

**ETHNICITY AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA: THE CASE STUDY OF 2023
GENERAL ELECTIONS IN LAGOS STATE**

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CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned certify that this research work was carried out by Precious Erhumuakpor Oteme of the department of Political science, faculty of social sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bsc(ed) in Fine and Applied Art.

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty who made this possible. I also dedicate this work to my wonderful family.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

	PAGE
TITLE	i
CERTIFICATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
ABSTRACT	viii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Background of the Study	
Statement of the Problem	
Objectives of the Study	
Research Questions	
Significance of the Study	
Definition of Term	
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
Conceptual Review	
Understanding Final-Year Projects	
Why Institutions Withhold Final-Year Projects	
How Students Feel About Withholding Final-Year Projects	
Impact of Withholding Final-Year Projects	
Academic Consequences	

Career and Professional Consequences

Challenges Faced by Final-Year Students When Their Projects Are Withheld by Their Schools

Difficulty in Using Projects for Job and Career Growth

Challenges in Continuing Research and Academic Development

Loss of Ownership and Intellectual Property

Emotional and Psychological Frustration

Limited Contribution to Public Knowledge and Innovation

Difficulty Applying for Competitions and Scholarships

Theoretical literature

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Population of the Study

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Instrument of Data Collection

Validation of the Quantitative Instrument

Reliability of the Study

Method of Data Collection

Method of Data Analysis

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Demographics Data

Discussion of Findings

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

Conclusion

Recommendations

REFERENCES

APPENDICE

ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to examine Perception of students on the withholding of their final year projects by the institution in Fine and Applied Arts Department: a case study of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Four research questions was raised to guide the study and the main objective of the study is explore the perception of students regarding the withholding of their final year projects in Fine and Applied Arts departments.

The descriptive design was adopted, the population size comprise students in university of Benin. In determining the sample size 100 students was used as the sample size. Self-constructed and validated questionnaire was used for data collection. The collected and validated questionnaires were analyzed using frequency tables. The result of the findings reveals that indicating that a majority of the respondents agreed with the rationale provided by institutions. These include preventing plagiarism, protecting intellectual property, and maintaining academic standards, from the finding it was also indicated that students hold negative perceptions of the practice and experience emotional dissatisfaction, such as frustration and disempowerment. The study therefore recommended that Institutions should formulate transparent guidelines that define the conditions under which final year projects can be accessed, used, and published by students, Rather than total withholding, universities can adopt digital repositories where students can access their work under supervision or after a fixed embargo period, Students should be educated on their intellectual rights and responsibilities, enabling them to understand why their works may be temporarily restricted and how they can legally protect and use them.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Nigeria is a plural society with a population of over 200 million and about 500 ethnic groupings (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2022; Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). Nigeria is characteristically categorized as a deeply divided state in which burning national issues are construed and constructed along identity patterns (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). These patterns, which commonly manifest in the forms of religion, ethnicity, class, gender and language have shaped Nigeria's political system over the years. In fact, scholars have traced the origin and ubiquity of these identity patterns to colonial period when the British structurally constructed these patterns to suit their divide and rule framework (see Ikelegbe, 2019; Abutudu, 2014; Okafor, 2006). Since then onwards, the elites who succeeded these colonial masters appeared to have mastered the craft of using these patterns to achieve their political aims while dividing the masses along these lines. More worrisome is the fact that these patterns have orchestrated violent conflict in virtually every geo-political zones of the country. Boko Haram insurgency and other terrorist insurgencies in the North have changed the security landscape of the country since 2009 and have been largely argued by various scholars to have taken religious ideological perspective since they proclaim the supremacy of Islam over other religions (Ebonine, 2022a). In other regions of the West and East, the identity patterns have taken the shape of ethnic agitations for Biafran and Oduduwa self-governments respectively (Ebonine, 2022b).

Ethnicity appears to have become an albatross towards nation building in Nigeria. Ideally, ethnicity is not a problem in any nation except when it is employed as a strategy to achieve some parochial and selfish goals and this has been the case since independence (Aluko, 2003; Nnoli, 1978). It is used to determine who gets what, when and how (Sokoh, 2021). A close look at the

Nigerian society reveals a people with differences in the type of language, dressing, diet, social system and tribal marks. Ethnicity has determined the political structure and culture of Nigeria even prior to independence. The foremost political parties such as the Action Group (AG), Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) and National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) incipiently took the complexion of ethnic associations which was sustained even after they metamorphosed into fully blown political parties (Ebonine and Akinyetun, 2022). Against this foreground, ethnicity has construed as ‘attachments, nationalistic mind, feelings, and the level of vindictiveness demonstrated by persons or groups as a show of loyalty, obligation, solidarity, love and the desire to propel group aspirations over and above opposing views and similar aspirations’ (Sokoh, 2021:107).

A great deal has been written on ethnic politics and its effect on electoral violence and by extension democratic consolidation in Nigeria (Sokoh, 2021; Aluko, 2003; Nnoli, 1978; Osaghae and Suberu, 2005; Edewor, Aluko and Folarin, 2014). However, there still appears to be a dearth of literature of its effect on political violence particularly as it relates to 2023 Nigerian election given that political violence is the sum of all violence that is politically motivated. It suffices to say that electoral violence is a subset of political violence. Nigerian political system has been ridden with political violence which often appears in the forms of killing, kidnapping, ballot box snatching, vote suppression, assassination of opposition, media censorship and others. Erunke (2012:8) specifically noted that the link between ethnic factors and violence stems from the fact that ethnicity has ‘largely becomes a parameter for allocation of political offices, assessment of group representation in Government, federal character principles, indigeneship and residency rights, ethno-religious conflicts and wild protest and even the tendency to win the sympathies of persons or groups, as well as, given direct and unperturbed access to So Rock Villa.’ It is in this

context that the study sets out to examine ethnicity and political violence in the 2023 General Elections in Nigeria using Lagos State as a case study.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The idolization of ethnicity has unleashed numerous challenges in today's world. This is evident in the many violent conflicts that are believed to be ethnically motivated. Some of the examples of such conflicts ethnically motivated in recent times are Hutus against Tutsi, Kurds against Iraqis; Arabs against Jews; Croats against Serbs; Irish against British; Bosque against Spaniard; Tamil Nadir against Sri Lankans; Palestinians against Israelis; Ukrainians against Russians, among others (Sokoh, 2021). It appears that the heterogeneous nature of societies is just a time bomb waiting to explode (Suberu, 2001). In Nigeria, ethnic politics has raised a lot of questions regarding continued existence of people under the name 'Nigeria.' As posited by Salawu and Hassan (2011:28), "the diversity nature of the Nigerian State has made identification with the nation a difficult task. The consequence of this is that many of the citizens may never develop a proper concept of nation. This kind of ethnic group relation signifies a negative dimension and which may mean much for the Nigerian political system."

The 2023 General Election was one election that shook the Nigeria's political landscape due to some reasons: the inability of the ruling All Progressive Congress (APC) to bring about the desired change as they promised after 8 years in office, the sudden emergence of a third force and the repeated assurances from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to ensure credibility of elections through the use of Bi-modal Verification and Accreditation System (BVAS) made, for long time since 1993, for the youths to participate in the elections. Given that the main contenders were from the three most popular political parties: Ahmed

Asiwaju Tinubu (APC), Alhaji Atiku Abubakar (Peoples Democratic Party, PDP); and Gregory Obi (Labour Party, LP) representing the three major tribes of West (Yoruba), North (Hausa) and East (Ibo) respectively, the ethnic politics and tension brewed and intensified right from the primaries.

The event of ethnicity in Lagos was more pronounced due to the fact that the metropolitan state was the stronghold of the candidate of the APC. Thus, given its metropolitan nature, the state harbours people from other ethnic groups, particularly from the East (Ibo) where the candidate of LP also hailed from. To that extent, the fear and anxiety of likely emergence of Obi as the winner of the election over Tinubu unleashed threats and counter-threats from Lagos indigenous people and supporters of Tinubu to other members of ethnic groups particularly the Ibos. Some scholars have argued that the popularity of Mr. Obi as a viable third force also intensified these threats. Furthermore, beyond the Presidential Election, account of ethnic profiling during the Governorship Election in the State was also pronounced. It is in this context that this study asks: What is the nature of ethnic politics in Lagos? What dimensions did it assume during the election process? Why was ethnic politics more pronounced in Lagos than other states during the 2023 General Elections? To what extent did this ethnic politics orchestrate political violence in Lagos State during the election period?

The effect of ethnic politics on political violence has defined the complexion and character of Nigeria's electoral system since independence. Numerous accounts of sudden disappearances, kidnapping, fake news, hate speech, ballot box snatching, shooting, voters intimidation, killings, assassination, obstruction and disruption of campaigns, election result falsification, harassment of electoral officers and voters, intimidation of voters, security-party agents-electoral officers'

collusion, voters suppression and outright willful cancellation of polls (Ikelegbe, 2019; Abutudu, 2014).

