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# Rights Abuse as Root Causes of Political Violence in Nigeria

Andrew Abidemi Olugbenga Babalola  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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2016

Abstract

Rights Abuse as Root Causes of Political Violence in Nigeria

by

Andrew Abidemi Olugbenga Babalola

MBA, Buckingham, 2003

BSC, Ibadan, 1984

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

May 2016

## Abstract

Ethnic division fueled by inadequate governance and uneven economic development has led some ethnic based groups to regard violence as a legitimate means to achieve political and social ends. The political disruption caused by ethnic militia related violence in Nigeria prevented the first 3 attempts at republican democracy. The purpose of this study was to analyze the role played by human rights abuse in Nigeria in the formation of the Oodua People's Congress (OPC) in 1994, and to also analyze the OPC turning to violence in 1999. The theoretical construct of the study is the constructivist philosophy, which purports that people develop meanings based on personal feelings, tastes, and opinions from their experiences. The conceptual framework of human rights theory is used to analyze whether human rights abuses and material deprivation created conditions that encouraged violence. The central research question addressed whether the militarization of politics in Nigeria so abused the citizens' political and personal rights that the human rights threshold was met, influencing the OPC to turn to violence as means to achieve political end. Interview data was collected from 15 founding members of the OPC to form themes and descriptions for the study. Results indicated that the incessant abuse of citizens' political and personal rights led to a violent reaction after the July, 1998 death of Chief MKO Abiola, who died in military detention. This research contributed to social change by documenting that human rights abuse in Nigeria created a condition that led violence by those abused. Further, research recommendations, if implemented, can facilitate social change through increased stability in governance, reduced human carnage from terror activities, and improved personal economy of Nigerians.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this Ph.D. degree to my late father, Chief David Fabowale Babalola, and my late mother, Mrs. Rebecca Mogbonjubola Babalola, for their comprehensive efforts to raise me from birth in the early morning hours on Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> of February 1961 through to graduating from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria in June 1984. I will forever remain grateful to you both for your efforts at giving me good education, the basic tool that has seen me through life.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Background**

Founded in 1914, Nigeria is an area of considerable social diversity with over 300 ethnic groups (Laitin, 1986). Despite Nigeria's century of existence, the country remains in an intermediate state of development. The dominated history of the country has been crises of ethnoreligious undertones since becoming a republic in 1960. These crises have prevented Nigeria from attaining the structural cohesion to move forward politically and economically. The historical legacy of Nigeria is a country with weak governing institutions and deep divisions due to cultural, language, and religious differences among the major ethnic nationalities (Osaghae & Suberu, 2005).

Its governing institutions suffer from a lack of agreement on how to promote the development of a suitable system of democracy. A large number of ethnic identities and religious ideologies can best explain the divisible nature of the Nigerian state. At every crucial juncture in the history of the state, each of the over 300 ethnic groups that made up the Nigerian State have competed forcefully for recognition. Some of the courses of action taken by ethnic nationalities to achieve their purpose frequently constitute a threat to the development of Nigeria as a nation. On every occasion, the process of dispute among the ethnic nationalities has caused repeated violent conflicts.

Despite her vast reserves of diverse natural resources, Nigeria remains an underdeveloped country. The country's rich oil reserve is free of sulphur (Dargay & Gately, 2010). The Nigerian fresh oil is very similar in composition to petroleum

from the North Sea (Owen, Inderwildi, & King, 2010). According to the Organization of Petroleum Export Countries (OPEC), Nigeria's sweet oil includes the bonny light, Brass River, Escravous blend, Farcados, Pennington Anfan, and Qua-Ibo (OPEC, 2014). In addition to being the largest exporter of crude oil in Africa, Nigeria has the largest economy in Africa (Chizea, 2014).

Contrastingly, the World Bank reported that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in Nigeria averaged 687.47 USD from 1960 until 2013 (Trading Economics, 2014). Nigeria's GDP per capita was at an all time high of 1097.97 USD in 2013 and a record low of 468.10 USD in 1968 (Trading Economics, 2014). As a result of widespread poverty and large petrol revenue, there exists a very wide gap between the few rich individuals and a large army of sick persons (Guichaoua, 2007). This wide gap of inequalities significantly raises the possibility of ethnic and religious conflict (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004)

Nigeria is an intensely polarized state that contests serious political issues along the lines of the ethnic, religious, and cultural divisions (Smyth & Robinson 2001). The polarization dates back to its inception as a colonial state (Maier, 2000). The amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates has led to the formation of the Nigerian state but did not account for differences in religion, language and ethnicity (Mwakikagile, 2001). The introduction of policies such as the National Youth Service Corp and the Federal Character Commission were attempts made to overcome the divisions. However, the problem of ethnic polarization remains unresolved due to the unprecedented growth of corruption that has not allowed the policies to achieve primary objectives (Maier, 2000).

