

U.S 2016 Presidential Election and Post Electoral Violence: How Consolidated Is U.S Democracy Today?

Odoh Patrick Abutu, Salisu Abubakar

Department of Public Administration The Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda Zamfara State, Nigeria West Africa

Registry Department The Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda Zamfara State, Nigeria West Africa

Corresponding Author: Odoh Patrick Abutu

Abstract: United States of America, the most acclaimed strongest consolidated democratic country in the world had her Presidential election on the 8th November, 2016. The Presidential election was declared in favour of Donald Trump after having met the constitutional requirements, especially the “needed, a must win of a minimum vote of 270 out of the 538 Electoral College votes”. Trump was sworn-in as the 45th President of the United States of America on the 20th January, 2017. However, immediately after Trump was declared President-elected by the electoral management board, there went up a flame arising from post presidential electoral violence. As a result, there has been a contending on-going debate among academics, particularly political scientists as to whether or not America still retains her position as the strongest consolidated democratic state in the world. The present study, therefore using an explanatory research method and content analysis were necessary answers two basic questions which include one, what are the causes of the 2016 post presidential electoral violence in the United States of America?; Two, is the United States of America still a consolidated democratic state after the 2016 post presidential electoral violence? Findings emerged accordingly based on the two research questions. For question 1 it is noted that the major causes of the post presidential electoral violence is victory of Donald Trump as the winner of the 2016 presidential election instead of Hillary Clinton amongst others while, for question 2, it is upheld that America still retains its status as a respected consolidated democratic State.

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I. Background of the Study/Problem Statement

The United States of America like many other countries of the world adopts democracy. Democracy is the present day most acceptable form of government globally, which provides opportunities to the greatest number of people to have a say in the selection of their representatives through voting and as well provide the best alternative government to the people because “among the great variety of developments that have occurred in the twentieth century, I did not, ultimately, have any difficulty in choosing one as the preeminent development of the period: the rise of democracy (Amartya, 2014)

America for many years now is under a democratic system of government and following the democratic principles has conducted several presidential elections before the 2016 Presidential election. The long and continuous practice of democracy by the United States of America has not only earned her a name as a democratic country but has elevated her globally to the top of the democratic ranking ladder called “democratic consolidation”- the democratic level that once a country has attained, it is upheld by political scientists as a country that has outgrown election rigging, manipulations of election results through any fraudulent means, outgrown electoral gerrymandering, and at best outwit any form of electoral violence and or any form of demonstration arising from disagreement over election result. Indeed, for some reasonable years now, United States of America have been enjoying this form of democratic benefits to the extent that it has been said that “No democracy, nearly as wealthy or durable as the United States has ever broken down.”(Miller, 2017).

However, electoral violence erupted on the 9th of November, 2016 just a day after the presidential election was conducted and Donald Trump was declared as the U.S President-Elect. The sudden electoral violence that struck U.S after Trump electoral victory over “the other three presidential candidates namely Clinton, Johnson and Stein” (Odoh & Salisu, 2017) was indeed, outrageous to political scientists in particular who begins to question whether or not United States of America still retain her prestigious glory as one of the most consolidated democratic countries of the world because “ a wave of news stories and essays have raised the alarm about threats to American democracy and declines in democratic support among young Americans (Miller, 2017). As a result, several questions begin to emerge from scholars as to whether or not America’s democracy could still be described as consolidated. Therefore, the onus of this work is to examine first and

foremost the triggering factors responsible for the November 2016 post presidential electoral violence in the United States of America despite its level of democratic consolidation. Second, examine how the post presidential electoral violence affected the consolidation status of America's democracy.

Research Questions

Basically, two research questions were generated and were used for the study accordingly. These include:

1. What are the causes of the 2016 post presidential electoral violence in the United States of America?
2. How does the 2016 post presidential electoral violence in the United States of America affects her status as a consolidated democratic State?

Research Objectives (General and specific objectives of the Study)

The general objective of the study is to examine the existing documents in previous literatures that are related to the 2016 post presidential electoral violence in the United States of America and bring out the factors responsible for it and to as well use the 2016 post presidential electoral violence in the United States of America to position the status of American Democracy in relation to consolidation.

The specific aims of the study are to:

1. Investigate the causes of the 2016 post presidential electoral violence in the United States of America?
2. Examine the status of the United States of America's democracy in relation to the consolidation.

Is it Necessary to undertake this Research?

From all perspectives, it is very necessary to conduct this research work because, apart from social media comments as well as electronic and printing media comments on the post presidential electoral violence in the United States, there are scanty scholarly literatures on the U.S 2016 post Presidential electoral violence and on the status of the United States' democratic consolidation being the subject matter under study apart from the work of Fischer et al (2016). More so, this work is focusing on the combination of understanding the reasons for the electoral violence and the question of the democratic consolidation status of the United States of America after the post-electoral violence. Again, up to date, there is no scholarly research that has been conducted using a combination of content analysis in pictures and explanatory research methodologies to study the 2016 post presidential electoral violence in the United States of America and the consolidation status of America. As a result, there is a vacuum created by previous literatures which this study intends to cover up hence, the permission granted because of the dire need to expressly conduct the research for the purpose of providing latest literature for further scholarly researches into election generally and American elections in particular.

In view of this, this study is very important because it will contribute to the extant literatures on electoral violence and democratic consolidation and establish the position of America as a consolidated democratic state after the 2016 post presidential electoral violence.

Scope and limitation of the Study

The study focused on the post presidential electoral violence that occurred immediately after the declaration of Donald Trump as U.S President-Elect in November 2016 by the United States Electoral Management Board (EMB). The study will not examine the pre-election violence, neither will it investigate the violence that occurred on Election Day though, that never mean that reference will not be made to it. Also, this work will not be extended to cover other elections held in U.S during the period under study except the presidential election. It is pertinent to note also that other aspects of the presidential election such as, review of the performance of presidential candidates in the election, the voting behaviour of the electorates, the performance of the electoral management board etc. was not examined in the course of carrying out this study. The justification for studying only the post presidential electoral violence is to amongst others things study the subject matter in-depth so as to be able to produce a quality result from the study instead of studying chunks of issue and at the end any meaningful result was not achieved.

