

Nigeria's Multilateral Approach in West Africa: A Case Study of Cote D'Ivoire Electoral Violence

Bello Muazu Alkali¹, Muhammad Fuad B, Othman², Nazariah Binti Osman³

^{1,2,3}*School of International Studies, University Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia; E-mail: Sois@uum.edu.my*

Abstract: This study interrogates the role of Nigeria through the multilateral organizations in West Africa with a particular reference to Cote d'Ivoire's elections crisis from 2010 to 2011. The violence occurred due to President Gbagbo's refusal to concede power to the election winner, Alassane Ouattara. However, through the influence of the multilateral organizations, Nigeria intervened and returned Cote d'Ivoire to democratic stability. Consequently, this study critically analyzed the role of Nigeria through the multilateral approach in Cote d'Ivoire's electoral violence. It also assessed how the use of Nigeria's relative material preponderances contributed to quelling the violence. This study used historical and exploratory qualitative techniques from the extant literature of high-ranking bodies. Thus, the initial literature search brought many articles, books, reports, and newspapers and selected only those with the needed historical and analytical depth in line with the subject matter. Also, role theory was applied in this study to aid analysis, and the data source for this study was analyzed thematically. The study found that the Cote d'Ivoire election crisis was animated due to former president Gbagbo's refusal to give power to the winner, Ouattara. Further findings revealed that the constitutional court illegally nullified Ouattara's legitimate votes favouring President Gbagbo. Also, the concept of national identity or Ivorite compounded the problems of the violence. This study will benefit researchers in the field of political science, international relations, and policymakers. Finally, other areas for future research include Nigeria's roles through the multilateral organization in other parts of West Africa.

Keywords: Electoral Violence, Democratic Instability, Multilateral Organizations, West Africa.

1. INTRODUCTION

The much-anticipated presidential election of Cote d'Ivoire took place on October 31, 2010; the election was successfully conducted and generally accepted as a free and fair election by both local and international observers [16]. As [11] affirmed, this election witnessed over 80 per cent of the voters' turnout, bolstering the election legitimacy recognition by local and international observers and showing Ivorians' enthusiasm and acceptance of democracy. However, based on the Cote d'Ivoire electoral guidelines, the constitution has mandated the Constitutional Council and Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) to declare and validate the election outcomes within three days. Therefore, after the completion of the election, the IEC is saddled with the responsibility of announcing the provisional election results within 3 days, subject to the affirmation and validation of the constitutional council. Also, the court has the constitutional power to void provisional results declared by the IEC if there are election malpractices capable of changing the election outcomes.

Also, if the election result was announced and there was no clear winner with more than 50% of the votes cast, the candidates with the highest and the second votes would go for the second round of an election. As affirmed by [10], [39] and [11], On November 3, 2010, when the result of the election was announced, none of the three major contenders got the 50% maximum votes to win the election. Among the election contenders, the incumbent president Laurent Gbagbo had 38.3% of the votes, the second was Ouattara 32.08%, and the third was Berdie 25.24%. That signified that the first and second contenders, who happened to be Gbagbo and Ouattara, would go for the second round of the election.

According to [19], [13], and [41], On November 28, 2010, the second round of the election took place, and Ouattara won the election with 54.1% of the cast votes. The then incumbent president, Gbagbo, rejected the outcomes of the election announced by IEC and certified by international observers, Nigeria, and multilateral organizations [30]. As such, Gbagbo influenced the Cote d'Ivoire constitutional court administered by his associate to declare him the winner of the election. Hence, the constitutional court annulled over 660,000 votes cast in favour of his opponent, Ouattara, and returned him as the winner with 51.4% votes against Ouattara, whose percentage changed to 45.9% [29]. Also, 2030

the constitutional court swore in Gbagbo as the new president. That made Nigeria, through multilateral means, outrightly reject the swearing-in of Gbagbo and declare total support to Ouattara as the true winner of the election.