Furthermore, with the amalgamation of 1914, the British allowed the Muslim civil and religious rulers under the Sokoto Caliphate to wield power in the Northern region. The action of the colonial masters has seemed to encourage the jihadist movement that dated back to 1802 (Griswold, 2010). The Sokoto Caliphates are descendants of Othman Dan Fodio, the Muslim cleric founder of the movement in 1802, with the sole aim of introducing Sharia law over conquered territory (Griswold, 2010). Thus, at the country's birth, the seeds were sown for later conflict. The colonial administration also refused to build institutions such as the judiciary and the police and introduce concepts such as the rule of law in the 46 years of their rule. Instead, they sought to use local divisions as a means of preventing unified resistance to British rule, thus making worse the extent of the discord (Ayandele, 1979).

According to Ojo and Lateju (2010), the colonial administration encouraged the feudal, conservative Islamic Sokoto Caliphate headed by the Sultan in the north. At the same time, Christian missionaries had unfettered access to the southern part of the country, and their presence brought western education to the south (Ojo & Lateju, 2010). Critics have argued that this was an attempt to polarize further the nation into two religious groups.

The 1914 amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria set the tone for political discourse after the independence from the colonial administration in 1960 (Human Rights Watch, 2003). Ayandele (1979) argued that the amalgamation was a merger of two different communities whose people were from different tribes. He contended that amalgamation had been a critical factor in the various ethnic conflicts in Nigeria since independence in 1960 (Ayandele, 1979). According to Ake (1996),

the merger of the Southern and Northern parts of Nigeria on the 14th of January 1914 by the British colonial administration was a significant mistake.

The British had governed the two protectorates with distinctive administrative styles for 62 years from 1852 to 1914 (Ayandele, 1979). Therefore, the Nigerian state created in 1914 was a powder keg waiting to explode and has since been in a comatose state. The country has experienced waves of violence that have bordered on ethnoreligious conflicts since independence in 1960 (Akintoye, 2010). The colonial administration did not hide its preference for the feudalistic approach to governance used by the Northern Nigerians under the grip of the Sokoto Caliphate (Akinwumi, 2004). The postponement of the Nigerian independence from 1958 to 1960 by the British colonial administration gave the North the opportunity to dominate the postcolonial era Nigeria politically (Ikelegbe, 2005).

By the time the British left in 1960, the polarity between the North and the South had widened beyond the situation in 1914 (Adejumobi, 2005). Additionally, the postcolonial independent government adopted an approach of 'winner takes all'. These are situations where the ruling party only patronizes its card-carrying members or their sympathizers. Thus, for the average Nigerian politician, every election process is a do or die affair. During the first Republic (1960-1966), the central government was a coalition of two parties. The two sides were the Northern People's Congress (NPC), and the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroon of the Northern and Eastern Regions respectively. The people of the Western Region did not achieve national prominence and remained in opposition. At the northern, western, and eastern regional government headquarters where the Hausa/Fulani,

Yoruba, and Igbo ethnic nationalities dominated respectively, the practice of winner takes all was also popular. The differences among ethnic nationalities became significant because of the processes of exclusion that characterized the postcolonial era (Freedman, 2007).

Political violence in Nigeria is a consequence of the uneasiness that preceded independence politics and afterward became firmly established during the long year of military rule (Abayomi, 2003). After attaining independence in 1960, violent conflicts became the substance underlining the politics of self-aggrandisement that later became the order of the day (Abayomi, 2003). The lack of well-defined ideology and citizen-aligned programs that described the distinctive nature of politics encouraged the free reign of ethnic based violence witnessed after independence (Ake, 1996). The practice of occupation and exploitation resulted in a form and content of Nigerian governance destined to yield unrestrained violence (Egwu, 1993).

### **The First Ethnoreligious Conflict**

In 1962, the first ethnoreligious conflict broke out in the revolt by the Tiv people of central Nigeria. The Tiv ethnic crisis arose out of frustration caused by the Hausa/Fulani domination of the Northern Nigerian state under the influence of the Sokoto Caliphate. In quick succession, violence occurred in the Southwestern Region during the 1964 federal election and the regional election in 1965 that marked the beginning of the end of the First Republic (Ayandele, 1979).

