

To Vote is to Dine with Devil: Using Host Communities and Higher-institutions' Relationship between 1999 and 2015 General Elections in Osun State, Nigeria

Journal of Management and
Social Sciences
© The Author 2017
Reprints and permission
fountainjournalmanagementandss@gmail.com

Adeleke, Gbadebo Fatai
Osun State University, Nigeria

Abstract

A steady decline in voter turnout has been noticed in general elections in Nigeria. Past studies have focused on rural dwellers' voting behaviour but there is still a dearth of research on the voting behaviour of host communities of higher institutions. This paper therefore examines the turnout of residents in host communities of higher institutions between 1999 and 2015 general elections in Osun state, Nigeria. Social disorganisation theory provides the analytical framework for the study. Twelve host communities and twelve neighbouring communities were selected from twelve higher institutions. Questionnaires were administered to 2,520 respondents; 63 respondents were interviewed and records were sought. Majority of the respondents were very passive voters. There was a significant association between the respondents' turnout ($\chi^2=19.3$) and students' relationship, disturbance from student cultists and thugs ($\chi^2=22.1$) and their voters' turnout. Constant attack by aggressive students prior to elections created fear in residents. The paper concludes that students' negative behaviour affects residents' turnout. There is a need to educate students to shun cultism and thuggery and to obey constituted authority of the host communities.

Keywords

Vote, dine with the Devil, higher-institution and host-community relationship, 1999 and 2015, Osun state

Introduction

Democracy is a unique system of government where the majority dictates the outcome of major policies and decisions. This system, according to Fukuyama and Diamond (2010) has become an important parameter to measure good governance and development. Voting plays a very dominant role in the democratic system when compared to its impact in other systems of government (Machado, 2011). It is understood that the concepts of election and voting are twin cardinal features of democracy, whereas, voters' turnout in particular, has become an indispensable link between the citizens and the

Corresponding author:

Gbadebo Fatai Adeleke, Department of Sociology, Osun State University, Osun, Nigeria
E-mail:

government. The paper derives its title from the widely known Yoruba proverb in the Southwestern region of Nigeria that *'Eniti yoo ba Esu jeun, sibi re yoo gun'* which literally translates to *'the one who needs to dine with the devil will need a long spoon'*. In other words, the competitiveness of the democratic system and the negative relationship that exists between the residents' host communities and higher institutions have posed a great danger for the host communities to exercise their voting rights. Whereas it is a civic responsibility for every citizen to cast their votes during general elections; the rigour of voting and participating effectively during an election in higher institutions communities is verse tense. The residents of host communities might be willing (need to acquire a very long spoon) to vote during the highly competitive elections but the hostile or unfriendly relationship between the host communities and higher institutions makes participation in this democratic process tedious and deadly (dine with devil) in Osun state, Nigeria. The paper's premise centred on the level of tensions, hooliganism, killing and maiming that led to a strain relationship between the host communities and higher institutions in democratic era.

In Nigeria, several communities recognise the advantage and pride in having schools located within their communities since a very small settlement can develop into an urban setting within the twinkle of an eye. For instance, the educational institution such as University of Ibadan was seven decades ago established in a rural settlement with red-roofed houses; but today the modest settlement has transformed into a big urban settlement (Eno-Abasi, 2016). Also, the University of Port Harcourt developed from a small rural settlement, but now 'Choba' (as it is called) and its environs is a bustling urban settlement. This is just to mention a few (Eno-Abasi, 2016). Many higher institutions employ highly trained people and this contributes to the cultural life of the community, hence making the area more attractive to other well-educated people. Specifically, education is the vehicle for effective human and national development and it is an essential motivating force for progress. Its cardinal philosophy is centred on human betterment for the progress of the society as a whole. According to United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO (2000), there are indispensable roles that educational institutions play in social and economic developments, which reaffirm the perception of education as a social function. However, despite the social and developmental value derivable from siting educational institutions in host communities, it has some negative environmental impacts. These range from increase in crime rates, cultism to increased cost of living. The influx of many people and students from different ethnic groups greatly erodes the community's social values and culture, and remains a continuous threat to community's security among others (Chidiukwu, 2014).