1.3 Research Objectives

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To examine whether or not ethnic politics occurred during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State.
2. To investigate the cause of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos.
3. To ascertain whether or not political violence occurred during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State.
4. To understand the effect of ethnicity on political violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State.
5. To proffer solutions to ethnic politics in Lagos State.

1.4 Research Questions

The following are the research questions for the study:

1. What are some of the occurrences of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State?
2. What was the cause of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State?
3. What are some of the occurrences of political violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State?

- 4 What was the effect of ethnicity on political violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State?
- 5 What solutions can be proffered on ethnic politics in Lagos State?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study will be useful in a number of ways:

First, this study will benefit Nigerian policy makers on how to address ethnic politics. Though there are relevant laws that prohibit discrimination against people on the basis of religion, ethnicity, class or education, but some of these laws are general laws without specifics on implementation and punishment. It is hoped that this study will bridge this gap by detailing how ethnic politics and profiling can be addressed.

Second, this study will broaden the frontiers of knowledge particularly as it relates to identity politics in Nigeria. The update of ethnic politics to 2023 general Elections will bring the study on identity politics to recency to the benefit of the entire academic community.

Last, as there is dearth of studies on ethnic politics in Lagos State, this study will lay bare the patterns of politics in the state with a view to eliciting responses from concerned academic community. This will ensure that the diverse groupings in the state are protected from unnecessary discrimination thereby promoting democratic governance in the state.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study covers ethnic politics and political violence in 2023 General Elections in Lagos State. The 2023 General Elections cover both the Presidential and Governorship Elections.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Election: This is a process whereby the people choose those who will represent them in the various political positions through voting.

Ethnic Politics: This is a form of discrimination against people on the basis of their ethnic grouping. It determines who gets what, when and how on the basis of one's language, tribal marks, food type, name, dressing or type of business.

Ethnicity: This is a common characteristic of people on the basis of culture, ancestry, dressing, language, food type and national experience.

Lagos State: This is one of the states in the South-West geopolitical zones of the country. It has its headquarters as Lagos and constitutes the largest metropolitan city state in Nigeria.

Political Violence: This is a sum total of violence that is politically motivated. It is designed to give a person, group or political party an edge over others in a state.

Violence: This is behaviour that involves physical force with the intention of harming, killing or destroying somebody or something.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews relevant literature on ethnicity and political violence in Nigeria. Literature review is crucial for a study of this nature as it helps to understand the history, trends and dynamics of ethnicity and political violence in Nigeria. In this study, review of literature helps to uncover methodologies, theories, findings and recommendations made in previous studies so as to identify gaps in them and how to fill in those gaps. Also, in this chapter, the theory of Marxism is deployed in order to understand the dialectics of class struggle which appears to shape the state. It is in the immersion of the state in the class struggle that ethnicity and political violence precipitates.

2.2 THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF IDENTITY DIVERSITY IN NIGERIA

The phenomenon of identity has been widely discussed among scholars within and without Nigeria. In fact, Erikson (1968) captured identity as intersection between group and individual identity. Specifically, Erikson captured it this way:

A process located in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his communal culture, a process which establishes, in fact, the identity of these two identities

Osaghae and Suberu (2005:5) saw it as:

any group attribute that provides recognition or definition, reference, affinity, coherence and meaning for individual members of the group, acting individually or collectively.

Osaghae and Suberu (2005) opined that there are two ways in which identity diversity in Nigeria can be analysed. The first is the Geertz's (1963) famous distinction between primordial ties and civil ties. The former are basically ascriptive and based on the 'givens' of life such as ethnicity, kinship, tribe and others) while the latter revolves around industrial society-type aggregations such as interest group membership, political party affiliation, class and others.

The primordial ties, as Geertz captured it, is not only prevalent in African and Asian societies, but also prevents integrative revolution which civil ties could have guaranteed. In other words, there is a transition prevention from what Oommen (1997:35) described as exclusionary and inequality-generating ethnicity and national identities to inclusionary and equality-oriented citizenship. This Geertz's characterization has been utilized by scholars of identity-based conflicts over the years (see Suberu, 2001; Ekeh, 1972; Oyovbaire, 1984). Scholars like Osaghae and Suberu (2005) have questioned Geertz's distinction which treats primordial ties as mutually exclusive of civil ties. Instead, these scholars argue that both cannot be utterly separated because the identities based on the so-called 'givens of life' are constructed and not natural. Also, it is wrong to assume that civil ties are equality-based.

A second approach is politicized identities in which only identities that form the basis for mobilization and action can be regarded as salient and relevant (see Young, 1976; Kasfir, 1976). While this approach might be commended for focusing attention on active identities, excluding identities that are politically active is a mistaken enterprise. Therefore, it means that any discussion of Nigeria's patterns of identity must include both primordial and civil ties for robust and comprehensive understanding of active and politically salient identities (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005).

Nigeria presents a complex identity situation in which ethnic, religious, communal and regional identities are the most salient and bases for violent conflict (Aluko, 2003). In order to show their interconnectedness, these identities are often compounded or hyphenated as ethno-religious or ethno-regional identities (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). These latter identities evolved from historical, geographical and political backgrounds. The old regional structures of the Nigerian federation where leaders of the major ethnic groups, Hausa (North), Ibo (East) and Yoruba (West) shaped these identities and this ethno-regional identities are expected to expand now or in the future given the emergence of six geopolitical zones in Nigeria (Ebonine and Akinyetun, 2022).

Also, the category of ethno-religious identity has helped to differentiate between Muslims predominantly in the North and Christians predominantly in the South (Maiangwa, 2017). In fact, it has helped to differentiate dominant Muslim group in the North from the minority group in the same region (Maiagwa, 2017).. As a result, while the majority groups in the South can be differentiated by the minority groups on the basis of ethnicity, the majority groups in the North are differentiated from the minority groups on the basis of religion. Thus, it is safe to say that a Christian from the majority Hausa/Fulani group is as a minority as an Igala or Idoma from the minority group in the North and he/she is more likely to enjoy lesser privileges than a minority who is a Muslim (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005).

From the recent past, other primordial identities that have gained currency in the Nigerian political discourse particularly contestation over citizenship are those of 'indigenes', 'non-indigenes', 'migrants', and 'settlers' (Maiangwa, 2017; Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). These categories have ethnic, religious and regional origins and have evolved into complex discriminatory practices that continuously excommunicate settlers, migrants and non-indigenes

from gaining access to common resources, opportunities, rights and privileges in their localities, communities, towns and states (Ukeje and Adebani, 2008). The system has created a ranked order in which 'sons and daughters' are granted exclusionary access to resources while 'non-sons and non-daughters' are excluded. This reality has exploded violent reactions from both groups of indigenes and non-indigenes and appears to have impeded every move for nation building in Nigeria (Vinson and Rudloff, 2022). The contemporary farmer-herder crisis, though it started long before today, is a good example of violent conflict that is induced by settler-indigene dichotomy. Furthermore, though these discriminatory practices are manifestly intractable in recent times; they have their historic roots from inter-group relations in pre-colonial period and continued to colonial and post-colonial Nigeria (Maiangwa, 2017).

The last set of identities according to Geertz is civil ties. These forms of identities include gender, class and even youth. As noted by Osaghae and Suberu (2005), in 1970s and 1980s when the debate on modernization-radical political economy dominated, the opportunity would have been used to examine whether class or ethnicity was more real. However, it was resolved on the basis that both are consequences of each other. Class interests underlie ethnic mobilizations and demands while it appears that ethnic divisions have obstructed class solidarity. Gender and youth have also emerged as active identities, especially in the struggle for rights and privileges (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). As regards gender, the emergence of different strands of feminism and greater call for women political participation and representation has become a major burning political issue and most times assume ethnic dimension (Abdullahi, 2022). Also, youth identity has been raging in recent times as exemplified in the Niger Delta crisis, IPOB agitation and the Oduduwa republic separatist movement. These movements and restiveness are coloured with ethnic identities (Ebonine, 2021).

2.3 IDENTITY PATTERNS IN PRE-COLONIAL AND COLONIAL NIGERIA

Identities may not be all about interest and instrument given that pride can play a part in the adoption of identities by individuals – it is important for an analyst to investigate why certain identities hold sway and others do not. Also, identities do not by themselves lead to conflict. It is the politicization of identities that often lead to conflict (Nnoli, 1978). In fact, there are many types of identity conflicts: ethnic conflicts, religious conflicts, class conflicts, communal conflicts, regional conflicts and more complex ones involving more than one identity such as ethno-religious conflicts, ethno-regional conflicts and ethno-cultural conflicts (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005; Suberu, 2001). The differences in these conflicts lie in the fact that there is tendency of their becoming violent because they mostly involve territorial claims based on enduring historical (pre-colonial and colonial conflict legacies, sharp and overlapping cultural cleavages, competition over scarce but very important resources, factual and hypothesized horizontal inequalities in access to scarce resources and inability to manage diverse inter-ethnic relations (Gurses, 2018; Maiangwa, 2017).