Consequently, Nigeria intervened through multilateral means to persuade Gbagbo to cede power to the true winner through various diplomatic channels. However, the refusal of Gbagbo to surrender power to the declared winner led to the outbreak of the Cote d'Ivoire electoral violence of 2010-2011. Thus, this study tends to understand the "What role did Nigeria through the multilateral organizations play in Cote d'Ivoire? Similarly, by its novelty, the evidence from various studies of foreign policies, states hegemonic positions and multilateral roles reviewed in this study indicated that none of the studies addressed the role of Nigeria through the multilateral organizations regarding Cote d'Ivoire's 2010-2011 election crises. Thus, this study fills the gap in the body of literature and contributes to the body of knowledge. Similarly, by its objectives, this study critically analyzed the role of Nigeria through the multilateral approach in quelling the electoral violence. It also assessed the extent to which Nigeria used its material preponderance in returning Cote d'Ivoire to the path of peace and democratic stability.

2. METHODOLOGY

The design of the study used are Historical and exploratory qualitative method; the type of study is a single case study, regarding the role of Nigeria through the multilateral approach in West Africa with a particular reference to Cote d'Ivoire's electoral violence 2010-2011. The crisis broke out because former president Gbagbo refused to cede power to the declared winner, Allassane Ouattara. Nigeria, as a hegemonic power through multilateral means, intervened in the crisis to protect lives and properties and return Cote d'Ivoire to the path of political Stability [10] [29] [30]. Given the above, this study collected literature from high-ranking secondary sources, including articles, reports, newspapers, and books. The extant pieces of literature collected were subjected to vigorous and rigorous thematic analysis of abstracts, keywords, and complete full-text screening to authenticate the sources from high and respected-ranking journal articles and books to arrive at far-reaching conclusions. That will ensure the reliability and validity of the study for those interested. The works of literature that share specific historical relevance in the study were selected, and those that are not relevant were rejected. Thus, this study deductively analyzed the data thematically. Additionally, role theory was employed to aid the analysis of the data explored for this study. Consequently, the findings from the data were supported by the evidence from literature that shared historical relevance with the research phenomenon in investigating the impact of the role of Nigeria through the multilateral approach in West Africa with a particular reference to the Cote d'Ivoire's electoral violence 2010-2011.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This study adopts role theory to analyze the phenomenon of the study. Two major reasons motivated the researchers to use role theory. First, to demonstrate how Nigeria, through the multilateral organizations, resolved Cote d'Ivoire's political crisis. Second, to illustrate how Nigeria's material capabilities contributed to resolving Cote d'Ivoire's democratic instability. Also, it is essential to note that most theories tried to explicate the political crisis backdrop by unilaterally extending the incumbent leader's expired tenure for another term [53]. As a result, this study fills this gap. Similarly, [9] [53] and [54], highlighted the analytical relevance of role theory in understanding the state's foreign relations and roles of a state with a regional power through the multilateral means. Furthermore, [28] [27] and [46] elucidated that a state with a regional or hegemonic status through multilateral organizations has foreign policy aims, orientations, and roles that it wants to achieve in a global political system.

In line with the above assertion, the studies carried out by [53], [54], and [45] reveal the importance of studying the role of hegemonic power within the delineated environment, which is likened to the Nigeria's hegemonic pasture in west Africa with a particular reference to the Cote d'Ivoire political crisis. Also, the overall conclusion from their studies shows that the roles performed by Nigeria through the multilateral lens center around the roles of perception and conception, regional leader, liberator, defender, and supporter. Those roles corroborate with the basic key

assumptions of the theory in depicting the role of regional hegemonic power through the instrumentality of multilateral organizations and how the usage of its relative material preponderances contributed to regional peace, order, and democratic stability, for example, as demonstrated by Nigeria, in Cote d'Ivoire of affirming the election as declared by IEC and influenced the peacekeeping through which Cote d'Ivoire's returns to the path of peace and democratic stability since 2010 to the present time.