Host communities of higher institutions have been experiencing a rise in barbaric culture and bloodletting among the student population of Nigeria (Igbinedion and Ovbiagele, 2012). It is always alarming that university or polytechnic students murder their peers in a show of supremacy. Despite

various studies (Taiwo, 2004; Ernest, 2015) on how to arrest this grievous anomaly, many students have become engrossed in grisly cult rituals on campuses and these have turned these citadels of higher learning into killing fields. There is hardly any academic semester without cult clashes among the students and residents of the host communities and these often lead to death or maiming. Cultism has continued to be a very embarrassing problem facing Nigeria's tertiary institutions (Adeyemi and Uko-Aviomoh, 2004). Various deadly factions have emerged in various tertiary institutions perpetrating nefarious acts to cause mayhem within the host communities. Different groups of students have confraternities with different secret activities, attires and symbols, which they use in self-branding. They recruit fellow students and indigenes of host communities into their ranks and those who refuse are always brutally assaulted (Chidiukwu, 2014).

Despite both positive and negative impacts of higher institutions in the host communities, the political participation of the host communities has been on a decline for a long period; although this is generally the case with voting behaviour in Nigeria's nascent democratic system (Oyewole, 2000). Many Nigerians have become dissatisfied with the declining trend, despite several awareness and mobilization programmes that have been propagated in many directions and to different groups in the society. Scholars like Oyewole (2000) and Maccido (2015) agree that participation of majority of the citizens remains the strongest weapon to retain or sack parties or candidates in a democratic regime. Like in every modern democratic regime, votes have become the basic instrument used to change bad government or leaders to better ones (Richard, 1997). Voters may end up on the losing side during an election; this is because a vote expresses a citizen's values and signals their preferences candidates and political parties.

Despite the importance of election and voting, many analysts have expressed concern over dismally low voter turnout in previous elections in Nigeria. Recent elections witnessed low voter turnout where an average of 40.7% and 42.1% of the registered voters voted in the 1999-2015 general elections in the House of Representative and Senate elections respectively (Independent National Electoral Commission, 2007; Independent National Electoral Commission, 2015). Many researchers have been focusing on the economic, social and cultural impacts of higher education institutions on host communities. Meanwhile, only a little attention has been given to the impact of university or tertiary education institutions on the political development of the host communities. It is within these gaps in research that this research is conceived. Considering the importance of majority voters' participation to democratic system, many advocates of democracy have regarded failure to vote as a drawback and a threat to democratic survival, particularly in Nigeria (Miller, 2001). Against this background, the study examines factors affecting

the turnout of voters who are residents of host communities of higher institutions in Osun State, Nigeria.

Osun State, Nigeria

Osun State was originally part of the Western Region in the three-region structure of 1954. In 1967, with the creation of twelve federating states by the military government, Osun became part of the Western State. The military government again created nineteen states out of the existing twelve in 1976 and Osun became part of the old Oyo State. In 1991, the military government of General Ibrahim Babangida divided Oyo into the present Oyo and Osun States. Osun State precisely came into existence on August 27, 1991. The 2006 Census put the population of the state at 3,423,535 (National Population Commission, 2006). Osun State is located in the Southwestern part of Nigeria. The State is divided into three senatorial districts, namely, Osun Central, Osun West, and Osun East. Each of these districts is divided into two zones. Osun Central consists of Osogbo and Ikirun zones and Osun West comprises Ede and Iwo zones while Osun East zones are the constituents of Ife/Ijesa districts. In all, the state is divided into six political zones, made up of thirty local government areas and one area council (Ife-East Area Council).

Osun State has been selected for several reasons among which are that it is the cradle of all Yoruba States and a repository of Yoruba customs and culture (Adekunle, 2007). There are twenty-four state-owned technical colleges, two state-owned and four private colleges of education, a state-owned polytechnic and a state-owned college of technology, a nationally-owned federal polytechnic and five private polytechnics in the State. The State jointly owns Ladoko Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho with Oyo State. The College of Medicine of the University is located in Osogbo. Also, the state has one nationally-owned university and seven private universities. The state government has established the Osun State University as model for a multi-campus university (Osun State Handbook, 2014) and two state-owned, one nationally-owned and two privately owned schools of nursing.