Though it is generally accepted that colonialism is the cradle of ethnicity in Nigeria (Nnoli, 1978) and that the complexity it assumes in the contemporary post-colonial Nigeria stems from the character of the state (Ebohon, 2012), some of the identity conflicts that have occurred in Nigeria have their remote roots from pre-colonial conquest, migration and control. For instance, the lingering ethno-religious between Southern and Northern Kaduna indigenes could be traced to the invasion, capture and eventual enslavement of Southern non-Muslims by the Hausa-Fulani Muslims in the mid-nineteenth century (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). In fact, pre-colonial migration is even far more important than conquest and control when discussing the contours of identity crisis in Nigeria.

A lot of instances where pre-colonial migration occurred as a result of wars, natural disasters and others which have continued till today due to continuing discrimination against the immigrants by the claimed original inhabitants (Isumonah, 2003). These include the current and complex crisis between Fulani herders and Hausa indigenes in the North, Ife-Modakeke crisis as a result of the latter's migration into Ife following the 18th century internecine wars in Oyo Empire, the migration of Ijaw and Urhobo into Warri where Itsekiri people claim aboriginals and others (Mustapha, 2000).

The advent of colonialism and subsequent amalgamation of Southern and Northern Nigerian in 1914 heightened the migration response of the Southerners particularly Igbo and Yoruba to emerging urban centres in the North such as Kano, Jos, Kaduna and Zaria in search for economic opportunities (Ebonine and Akinyetun, 2022). The needed integration was not done partly due to the unwillingness of Northern rulers to embark on such mission possibly due to fear of territorial invasion or to avoid possible power contestation and partly due to the unwillingness of the British colonialists to embark on such mission possibly to preserve the Islamic Puritanism of the North thereby avoiding potential inter-group disharmony (Ebonine, 2022). To achieve this, the British had to 'quarantine' these immigrants to certain areas that were not core Muslim areas such as *Sabon Garri* or strangers' quarters. This territorial demarcation and eventual quarantine of the immigrants sowed the seed of conflictual identity and other discriminatory practices in Nigeria post-colonialism (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005).

Colonialism was the architect of the emergence of contemporary identities and identity conflicts in Nigeria. By mere lumping of different ethnic groups with distinct religious, education, political and cultural backgrounds together without recourse to their distinctiveness but for selfish economic reasons has birthed identity strife in Nigeria (Ogele, 2022; Ebonine and

Akinyetun, 2022). Moreover, the creation of colonial centres and the eventual migration of the people to these areas created an unhealthy rivalry and competition which made both settlers and immigrants to create kinship, ethnic and lineage associations to cushion the effect of insecurity, instability, alienation and competitiveness created by the colonial masters (Ogele, 2022).

The influence of colonial legacy was seen in the creation of uneven socio-economic and development imbalance among the Nigerian peoples. This was more evident in the exclusion of the North from the Christian Missionary Schools that were supposed to be agents of inclusion and development, the quarantine of strangers to certain residential areas, the discouragement of political contact between the North and South until 1947 and the lopsided recruitment of Nigerians into the Army and Police (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005; Diamond, 1988; Dudley, 1973). Also, the height of British divide and rule system was visible in the bifurcation of Nigeria into three regions of North, East and West. Though this bifurcation reflected the tripartite ethnic configuration, it however fostered divisiveness, disintegration and instability (Ebonine and Akinyetun, 2022). This tripartite configuration later manifested in the complexion of political parties formed in the period and defined the political contest and access to state resources in post-colonial Nigeria.

2.4 IDENTITY PATTERNS OF POST-COLONIAL NIGERIA

The post-colonial Nigeria has witnessed two contradictory tendencies. The first is that the successors of the British colonial administrators rolled over the colonial conflict legacies, leading to at least two waves of violent conflicts between 1960 and 1970. The second is the attempts at managing identity conflicts through innovative federalist practices (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005).

The lopsided colonial ethno-regional feral structure was heavily implicated in the first wave of the violent conflict in post-colonial Nigeria. This was more manifested in the various ethno-political discontents that occurred in the wee years of independence such as Tiv riots of 1962 and 1954 and the secessionist agitation by the Ijaw collaborators led by Isaac Adaka Boro in 1966 (see Ikelegbe, 2019; Abutudu, 2014). These people were heavily disenchanted with the manner in which the minority groups which they belonged to were delinked from the collective resources to the benefit of the dominant majority groups. Other ethno-political crises such as 1962 Western region crisis, the census crisis of 1962-63, the Federal Election Crisis of 1964; the secession bid by the Eastern people in 1967 (Ebonine and Akinyetun, 2022).

The civil war of 1967 could have been averted if not for the Unification Decree promulgated by the then Major General Aguiyi Ironsi which many suspected to be a coy to enthrone Igbo hegemony. Arguably, the continuation of federal structure would have paved way for establishment of sub-federal units at the regional levels (Suberu, 2001). This immediate move by Aguiyi Ironsi with other remote events against the Igbos triggered massive Igbo killings in the North and allowed massive migration of Igbos back to the Igboland and the eventual declaration of the State of Biafra (Gurses, 2018).

The end of the Civil War in 1970 restored balance and ushered in inter-group stability until 1980s. Many reasons have been adduced for this relative stability and peace: the victory of the Federal Government, the jettisoning of region for states and subsequent creation of twelve and nineteen states in 1976 and 1976 respectively, the use of oil revenues to soften agitation through various ethno-distributive measures, creation of ethno-accommodation programmes such as National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) and Federal Character Principle (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). Though, these measures did not entirely reduce ethnic tensions as exemplified in the

subsequent military coups and counter-coups, assassinations and inter-group boundary issues, the period ensured relative peace when compared to 1960s and 1980s onwards.

By 1980s, events that ensured relative peace and calmness had been evaporating. For instance, the oil boom had gradually given way for international oil crisis of 1980/1981 which destabilized the home economy and the high-commando style of intermittent military generals (Falola, 1998). Remarkably, two events stood out as marking the beginning of the end of post-civil war tranquility in Nigeria. The first was the Maitatsine riots of 1980 that claimed thousands of lives and culminated into other riots in Yola, Gombe, Jimela and Bulunkutu. The second was the destruction of churches and other properties belonging to Christians as a result of protestation against church's construction in the heart of Muslim Kano in 1982 (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). However, the event that broke the camel's back and brought back the inter-group ethnic conflict was the Kafanchan-Kaduna ethno-religious in 1987 between the Muslim Hausa-Fulani group and non-Muslims which spread to other Northern States (Ikelegbe, 2019; Falola, 1998). To be sure, it is easy to locate the predominance of violence along ethnic line than other lines of religious, cultural, class, gender and youth. Even in the compound or hyphenated forms of

2.5 ETHNIC IDENTITY PATTERN IN NIGERIA

The term 'ethnic' originated from the Greek word 'ethnos' which means 'nation' (Tandu and Etta, 2018). Basically, ethnic stands for homogenous people that are tied to common language, culture, race and ancestry. However, regardless of this common definition, the term has been subject to controversies. As Cohen (1974) conceptualized it, an ethnic group is "an informal interest group whose members are distinct from the members of other ethnic groups within the larger society because they share kinship, religious and linguistic ties" (in Salawau and Hassan,

2011:28). According to Osaghae (1995), it is the “employment or mobilization of ethnic identity and influence to gain advantage in situations of competition, conflict or cooperation” This definition is crucial for two reasons: First, it shows that ethnicity is a human construction, particularly by social actors. Second, ethnicity can manifest itself in various forms: political contest, violence and community services (Edewor et al, 2014).

Osaghae and Suberu (2005) noted that ethnicity is the most basic and salient identities in Nigeria. It thus means that whether in competitive or non-competitive settings, Nigerians are more likely to identify themselves along ethnic identities than any other forms of identity. This was also corroborated by the survey conducted by Lewis and Bratton (2000), where ethnicity was identified as the most conspicuous group of identity in Nigeria. While 48.2% (one-third) of the respondents chose to be identified based on their ethnic grouping, 28.4% chose for class identities and 21.0% went for religious identity. Yet, despite this study, the controversy surrounding the number of ethnic groups in Nigeria still rages. Osaghae and Suberu (2005) and PEFS (2001) quoted 500, 161 (Gandonu, 1978) and 374 (Otite, 1990).

