternative given would be to replace such gap. However, this gap has been appropriated to unapologetically subvert, manipulate, and short-change trained personnel for their personal goals KII/Female/49years/ad-hoc staff/Ogoni”.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

From the information gathered by the respondent the study thus concludes that the complexities surrounding the short-term training of Ad-hoc Staff for elections in a dwindling and fragile democracy have constantly increased the tenacity at which unethical practices are evolving especially, in data computation of electoral votes that often increases the propensity for election violence.

#### 5.0 RECOMMENDATION

To promote sustainable democracy and violence-free electoral process, void of complicity of INEC and its staff, the independence of INEC should be reviewed. This would help check the political recruited ad-hoc staff and as well systematically keep good records of the trained personnel. Also, a well-planned and

intensive training program should be done routinely prior to the pre-election periods and above the five days training to allow room for adequate coverage of all aspect of professional engagement in data computation of electoral votes in order to decrease the propensity for election violence.

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