Literature Review and Theoretical Frameworks

Democracy is based on the consent of the governed, the people are sovereign and they become the highest form of political authority in the state. Power flows from the people to the leaders in government; these leaders only hold power temporarily for the general people. According to Button and Mattson (1999), every vote has an equal weight and no flimsy restriction can prevent good citizens from becoming representatives of the people. Based on Collier and Rohner's (2008) argument, political participation requires that all the eligible people should vote. However, voting is not the only means of participating in politics, although it encourages and provides the means for people to make choices in public policies. The essence of voting is to make a

choice and the concept of participation in voting is then more likely to stimulate interest and understanding (Besley and Rao, 2005). Voters sometimes base their choices at the polls on their experiences during the latest period of government (Linz, Alfred and Yogendra, 2007).

Various studies have focused on the impact of voter characteristics on voting versus abstinence (Lutz and Marsh, 2007). In addition, Blais (2000) examined the impact of eleven social characteristics in nine countries across the globe and found level of education, age and religion as the strongest factors. He identified other characteristics that contributed to differences in turnout like the presence or absence of compulsory voting, voting age, the electoral system, and the number of parties. The paper identified with scholars like Saliu and Lipade's (2008) views; they established various electoral flaws in electoral and institutional processes, including the practice of the use of thugs to truncate the voting process. These electoral flaws also included compilation of fictitious names on voters' registers, illegal compilation of separate voters' list, unlawful possession of ballot boxes, printing of voters' cards and manipulation of the revised voters' registration exercise. Moreover, harassment of candidates, agents, voters, change of list of electoral officials, and inflation of figures marred the voting processes. Electoral violence remains the greatest challenge to many democratising societies; it includes murder, arson, abduction of humans and electoral materials, assault and violent seizure (O'Donnell and Philippe, 1986; Taageneanu and Shugart, 1989).

The empirical model enunciated in this paper is guided by some theoretical considerations that characterise the problems and difficulties confronting the residents of host communities of higher institutions. Karani (1997) identified the physical fear of perceived increase in the cohesive residential population associated with the host communities. Also, Sabo (2005) further identified the characteristics of students and localities, neighbourhood and political conditions; therefore, the social disorganisation theory was adopted. This study applies the relationship between the people and their interactions with their natural or developed environment. The society has established rules, customs and culture before the establishment of higher institutions in these localities and communities. A person's residential location remains a substantial factor that often shapes the likelihood that that person would become involved in political and voting activities (Kubrin, 2009). The theory suggests that among other determinants of a person's later political activity, residential location is as significant as or more significant than the person's individual characteristics. Many young people who are indigenes of various communities where higher institutions are situated later join the student cultists and other bad groups to perpetrate evils around the towns and villages. These youths thus are socialized into criminality in these social and cultural settings. As a result of newly established institutions, communities operate as super organisms. These students who possess different urban traits and whose sense of culture is

diluted invade and influence the communities with these features. The strain relationship results in disorganisation and disruption of the normative structure of the host community. Also, community with standard social and moral structures could be disorganised in such a manner that blood-related people and extended kin groups will no longer respect the culture of their origin.

In all the towns and villages where universities, polytechnics, colleges of education and schools of nursing are sited, social problems erupt and the smooth functioning of the society is threatened. These existing social problems have led to social disorganisation and inability to perform effectively in political and voting activities. Mathew and Ramiro (2002) have observed that social disorganisation represents a breakdown in the equilibrium of forces and decay in the social structure so that old habits and forms of social control no longer function effectively.

Methodology

The study is a cross-sectional survey and it utilised both primary and secondary sources of data collection. On primary sources, quantitative and qualitative methods were used while the secondary methods consisted of records and data from the archives of electoral body. In this study, the researcher involved the population of the host and neighbouring communities to these selected higher institutions to provide a better result. The researcher purposively selected general elections of 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015 in Nigeria. Newly created higher institutions were excluded in the study due to period covered by the election periods.