From history, identities in Nigeria have been summarized into two broad categories: Majority and minority groups. Though the differentiation could be attributed to unequal size and population, it lies more on configuration of power by the former colonial masters in which the three major ethnic groups (Hausa/Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba) hold sway (Human Rights Watch, 2006). This is truer given that before the creation of these regions, there were no minor or major distinctions in the country. Moreover, with the creation of states and local governments, major and minor groups further emerged. Against this backdrop, it is evident that the colonial masters and the Nigerian political elites are implicated in the construction and politicization of ethnicity in Nigeria which has endured till today (Nnoli, 1978).

The colonial masters factionalized the Nigerian state into regions in 1946 which formerly constructed an ethnic state. From then onwards, ethnic nationalism in which an average Nigerian identifies him/herself first on the basis of his/her ethnic group has held sway (Salawu and Hassan, 2011). The various conflicts that have occurred in Nigeria since independence have largely taken ethnic lines than other identities (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). The Nigerian civil war, census crisis and other political and electoral violence are some of the violent conflicts that have assumed ethnic undertones in Nigeria since independence (Vinson and Rudloff, 2022). In addition, as have been identified, political elites usually deploy ethnicity as a tool based on three factors: the primacy of ethnic grouping in Nigerian politics in which a potential politician must be obliged to join to succeed, the difficulty for politicians to win elections on the basis of sound ideology, and the use of ethnicity as a tool for maintaining relevance within the Nigerian political landscape (Abutudu, 2014). This explains the reason why political contest is always deadly as every politician employs ethnicity as a strategy to win appeals. It also explains the ubiquity of political violence in Nigeria which appears to have further polarized an emerging democracy called Nigeria since independence.

2.6 AN OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

As with other concepts, the concept of political violence has been subjected to controversies over the years. For instance, Hibbs (1973) opined that political violence must fulfill these three criteria. First, the event or behavior must be anti-system. Second, it must have political significance. Third, it must involve mass activity or action. When viewed cautiously, it would be seen that Hibb's conception of political violence is pro-elites and ambiguous. His first criterion would regard anti-government protest as political violence. Also, the criterion failed to capture

the possibility of state-sponsored violence against the people. The same goes with the rest two and three criteria.

Anifowose (1982:4) captured political violence as:

the use of threat or physical act carried out by an individual or individuals within a political system against another individual or individuals and/or property with the intention to cause injury or death to persons and/or damage or destruction to property and whose objective, choice of target or victims, surrounding circumstances, implementation and effects have political significance.

From the definition above, it could be deduced that political violence can be perpetrated by an individual or group against a person. Thus, events such as rioting, electoral violence, politically-motivated kidnapping, assassination, terrorism, insurgency, arson, secession agitations, state repression of peaceful protests, violent protests are some of the examples of political violence and the end must be to achieve some calculated political goals (Igwe and Amadi, 2021; Lupu and Peisakhin, 2017).

However, as broad as the conception of political violence above is, it fails to account for non-physical injuries suffered by person or group of persons. Political violence is not all about physical bodily violence, it also connotes psychological, mental and emotional violence that live with the people till death whose ultimate goal is modify behaviour or cause a change in politics, systems, territory of government and hence also directed to changes in the lives of individuals within societies for political significance (Obakhedo, 2011:101).

As have been partly explained in the previous headings, political violence has been a sobriquet of Nigeria's political history since independence and it has constituted a major impediment to national cohesion and development (Ibok and Ogar, 2018). Aside inhumane killings which appear to be popular manifestation of political violence in Nigeria, there are serious

displacements of the people. Some also suffer generational disorder, pains, anguish and trauma as a result of the incessant political violence.

Incidences of political violence in Nigeria are not new and they abound from pre-independent to post-independent Nigeria. There was Aba women riot in 1929 that left hundreds of people dead. The Jos riots of 1945 that was politically motivated and left scores of people dead. The 1962/63 census crisis that left many people dead and properties destroyed and the Western crisis of 1962 between Obafemi Awolowo and S.L Akintola that also left lives and properties destroyed (Igwe and Amadi, 2021).

The various military coups that occurred beginning from 1966 were also politically motivated. Most often, these coups targeted senior military officers from a dominant ethnic group giving the coup an ethnic colouration. The reprisals often water down the violence to touch innocent civilians who never had anything directly to benefit from such coups. This reality has been the common occurrence in post-independent Nigeria. Since 1999, the political calculations of political elites that have ethno-religious undertone have left many people dead (including more than 200 in each of 2003, 2007 and 2011 elections), displaced and while some sustained varying degrees of injuries (Chinwokwu and Arop, 2014).

Raleigh and Kishi (2021) reported that the 2017 Afrobarometer showed that in the last two years, every one in four Nigerians (26%) suffered at least one form of political violence or the other. As a result, the North had a share of 23% while the South accounted for 28%. Common forms of political violence included violence during political rallies or campaigns (18%), violence by protests (14%) and violence orchestrated by extremists (11%). Further, the authors noted that Nigeria experienced more political violence in 2019 than in 2020.

Studies on political violence in Nigeria have often focused on causes and consequence of political violence (see Chinwokwu and Arop, 2014; Igwe and Amadi, 2021; Ibok and Ogar, 2018; Emmanuel and Onyinye, 2019). However, little studies have focused on the victims of political violence in Nigeria (Alabi, 2023). The study of Alabi (2023) is very instructive in this regard.

Alabi's (2023) study investigated explanatory variables for political violence victimization in Nigeria between North and South of Nigeria using the Afrobarometer for political violence in Nigeria 2017. He discovered that people of the South had the higher likelihood of expiring political violence than in the North. In fact, in that order, South-South recorded the highest rate of political violence, followed by North East and South West. The author explained the much higher likelihood of political violence in the South through deviance theory where 9 out of 10 states with the highest population are in the South while 15 states with the lowest population density is in the North. Also, the oil politics in the South-South (Emuedo, 2010) would have accounted for the predominance of political violence in the region. North East's high level of political attacks could be explained from the rising scourge of Boko Haram insurgency in the region. Given that the South were more tolerant of ideological, cultural and political differences than the North, it was not surprising to see high predominance of political violence in the North than in the South (Alabi et al, 2020; Kunnuji et al, 2017).

While political violence is increasingly appreciating in Nigeria, overly orchestrated by fierce competition for scarce resources, political positions and national treasury, the explanatory impact of ethnicity as a trigger needs to be accounted for given the complexion of political activities in Nigeria which has taken more of the path of ethnicity than other identities such as religion, culture, class, gender and youth as have been previously explained under this chapter.

2.7 ETHNICITY AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

Nigeria's level of political violence can be accounted for myriads of factors as various studies have shown. Scholars such as Halle (2009), Sani et al (2015) and Ibrahim (2017) have, besides ethnicity, pointed at poverty, low income level, adverse economic condition and international conflict as other triggers of political violence. Also, contest over natural resources such as oil, as have been variously witnessed in the South-South geopolitical zone of the country explode political violence in Nigeria. However, the prevalence of ethnically-induced political violence in Nigeria over other factors has been accounted for by previous studies (see Isah et al, 2018; Osaghae and Suberu, 2005).

As noted earlier in the chapter, the colonial masters as well as their post-colonial indigenous placeholders constructed and reconstructed ethnicity which often exacerbated the fragile nature of Nigeria for their personal benefits. The colonial masters who had vowed to preserve the existing traditional institutions and cultures of the people imposed Warrant Chiefs to the people of the Eastern region to the desecration of their tradition. These imposed were ones regarded as incapable of ruling the Igbo race as they were not from traditional ruling lineage. This imposition, which could be regarded as political violence in itself, exploded Aba Women Riot in 1929 particularly when the Warrant Chiefs began imposing excruciating taxes on both men and women in the East. The intervention of the colonial masters led to the killings and injuries to many ((Matera, Bastia and Kingsley –Kent 2011).

Further, in 1945, following inter-ethnic conflict, the people of the North attacked the Igbos in Jos and killed over 200 people. Again, in 1953, following the movement of motion for self-government by Chief Anthony Enahoro, the Southern delegation to the Northern conference in

Kano were attacked in what looked like an ethno-religious conflict, killed and injured victims (Ebonine and Akinyetun, 2022). The military coup led by Aguyi Ironsi turned ethnic following the massacre of political elites who were mostly non-Igbos. The counter-coup by Gowon was meant to avenge the assassination of these political elites. The noise that later surrounded the counter-coup would later lead to a declaration of State of Biafra by Odumegwu Ojukwu. The memories of recorded ethnic cleansing of the Igbos in the War still influence the contemporary agitation for self-government by the Igbos till today ((Ebonine and Akinyetun, 2022).