This study suffered from certain limitations which usually is a characteristic of every research. One of the limitations is the distance barrier between Nigeria where the authors reside and the United States of America which is the study area of this work. Therefore, the scholars were compelled to use previous documents and content analysis method to conduct this research instead of using other primary methods of data collection, such as qualitative in-depth interviews, or quantitative interview or questionnaire that would have been used to solicit direct information from informants (the respondents). Secondly, this research work is limited by the dearth of information amongst other factors especially that the work relied heavily on generating the required information through the internet

II. Methodology

While there are several methodologies available within research study, in this work only a combination of qualitative explanatory research method and content analysis (using images) are adopted. The justification for

choosing the combination of these two qualitative research methods are because we used explanation to describe the 2016 post presidential electoral violence in the United States of America while images was used to analyze the contents of the electoral violence to portray the real picture of the violence and as well to prove beyond reasonable doubt that electoral violence did occur in the United States of America after the 2016 Presidential election in the U.S.

Reviewing the Related Literatures

In reviewing the literatures that relate to this study, the research work is hanging on related conceptual and theoretical framework. While the conceptual review will include election, electoral violence and democratic consolidation on one hand, **Marcus Gustafsson** Theories of Democratic Consolidation: A Mexico-Germany Comparison is considered important as theoretical support for the study on the other hand.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

To make this study scholarly and logical, three basic concepts were reviewed accordingly. These are election, electoral violence and democratic consolidation respectively.

Election

While scholars like Heinz, 2015; Orji & Uzodi (2012) in Timothy (2015); Adesola & John (2014) asserts that election is a formal process of selecting people's representatives into the arms of government through voting, the definition that is closely related to our study is the one offered by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted in 2000 by world Leaders in Fabio, Mette, Paul, & Richardo (2011) which holds election to be the yardstick used for measuring the level of a country's democratic advancement and consolidation. Therefore, going by the MDGs view, election as an academic subject has a strong foundation in the discussion of modern democratic practice globally and it is even more important because it have a high potential to set a country on violent conflict, destabilizes and truncate democracy (Kuhne, 2010) and in this vein, elections became the most acceptable and fashionable form of selecting new leaders and as a means of replacing old ones globally for long till date. Indeed, the appeal for acceptance of election was highly entrenched, propagated nurtured and being sustained by the wealthy Western democratic Europe and America in particular.

Summarily, it is not possible to complete the conceptualization of election without mentioning Norris Pippa particularly in Norris (2014, p 19), in her book "Why Electoral Integrity Matters". In the book, the author presented a two-sided striking argument with one side bad and the other one favourable. Her first argument is, that in an ideal situation, if elections work well it will help in selecting office holders and representatives in government that will not only determine policy priorities but, will make the citizens to be linked to their representatives, generate legislatures that are truly representatives and elected authorities will be conferred with legitimacy while leaders are hold accountable and the citizens will adequately be provided with the opportunity to actively participate in politics. In her second argument she laments that generally most election conducted globally falls short of the required ideals whereby:

Political opponents or the opposition candidates are frustrated from the ballot, districts are re-drawn to gain electoral advantage by one political party over another, the campaign becomes a battleground, the media are intimidated harassed and muzzled. There is also the stuffing of ballot boxes, counting of votes is manipulated, boycott of election by oppositions, the people's choice are disregarded by incumbents, money is used in campaigning, vote buying is rampant, partisan officials deploy state resources into politics, ballot papers are insufficient during elections, voting machines during elections are said to have a breakdown. Others include, deliberate delay to increase lengthy line, break ballot boxes by hoodlums, missing of names in election registers, the failure of courts to resolve electoral issues due to impartiality, violence threatens elections.

She concludes that elections that are well run in itself is still insufficient to provide a sustainable and successful democratic transition. She, however, agreed that even election that is flawed or a failed contest could even worsen to break down the progress. The arguments from Norris (2014), Ake, Adekanya, and Nnoli, Abbas, Jega in Fagbohun (2013)'s on election portrays that elections are characterized by continued conflicts and other vices which are contrary to ideals of election and that this occurs almost in every country.

In the light of the above, let us turn to examine the second concept under review-electoral violence, having been notified by Norris (2014) that poor handling of election or 'even elections that are well run in itself is still insufficient to provide a sustainable and successful democratic transitions' could result to election violence.

Electoral violence

Straus and Taylor (2009), define electoral violence as physical violence and coercive intimidation directly tied to an impending electoral contest or to an announced electoral result. They further argue that any politically related violence that occurred six months prior to or three months after an election is termed as an

electoral violence. Furthermore, the author in their argument posits that electoral violence are organized in three dimensions which include first, elections are formal contests between incumbents and challengers or opposition party/candidates. The incumbents and the opposition use electoral violence in two circumstances. The incumbents employ violence to maintain power through coercive means of the state if the position is threatened by the opposition challenger. While on the other hand, the opposition uses violence to protest the outcome of an election using non-state means. In this state of affairs, violence is measured in terms of state violence and repression as well as in terms of rebellion and protest.

Therefore, Straus and Taylor (2009), are of the view that a crisis empirical study of electoral violence should be considered on the basis of origin which other existing studies disregarded. The argument of Straus and Taylor are that two sets of categories be created for the understanding of electoral violence which includes incumbent and the challenger while the study of the incumbent in relation to violence must examine any state agents militia, political party member or hooligan who acts on behalf of the party that control the executive. The challengers on the other hand include any party member, militia or hooligan acting on behalf of the political party and do not control the executive.