In respect of the above, more admirably, drawing from the theory thrust, [46] underpinned that Nigeria's role in Africa is a systematic way of asserting its hegemonic power status in African centers within the circle of the three "P," namely, perception, provision, and projection through which Nigeria multilaterally quelled several political crises in the region and firmly believes any instability in every part of West Africa have negative impacts to the regional socio, political, and economic stability, for example, how 1979 republic of Chad crisis followed by Ghana and Togo political impasses of 2005 crises resulted into an influx of hundreds of thousands refugees into various countries in the region and negatively impacted into the regional socio-political stability [53] [40] and [56]. Consequently, the diagram 1 below illustrates the key assumptions underpinning the theory,

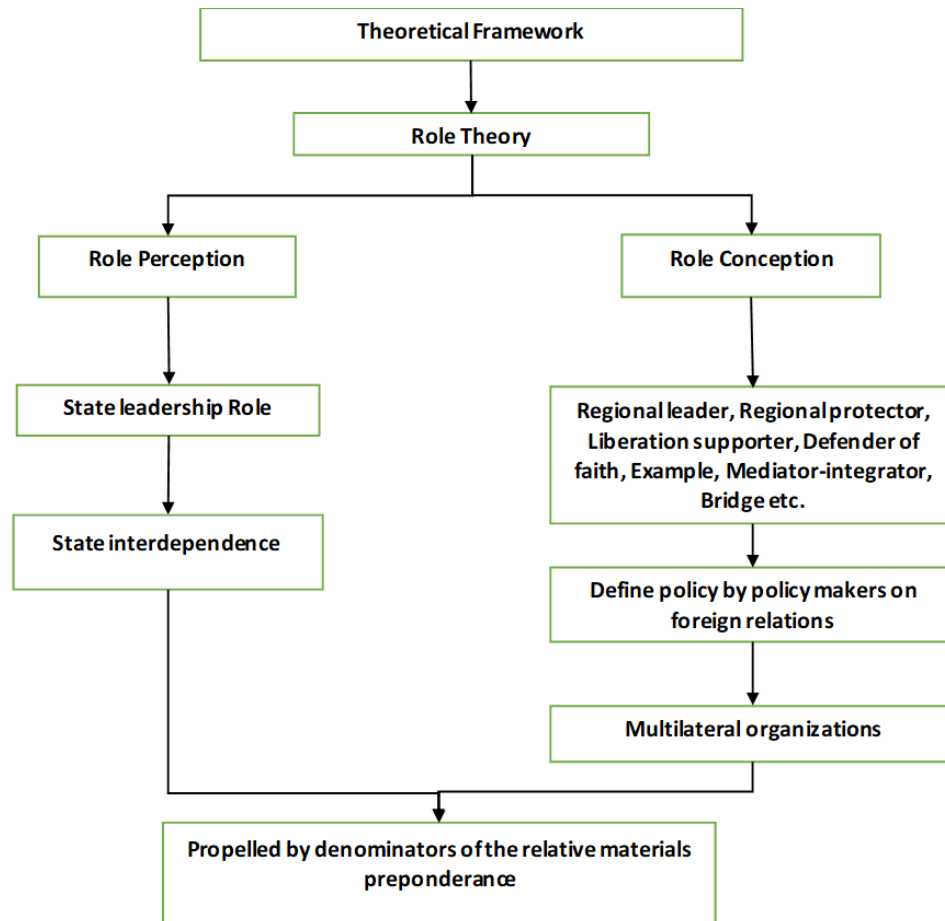


Diagram 1: Authors' source

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 Nigeria's Foreign Policy

In a global diplomatic space, a sovereign state has its interests and objectives to achieve in its relationship with other countries. The national interest of a country in the global diplomatic arena is known as its foreign policy or foreign relations, carried out either unilaterally, bilaterally, or multilaterally [45]. As opined emphatically by [8] [42] [46] and [45] that the term foreign relations refer to the projection of a state national interest on its dealing with other country in international diplomatic system or politics. This national interest of a country has been backed by major components such as goals that a country determines to achieve, as well as principles or actions guiding the policy, which is propelled by the materials capability of a country and remains the determinant factor of achieving its foreign policy.