The first stage involved the purposive selection of four types of higher institutions from each of the three senatorial districts in Osun State. In each senatorial unit, one university, polytechnic, college of education and one school of nursing each were purposively selected for the study. In Senatorial district 1, selected institutions are Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife; Osun State College of Technology, Esa-Oke; Osun State College of Education, Ilesa and School of Nursing, Obafemi Awolowo Teaching Hospital-Wesley Guild Hospital, Ilesa. In Senatorial district 2, Bowen University, Iwo; The Federal Polytechnic, Ede; Assanusiyah College of Education, Ode-Omu; School of Nursing, Seventh Day Adventist Hospital, Ile-Ife. In Senatorial district 3: Fountain University, Osogbo; Osun State Polytechnic, Iree; Osun State College of Education, Ila-Orangun and Osun State School of Nursing, Osogbo.

In the study, the researcher involved both the host of higher institutions and the nearest neighbouring communities where many students living outside the campus reside. The host communities considered from the three selected universities are Ile-Ife and Tonkere towns from Obafemi Awolowo University; Iwo and Oluponna towns from Bowen University; Osogbo and Oke-Osun towns from Fountain University. In the three selected Polytechnics, residents of host communities of Iree and Agbaa towns were selected for Osun State Polytechnic; Ede and Anjorin towns for the Federal Polytechnic; Esa-Oke and

Esa-Odo towns for Osun State College of Technology. The host communities and neighbouring towns selected for Colleges of Education are Ila-Orangun and Alagbede towns for Osun State College of Education; Ilesa and Ibodi towns from Osun State College of Education, and Ode-Omu and Oogi towns from Assanusiya College of Education. In Schools of Nursing, the host communities and neighbouring towns selected from this study are Osogbo and Asubiaro community for Osun State School of Nursing; Ilesa and Osu towns for School of Nursing, Obafemi Awolowo Teaching Hospital (Wesley Guild Hospital) and Ile-Ife and Oronna Communities for School of Nursing, Seventh Day Adventist Hospital. The second stage involved stratifying the host communities and towns into 10 various compounds in each stratum for easy administration of the questionnaire. The researcher used stratified sampling primarily to ensure that different residents of the host communities and neighbouring towns were adequately represented in the sample to increase their level of accuracy during the estimated parameters. In each stratum, the researcher selected the traditional chief, compound head, eldest community woman and some other eighteen members of the family to represent each compound through representative sampling technique. In this approach, twenty-one resident members represented each compound and the total sample chosen from all strata in each town was made up of 210 resident members. The total sample size from the host communities of the twelve higher institutions selected was 2,520 respondents.

Questionnaire was administered to 2,520 respondents in the study areas. In the in-depth interview conducted, the researcher applied key informant sampling technique by interviewing the host communities' traditional heads, community leaders, youth and women leaders in each host community and neighbouring town of the 12 higher institutions. The researcher picked one traditional head, one community leader, one youth leader, and one women leader in each of the host communities, which made up of 48 respondents. The researcher further considered the sensitivity of the study and therefore selected 3 national electoral officials (Independent National Electoral Commission) and one Divisional Police Officer (Nigeria Police Force) in each of the 12 higher institutions' host communities for interview. The total number of respondents interviewed was 63 respondents in all. On the secondary sources of data collection, this study utilised documents and records to generate secondary data. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) publications and records that were relevant to the subject matter were accessed to complement data generated from the primary sources. In addition to this, there were five general elections (President, Senate, House of Representatives, Gubernatorial and House of Assembly) in each election year (1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015) in Nigeria. The maximum vote any respondent could cast during the selected period is 25 while the minimum is 0 and based on this typology, the voters were classified as *passive voters* (0-8), *moderate voters* (9-16) and

active voters (17-25). Data collected through the quantitative method were analysed using the descriptive statistical tools such as frequency counts, percentages and chi-square test. Data gathered through qualitative methods were transcribed and analysed using content analysis and ethnographic summary.