The political behavior that involved the unlawful exercise of physical force in the southwest possessed its beginning in the trivial political disagreements within the Action Group (AG). The AG is the most influential political party in the

Southwestern Region of the first republic (Abayomi, 2006). The AG was an individual with transparent systems of ideas that formed the basis of economic policy. The events that later swept over the western region clearly show that the breakdown of existing cohesion within the AG led to the emergence of two dominant groups struggling to control the party. The eruption of violence in the southwest triggered pockets of violence across the country. The United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) and the Northern People's Congress (NPC), the two largest parties in the Northern Region, engaged in violent hostility. Series of the extreme crisis were reported in the north of the country between 1962 and 1964 as a result of the hostility between the NPC and the UMBC. The crises became nationalized when the two northern parties formed alliances with the two splinter groups that emerged from the collapse of law and order in the Southwestern Regional Assembly (Abayomi, 2006). The crises later snowballed into complete and extreme violence that resulted in the demise of the very first attempt at instituting democratic governance in Nigeria.

The first fallout of the crises was the military coup of January 1966 that ended the first republic (Abayomi, 2003). In August 1965, five majors of the Nigerian army who were mainly of Igbo ethnic extinction came together to plan a coup against the Government of the First Republic under Alhaji Abubakar Balewa, the then Nigerian prime minister. The grouse of the coup plotters was with the activities of the government at the center whose participants were mostly politicians of Hausa/Fulani ethnicity (Francis, 2009). The chaotic federal election of 1964 and the political fallout from the Southwestern Region crisis encourage the coup. Although the coup

did not succeed, the bulk of the politicians who lost their lives in the tragedy were from the Northern and Southwestern Regions.

Young, idealistic officers of the Nigerian army carried out the first Nigerian military coup in January 1966. The list of the coup plotters included Major Kaduna Nzeogwu, Major Timothy Onwuatuegwu, Major Emmanuel Ifeajuna, Major Chris Anuforo, Major Don Okafor, and Major Humphrey Chukwuka. The others were Major Adewale Ademoyega, Captain Emmanuel Nwobosi, Captain Ben Gbulie, and Captain Ogbu Oji. All the officers except Major Adewale Ademoyega were of the Igbo ethnic stock (Siollun, 2005). The coup plotters assassinated four senior politicians and eight senior military officers. Among those killed was the prime minister, the premier of the Northern Region, the premier of the Southwestern Region, and the then minister of finance (Siollun, 2005). More so, the coup activities were limited to the cities of Kaduna, Ibadan, and Lagos and covered a period of 2 days. It was therefore very easy for observers to tag the coup as an Igbo coup. Moreover, General Aguiyi Ironsi, who assumed the position of the commander-in-chief, used the pretext of the coup to end Nigeria's First Republic (Coutsoukis, 1991) effectively.

On the 29th of July 1966, about 6 months after the January 1966 coup d'état, some officers of the Nigerian Army of Northern extraction organized and participated in a counter-coup. Major-General J.T.U. Aguyi-Ironsi, the Head of State, died in the counter-coup. Also, Col. Francis Adekunle Fajuyi, the Military Administrator of the Southwestern Region under Aguyi Ironsi government, died in the counter-coup along a host of other military officers in a spate of killing that span 4 days. It was the

counter-coup that provided the stimulus for the subsequent events that burst forth dramatically into the Nigerian-Biafran civil war (Francis, 2009).

### **The Nigerian-Biafran Civil War**

The main casualties of the first coup included the prime minister, who was from the north, and the premier of the Northern Region, also from the north. Additionally, the premier of the Southwestern Region and the minister of finance of the Southwestern Region were also casualties. Ironically, although the officers of Igbo ethnicity led the coup d'état, General Aguiyi-Ironsi, an Igbo man, who later became the first Nigerian military head of state, foiled the coup.

The Aguiyi-Ironsi government dissolved the regional governments in an attempt to eradicate the tendency of the regions to polarize the country. However, many people of other ethnic affiliations saw it as a bid to create an Igbo-dominated Nigeria.

The first violent reaction to the Igbo-led coup was the northern riot in May 1966. The riot occurred on impulse without any premeditation in all the cities of the north. Many persons and businesses of Igbo ethnic origin fled to the eastern part of the country. The state was able to suppress the riot and promise safety to those that had fled but wished to return (Achebe, 2012).

However, in July 1966, events took a new turn. The northern officers of the Nigerian army staged a countercoup. This countercoup was the bloodiest coup in the history of the country. The bloodletting covered a period of 4 days in which many military officers of Igbo ethnicity, including the commander-in-chief lost their lives (Achebe, 2012).

A few days after the countercoup, an anti-Igbo pogrom commenced in the Northern Region. The pogrom was a series of massacres directed at persons of Igbo ethnicity in particular and other Southern Nigeria residents in the north part of the country (Saro-Wiwa, 1989). The pogrom led to a mass exodus of people of Southern ethnic origin from other regions of the country (Achebe, 2012). It was also the forerunner to a formal announcement by Colonel Ojukwu, the military governor of Eastern Nigeria, of the beginning of the state of Biafra in May 1967. Officially, five countries recognized the Republic of Biafra: Tanzania, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire, Zambia, and Haiti (Achebe, 2012).