In line with the above, Nigeria, as a regional power over its natural geographical area of West Africa, declared its foreign policy known as Afrocentric or Africa-centred. As confirmed by scholars of international relations such as [48] [42] [43], and [53], immediately after the independence of Nigeria, Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa proclaimed Nigeria's foreign policy objectives towards Africa. Since then, no successive administration of the country was found to have deviated from the country's foreign policy toward Africa. Since its inceptions, the main purpose of Nigeria's foreign policy regarding African countries has been the ambition of the country to have a united Africa free from any external political and economic interference, including the eradication of any form of colonial administration in the continent, ending South Africa's apartheid regime, maintenance and sustenance of peace, order and democratic stability in Africa [47] and [52].

Given the above, that is why Nigeria's foreign policy towards Africa skyrocketed with the emergence of the robust body of literature among scholars in the field of international relations and political science [[5] [16] [1] [36] [44] [9] [45] [38] and [54].

Nigeria, as a giant of Africa, is considered a regional leader through the instrumentality of the multilateral organizations. It has been playing the vital role of ensuring political or democratic stability and peace across many countries, particularly in West Africa, through the participation of different peacekeeping, peace-making, and peace rebuilding [6] [43] [54] and [45]. Also, scholars like [25] and [26] confirmed that Nigeria's foreign policy has four main national interests in Africa and the world. The four major national interests are called concentric circles through the model developed by Gambari. Thus, The first concentric circle signifies Nigeria's need to ensure its internal security and stability and establish superb relationships with the countries' borders with Nigeria, like, the Republics of Benin, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad. The second concentric circle of its foreign policy covers its entire relationship with the remaining West African countries regarding their security, peace, order, and sustenance of democratic stability. The third concentric circle is Nigeria's relation with the rest of African countries, as a giant of Africa sees itself with the continental responsibility of ensuring regional peace, order, development, and democratic maintenance and sustainability. The last concentric circle covers the country's relationship with other countries outside Africa and multilateral organizations through which the country has been providing regional service expected of regional leaders through various mediations, peacekeeping, and peace-making for African peace, order, and democratic stability.

As noted by [40] and [56], Nigeria has been performing those roles and always sees itself as an undisputed leader and has been projecting to the world Africa's collective stands, particularly regarding matters of international importance. As such, a substantial proportion of works of literature from international relations, history, and political science have accepted that Nigeria's foreign relation remains the major way the country ensures regional peace, order, and democracy, mainly through the medium of multilateral organizations. Thus, Nigeria intervened in Cote d'Ivoire through the multilateral means and quelled Cote d'Ivoire's 2010 and 2011 democratic instability.

4.2. Role of Nigeria through the Instrumentality of the Multilateral Organisations

International states can gather under an agreed arrangement to achieve common objectives through multilateral organizations. Thus, this multilateral arrangement enables a state to achieve what it cannot be able to achieve singlehandedly. Therefore, multilateralism reflects relationships that consist of three or more countries through the medium of multilateral organizations. Through the United Nations UN, the Economic Community of West African States ECOWAS, and the African Union AU, Nigeria performs different roles in providing peace. Order and democratic stability in Africa through peacekeeping, peace-making, and rebuilding. For example, Nigeria participated in and resolved many civil wars, especially in the West African states. As a hegemonic power, it participated in 25 out of 50 United Nations peacekeeping missions, including the Chad crisis of 1975 to 1979, 1980, between Kouyou Weddeyye and Hisre Habre, the Liberian civil wars of the 1990s to 2003, and the Sierra Leone wars of the 1990s to 2001. Togo's political impasses in 2005, the Gambia election crisis of 2016, and particularly the Cote d'Ivoire election crisis of 2010-2011, where the country resolved the problem and returned Cote d'Ivoire to the path of democratic stability [29] [32] [20] [21] and [22].

Consequently, Table I below illustrates Nigeria's peacekeeping mission since its independence.

List of the Major Nigeria Peacekeeping Operations Since Independence [53].