Results and Discussions

Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The result shows that 73.7% of the respondents were males as against 26.3% of females. This implies that there was a gender imbalance deriving from the patriarchal nature of dominance in the economic, political and social life of Nigerian society. The result further reveals that 11.1% of the respondents were less than 35 years and majority of the respondents (88.9%) were above 35 years. The findings revealed that most respondents were mature at the inception of Fourth Republic in 1999 since Nigerian laws stipulate the minimum age of 18 years to qualify for voting. The findings further indicated that 64.7% of the respondents were married which showed that majority of the respondents were quite aware of their political environment and state of affairs in Nigeria. Results on the ethnic origins of the respondents showed that majority (53.9%) were Yoruba while other ethnic groups constituted 46.1% in Nigeria. This is attributed to the fact that the economic position of host communities of higher institutions is found to be attractive to other ethnic groups.

Ludicrousness of Electoral and Voting Process

The findings showed that majority (70.5%) respondents were *passive voters* in 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015 general elections. Only 11.9% of the respondents were *active voters* while 17.6% were *moderate voters*. In order to complement this data, statistics from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) showed that the level of turnout of residents of host communities and neighbouring towns of higher institutions was insignificant (INEC, 2015). The records further showed that 32.7% of the estimated eligible voters of the host communities participated in voter registration in the selected electoral process (1999-2015). Also, INEC records showed that residents of host communities (Ile-Ife and Tonkere towns) in Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, who cast their votes out of the registered voters in the selected general elections were 23.0%. Residents of Iwo and Oluponna towns in Bowen University, Iwo, who cast their votes out of registered voters were 31.4% in the selected elections. Also, residents' host communities (Osogbo and Oke-Osun towns) of higher institutions in Fountain University, Osogbo who cast their votes out of registered voters in the selected general elections were 11.9%.

INEC records further showed that residents' turnout in Iree and Aagba towns in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, who cast their votes out of registered

voters in the 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015 general elections were 28.9%. Also, residents of Ede and Anjorin towns in The Federal Polytechnic, Ede were 34.2% while only 27.7% of the residents in Esa-Oke and Esa-Odo towns in Osun State College of Technology, Esa-Oke voted. Records from INEC further showed that residents of Ila-Orangun and Alagbede towns in Osun State College of Education, Ila-Orangun who cast their votes out of registered voters in the selected general elections were 18.4%. Also, residents of Ilesa and Ibodi towns in Osun State College of Education, Ilesa were 24.6% and residents of Ode-Omu and Oogi towns in Assanusiyah College of Education, Ode-Omu were 23.9%. Records from INEC further showed that residents of towns and neighbouring settlements to selected Schools of Nursing in Osun State who voted in the selected general elections are as follows. Ile-Ife and Oronna Communities for School of Nursing, Seventh Day Adventist Hospital, Ile-Ife, were 38.4%. Also, residents of host communities who voted in Osogbo and Asubiaro communities in Osun State School of Nursing, Osogbo were 17.5%. Residents of Ilesa and Osu towns in School of Nursing, Obafemi Awolowo Teaching Hospital (Wesley Guild Hospital), Ilesa who cast their votes out of registered voters in the selected general elections were 28.3%. The chi-square test further showed that there was a significant association between respondents' host communities, institution environments ($\chi^2=19.3$) and residents' turnout.

One of the respondents corroborated these findings thus:

My coronation as the traditional head of this community was twenty-five years ago. I never voted after I was named the Oba (the head of the town). I am afraid to go near these rascally students since many of them have no respect for traditional institutions. During the 1999 registration exercise, I was in the queue to register my name when some of the militant students took away registration materials from the polling centre. I pleaded with these student thugs but to no avail. Ten minutes after I left, I learnt that two groups of students' cults clashed, claiming four lives and three were injured. Since then, INEC cancelled the registration polling centres till date. (*IDI/Man/Traditional Ruler/Universities Osun State/2017*)

Another respondent further corroborated these results and unscrupulously commented thus:

I left in annoyance during last 2015 general elections when a mob of students invaded the polling booths and drove everybody away to snatch the ballot box.

*(IDI/Woman/Women Leader/Colleges of Education/
Osun State /2017)*

Perceived Aberration of Political Process

The findings showed that 51.4% of the respondents agreed that all internal processes within various political parties were a sham. Also, the result further showed that majority of the respondents condemned outright the campaign activities of the political parties. This indicates that the host communities did not partake in any of the campaign processes of all political parties because of the fear of being attacked by student thugs and cultists, and because of the high level of insecurity.