The minority agitation for greater inclusion or outright grant of self-government raged from the colonial times when the Willinks Commission was set up to look into the agitations of the minority groups. This agitation resurfaced in 1966 when Adaka Boro led a 12-day revolution against the government over the marginalization of Niger Delta People (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). This has lingered till present when various militant groups ventured into pipeline vandalism, illicit oil refining and sales, kidnapping of oil expatriates and political assassination before they were granted amnesty by the government of Musa Yar'Adua (Aghedo, 2015) .

Instances of ethnicity-triggered political violence also abound. In 2011, political violence grew partly due to the fact that the North believed that they should be allowed to rule since their person Late Yar'adua did not complete his tenure and partly due to the fact that the people of the Niger Delta and by extension the South believed that the North should rest and allow their son, Goodluck to rule (Salihu and Yakubu, 2021). This saw the clash between the ruling party PDP and the CPC before, during and after the elections. According to Human Right Watch (2012) in (Salihu and Yakubu, 2021), 800 people were killed in deadly election-related violence in northern Nigeria in the period. This reality manifested in all states of the federation in almost election cycle in Nigeria.

2.8 ETHNIC POLITICS IN LAGOS STATE DURING 2023 GENERAL ELECTIONS

Nigeria has had several general elections since 1999 but none could be compared to 2023 general elections. The elections took place on 25 of February and March 11, 2023 for presidential and governorship elections in 28 states respectively (Kohnert, 2023). The non-comparison of the 2023 general elections with other previous elections in the Nigerian history was mainly for three reasons: First, the passage of Electoral Act of 2022 restored the confidence of an average Nigeria in the Election Management Bodies (EMBs) to conduct free, fair and just elections. The promise for the use of BVAS machine to accredit voters and transmit elections results in real time from the polling units to the IREV viewing portal of the INEC further raised the hope of the people of a future Nigeria. Second and flowing from the above, it marked the very first time that the youths became more interested in the election in Nigeria. They became the highest number of registrants for PVC among the men and women. Third, the quality of debates before elections, particularly from the candidate of the Labour Party (LP) further aroused people's curiosity (see generally Garvin, 2023; Adeoye, 2022).

The candidate of the LP was one of the contenders of the presidential election besides Ahmed Tinubu of the APC and Atiku Abubakar of the PDP. Unfortunately, the three candidates represented the three main ethnic groups in Nigeria: Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa/Fulani respectively (Adeoye, 2022). This triggered ethnically-charged environment as the Igbos believed it was their turn to rule after eight years of the Hausa-Fulani administration led by the immediate past Muhammadu Buhari particularly given the fact that the region has not produced a president since a return to democratic rule in 1999. The West on their part felt that it was their turn to rule having last clinched the most coveted position in 2007. The North felt the position should be left open for contestation without being zoned to a particular region particularly as their candidate;

Atiku Abubakar has been contesting for the position since 1993 (Hassan, 2023). This reality charged the political atmosphere of the country as propaganda, ethnic profiling, lies, hate speeches and threats began hitting the air. It was ubiquitous throughout every state of Nigeria.

Nowhere was this ethnically-charged atmosphere more prevalent than in Lagos State. Adibe (2023) regarded this ethnicity as between nativism and cosmopolitanism. However, 2023 general elections was not the first time ethnic politics was played in Lagos. In 2015, the Oba of Lagos threatened to throw the Igbos into the Lagoon if they failed to vote for his preferred candidate (Adibe, 2023). It is always between the people that see themselves as the real owners of Lagos against the Igbos who they regard as strangers (Adibe, 2023). This connotation of Igbos, as the Yorubas often think, is a generic name for non-Yorubas except for Hausa/Fulani settlers. So, to them, it does not matter whether you are from Igbo tribe or not, or whether or not you can speak the Igbo language- so long you are not Yoruba or Hausa/Fulani.

The issue deliberately is not about Igbophobia, but an attempt by scaremongers to prevent the Igbos from influencing the outcome of any election in the state. The fear further grows whenever it is remembered that the population of the Igbos is significant to influence an outcome of an election (Adibe, 2023; Adeoye, 2022). Thus, to quarantine the Igbos from voting, there is always the issuance and enforcement of threats carried out by the supporters and beneficiaries of ethnic politics - in this 2023 general election - by personalities such as Femi Kani Kayode, Bayo Onanuga and MC Oluomo (Hassan, 2023).

These personalities intensified their threats and efforts towards preventing the Igbo group from voting for their choices given that unexpected performance of the Labour Party, whose presidential candidate, Peter Obi, was from an Igbo (Labs, 2023). The natives believed that

Ahmed Bola Tinubu, who nicknamed himself 'City Boy', was a bigger fish than Peter Obi and thus, was no match to Tinubu (Adibe, 2022). Moreover, they claimed to have variously benefitted from Tinubu's administration as Lagos State Governor, hence his presidential ambition presented a ripe time to reward his philanthropy. While these natives basked in the euphoria of state ownership grandeur, the Igbos was basking in the euphoria that it was the turn of their person to rule after long years of marginalization, suffocation and relegation (Macaulay, 2023).

The outcome of the presidential election in which the LP candidate surprisingly won Ahmed Tinubu heightened the Igbophobia that changed the dynamism of the governorship election in the state on March 18, 2023 (Labs., 2023). The main contenders for the governorship positions were Governor Sanwo-Olu Babajide, who was seeking re-election under the platform of APC and who was widely regarded as the political son of Ahmed Tinubu, Gbadebo Rhodes-Vivour of LP and Adediran Azeez Olajide (PDP). The LP candidate raised some fears among the natives particularly because of the performance of the LP's presidential candidate in the state (Hassan, 2023).

To pull down the Mr Rhodes-Vivour, propaganda of not being a native of Lagos became a too land strategy even though it was claimed that most of the contenders of elections in Lagos State including Ahmed Tinubu and Sanwo-Olu were not even aboriginals of Lagos State (Hassan, 2023). While these claims held sway, other claims held that the LP governorship candidate was a native of Lagos State except that his mum was an Igbo. As witnessed in previous elections, ethnic politics and political violence are Siamese twins that cannot be easily separated in Nigeria (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005).

There have been reports of political violence by both local and international observers during the 2023 General elections in Nigeria as well as civil society groups. The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data [ACLED] project (2023) reported the prevalence of political violence pre-, during and post-election in 2023. It reported that 12 months leading to the elections, there were over 200 violent events involving party members and supporters with nearly 100 fatalities. The South East recorded 46, South West 45, South-South 38 and North Central 32. While this data influenced voting behaviour of voters in the regions the violence happened, it cannot vividly account for same in Lagos State hence the focus of the study.

The freedom of any person to participate in an election is a constitutional one in Nigeria. One of the rights available to every Nigerian citizen is the right to freely reside in any place of his/her choice without any form of discrimination in addition to the rights to vote and be voted for (S.41 and 43 of the 1999 Constitution). Thus, any form of threats, intimidation, harassment, injury, any form of bodily, psychological and emotional harm against anybody is a threat to the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and survival of Nigeria's democracy and there are stiff penalties for defaulters.

2.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study adopts Marxist theory to explain the interplay of ethnicity and political conflict in post-colonial states like Nigeria. The theory is significant in analyzing the political economy and struggle for survival among the people of post-colonial states. According to Marxist theory, the state is a construct and product of irreconcilable class antagonisms (Lenin, 1984). Ideally, according to Ebizem (2015), the state emerged in order to mediate between antagonistic groups in the society so that they do not consume themselves in fruitless struggle. However, unlike in

the neo-colonial societies, state is part and parcel of class antagonisms and exists to satiate their interests (Ebohon, 2012). Therefore, instead of post-colonial states to be an instrument of resource distribution and redistribution among the haves and have-nots, it becomes an instrument of domination, exploitation and marginalization of the people.

Appropriated by the bourgeois against the proletariats, the state uses the instrumentalities of religion, class, ethnicity, education, income, gender and youth to divide the people to serve the interest of the few elites. The state becomes a purveyor and incubator of various forms of ethnic politics. This has been the case with Nigeria since independence where the elites readily used the instrumentality of ethnicity to divide the people and clinch power. When power is clinched, they use the state resources to oil the relationship that exists between them and members of their ethnic groups.

The inability of the members of other ethnic groups to partake in the state resources which should be collectively owned, they resort to various forms of political violence to make their demands known, remove the government in power or unsettle the government in power. Most often, the government in power mobilizes its ethnic members to counter these other groups leading to violence conflict in the society.