Electoral Violence is the use of threats, whether emotional, psychological, or physical to influence political activities and stakeholders before election is held or after the election is held to truncate electoral ideals and change election results (Kolawole 1988 in Bamgbose 2012). Nwolise (2007) presented three various dimensions and components of electoral violence where he categorized them to include physical, psychological and structural. Electoral violence according to the Nordic African Institute's Policy Notes (2012/13) is a branch of political violence which is specifically unique and featured timing of electoral activities which its main motive is to cause violence. It employs coercive strategy and mostly used by both the incumbent and the opposition politicians to achieve a political goal through contesting of elections. The coercive strategy here as used by the definition could mean threat, killing, bombing, assassination and other wicked methods to compel oppositions or incumbents to become afraid and stay away from the campaign or stepping down from contesting election.

To sum up the reviewing of electoral violence, Tensae (2011)'s definition, though, not universally adopted, is unique to some extent to encompass the meaning of electoral violence. Electoral violence seeks to mainly affect the final outcome of the election and the entire process of election. Second, electoral violence normally take place before the election is held, during the election and after the election is conducted; third; many actors are usually involve which may include, the ruling party/ incumbent government and its security agents, opposition parties as well as others like the militias and many more; fourth, it has to do with perpetrating abnormalities which may includes destruction of public and private properties, threatening of lives, inflicting injuries on people, killing and assassinations, looting, shutting down normal life activities and many more. Finally, electoral violence has a particular target and this may include electoral materials, electoral officers, election results, electoral observers and media personnel or gadgets, candidates contesting for elections. This definition significantly represents the concept of electoral violence.

Democratic Consolidation

Democratic consolidation has its taproot from democracy, therefore, it is not practically possible to mention democratic consolidation without first have knowledge of the concept of democracy, hence, democracy as we all know has its origin from Ancient Greek City State of Athens, but the participatory Athenian democratic method was modified into representative form which is the globally acceptable one. In fact, all other definition of democracy among scholars today incubated the popular definition given by the 16th American President-Abraham Lincoln in Okoye, Egboh & Chukwuemeka, (2012) as "government of the people for the people by the people" in order to hatch theirs. Umez (2002) in Uchekukwu (2005) in Okoye, Egboh & Chukwuemeka, (2012) in his definition of democracy on 'sovereignty' of the people contending that the people's (particularly the adult population) sovereignty is entrenched through a representative government that identify and allows certain basic principles to include rule of law, political equality, universal political participation, majority rule, minority rights, that government be responsible for the opinion of those they governed and finally basic fundamental rights of persons (including freedom of speech, freedom of the press, rights to religious choice and worship, freedom for lawful assembly and freedom to belong to lawful organizations). The above listed items represent the basic characteristics of modern democracy anywhere in the world, particularly if we add constitutionalism of the constitution, free, fair and credible election, strict adherence to electoral rules and conducts particularly as it pertains to international and national electoral rules and regulations.

Democratic consolidation is conceptualize by various scholars drawn from Western and Developing countries such as Jean Jacques Rousseau (direct or plebicitory), John Staurt Mill, James Madison, John Locke (Representative or Liberal), Joseph Schumpeter (the Pluralist) in Philips, 2011; Dahl, 1989; Krouse, Schedler, 1998 in Nwanegbo & Alumona, 2011; Bratton, 1998 in Nwanegbo & Alumona, 2011, Omotola in Ojo in

Nwanegbo & Alumona, 2011; O'Donnel in Alfa, 2011; Ayoade, 2000; Okechukwu, 2008; Nwanolu & Iwuoha, 2012; Kwasau, 2013; Oni, 2014; Azeez, 2006 in Ngara, Esonbu, Ogoh and Orokpo, 2014; Okoye, Egboh and Chukwuemeka, 2012. In summary, the scholars agreed that when power alternates freely between incumbents party and opposition parties, rebels and violators of electoral rules are tried and punished accordingly, when all persons are acting within democratic institutions and framework, if people that lost election remains in the same political party to re-contest again, whenever there is stability of regimes, when elections of changing from one regime to another is freely conducted without violence and the loser and winner agree that the election result produced the real outcome and the loser did not go to court to contest election results. When government is regarded as legitimate if they ascend to power based on the decision of the electorates at the poll, if there is free, fair and credible periodic elections, if there is adequate security to protect contestants, supporters and the electorates before, during and at least six months after election, if incumbents freely hand over power after a defeat at the poll, when the court of law is impartial in determining cases arising from electoral issues, a democratic system that encourages, promotes, entrenched and established a democracy that is enduring, institutionalized and characterized by stability through a sustainable period of time.

Huntington (1998) in Oni (2014) further add that a democracy will be regarded as consolidated if sets of people who wins election in a preceding previous transition election lost election to new sets of winners subsequently and same re-occurs at least for two consecutive elections and the scenario continue, it will reasonably mean that democracy is being consolidated. The weakness of Huntington (1998) is that he rigidly tied democratic consolidation status to the defeat of preceding winners by the new sets of winners to only two consecutive times. There should be no rigid law applied to the rule of the game in new sets of winners defeating the preceding winners who held onto power because records from the present consolidated democratic nations in the western liberal democracy which did becomes consolidated did not occurred by the consecutive winning of new sets of winners against the old sets of winners.

While it may not be feasible and practicable for any sovereign state to achieve and record one hundred percent of the necessary conditions spelt out as a prerequisite for a democratic consolidation in her practice of democracy, a country practicing democracy should be able to reasonably attain higher percentage of the prerequisites for her democracy to be accredited globally as a consolidated democracy. These basic conditions are what Jean Jacques Rousseau, the first person who theorized on democracy in the 18th century described as 'good political system' that allows the citizens to freely participate in political life. This political life includes freedom to vote and be voted for and how to select leaders and people's representatives and participate in the discussion of proposed legislative changes. Freely here mean absence of hindrance of any form provided the person is qualified. Philips (2011, p. 11), holds that the most influential theorist of democracy in our present time is Robert Dahl. Dahl's (1989) postulation on democracy is particularly on participatory democracy. Generally, Dahl's five principles' theory was outlined by Krouse (2008) to include Effective participation of everyone in the polity. Everyone according to Dahl should be allowed to vote freely and should be able to share other opinions and making their views known, Equality of vote for all the citizens, particularly at the decisive stage, the electorates should be educated and informed concerning the electoral processes, there should be control of the agenda so that the people should be able to determine what should be decided, the rule of inclusiveness should be adopted to ensure that no one is excluded at any point in time during the process.