One of the respondents corroborated this finding and said:

The entire town has been polarised into two groups and tagged indigenes and non-indigenes, and students test their strength at any simple misunderstanding. I always camp my family in any public outing especially during any political activities, such as campaign. The political leaders employ this faction today to fight opponents and by tomorrow another faction. *(IDI/Man/Community leader/Polytechnics/Osun State/2017)*

A respondent who happened to be a police officer buttressed this result and said that,

Most of the campaigns conducted since 2003 general elections were led by renowned student thug in this community. Some of his lieutenants were recruited to drive vehicles mercilessly and several records of deaths were recorded in the process. Besides, different reports of public assault, maiming and killings were witnessed in 2007 and 2011 general elections. *(IDI/Man/Divisional Police Officer/Polytechnics/Osun State/2017)*

Replacement of Community Values with Farce

The findings further revealed that 68.5% of the respondents agreed that these students have no respect for constituted authorities and traditional rulers in their host communities. The findings showed that majority of the respondents lamented that student thugs molested their traditional rulers in some public outings and ceremonies. This result indicates that students disrespected the traditional rulers, constituted authorities and culture of their host communities. The findings did not tally with Gupta's (2004) argument that non-indigenes always complied with the culture, values and customs of their resident and host communities.

One of the respondents interviewed corroborated this finding and said:

I witnessed relative peace before the establishment of this Polytechnic in my town. There was a guiding law that everybody followed before the arrival of this institution and the rowdy students. All indigenes saw each other like brothers and sisters before the institution was established. There were local laws and order that bound us together. For instance, nobody can stay outside their houses after 10 O' clock in the evening, the local vigilantes and night guards will arrest such a person, question him or her and if found guilty, he or she would face trial by the traditional institutions and would be punished accordingly. The reverse is the case now since students move around both in the night and day times with sophisticated weapons. (*IDI/Man/Traditional Ruler/Polytechnics/Osun State/2017*)

Another respondent buttressed these findings and said that:

Till midnight, students move from the school to their residential houses and from co-students' houses to their houses without regard or fear anymore of the local hunters or guards. Nobody obeys simple rules again, and ordinary land or farm disputes escalate, some indigenes invite or employ the services of the student thugs and cultists to attack his or her fellow kin, brothers and sisters. Police and security agents handle both criminal and civil matters with little success because hardy and highly connected students and parents intervene in all matters. (*Man/Youth leader/Polytechnics/Osun State/2017*)

One of the respondents frankly expressed his feeling and said:

The roles of traditional institutions and that of family heads have been eroded and the students take laws into their hands with little provocation. The student cultists drove every member away especially during the public meetings and ceremonials. (*IDI/Woman/Woman leader/Schools of Nursing/ Osun State/ 2017*)

Unfathomable and Turpitude Relationship

The result revealed that 72.9% of the respondents agreed that general-elections under review in this paper were characterised by thuggery, maiming and killing. Also, majority of the respondents strongly condemned the bloody and

constant attacks unleashed by students through their hooliganism on or before general elections. Majority of the respondents (84.3%) further agreed that security officers were not enough in their various host communities, neighbouring towns and villages to combat the sophisticated arms carried by these student thugs, cultists and hooligans.

The result further showed that 88.3% of the respondents were panicky and afraid to come out willingly to vote during the elections under review. This agrees with Katz's (1997) view that the electoral processes must be transparent enough, elections must hold in compliance with national laws that usually create immutable periods, freedom of speech and association. Many residents fear being attacked by the student cultists due to their violent displays in the past. Also, the chi-square shows that there was significant association between respondents' constant disturbance by student cultists and thugs ($\chi^2=22.1$) and the turnout of residents of host communities during elections.