It is based on this reality that scholars and analysts have variously described the Nigerian state. For instance, Dudley (1982) summarized the state as “characterized by debilitating institutional immobilism and systemic flaws”. Ebohon (2012) sees the state as rooted in the culture of underdevelopmentalism which he described as resonant paradigm, constructed in the business of statecraft to serve the interest of the power-fixated ruling and governing classes whose reproduction as a parasitic class is guaranteed only by holding on to separate power. Odion-Akhaine (2007:10)

described Nigerian political theatre as bizarre while Kesselman, Krieger and Joseph (1996:616) dubbed the state as an unfinished project characterized by instability and uncertainties. Ameh (2007) likened the state to a diabetic patient whose excess sugar in its blood stream serves no useful purpose. Sklar, Onwudiwe and Kew (2006) see it as a country where dysfunctional policies have drained its potential for greatness and stability.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals mainly with research design, population of the study, sample size and sampling technique, instrumentation, validity of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, method of data collection, and techniques of data analysis.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopted a survey research design. By this, it utilizes designed questionnaire. The design is considered appropriate for this study as the researcher sets out to determine the relationships that exist between ethnicity and political violence.

3.3 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population is the entire subset from which the representative sample is drawn. The population of this study comprises the adult registered voter in Lagos State, Nigeria. An adult registered voter here means anyone who has attained the age of 18+ before the conduct of the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The population of adult registered voters in Lagos State was put at 7,060, 195 people (National Population Commission, 2023).

3.4 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

A sample size of 200 hundred (200) respondents were randomly selected from the entire population of eligible voters. The study utilized simple random technique to select the sample size for the study.

3.5 INSTRUMENTATION

The main instrument for data collection in this research was the structured questionnaire. Oral questions were also asked some of the respondents in order to clarify their responses in the questionnaire. Part A of the questionnaires sought the bio-data of the respondents. Part B contained questions bordering on ethnicity and political violence in Nigeria. The questions were open and close ended. The closed ended questions were designed to elicit direct responses from the respondents as well as for easy analysis while the open ended questions were coded as themes based on the responses of the respondents.

3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

In determining the validity of the instruments, the copies of the instruments were validated face to face by the supervisor who made needed corrections. The corrections were effected before the proper administrations of the questionnaires were made. To determine the reliability of the instrument, it was trial tested on 50 Uniben students who are also conversant with the incidences of ethnicity and political violence in the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. Cronbach Alpha method was adopted to measure the internal consistency coefficient of the questionnaire.

3.7 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Data for this study were generated from two sources: primary and secondary sources. The primary source was through the administration of structured questionnaire in line with statement of the objectives in order to elicit information from respondents. The secondary sources involved the use of archival materials such as journals/articles, publications, conferences, newspapers and internet materials.

3.8 TECHNIQUES OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data generated were analyzed using simple percentages and graphical representations for the data gotten from the field. The data were coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 25.0).

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents data collected through the questionnaire. As stated in chapter three, the study sampled 200 hundred respondents who were eligible voters in the 2023 general elections in Lagos State. Out of the distributed 200 questionnaire, one hundred and ninety five copies were returned and the remaining five were lost in the survey process. Therefore, under this chapter, the demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented and analyzed. They are presented in frequencies, simple percentages and charts.

This chapter also presents and analyses the research questions using frequency counts, simple percentages and charts. The hypotheses are tested using chi square (X^2) in order to understand the relationship between variables.

4.2 PRESENTATION OF THE SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

This section presents respondents' sex, age, religious, marital, occupational and academic qualification. It also presents the respondents' knowledge of the concepts of electoral violence and democratic consolidation.

Table 4.2.1: Respondents' Distribution by Sex

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	112	57.4	57.4	57.4
	Female	83	42.6	42.6	100.0
	Total	195	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2024)

From the table 4.2.1, 112 respondents constituting 57.4% of respondents are male while 83 respondents constituting 42.6% of respondents are female. Thus, the men participated more in the study than the women did.

Table 4.2.2: Respondents' Distribution by Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	below 20	28	14.4	14.4	14.4
	20-30	52	26.7	26.7	41.1
	31-40	74	37.9	37.9	79.0
	41-50	29	14.9	14.9	93.9
	51-above	12	6.1	6.1	100.0
	Total	195	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2023)

From the table 4.2.2, the respondents' distribution by age shows that a majority of 74 respondents constituting 37.9% are between the ages of 31 and 40, followed by 52 respondents representing 26.7% who are between the ages of 20 and 30, followed by 29 respondents representing 14.9% who are between the ages of 41 and 50, followed by 28 respondents

representing 14.4% who are below the age of 20 and lastly followed by 12 respondents representing 6.1% who are between the ages of 51 and above. Thus, respondents between the ages of 31 and 40 participated the most in the survey.

Table 4.2.3: Respondents' Distribution by Religion

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Islam	64	32.8	32.8	32.8
Christianity	104	53.3	53.3	86.1
Traditional religion	19	9.7	9.7	95.8
Others	8	4.2	4.2	100.0
Total	195	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2024)

From table 4.2.3, 64 respondents constituting 32.8% of respondents practice Islam, 104 respondents constituting 53.3% practice Christianity, 19 respondents constituting 9.7% practice Traditional Religion and 8 respondents constituting 4.2% of respondents practice other religion. Thus, respondents who practice Christianity participated the most in the study.

Table 4.2.4: Respondents' Distribution by Marital Status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Single	54	27.7	27.7	27.7
married	94	48.2	48.2	75.9
divorced	17	8.7	8.7	84.6
widowed	21	10.8	10.8	95.4
Others	9	.4.6	.4.6	100.0
Total	195	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2024)

From the table 4.2.4 figure 4 above, 94 respondents, constituting 48.2% of respondents are married, 54 respondents constituting 27.7% of respondents are single, 21 respondents constituting 10.8% are widowed, 17 respondents constituting 8.7% are divorced and 9 respondents constituting 4.6% have other marital status. Thus, married respondents participated the most in the study.

Table 4.2.5: Respondents' Distribution by Occupation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid civil servant	47	24.1	24.1	24.1
self-employed	81	41.5	41.5	65.6
student	32	16.4	16.4	82.0
unemployed	28	14.4	14.4	96.4
others	7	3.6	3.6	100.0
Total	195	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2024)

From table 4.2.5 and Figure 5 above, the respondents' distribution by occupation shows that a majority of 81 respondents constituting 41.5% are self-employed, followed by 47 respondents representing 24.1% that are civil servants, followed by 32 respondents representing 16.4% that are students, followed by 28 respondents representing 14.4% that are unemployed, and lastly followed by 7 respondents representing 3.6% that have other occupation. Therefore, from the survey, respondents who are self-employed participated the most in the study.

Table 4.2.6: Respondents' Distribution by Academic Qualification

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid None	17	8.7	8.7	8.7
SSCE/GCE	30	15.4	15.4	24.1
Graduate	91	46.7	46.7	70.8
Undergraduate	35	17.9	17.9	88.7
postgraduate	10	5.1	5.1	93.8
others	12	6.2	6.2	100.0
Total	195	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2024)

From table 4.2.6 above, the respondents' distribution by academic qualification shows that a majority of 91 respondents constituting 46.7% are graduates, followed by 35 respondents representing 17.9% that are undergraduates, followed by 30 respondents representing 15.4% that have SSCE/GCE Certificates, followed by 17 respondents representing 8.7% that do not have any academic qualification, 12 respondents representing 6.2% that have other academic qualifications, and lastly followed by 10 respondents representing 5.1% that post-graduates. Therefore, from the survey, respondents who are graduates participated the most in the study.

ASSESSMENT OF VOTERS IN THE 2023 ELECTION

Table 4.3.1: Assessment of Voters in the 2023 Election

Item	Question	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Did you vote during the recently held general election in Lagos State?	Yes	195	100
		No	0	0
		Total	195	100
3	Which of the elections did you participate in?	Presidential	31	15.9
		Governorship	22	11.3
		Both	142	72.8
		Total	195	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

From table 4.3.1 above, it shows that all the respondents constituting 100% voted during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State. Notwithstanding, 31 respondents representing 15.9% said they voted only in presidential elections, 22 respondents representing 11.3% said they voted only in governorship elections in Lagos State while 142 respondents representing 72.8% said they voted in both elections. Thus, from the survey, respondents who voted in both elections participated the most in the study.

Table 4.3.2: Assessment of Respondents' knowledge on ethnicity

Item	Question	Response	Frequency	Percent
4	Ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on their tribe?	Yes	134	68.7
		No	42	21.5
		Not sure	19	9.7
		Total	195	100
5	Ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on their language?	Yes	155	79.5
		No	32	16.4
		Not sure	8	4.1
		Total	195	100
6	Ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on their dressing?	Yes	104	53.3
		No	61	31.3
		Not sure	30	15.4
		Total	195	100
7	Ethnicity is the discrimination of people based	Yes	98	50.3

	on their looks?	No	50	25.6
		Not sure	47	24.1
		Total	195	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

From table 4.3.2 above, 134 respondents constituting 68.7% agreed that ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on their tribe, 42 respondents constituting 21.5% disagreed while 19 respondents constituting 9.7% were not sure. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on their tribe.