These conditions are the major determinants of accepting a democratic state as a consolidated democracy.

III. Theoretical Pillar for the Study

Marcus Gustafsson Theories of Democratic Consolidation: A Mexico-Germany Comparison is adopted as the theoretical stand for this work. Though, the intention of this study is not to compare the United States of America's democratic consolidation with any other country, the theory contains the essential ingredients that could be found in a consolidated democracy and which will be useful for explaining U.S Case under study.

Gustafsson argues that several literatures have made tremendous contributions with respect to the features of a consolidated democracy. Accordingly, hundreds of political literature was providing good examples of measuring and labeling democracies (Collier & Levisky, 1997). However, the general and most commonly acceptable one is the eight criteria provided by Dahl (1971:3) in his Seminar book, Polyarchy which include the right to vote, the right to be elected, the right of political leaders to compete for support, free and fair elections, freedom of expression, alternative sources of information, freedom of association, public policy institutions depending on the votes and expression of preferences. The theory holds that Dahl's criteria were used by Lijphart analysis to conclude that West Germany in 1949 became a democratic consolidated country. While in the case of Mexico, as of 1994, it is not able to fulfill Dahl's criteria therefore, it could not become a democratic consolidated nation.

In the debate over what makes a democratic country consolidated, some scholars have favor literacy and urbanization which traditional societies are expected to pass through (Lerner, 1958:54-68). In addition, there

is also increased communication which Pye (1966) accepted and emphasized that it is a driver of political development, while Lipset (1959) on the other hand, said that the more well-to-do a nation is, the greater the chance of sustaining democracy for long and the possibility of the democratic sliding into consolidation and on this note, the modernization school of thought supported the motion and stated that democracy is linked to economic development. In another development, Almond & Verba have attributed the roles of political values to the possibility of becoming democratically consolidated country and which they claimed have link to education.

While, the above theories may not be complete in explaining the features for democratic consolidation as argued by Przeworski & Limongi 1997; O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986, 1997) as in the Marcus theory of democratic consolidation, it is rational to say that those conditions mentioned by the theories, especially that of Dahl are the solid base by which Democratic consolidation could be achieved.

In the light of the above theoretical position therefore, the study of the Post Presidential electoral violence in the United States of America becomes interesting to understand the causes of electoral violence in a well respected democratically consolidated state-America.

Research Question 1

What are the causes of the 2016 post presidential electoral violence in the United States of America?

To answer this research question, several documents were consulted from secondary sources such as printing and (such as magazines, newspapers) electronic media (Radio, Television, Internet web sites) social media stories (for instance, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) Government official reports, gazettes). In view of the above, therefore, what caused the 2016 post presidential electoral violence in the United States after Donald Trump was declared as the elected President.

To answer the research question 1, we shall scholarly establish first and foremost, if truly that post presidential electoral violence occurred in the United States of America after the 2016 Presidential election result was declared in favour of Donald Trump of the Republican Party then thereafter, the causes of 2016 post presidential election will be discussed accordingly.

Evidences of the 2016 post Presidential Election Violence in the United States

'The Sun' of 9th November, 2016 according to its Reporters (Simon Tominson and Sam Webb) on its page story is captioned "BATTLEGROUND AMERICA Donald Trump's US presidential election win sparks riot by Hillary Clinton fans as fighting erupts outside the White House. Pro Clinton supporters clashed with Trump fans in major cities within minutes of the billionaire being named president".

The paper in its breakdown of the news says "*that VIOLENCE erupted across America this morning after Donald Trump's shock election win - including outside the White House. Pictures and footage emerged of furious protesters burning flags, rioters setting fire to rubbish and angrily confronting Trump supporters after it emerged the controversial Republican president-elect will soon hold the most powerful position in the world.*

In the front page of the "Sun" is a video footage of multiple demonstrators available on this link <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/2147684/violence-erupts-across-the-us-as-pro-clinton-fans-riot-after-donald-trumps-shock-election-win/>. Also in the same document, there are picture images of demonstrators indicating the protest as seen below



RED FLARE-UP... A Hillary Clinton supporter clashes with a Donald Trump supporter outside the White House

Source: "The Sun" 9th November, 2017



Clinton supporters were filmed setting fire to the US flag while marching through the streets of Portland



A woman passes, burning garbage during a demonstration in Oakland, California



Cops patrol after several dozen protesters gathered in downtown Oakland to protest the election of Donald Trump



Pro-Trump supporters and opponents of the Republican clash in Times Square, New York



Students gather in Makolin X Plaza at San Francisco State University

Also, some students of Georgetown University namely Saki Araida, Evan Chiacchiaro, Georgia Garney, Elizabeth Lievens, Sundar Ramanujam, and Laura Sinclair under the guidance of Professor Jeff Fischer conducted a research entitled “ELECTORAL VIOLENCE: A Study of the 2016 United States Presidential Election. In this work, it has been scholarly proved that electoral violence took place in the United States of America after the 2016 Presidential election conducted on the 8th November, 2016 which was won by Donald Trump and that the announcement of the election result in favour of Trump was responsible for the violence. From the Executive Summary of the report of that Study, it was stated that:

This report by Georgetown University’s “Electoral Violence” graduate class records, analyzes, and contextualizes electoral violence in the United States during the 2016 electoral cycle and establishes a baseline for future comparison. Along with the database, a description of the violence recorded, and key findings, the report includes a historical review of electoral violence in the United States with a comparison to 2016, a section on the role of social media in electoral violence, and suggested next steps for further research. Electoral violence events were identified using conventional media sources such as NPR, CNN, ABC, Washington Post, Reuters, CBS, and New York Times, along with the local news website Patch.com. The social media websites Twitter and YouTube were also mined for events, although this report is not a comprehensive review of violent threats on social media. In total, fifty-three electoral violence events were recorded in the study: 37 incidents, 4 acts of intimidation, and 12 threats. Forty-four of the 53 incidents occurred before Election Day, with most incidents occurring during the Primary Phase of the electoral cycle. Analysis of the events led to the following six key findings:

- 1. Rallies and Protests are flashpoints of violence.*
- 2. Generally low-impact violence despite high-impact threats.*

3. *Primary Phase and Pre-General Election Day Phase violence primarily committed by Trump supporters or Republicans, while post-Election Day Phase violence primarily committed by anti-Trump aligned individuals.*
4. *Males appear to be the primary perpetrators and victims of electoral violence; perpetrators spanned all ages.*
5. *Pre-Primary Phase and Primary Phase violence was nationwide, while most post-Primary Phase violence occurred in "swing states".*
6. *Some incidents suggest a racial or ethnic component to violence.* (Araida, Chiacchiaro, Garney, Lievens, Ramanujam, Sinclair, & Fischer (2016: 1)..

Examining the post election environment of the 2016 U.S Presidential election and of course, which is our major concern in this study, several evidences from the studies carried out by Araida, S.; Chiacchiaro, E.; Garney, G.; Lievens, E.; Ramanujam, S. & Sinclair, L. & Fischer (2016) has shown that post election violence occurred really did took place in the United States after Donald Trump was declared as the winner of the 2016 Presidential election. According to the revealing by that study:

The strongest opposition and closet rival to Donald Trump in the 2016 U.S Presidential election race, Secretary Hillary Clinton on noticing the charged post election environment did not only delivered a concessional statement to her supporters, but also approach the President-Elect with an open mind and as well in conjunction with the then President Barack Obama called for unity and peace in subsequent days and months that will follow the election victory of Donald Trump. Despite this news on Twitter portrays that riot looms among the supports of Hillary Clinton, who lost to the presidential election and the supporters of Donald Trump, who won the presidential ticket and in Oakland in particular, on the 9th of Novemeber, 2016, within one hour interval the rioting crowd grew from 3,000 to 6,000 people followed by fire on the streets as well as broken windows; and at least a police officer was injured in the process. Furthermore, the database from the documentary record indicates that summarily "6 incidents, 1 threat, 1 instance of intimidation during the Post-Election phase occurred and that it extends to Friday 11th November, 2016 and even went beyond that day.

The places of the incident include major cities in New York, Portland, Chicago and on college campuses respectively. Thirty one protester according to the source under review were arrested and a videos have that protesters and counter protesters fought one another in the course of the protest and it took place in Oregon and Portland just a day after the presidential election was held. Indeed, a Twitter Report had it that:

"#reporthate" on Twitter to give individuals a space to report hate crimes and discrimination. From November 9 to November 12 SPLC had 200 cases of hate crimes. Slightly more than 140 occurred the day following the election. The cases were broken down by group targeted, venue, and state. There were 99 incidents K-12 schools and 67 in universities. Children who were Asian American and Latino were told that they would be deported by their peers and a teacher in Georgia was left a note in her classroom telling her that her headscarf was no longer allowed and that she should "hang [herself] with it" Araida, S.; Chiacchiaro, E.; Garney, G.; Lievens, E.; Ramanujam, S. & Sinclair, L. & Fischer (2016)

Indeed, the police report has claimed that not less than 500 people swarmed on the streets, especially in and around UCLA with some shouting "*f**k Trump' and others chanting "Not my president!*" (Araida, S.; Chiacchiaro, E.; Garney, G.; Lievens, E.; Ramanujam, S. & Sinclair, L. & Fischer (2016))

From the documents available before the researchers and which were reviewed accordingly as shown, it is no longer doubtful that post presidential electoral violence did occur in the United States after the 2016 presidential election victory of Donald trump over other three candidates. In the light of this therefore, this study standing on the permission of the scholarly evidences that post presidential electoral violence did occur in 2016 immediately Donald trump was declared President-Elect, did proceed to investigate the causes of the post election violence.

Factors that Triggered the 2016 Post Presidential Electoral Violence in the U.S

While four presidential candidates, namely Hillary Clinton of the Democratic Party, Garry Johnson of the Libertarian Party, Donald Trump of the Republican Party and Jill Stein of the Green Party contested the 2016 presidential election in the United States of America, the name of Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump rented the air and the media as if the contestants were only two candidates. Therefore, the 2016 presidential election in the United States was a battlefield for Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton which invariably mean that the contest is a two party contest between the then sitting (in Government) Democratic PartyGoin and the Republican party. In the course of the campaign before the election day, it has been proved by a research that both Hillary and Trump were very confrontational against each other in such a way that the Contest for the election was seen as a great war between the two candidates. Captured from a document is this statement that:

The campaign was characterized by a high degree of partisan hostility between the two major presidential candidates. Both candidates used a tone that has been confrontational, often employing personal attacks during campaign events and characterizing each other as unfit for the office of president. Mr. Trump frequently used offensive and intolerant language against women, ethnic and racial communities, and people

with disabilities. Mr. Trump also states that, if elected, he would put Ms. Clinton in jail. Ms. Clinton referred to a number of supporters of Mr. Trump as “deplorable.” The negative rhetoric was often reflected in tightly contested congressional races. A few cases of disruption at rallies were reported (Araida, S.; Chiacchiaro, E.; Garney, G.; Lievens, E.; Ramanujam, S. & Sinclair, L. & Fischer (2016))

Therefore, when Donald Trump was declared a winner of the presidential race, it did not go well with the supporters of Hillary and hence the friction that built up in the polity and resulted to post electoral violence. In fact, organizations that observed the 2016 U.S Presidential election, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) had earlier before the election day notified that there is high tension in the campaign environment and it was this same tension that crossover to the post election environment.