A respondent corroborated this finding with lamentation by saying that:

Only those who have two lives or have received strong material gifts from politicians or parties can come to vote in this community. Some of our indigenes have been indoctrinated with bad behaviour by students' cultists. Nobody is safe any longer during the election periods. Many were wounded during the previous general elections; some were beaten into a coma while some died untimely because of these so-called student thugs and cultists. In the 2007 general elections, I lost three men from my compound during a clash between the student cultists and indigenous thugs I reported the case to the security officers but nothing worthwhile came out of it. Since then, no member of my compound can go out and vote. (*IDI/Man/Community leader/University/Osun State/2017*)

One of the respondents further buttressed these findings and said that:

Unlike in the past, the establishment of institutions without adequate care and protection by the security agents has turned this rare blessing to a curse for us in this town. The students have metamorphosed into gangsters, hooligans and cultists and they move in daytime with guns and cutlass, attacking fellow students and indigenes without any arrest by police or other related security agencies. Little disagreements between students and residents that need amicable settlement between parties always escalate to the point of attack with harmful weapons. We experienced special and heartless attacks during the elections or campaign

periods. (*IDI/Man/Youth leader/ Colleges of Education/ Osun State/ 2017*)

Another respondent lamented the relationship of host communities and students and said thus:

In daytime, student cultists and thugs often hold meetings in the bush and many times indigenous farmers were attacked around their so-called temporary shrines in the indigenous farmland. I am not the only one that fears them, every member of my town fears them since they disobey every rule and order harmoniously promulgated by the community to allow peaceful relationship and living among everybody. Instead of obeying these local laws and orders, they often ignore and disobey, giving flimsy excuses. (*IDI/Man/ Traditional Ruler/University/Osun State/ 2017*)

One of the respondents who is an official of INEC said that:

We do ignore and oppose posting from the commission to most of these communities where higher institutions were established. Electoral officials were in most cases rough-handed and assaulted. Ballot boxes and papers were snatched at gunpoint in these communities. Some of the security officials attached to these communities bear no weapon compared with sophisticated weapons by these student thugs and cultists. (*Man/INEC Official/ Osun State/2017*)

Conclusion and Recommendations

Despite the steady decline in voter turnout, residents of institutions' host communities who are eager to vote during the general elections in Osun state, Nigeria have been hampered and discouraged by student thugs and cultists. Majority respondents who are residents of host communities of higher institutions were *passive voters* in Osun state, Nigeria. Most respondents agreed that students generally have no respect for constituted authorities and traditional rulers in their respective host communities. The results showed that majority of the respondents were apprehensive and afraid to participate in voting because of constant attacks by these student thugs and cultists. Records show that residents of host communities and neighbouring towns of higher institutions were passive voters. The paper concludes that only those who were induced with material gains, those who have an extreme love for the system and those eager to vote or die among the residents of host communities

participated in voting exercises. The relationship between the residents of host communities and the students was not cordial, rather, it was like a relationship between cat and dog. There is a need to increase the number of police officers and other security agents in each of the host communities of higher institutions to strengthen community security. Pro-active mechanisms should be developed that are aimed at building cordial relationship and mutual trust between residents of host communities and authorities of higher institutions. Public awareness and enlightenment of residents of the host communities is needed to improve their turnout during the elections periods. Students of higher institutions should be educated to shun hooliganism, cultism and thuggery, re-orientated to respect and obey constituted authorities, customs and culture of the host communities.

References

- Adekunle, Y. (2007) Season of accusations. *Nigeria Tell Magazine*, 23, July. 30: 37.
- Adeyemi, J. and Uko-Aviomoh, E. (2004) Effective technological delivery in Nigerian polytechnics: Need for academic manpower development policy. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 12(24). Available: <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v12n24/pdf>. (Accessed November, 2015).
- Besley, T. and Rao, V. (2005) Political Selection and the Quality of Government: Evidence from South India. Yale University, Economic Growth Center WP 921.
- Blais, A. (2000) To vote or not to vote? The merits and limits of rational choice theory. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Button, M. and Mattson, K. (1999) Deliberative democracy in practice: challenges and prospects for deliberation. *Policy* 31: 609-637.
- Chidiukwu, N. (2014) Armed host community youths attack Benue tertiary institution, *ThisDay Newspaper*, June 5.
- Collier, P. and Rohner, D. (2008) Democracy, development and conflict. University of Oxford Working Paper.
- Ernest, C. (2015) Ending cultism in our campuses. *The Tide newspaper* December, 2015.
- Eno-Abasi, S. (2016) Surge in host community campus, Friday, 23 December 2016, *The Guardian*.
- Fukuyama, F. and Diamond, L. (2010) Democracy's past and present. *Journal of Democracy*, 21(1): 3-5.
- Gupta, D. (2004) An analysis of Indian election. Appendix D. Australia South Asia Research Centre, Australian National University: Retrieved 2008-11-20.
- Igbinedion, V. and Ovbiagele, A. (2012) Corporate social responsibilities of tertiary educational institutions to host communities in delta south