Name	Country	Organization	Year	Role
ONUC	Congo	U.N.O.	1961	Military observers serving as Battalion commanders and operations officers.
UNSF	New Guinea	UNSF	1962-1963	Military training observers and Battalion operation
OAUTN	Tanzania	OAU	1964	Military Battalion operations and staff officers
UNIPOM	India/Pakistan	UNO	1965-1966	Military Battalion operations observers and staff officers
UNFIL	Lebanon	OAU	1978	Observers Battalion operations and staff officers
OAUPMC 1	Chad	O.A.U.	1981-82	Military Battalion operations and staff officers
OAU PMC2	Chad	O.A.U.	1983	Observers and Brigade operations
UNIMOG	Iran/Iraq	UNO	1988-1991	Military operations and observers and operations and detachments
UNTAG	Namibia	UNO	1989-1990	Military observers training team.
NATAG	Sierra-Leone	UNO-OAU	1991-1992	Training team military observers
UNTAC	Cambodia	UNO	1992-1993	Military operations and observers
UNOSOM	Somalia	UNO	1992-1995	The Battalion operations and staff officers
UNAOMIL	Liberia	ECOWAS	1990-1997	Military operations

ECOMOG	Sierra Leone	ECOWAS	1992-1998	Military operations and staff welfare
ECOMOCI	Cote d'Ivoire	AU/ECOWAS	2003, 2010 and 2013	Military observers and battalion operations
UNAMID	Sudan	AU/UNO	2003	Military operations, training, and deputy joint special operations
ECOGAM	Gambia	AU/ECOWAS	2016	Military operations and observers

4.3 Nigeria's Role through the Multilateral Organizations in Cote d'Ivoire

As a regional leader under the lens of multilateral organizations, Nigeria intervened in the Cote d'Ivoire's election violence. For instance, immediately after the November 28, 2010, country presidential election, as well the failure of the then incumbent president Gbagbo to cede power to the true winner of the election, Nigeria, under the influence of the multilateral organizations on December 4, 2010, stated that:

"Condemned any attempt to usurp the popular will of the people of Cote d'Ivoire and appealed to all stakeholders to accept the result declared by the electoral commission" [29].

In line with the above, on December 7, 2010, Nigeria influenced the meeting of an extraordinary session of the heads of state and governments of ECOWAS. After the meeting, a communique was read by Nigeria's president, Goodluck Jonathan, as the chairman of ECOWAS of the head of states through which the organization endorsed the election result declared by IEC as Ouattara the winner of the election [20]. As noted by scholars like [10] [11] [26] that the ECOWAS endorsement was supported by the Peace and Security Council (PSC), which decided to invoke sanction on Cote d'Ivoire under the Gbagbo regime in all the AU activities until the Gbagbo ceded power to the true election winner. Gbagbo rejected and ignored all the appeals made by Nigeria through the medium of multilateral organizations.

According to [16] and [39] On the eve of Christmas 2010, Nigeria influenced another ECOWAS extraordinary meeting of the head of government held in Abuja, Nigeria's capital. It reaffirmed their position that Ouattara was the true winner of the Cote d'Ivoire elections and endorsed all the economic sanctions imposed by international communities and continental and intercontinental organizations on Gbagbo's regime. Through the multilateral channels, Gbagbo's continued intransigence made Nigeria influence the ECOWAS to instruct the then president of the ECOWAS to convene a meeting of the committee of the Chief of Defence Staff to plan future actions. Nigeria, through the multilateral organization, influenced the meeting of the ECOWAS Military Chiefs twice in the country capital, Abuja, between 29 and 30 December 2010, as well as Bamako in Mali meeting between 18 to January 19, 2011, aimed at considering the forceful removal of Gbagbo if all the channelled of political persuasion were exhausted and failed.

Furthermore, before the ECOWAS military possible action on Gbagbo, the AU adopted mediation attempts to solve the crises, as stated that on December 4 2010, Jean Ping, Chairperson of the then AU commission, demanded the former South African President Thabo Mbeki mediate on the Cote d'Ivoire issues [14]. Also, both the UN Secretary general Choi and Mbeki peace mission failed and departed the country and quoted to have said.