In a related development, Araida; Chiacchiaro; Garney; Lievens, E.; Ramanujam, S. & Sinclair, L. & Fischer (2016) Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) earlier had identified some previous specific incidents which accordingly may have been responsible for the violence that broke out after the presidential election result was declared in favour of Donald Trump. According to the organization, there is a firebomb attack launched against the office of the Republican party in North Carolina and also the church was set on fire by the supporters of the Republican party in Mississippi (Araida, Chiacchiaro; Garney; Lievens.; Ramanujam; Sinclair & Fischer, 2016) Consequently, each of the two giant political parties in the presidential race is not comfortable with themselves so there were various accusations and counter accusations and this aggression was transferred to the post election period leading to violence across the United State.

The negative roles of the social media in the 2016 U.S presidential election cannot be underestimated going by the assassination of the characters of the presidential candidates, especially Hillary Clinton that was recorded during the contest. Case in point is the one presented by Reads (2016 in Odoh & Abubakar, 2017) which claimed that “Facebook comments were extensively used in favour of Trump by teenagers to assassinate the character of the strongest opposition candidate (Hillary Clinton) in favour of Trump. Some of the negative Facebook comments allegation against Hillary Clinton include captions such as “the Pope has endorsed Trump, Hillary Clinton allegedly bought US\$137 million illegal arms, in the Maldives, Hillary Clinton bought US\$200 million houses” To corroborate this assertion, Araida, Chiacchiaro; Garney; Lievens.; Ramanujam; Sinclair & Fischer, (2016) on the other hand say that “the presence of social media has had both virtuous and detrimental effects. On the one hand, social media has allowed itself to be used a mantle to forecast violence, convey threats and document incidents. But at the same time, it has changed the nature of information flow and has made it easier for social interaction — without necessarily adding to the accurate informing of the civic community” The post electoral violence that erupted after the presidential election may not be unconnected with with the role the social media played in scheming out Hillary Clinton from victory at the presidential poll therefore, it could be explained that the supporters of Clinton were annoyed over her failure and have to register their displeasure openly through violence.

Another scholar portraying the justification for the 2016 post election violence in the United States has claimed that the violence may have occurred because of the way Donald trump instigated and encouraged his supporters to “knock the crap” out of protesters, and even suggested he will pay the legal fees of followers who assaulted his critics”. In fact, another source has claimed that during the campaign by Donald Trump, there are are many incidences of violence which indeed forced Trump to suspend some of the scheduled campaigns (Muchlinski, D. (2016). This may not in small measure contributed to the wildness of the supporters of the two biggest political parties after the presidential election result was declared.

Several scholars also have argued that historical antecedents is contributing to election violence in America elections and that the 2016 electoral violence may also have its tap root from that. According to them, election violence occurred in 1900, 1968, 1972-2012, therefore, the 2016 election violence is an extension of the previous election, but the only difference between the previous electoral violence and the one of 2016 is that in 2016, the nature of threats, lack of trust on the credibility of the electoral institutions to be impartial, and the roles of social media all helped to increase the tension of the 2016 electoral violence (Rhodes, 2016, Araida, Chiacchiaro; Garney; Lievens.; Ramanujam; Sinclair & Fischer, 2016).

One other factor that is linked to the post election violence in U.S after the Presidential election in 2016 is the consistent and persistent warning by Donald Trump that if he lost the election, it means that the election was rigged signaled the likely danger that transcend to the post election environment and resulted to the electoral violence In the words of Beauchamp (2016:1) “ Donald Trump’s claim that the upcoming election is rigged against him is without precedent in modern US history. The potential consequences are bigger than you think. The GOP candidate’s talk of millions’ of fraudulent votes and his commitment to only accept the election results “if I win” don’t sound like the words of a typical American politician and for good reason: the typical American politician has faith in the system, accept the results of an election and moves on... He has repeatedly warned his fans that if he loses, the America they know will be irreparably damaged. Though, some critics may argued that Trump won the election so the possibility of his hate speech metamorphosing into violence after the election may not have arise but let us know that by those speeches, his fans were already groomed and

psychologically been trained for violence should Trump failed so the aggressiveness is already there and that may be what was exhibited by the fans at the slightest provocation that fueled the violence.

Several other factors combined may have fueled the post 2016 presidential electoral violence in the United States. These may likely include the roles played by the United States' FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) over the email saga of Hillary Clinton "*This morning I sent a letter to Congress in connection with the Secretary Clinton email investigation. Yesterday, the investigative team briefed me on their recommendation with respect to seeking access to emails that have recently been found in unrelated case. Because those emails appear to be pertinent to our investigation, I agreed that we should take appropriate steps to obtain and review them.*" may have been responsible for her failure in the presidential race (Guaghan, 2016 in Odoh & Abubakar, 2017), unfounded and likely false posting in the social media about Hillary Clinton's ill-gotten wealth "*Hillary Clinton allegedly bought US\$137 million illegal arms, in Maldives, Hillary Clinton bought US\$200 million house* (Reads, 2016, in Odoh & Abubakar, 2017)" and the open accusation of Hillary Clinton's high level of corruption by Donald Trump, "*Hillary Clinton May be the most corrupt person ever to seek the presidency*", "*I know that corruption has reached a level like never ever before in our country, I want the entire corrupt Washington establishment to hear the words we are about to say: when we win...*" as well as the revelation made by Russia with respect to her roles in the 2016 US Presidential election in favour of Donald Trump (*It has been openly proved by Russia that it has hand in the campaign and success of Donald Trump in the US 2016 Presidential election...The allegations then were denied both by the Trump Spokesman, Trump himself and even the Russia President, Vladimir Putin over the involvement of Russia in the campaign of Donald Trump. However, available source from Russian Deputy Foreign Minister, Sergei Ryabkov in an interview with the State run Interfax news agency has revealed the involvement of Russia in the Donald Trump Presidential electoral victory as it appears in "The Washington Post" of 10th November, 2016*). These strategies were all adopted to scheme, Hillary Clinton out during the presidential election and it worked. Therefore, it may not be out of place to argue that the post election violence may be a result of the accumulative annoyance arising from these schemes.