- senatorial district of Delta state of Nigeria. *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 4(1): 133-141.
- Independent National Electoral Commission (2007) Voters registration. *Journal on Electoral Magazine*, 4: 46.
- Independent National Electoral Commission (2015) Summary of Voters' votes. Official Gazette, Abuja: Zaklat Publication.
- Karani, F. (1997) Higher Education in Africa in the 21st Century. Paper presented at the Africa Regional Consultation Preparatory to the World Conference on Higher Education, Dakar, Senegal.
- Katz, R. (1997) Democracy and Elections. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kubrin, E. (2009) Social Disorganization Theory: Then, Now, and in the Future. In Marvin D. Krohn (Ed.), *Handbook on Crime and Deviance*. Dordrecht: Springer, 225-236.
- Linz, J., Alfred, S. and Yogendra, Y. (2007) Democracy and Diversity. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. 99.
- Lutz, G. and Marsh, M. (2007) Introduction: consequences of low turnout. *Electoral Studies*, 26(3).
- Maccido, T. (2015) Senate may pass 4.357 trillions naira budget. *Daily Sun*, March 2.
- Machado, C. (2011) Building democracy from below in Venezuela. *Yale Journal of International Affairs*, (Winter). 17-20.
- Matthew T. and Ramiro, M. (2002) Social Disorganization Revisited: Mapping the Recent Immigration and Black Homicide Relationship in Northern Miami. *Sociological Focus*, 35(4): 363-80.
- Miller, J. (2001) Democratic Characterizations of Democracy: Liberty's Relationship Equality and Speech in Ancient Athens. *History of Political Thought*, 22(3): 400-417.
- National Population Commission (Nigeria) (2006) National population census of the Federal Republic of Nigeria: *Analytical report at the national level*. Lagos, Nigeria.
- Osun State (2014) *State of the living spring: handbook of Osun State diary*. Osogbo: Igbalaye Printing Press. http://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/osun_state.
- Osun State Handbook (2014) *State of the living spring: handbook of State of Osun*. Osogbo: Kolly Printing Press. <Http://osun.gov.ng/government>.
- Osun State (2015) *State of the living spring: handbook of Osun State*. Osogbo: Igbalaye Printing Press. <Http://osun.gov.hbk.ng/government>.
- Oyewole, O. (2000) Democracy and political behaviour in Oyo State. Ile-Ife: Msc project, Department of Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University.
- O'Donnell, G. and Philippe, S. (1986) Transitions from authoritarian rule: tentative conclusions about uncertain democracies, Baltimore: John Hopikins Press.

- Richard, S. (1997) *Democracy and elections*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sabo, B. (2005) *Universities, research and development in Nigeria: Time for a paradigmatic shift*. Paper prepared for 11th General Assembly of CODESRIA, on Rethinking African Development. Beyond impasse: Towards alternatives, Maputo, Mozambique. Available: http://www.codesria.org/Links/conferences/general_assembly11/papers/bako.pdf. (Accessed January 2016).
- Saliu, H.A. and Lipade, A. (2008) Constraint of democracy in Nigeria. In H.A. Saliu *et al.* (Ed.). *Perspectives on nation-building and development in Nigeria political and legal issues*, Lagos: Concept Publications Limited.
- Taageneanu, R. and Shugart, M. (1989) *Seats and votes: the effects and determinants of electoral systems*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Taiwo, O. (2004) *An Appraisal of the Use of Threat or Violence in Resolving students' Crisis in our Universities*. In Lai Olurode and Omololu Soyombo (Eds.). *Reading in Campus Violence*, Lagos: John West Publication Ltd., 237-256.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2000). *Education for all by 2015, Declaration Adopted at the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000*, Available online at <http://www2.unesco.org/wef/en-press/relea-dak-0427-18h.shtm> (Accessed June 2015).