"Let peace and democracy prevail" (Aljazeera, 2010)

Similarly, Kenya's Prime Minister Raila Odinga was requested by Ping to mediate equally and resolve the tensions [15]. The Choice of Odinga amazed many pro-Gbagbo groups since Odinga had already declared his stands that 2035

Gbagbo must be removed and considered Gbagbo refusal to cede power to the true winner of the election as a raped to the democracy. Thus, Gbagbo disregarded meetings with Odinga, which led to the failure of the meeting [14]. Another powerful committee was formed and influenced by Nigeria through AU, known as the Peace and Security Committee, on January 31, 2011. As noted by [14] [2] para.6 that, a high-level panel on Cote d'Ivoire of heads of Tanzania, Chad, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and South Africa have been mandated to meddle and reconcile the Cote d'Ivoire political crises. As observed by [29] [3] [10] the outcome of the Panel meetings proposed a safe exit for President Gbagbo by the sanctuary to the African countries of his choice and assured him freedom from any form of political persecution, harassment, or trials if he ceded the power to Ouattara peacefully. Also, during the meeting, the panel affirmed Ouattara as the president as rightly declared by IEC and persuaded Gbagbo to accept the election outcomes. Lastly, the panel suggested forming a unity government, including preparing Gbagbo's men for the new government of Ouattara, which Gbagbo rejected all the suggestions made. As confirmed by [29] [37] and [39] that all of the panel meeting outcomes were rejected by Gbagbo, as affirmed by his lieutenant Pascal Affi that the proposal made by the panel was outrightly rejected [33]. This prompted the PSC chairperson of the AU Commission to make another appointment of High representatives for the implementation of all the political solutions made by high-level panels of the head of governments within two weeks under the former minister of Cape verd and foreign minister Jose Brito. However, Alassane Ouattara's camp rejected the appointment of Brito due to his relationship with Gbagbo [33].

However, As the AU mission to solve the problem did not yield the desired result, Nigeria peacefully influenced another ECOWAS emergency meeting through the multilateral organization. As elucidated by [11] [20] [33] [34] and [35] the ECOWAS governments met again in Nigeria's capital, Abuja, on March 24 2011. They agreed that the Cote d'Ivoire crisis had become a regional humanitarian crisis and decided to enforce the decision reached on 7 and 24, 2010, to return the country to the path of peace, order and democratic stability and apropos to this needed UN Security Council to empower the mandate in protecting lives and properties as well facilitating the transfer of power to the true winner of the elections.

4.4 Nigeria's Role in Ending Gbagbo Regimes

Nigeria's roles through the medium of international and national organizations, as well as influenced by Nigeria in forming committees and panels of heads of government to Cote d'Ivoire, failed to convince Gbagbo to cede power to Ouattara. On March 17, 2011, Alassane Ouattara signed an ordinance creating the forces Republicaine de Cote d'Ivoire (FRCI) comprising forces armee natonales Cote d'Ivoire and Forces armee des forces Nouvelles (FAFN) aiming to protect civilian and returned the country to the path of the democratic stability [4]. Nigeria through the influenced of the multilateral organizations convinced that Gbagbo will never cede power voluntarily or peacefully, as earlier believed the diplomatic channel will not yield the desired result [3]. On March 31, 2011, Nigeria through multilateral organizations and French licorne destroyed the weapons of the pro-Gbagbo camp. On April 11, 2011, under the instrumentality of multilateral organizations forces, Nigeria captured Gbagbo and charged him to the ICC for crime against humanity.

4.5 Electoral Violence and Democratic Instability

The essence of democracy is to allow people to exercise their constitutional right of electing their leader. That made most of the countries globally accept democracy and reject in its entirety any other form of government. However, after the Second World War of 1945 to the emergence of independence of many African countries in the 1960s, the acceptance of a democratic form of governance by different democracies in the continent had a lot of loopholes, particularly in West Africa. The main causes of the crises are mostly due to the absence of free, fair, and credible elections. That lends credence to stymieing the growth of political stability in the sub-region, which gave birth to many forms of election violence and democratic instability, loss of lives and properties. As confirmed by [17] [23] and [16] the absence of free and fair elections resulted in democratic instability. Diamond buttresses further that societal peace and development are a symbiotic relationship with credible elections, and the level of development of

a society depends on its level of democratic stability. Election irregularities and malpractices animate much electoral violence and instability. As underpinned by [12] democratic election as a factor of election cannot be regarded as a yardstick through which a real winner emerges. ECOWAS believes not all polls can be viewed as democratic because of the actions of leaders in shifting the election date to favour them, rigging the election or using false voter register lists to inflate the votes in their favour.