Finally, another calculation and permutation for the reasons behind the post presidential electoral violence in the United States of America is the fact that it has been proved that any election with the close margin result is likely to witness a post election violence and the case is applied in the case of the U.S 2016. In examining the popular vote score of the two strongest presidential candidates, namely Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, one will discover that the margin is so small "*While Donald Trump polled 61,201,031 going by popular votes, the popular vote of Hillary Clinton was 62, 523, 121 indicating that Hillary Clinton beat Donald Trump by 1,322,090 votes*" (Politico Magazine, 2016 in Odoh & Abubakar, 2017). This little margin may create serious suspicion of manipulation of the result of the parties involve. While the Republican Party supporters may be thinking something happened to place the Democratic Candidate ahead of their own candidate, the Democratic supporters too may be thinking that something happened somewhere that made the result, so close to each other therefore, the probable outcome may be clash that may end up in electoral violence.

Research Question 2

How does the 2016 post presidential electoral violence in the United States of America affects her status as a consolidated democratic State?

In the process of conceptualization of elections in our previous discussion, we presented Norris (2014) two sided views on the election from her Book: *Why Electoral Integrity Matters* and the last item in the component of the negative aspect of election if the election is not properly handled is "violence threatens election" or what we may term "electoral violence". In view of this, we know from Norris' postulation that when the election is not properly handled, electoral violence may occur and therefore, the 2016 American presidential election was not properly handled in at least one or more aspect no matter how this claim may be faulted by anyone and therefore, electoral violence did occur. So how has the violence influence the status of the United States as a consolidated democratic State? To effectively answer this question, the examination of the conditions for democratic consolidation provided by scholars in the conceptual framework for democratic consolidation in this study becomes very necessary. They says that democratic consolidation is:

when power alternates freely between incumbents party and opposition parties, rebels and violators of electoral rules are tried and punished accordingly, when all persons are acting within democratic institutions and framework, if people that lost election remains in the same political party to re-contest again, whenever there is stability of regimes, when elections of changing from one regime to another is freely conducted without violence and the loser and winner agree that the election result produced the real outcome and the loser did not go to court to contest election results. When government is regarded as legitimate if they ascend to power based on the decision of the electorates at the poll, if there is free, fair and credible periodic elections, if there is adequate security to protect contestants, supporters and the electorates before, during and at least six months after election, if incumbents freely hand over power after a defeat at the poll, when the court of law is impartial

in determining cases arising from electoral issues, a democratic system that encourages, promotes, entrenched and established a democracy that is enduring, and characterized by stability through a sustainable period of time. In addition, Huntington (1998) in Oni (2014) further adds that a democracy will be regarded as consolidated if sets of people who wins election in a preceding previous transition election lost election to new sets of winners subsequently and same re-occurs at least for two consecutive elections.

While it may not be feasible and practicable for any sovereign democratic state to achieve and record 100 percent of the necessary conditions spelt out as a prerequisite for a democratic consolidation in her practice of democracy, a country practicing democracy should be able to reasonably attain a higher or percentage close to 100 for that consolidated democratic to be accredited globally as a consolidated democracy. These basic conditions are what Jean Jacques Rousseau, the first person who theorized on democracy in the 18th century described as ‘good political system’ that allows the citizens to freely participate in political life. This political life includes freedom to vote and be voted for and how to select leaders and people’s representatives and participate in the discussion of proposed legislative changes. Freely here mean absence of hindrance of any form provided the person is qualified. Philips (2011, p. 11), holds that the most influential theorist of democracy in our present time is Robert Dahl. Dahl’s (1989) postulation on democracy is particularly on participatory democracy. Generally, Dahl’s five principles’ theory was outlined by Krouse (2008) to include: 1) effective participation of everyone in the polity; 2) equality of vote for all the citizens particularly at the decisive stage; 3) the electorates should be educated and informed concerning the electoral process; 4) there should be control of the agenda so that the people should be able to determine what should be decided; and 5) the rule of inclusiveness should be adopted to ensure that no one is excluded at any point in time during the process.

These conditions are the major determinants of accepting a democratic state as a consolidated democracy. In view of this, Schedler () adds that: *Any judgment on democratic consolidation in a given country must thus rest on both factual evidence and causal arguments. In other words, if we want to measure democratic consolidation, we have to theorize about democratic stability.* Therefore, regime stability is one cardinal yardstick by which an existing consolidated democratic state could be assessed according to Schedler. *If we want to assess their implications for democratic continuity in the short to medium run, we need a causal theory that explains how post-electoral disputes, economic recession, or the presence of guerrilla groups affect regime stability in the given context.* In this vein, it has been argued that there is no uniformity among scholars on the argument about the regime consolidation because some scholars focused on the political actors, while some examines their attitude, and another group see it from the structural environment perspective. Therefore, Schedler contends that While we may comprehend behavioral, attitudinal, and structural data as operational indicators that refer to different levels of measurement, they also represent different levels of causation as seen in the table 1 below.

Measuring Democratic Consolidation: Types of Evidence and Inference

Level of Measurement & Causation	Object of Observations	Causal Assumptions
Behavioural Foundation	observable behaviour factual & Counter factual	Institutions depend on actors past behaviour (under stress) Is predictive of future behaviour
Attitudinal Foundations	Participant perspectives: Strategies, norms and Perceptions	Attitudes are predictive of Behaviour
Structural foundations	Structural contexts, economic, Social and individual Constraints) shape actor and Attitudes	Contexts (incentives and

Source: Schedler, A. Measuring Democratic Consolidation" Springer.