Furthermore, from table 4.3.2 above, 155 respondents constituting 79.5% agreed that ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on their language, 32 respondents constituting 16.4% disagreed while 8 respondents constituting 4.1% were not sure. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on language.

In addition, from table 4.3.2 above, 104 respondents constituting 53.3% agreed that ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on their dressing, 61 respondents constituting 31.3% disagreed while 30 respondents constituting 15.4% were not sure. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on dressing.

Finally, from table 4.3.2 above, 98 respondents constituting 50.3% agreed that ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on their looks, 47 respondents constituting 25.6% disagreed while 30 respondents constituting 24.1% were not sure. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on looks.

Table 4.3.2: Assessment of Respondents' knowledge on political violence

Item	Question	Response	Frequency	Percent
8	Political violence occurs when a person or group is attacked to achieve certain political gains?	Yes	179	91.8
		No	14	7.2
		Not sure	2	1.0
		Total	195	100
9	Political violence occurs when a person or	Yes	168	86.2

	group are prevented from collecting their voters card by another person or group to achieve certain political gains?	No	20	10.3
		Not sure	7	3.6
		Total	195	100
10	Political violence occurs when a person or group are prevented from voting in an election day by another person or group to achieve certain political gains?	Yes	188	96.4
		No	6	3.1
		Not sure	1	0.5
		Total	195	100
11	Political violence occurs when a person or group are harassed, kidnapped, assassinated, injured or maimed by another person or group to achieve certain political gains?	Yes	191	97.9
		No	4	2.1
		Total	195	100
12	Political violence occurs when a person or group suffers from mental, psychological and emotional stress caused by another person or group to achieve certain political gains?	Yes	154	79.0
		No	30	15.4
		Not sure	11	5.6
		Total	195	100
13	Political violence can occur before, during and after elections?	Yes	179	91.8
		No	14	7.2
		Not sure	2	1.0
		Total	195	100

Source: Field Study (2024)

From table 4.3.3 above, 179 respondents constituting 91.8% agreed that political violence occurs when a person or group is attacked to achieve certain political gains, 14 respondents constituting 7.2% disagreed while 2 respondents constituting 1.0% were not sure. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that political violence occurs when a person or group are attacked to achieve certain political gains.

Furthermore, from table 4.3.3 above, 168 respondents constituting 86.2% agreed that political violence occurs when a person or group are prevented from collecting their voters card by another person or group to achieve certain political gains, 20 respondents constituting 10.3% disagreed while 7 respondents constituting 3.6% were not sure. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that political violence occurs when a person or group are prevented from collecting their voters card by another person or group to achieve certain political gains.

In addition, from table 4.3.3 above, 188 respondents constituting 96.4% agreed that political violence occurs when a person or group are prevented from voting in an election day by another person or group to achieve certain political gains, 6 respondents constituting 3.1% disagreed while 1 respondents constituting 0.5 % were not sure. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that political violence occurs when a person or group are prevented from voting in an election day by another person or group to achieve certain political gains.

From table 4.3.3 above, 191 respondents constituting 97.9% agreed that political violence occurs when a person or group are harassed, kidnapped, assassinated, injured or maimed by another person or group to achieve certain political gains, 4 respondents constituting 2.1% disagreed. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that political violence occurs when a person or group are harassed, kidnapped, assassinated, injured or maimed by another person or group to achieve certain political gains.

Similarly, from table 4.3.3 above, 179 respondents constituting 91.8% agreed that political violence can occur before, during and after elections, 14 respondents constituting 7.2% disagreed while 2 respondents constituting 1.0% were not sure. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that political violence can occur before, during and after elections.

Finally, from table 4.3.3 above, 154 respondents constituting 79.0% agreed that ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on their looks, 30 respondents constituting 15.4% disagreed while 11 respondents constituting 5.6% were not sure. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that ethnicity is the discrimination of people based on looks.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS BASED ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study outlined five research questions. They are as follow: Was there occurrence of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State? What was the cause of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State? Was there occurrence of political violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State? What was the effect of ethnicity on political violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State? What solutions can be proffered on ethnic politics in Nigeria?

Under this section, the results of the first four are presented discussed while the last is presented and analyzed in Chapter five under recommendations.

Q1: Was there occurrence of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State?

Table 4.4.1: Item 14: The occurrence of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	186	95.4
No	6	3.1
Not sure	3	1.5
Total	195	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

From table 4.4.1 above, 186 respondents constituting 95.4% agreed that there was occurrence of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State, 6 respondents constituting 3.1% disagreed while 3 respondents constituting 1.5% were not sure. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that there was occurrence of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State.

This finding clearly confirms the earlier findings made by authors and independent observers during the 2023 general elections. For instance, EU-EOM (2023) reports on the 2023 general elections noted that there was escalation of political violence in Lagos State based on ethnicity. Those that regarded themselves as indigenes of Lagos State harassed, intimidated and attacked suspected non-indigenes whom they believed would vote against their candidates. According to the reports, the ethnic-based violence escalated after the presidential election in which the third force, Labour Party presidential candidate, sprang surprises by defeating the candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC), Bola Ahmed Tinubu whom many regarded as the ‘owner’ of Lagos State.

To Adibe (2023), the ethnic violence targeted the Igbos and non-Igbos but not Yorubas who were dominant in Lagos State and therefore capable of influencing the outcome of the elections.

Q2: What was the cause of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State?

Table 4.4.2: Item 15: The cause of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Because of the intensity of the campaigns and supports	126	64.6
Because of the third force	134	68.7
So as to clinch political power	166	85.1
Because it has been part of Nigeria’s electoral system	95	48.7

Source: Field Survey (2024)

From table 4.4.2 above, 126 respondents constituting 64.6% identified the intensity of the campaigns and supports as the cause of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State, 126 respondents constituting 64.6% identified the intensity of the campaigns and supports as the cause of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State, 134

respondents constituting 68.7% identified the rise of a third force as the cause of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State, 166 respondents constituting 85.1% identified the quest to clinch political power as the cause of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State and 95 respondents constituting 48.7% argued that ethnic politics occurred during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State because it has been part of Nigeria’s electoral system since history.

These findings are consistent with the previous findings made by authors and independent observers during the 2023 general elections. For instance Yiaga Africa (2023) and EU-EOM (2023) noted that the issue-based campaign of the Labour Party presidential candidate Peter Obi, heightened the ethnic war and unleashed violence on his supporters. Similarly, as found in the study, Ukiwo (2003) noted that the cause of ethnic conflict in Nigeria was due to unbridled quest for power. He also supported the finding that the quest for power is historical in Nigeria and has been embedded in the Nigeria’s electoral landscape.

Q3: Was there occurrence of political violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State?

Table 4.4.3: Item 16: The occurrence of political violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	167	85.6
No	28	14.4
Total	195	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

From table 4.4.3 above, 167 respondents constituting 85.6% agreed that political violence occurs when a person or group is attacked to achieve certain political gains, 28 respondents constituting 14.4% disagreed. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that political violence occurred during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State.

This finding concurs with findings made by Yiaga Africa (2023), EU-EOM (2023, Adibe (2023) and Hassan (2023). For instance, EU-EOM, Yiaga Africa and Hassan jointly noted that prior to the elections, voters cards were given based on the voter’s agreement to vote for a particular candidate otherwise the card s withheld. During the elections, voters were threatened not to vote if they knew they would not vote for a particular candidate. There were also reported physical attacks on voters based on presumption of ethic group in Lagos State.

Q4: What was the effect of ethnicity on political violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State?

Table 4.4.4: Item 17: Was the political violence that occurred during 2023 general elections in Lagos State due to ethnicity?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	161	82.6
No	10	5.1
Not sure	24	12.3
Total	195	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

From table 4.4.4 above, 161 respondents constituting 82.6% agreed that political violence occurs when a person or group are attacked to achieve certain political gains, 10 respondents constituting 14.4% disagreed while 24 constituting 12.3% were not sure. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that political violence occurred during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State.

Indeed, identities such as religion, party affiliation and ethnicity played a very big role in orchestrating political violence during the general elections in Lagos State. However, the most pronounced was ethnicity that affected negatively on the electoral outcome. The Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room (2023) reported that ethnicity severely affected the outcome of the elections in several states but chiefly including Lagos State.

2 TEST OF HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis: There is no relationship between ethnic politics and political violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State, Nigeria

Table 4.5.1: Output for the Chi-square Test of Independence

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.625E2 ^a	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	279.169	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.379	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	345		

Source: SPSS chi square output (2024)

Interpretation

From table 4.5.1 above, $X^2 = 2.625$, $df = 16$, $N = 195$, $p = .001$. The p (Assump.Sig) is less than .05. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the research hypothesis. There is a relationship between ethnic politics and political violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State, Nigeria

Table 4.5.2: Test of Relationship

Symmetric Measures		
	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.000
	Cramer's V	.000
N of Valid Cases	195	

Source: SPSS Chi square output (2024)

The table above shows Phi Cramer's V test of relationship. The effect size according to Phi Cramer's test table is 0.87 signifying a positive relationship between variables. Thus, ethnic politics is more likely to cause political violence.