Regarding [7] noted that some African leaders are unwilling to adhere to the democratic norm and principle of allowing credible elections, conceding defeat to the winner and peaceful handover of power. As buttressed further by Aning and Atuobi that the factors that can solve election problems and democratic instability factors are Transparency, Armed forces being under the authority of the civilian regime, freedom of the press, and putting in place powerful governmental institutions. As underpinned by [51] all over the world, democratic stability shares some common features such as political stability, which resulted in economic prosperity, existence and proper functioning of the democratic institutions, rancour-free and fair elections, the rule of law which all these above depended on the impact made through a credible, acceptable free and fair election. Stoddard clarified that the absence of those mentioned above are the basic factors that cause or trigger election violence or political instability, civil unrest, tension, conflicts, compounded religious-ethnic division, and loss of life and property. As [51] confirmed that the absence of free and fair elections snowballs into electoral violence, giving birth to democratic instability. Thus, the democratic stability of a state rests on the outcomes of its free and fair election. As reiterated by [51], the quality of any democracy depends on the quality of its election; thus, a credible election is the most important element of democracy and the easiest way to quell and prevent electoral violence.

In line with the above, [7] noted that Conflict or violence arising from an election can destroy the political or democratic stability of a state, and refers to the 2010-2011 Cote d'Ivoire electoral crises that gave birth to the country's constitutional crises of having two sitting presidents at a time: the incumbent presidents Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara. This scenario brought Civil war, loss of lives and properties and displaced more than one million people. That required the intervention of Nigeria as a regional and hegemonic power through the medium of multilateral organizations, which had successfully resolved the crises and returned the country to democratic stability, peace, and order. Also, Nigeria's intervention served as an eye-opener to the heads of government in West Africa and Africa at large, as no leader will subvert people's will at the expense of a genuinely acceptable, free, and fair election.

5. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As a result, a rigorous and vigorous review made through thematic analysis from the extant literature in this study resulted in several findings through the following subheadings.

5.1 Factors that Influence Electoral Violence and Democratic Instability

The concept of democracy is to enable people to willingly exercise their constitutional rights of either contesting or voting for their leader. This notion has not been properly exercised in some parts of the world, particularly in West Africa, as many leaders forcefully subverted the wills of the people by rigging the election or outrightly rejecting the election results which are not in their favour or to unilaterally influenced the change of the constitution to justify their tenure extension [17] and [22]. This study found that what triggered electoral violence and democratic instability was the absence of a free, fair or credible election and the refusal of the incumbent to cede power to the declared election winner. As agreed by the scholarly works [51] the factors of political violence and democratic instability are political leaders or actors' interference in influencing the outcomes of an election, refusal of the incumbent to cede power to the declared winner of an election, lack of peaceful transition of political power coupled with the absent of free, fair and credible election as it was found and stated in this study by scholars like [12] [17] that the quality of democracy rest on the impact of the quality of an election which free from any form of malpractices and interference. The absence of the former gave birth to electoral violence and democratic instability, conflicts, and civil wars. As the study found,

the code d'Ivoire electoral violence emerged due to the incumbent influence or interference made through the constitutional court of changing the election outcomes. This study further found that the emergence of two sitting presidents at a time was due to the constitutional court's role favouring Gbagbo against the winner of the election, resulting in having two presidents at a time divided the country along ethnic, religious and aggravated the situation to civil wars [47].