.Schedler says, *They form a chain of causation whose links are causally embedded: (a) behavior appears as a proximate cause of regime stability, (b) attitudes work as a prime mover of behavior, and (c) structural contexts represent a proximate source of both actors and attitudes. Put in simple graphical terms:*

Structural contexts ~ actors and attitudes ---- behavior --- democratic stability

The first and most basic assumption in this hierarchy of causal relations is the premise that, in the last instance, it is political actors who sustain political institutions. We may regard this as the founding assumption of consolidation studies: Democracy is neither a divine gift, nor a side effect of societal factors (Schedler)

From this postulation, we can now say what is happening to the United States of America's democratic consolidation or regime in terms of behavioral, attitudinal, and structural since the 2016 presidential post electoral violence have a tendency to influence America's democratic consolidation because Schedler agree that democratic consolidation is determined by the post electoral violence environment. How have post electoral disputes, guerrilla groups and other factors influence regime stability in the United States since the post presidential electoral violence of 2016. Scholars such as Friedman (2016) said "in late 2016, shortly after the U.S Presidential election, two Harvard political Scientists posed a bleak question in the *The New York Times* "IS Donald Trump Threat to Democracy" Now they are out with an even more bleakly titled book – *How Democracies Die* – that seek to answer that question by drawing on a year's worth of evidence". It is pertinent to note that Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt studied the collapse of democracy in latin America and Europe, respectively before according to Friedman (2017) and:

they are witnessing in the United States "the precursors of democratic crisis in other places." They contend that democratic norms were "coming unmoored" in America long before Trump's ascent to power, hastened by political polarization. And they maintain that Trump himself—in rejecting democratic rules, denying the legitimacy of political rivals, tolerating political violence, and considering restrictions on the civil liberties of critics—tests positive as an "authoritarian." Yet they note that "little actual [democratic] backsliding occurred in 2017" in the U.S. "Our democratic institutions have weakened and we have, for the first time in our memory, elected a [president] who is not fully committed to democratic rules of the game," Levitsky said. What happens next depends on a number of factors, including whether the United States experiences a security crisis such as a war or terrorist attack...

In a summary of the whole discussion, Uri Friedman had a conversation with the political scientist in question and here is the excerpt:

Uri Friedman: What's the state of American democracy in January 2018?

Steven Levitsky: U.S. democracy remains intact. We do not think that either before or after Trump American democracy has broken down or entered into constitutional crisis or anything like that.

What motivated us to write the book is that, looking at developments of the last two years, certainly accelerating around the 2016 election, we saw signs, for the first time, of American democracy potentially being under threat.

U.S. democracy is not dead. U.S. democracy is not dying. But there are some alarm bells ringing.

Friedman: What are the loudest alarm bells?

Levitsky: First of all, the election of a president who is demonstrably not fully committed to constitutional and democratic rules of the game. In our book, we develop a litmus test for [authoritarian politicians] and Trump tests positive. He has exhibited the kind of behavior and the kind of language characteristic of other authoritarians.

The other one, perhaps even more serious, is the underlying erosion of democratic norms—the unwritten rules that have sustained our democracy for many decades. This unraveling of democratic norms is rooted in intense partisan polarization.

Friedman: What norms are you most worried about?

Daniel Ziblatt: The most important are two of what we think of as meta-norms: the norms of mutual toleration and forbearance. What we mean by the norm of mutual toleration is politicians' willingness to treat their rivals as competitors for power, not as enemies, [who] have a right to compete for office. They are citizens and they love their country; they just disagree. That's one critical norm that has eroded over the last 30 years.

IV. Findings

Findings from the sources used for this study has proved that presidential election did hold n the United States on the 8th November, 2016 contested by four Presidential Candidates namely Donald Trump, John Stein, Hillary Clinton and Johnson. The Presidential election was won by Donald Trump and he was sworn-in as the 45th President of the United States of America on the 20th January, 2017.

Also, post presidential election violence did occur in the United States of America immediately after Donald trump was declared the winner of the Presidential election as proved beyond reasonable doubt by proven evidences through the method of data collection used for this study. Several reasons that caused the violence emerged from the findings and the top most one is because Donald Trump won the election instead of Hillary Clinton, build ups of some pockets of disagreement from the pre election environment amongst factors.

In using the necessary tools for measuring democratic consolidation globally, it is certified that American Democracy still retain its status as a democratic consolidated country as there is no evidence to justify that the

consolidation of America democracy is either sliding away from consolidation based on where the swinging pendulum finally stopped as a result of this investigation. Though, it was noticed by some political scientists in the course of the investigation that American democracy is facing some challenges of regime mistakes but those mistakes are not weighty enough to be able to shift or pull away American democracy from the consolidated point. Though, the political scientist based on their newly conducted research cautioned that there is impending danger to American democracy such as “president who is demonstrably not fully committed to constitutional and democratic rules of the game (Levitsky in Friedman, 2018); He has exhibited the kind of behavior and the kind of language characteristic of other authoritarians (Levitsky in Friedman, 2018); The other one, perhaps even more serious, is the underlying erosion of democratic norms; and finally, meta-norms: the norms of mutual toleration and forbearance (Ziblatt in Friedman, 2018). What we mean by the norm of mutual toleration is politicians’ willingness to treat their rivals as competitors for power, not as enemies (Levitsky in Friedman, 2018).

Concluding Remarks

The 2016 presidential election came and gone and has entered one of the pages of the American book of history but the post electoral violence that it gave birth to is still posing several questions among political scientist in America and around the world with regards to the position of American consolidated democratic status as to whether or not that electoral violence will shake the democratic consolidation status position of America. Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt the Havard Political Scientists though, has claimed that nothing is wrong with American democracy as at the present and will not also happen in future. But, they feared that there are threatening dangers to American democracy at present that need to be corrected since those features are new and alien to American exemplary democracy. In view of the fears being entertained by these political scientists, there is the need to go back to the drawing board to redraw, the possible solution. In view of this therefore, we pose a question “what will be the status of American democratic consolidation in years to come if the dangers detected by Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt continue to strive and grow? This question formed the research gap created by this study therefore, other researchers should answer this question subsequently.

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