This finding is consistent with the findings made by Hassan (2023) and other independent observers during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. Moreover, previous studies also accounted for the place of ethnicity in causing political violence in Nigeria. For instance, Onuoha and Ufomba (2017) found that though ethno-religious diversities propel electoral violence in Nigeria, the elites should be blamed for using such identities to achieve their political interests. The authors further noted that the elites derive their support from ethno-religious enclave and therefore have ethno-religious structures that ensure their political dominance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarized the entire study. It stated the topic of the study, objectives, hypothesis, the theory used and various findings made. Through these findings, the chapter drew its conclusions while leaving behind useful recommendations.

5.2 SUMMARY

The study attempted to examine the impact of ethnicity on political violence in 2023 general elections in Lagos State, Nigeria. The 2023 general election was a watershed in the history of electoral process in Nigeria. Some have likened the election to the 1993 general election that was adjudged the freest, fairest and most credible election ever conducted in the history of Nigeria. The arguments of these individuals stemmed from the emergence of a third force, the Labour Party whose presidential candidate campaigned based on the prevailing national issues of the time against the other dominant political parties such as the All Progressive Congress (APC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Furthermore, beyond the emergence of a third force, the incompetence of the APC government led by Mohammad Buhari created a sense of disillusionment among the people who sought an alternative independent party to vote for having experimented PDP in the past years. However, as common with political elites, their calculation of likely defeat prompted their use of ethnicity in Lagos State. Lagos State was one of the hotbeds in Nigerian politics based on population and

geography. Hence, the study examined the impact of the ethnicity on political violence during the election of 2023 in the state.

The study set out to achieve five research objectives: examine whether or not ethnic politics occurred during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State; examine the cause of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos; examine whether or not political violence occurred during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State; understand the effect of ethnicity on political violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State; and proffer solutions to ethnic politics in Nigeria. In addition, the study tested one hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between ethnicity and political violence in Lagos State during the 2023 general elections.

Theoretically, the study utilized the Marxian theory that argued that ethnicity is based on post-colonial state construct used by the political elites to advance their political interests. Therefore, instead of post-colonial states to be an instrument of resource distribution and redistribution among the haves and have-nots, it becomes an instrument of domination, exploitation and marginalization of the people.

Methodologically, the study undertook a quantitative research that utilized an open-ended questionnaire to elicit responses from adults in Lagos State. Generally, the study sampled 200 respondents drawn from Lagos State and those who have requisite experience of the subject matter. However, out of the 200 questionnaires distributed, only 195 copies were returned while the remaining five copies were not returned.

The study discovered that a majority of the respondents (112 respondents constituting 57.4%) are male while 83 respondents constituting 42.6% of respondents are female just as a majority of the

respondents between the ages of 31 and 40 (74 respondents constituting 37.9%) participated the most in the study. Furthermore, a majority of the respondents (104 respondents constituting 53.3%) practice Christianity. 94 respondents constituting 48.2% are married while a majority of 81 respondents constituting 41.5% are self-employed.

Furthermore, the study found that majority of the respondents (186 respondents constituting 95.4%) agreed that there was occurrence of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State just as 166 respondents constituting 85.1% identified the quest for power as the cause of ethnic politics during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State. The hypothesis tested showed that there is a significant relationship between ethnic politics and political violence during the 2023 General Elections in Lagos State, Nigeria.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings made in the study, the following conclusions are made. First, politics of ethnicity occurred in Lagos State during the 2023 general elections. This finding confirmed the litany of reports by both local and international observers that the ethnic politics marred the entire election in some states including Lagos State. Second, the major cause of the ethnic politics was the quest for political power while other cause were the intensity of campaigns and support base candidate of the Labour Party garnered during the electioneering campaign and the rise of third force (Labour Party). Third, there was an occurrence of political violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State as also confirmed by various reports by election observers and scholars. Last, political violence that occurred in Lagos State was caused by ethnicity.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions made in the study, the study made the following recommendations.

First, politicians should always be held accountable for the use of ethnicity as a weapon against the people. The law in Nigeria appears too weak in holding the political elites responsible for any atrocity. Likewise, the courts and law enforcement agents appear to always take sides with the political elites when they are found using the instrumentality of ethnicity to determine the outcome of elections to their favour. Until the political elites who utilize divisive instrumentalities to influence the outcome of an election are held criminally responsible, the use of ethnicity and attendant political violence would always occur in any Nigerian electoral process. This recommendation was also made by the respondents (82.7% of them) that the law, judiciary and law enforcement agencies should hold political elites who use the instrument of ethnicity to perpetuate political violence accountable.

Last, following from above, there should be a total restructure of the political positions to reduce the intensity and anxiety that breeds zero-sum political process in Nigeria. The question that needs to be addressed is: what happens to any candidate that loses election? Lack of official benefit or compensation to any candidate that loses election is also responsible for the utilization of all forms of gimmicks including ethnicity to win at all cost. As alluded to by majority of the respondents (91.4% of them), there is a need to create an alternative compensatory position for losers in an election.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS

Department of Political Science,
University of Benin,
Benin City.

Dear Respondent,

REQUEST FOR YOUR COOPERATION IN COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

I am an undergraduate student of the above mentioned Department and University, carrying out a research on the impact of ethnicity on political violence in Nigeria: A case of Lagos State 2023 general elections, as part of the requirements for the completion of my programme.

In order to gather relevant data for the study, it will be highly appreciated if you could respond to these questions as frankly and objectively as possible. All information you supply is strictly for the purpose of the study, and will be treated confidentially.

Yours faithfully,

The Researcher.

APPENDIX II

SECTION A: BIO-DATA

Please **TICK** [] the option that best suits your description.

- 3 **Sex:** Male [] Female []
- 4 **Age:** Below 20 [] 20 – 30 [] 31 – 40 [] 41- 50 [] 51- above []
- 5 **Religion:** Islam [] Christianity [] Traditional Religion [] Others []
- 6 **Marital Status:** Single [] Married [] Divorced [] Widow []
- 7 **Occupation:** Civil Servant [] Self-employed [] Student [] Unemployed [] Others []
- 8 **Academic Qualification:** None [] SSCE/GCE [] Graduate [] Undergraduate []
Post-Graduate [] Others []
- 9 **Ethnic Group:** _____

SECTION B: Please **TICK** [] the option that best suits your description.

10 ASSESSMENT OF VOTERS IN THE 2023 ELECTION

- 11 Did you vote during the recently held general election in Lagos State? Yes [] No []
- 12 If yes, which polling unit did you vote? _____
- 13 Which of the elections did you participate in? Presidential [] Governorship [] both []

14 KNOWLEDGE ON ETHNICITY

- 15 Ethnicity is the discrimination of people on the basis of their tribe? Yes [] No [] Not sure []
- 16 Ethnicity is the discrimination of people on the basis of their language? Yes [] No []
Not sure []

17 Ethnicity is the discrimination of people on the basis of their dressing? Yes [] No [] Not sure []

18 Ethnicity is the discrimination of people on the basis of their looks? Yes [] No [] Not sure []

19 KNOWLEDGE ON POLITICAL VIOLENCE

20 Political violence occurs when a person or group is attacked to achieve certain political gains? Yes [] No [] Not Sure []

21 Political violence occurs when a person or group are prevented from collecting their voters card by another person or group to achieve certain political gains? Yes [] No [] Not Sure []

22 Political violence occurs when a person or group are prevented from voting in an election day by another person or group to achieve certain political gains? Yes [] No [] Not Sure []

23 Political violence occurs when a person or group are harassed, kidnapped, assassinated, injured or maimed by another person or group to achieve certain political gains? Yes [] No [] Not Sure []

24 Political violence occurs when a person or group suffers from mental, psychological and emotional stress caused by another person or group to achieve certain political gains? Yes [] No [] Not Sure []

25 Political violence can occur before, during and after elections? Yes [] No [] Not Sure []

26 ETHNICITY AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE DURING 2023 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN LAGOS STATE

27 Do you think people voted in the 2023 general elections in Lagos State based on ethnicity? Yes [] No [] Not sure []

28 If yes, why do you think people voted based on ethnicity? _____

29 Was there violence during the 2023 general elections in Lagos State? _____ Yes

No Not sure

30 Was the political violence because of ethnicity? Yes No Not sure

31 If you did not personally experience this ethnically based political violence, did you see or hear about one or those that experienced it? yes No Not Sure

32 If yes, what was the type of political violence? _____

THANKS!!!