5.2 Nigeria's Foreign Policy Towards Africa

This study found that Nigeria, a giant of Africa with regional and hegemonic status, cannot relinquish its responsibility of ensuring regional peace, order, and democratic stability [45]. It has been further discovered that Nigeria's role in Africa, particularly Cote d'Ivoire political crises, has been carried out through the multilateral approach guided by its foreign policy objectives termed as Afrocentric. The material capabilities of Nigeria endear it to perform the role of power as a regional leader. As noted by [8] [42] [46] [48] [49] [9] and [45] denominators of relative material preponderances like military power, economic prosperity, High GDP, population, and size are the basic indicators of a regional power status. Also, the ability of regional capacity to shoulder regional responsibility like sustenance and maintenance of peace, order, and democratic stability promoted a regional power to the regional hegemon. As found by this study, Nigeria, as a regional power, pioneered multilateral organizations in quelling the 2010-2011 Cote d'Ivoire democratic instability. As affirmed by many scholarly works of [40] and [56] Nigeria always views itself as a regional leader with a duty of ensuring regional order and democracy.

5.3 Nigeria's Multilateral Policy Role In Cote d'Ivoire

International states can cooperate under an agreed arrangement to achieve common objectives through multilateral organizations. Thus, this multilateral arrangement enables a state to achieve what it cannot be able to achieve alone. This study found that, through the medium of the multilateral organization, Nigeria restored Cote d'Ivoire to the path of democratic stability. The study further found that Nigeria financed and sponsored the operation of the armed forces and curtailed the Code d'Ivoire civil wars due to the outcome of the 2010 election. As shown through the works by scholars like [10] and [19] the crises broke out after the December 28, 2010, election. The study found that the declared election winner, Alassane Ouattara, was refused state power by the incumbent Gbagbo. The study found that under the medium of the multilateral organization, Nigeria affirmed the result declared by the Cote d'Ivoire electoral commission and influenced the recognition of Ouattara as the true winner of the election to the world powers. The scholarly works of [10] [43] [13] and [12] showed that through the medium of multilateral organization after the failed persuasion of Gbagbo to hand state power to the true winner of the election, Nigerian influenced economic sanction to Gbagbo regime.

5.4 Removal of Gbagbo from the Office

The study found that when the mediation was made through the multilateral channels of UN, AU, and ECOWAS, high delegates of the head of government failed. As observed by the scholarly works of [50] [7] [33] [34] and [37] the economic sanction imposed on the Gbagbo regime has already dealt a major blow to him and his supporters by making his administration unpopular and unable to be up to its administrative financials task of paying salary [37] and [39]. Through the multilateral channels, Nigeria influenced the arrest of Gbagbo and restored Cote d'Ivoire to democratic stability [2] and [4].

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the causes of electoral violence and democratic instability in Cote d'Ivoire and how Nigeria, through multilateral means, suppressed the crises. This study used historical and exploratory qualitative techniques and extant literature from high-ranking bodies. The initial literature searched brought a large collection of journals,

books, international observers reports, and newspapers. Therefore, the materials used in this study have been ranked, and those with the needed historical and analytical strength or depth regarding the subject matter were selected. Role theory was also applied to arrive at reliable and valid conclusions. Based on the analysis, the study found that the lack of clear electoral policies, weak electoral institutions, political flaws, interruption, and manipulation animated the Cote d'Ivoire election crisis.

Further findings revealed that the constitutional court illegally nullified Ouattara's legitimate votes and swore in the then-incumbent Gbagbo for the third term, the major factor that animated the crises to the Civil War. Similarly, the study found that politicians used the concept of national identity, Ivorite, religion and tribalism for cheap political gain against their opponents, which has compounded the problems, [30] [37] and [39]. Finally, the study contributed to the body of knowledge, particularly researchers in political science, as it would benefit institutions and researchers who suggested that the concept of Ivorite and tribalism be removed from the Cote d'Ivoire political process. Also, the idea of national identity and Ivorite shall be reconceptualized and stated clearly in the constitution to prevent further electoral violence in the subsequent elections. Lastly, the departure areas of this study are the roles of Nigeria through the multilateral organization in some parts of West Africa, which can be analyzed and examined to consolidate more knowledge.

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