The declaration of secession from the Federal Republic of Nigeria to form the Republic of Biafra led to hostilities that resulted in a civil war lasting from 1967 to 1970. The war caused the destruction of much of the Eastern Region's infrastructure and over 3 million deaths (Achebe, 2012).

The war started as a police action; it turned into a bitter conflict with more than two-thirds of the recorded deaths due to hunger and starvation. The war formally ended on the 13th January 1970. The Biafran army surrendered to the Nigerian army after the Biafran leader had fled into exile in the Ivory Coast. The principles underpinning the war were similar to those of ethnic conflict in Nigeria (Achebe, 2012). The war brought about the excuse needed by the military to foist itself on the populace for over 3 decades from 1966-1999 with two brief democratic experiments (1979-1983) and (1991-1993). Military intervention at no time found an answer to the problems of ethnoreligious violence, but in some ways made it more dangerous in a form and manner that is unusual. Rather, the military rule makes sure that a few

groups of individuals got status that allows them to monopolize violence. The worst form of ethnoreligious violence gain possession throughout the duration of the military rule (Oyerinde, 1999).

### **Other Notable Ethnic Conflicts**

Besides the war with Biafra, Nigeria has a record of other ethnic conflicts with a religious undertone. These include the Maitatsine Crisis of 1980 in Kano between Islamist fanatics and members of Christian communities of southern ethnicity (Adesoji, 2010). The 1981 inter tribal conflict between the Ife and the Modakeke communities were also an ethnoreligious conflict. Among other notable ethnic conflicts were the 1982 Fagge crisis in Kano, the Rev. Bonke riot of 1991, and the Zangon-Kataf crisis of 1992. There is also the long-lasting Hausa/Birom conflict in Jos (Adora, 2010), and the current Boko Haram insurgency (Adesoji, 2010).

### **Nigeria's Military Governance**

Military involvement in governance introduced a new form of political violence (Oyerinde, 1999). The country witnessed the worst form of political violence during military rule. The capacity of the military junta to organize and encourage the deployment of firepower enabled it to commit human rights atrocities including the looting of the treasury without argument (Oyerinde, 1999). More so, militocracy gave support to providing justification and cover for dishonest men and women among the elite. These individuals built and deployed political power to their advantages at the expense of the rights of the ordinary citizen (Ikime, 2001). For example, present day conflicts such as the Zango-Kataf communal clash is being carried on by new communities of elites created by the military. Moreover, political conflicts under the

army are associated with a process that sets neighboring communal groups against each other in the chaotic search for status and security. Between 1966 and 1999, military dictatorship changed hand violently between Aguiyi Ironsi, Yakubu Gowon, Murtala Mohammed, Olusegun Obasanjo, Muhammadu Buhari, Ibrahim Babangida, Sani Abacha, and Abdulsalam Abubakar. A common distinctive attribute of the eight military regimes was the application of force to legitimize the inefficient conducts of the affairs of the country.

The contest for power during the military regimes was among the elites, who were trying to hold on to power and the masses that were struggling to prevent perpetual political domination. More so, political discussions were on no occasion the premise for how to use political leadership for the benefit of the larger society. While electoral violence resulting from Intra and inter party squabbles led to the demise of the first republic, organized state violence took root with the military governance. The state ordered violence in the form of a formal authorization as evidence under the various military rulers between 1966 and 1999. Organized violence under the military regimes involved the suppression of the popular will and abuse of political, personal, and fundamental rights of the citizen. Police brutality, application of capital punishment, and the assassination of opponents of military rule were some of the collective futures of the long years of military rule in Nigeria. Other features of military governance included fatal communal clashes and incessant closure of media houses.

Many years of army rule led to the progressively deteriorating socioeconomic situation. For instance, in the 1990s, real GDP grew only at an average of 4.1%.

Meanwhile, the Worldmark Encyclopaedia of Nations (WEN) explained that the large size of government deficits of over 10% of GDP extended further in the negative direction (WEN, 2012). According to WEN, the Nigerian state economy was in its worst state in the mid-1990s with the budget deficit at over \$1 billion, representing more than 12% of GDP. Nigeria's per capita income was the 13th poorest in the world in 1997, down from the position of the World's 33rd best in the 1970s (IECONOMICS, 2015). This economic crisis was worsened by the long lasting prodemocracy strife of the 1990s. The annulment of the 1993 presidential election and the hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa the Ogoni right activist, by the military junta in 1995, bestowed the impetus to organize struggles.

Political disorder and confusion created by organized effort made the state weaker. The state under the army could not intervene in the discussion of how to eradicate violent conflicts. In the absence of the right political leadership, various ethnic groups begin to be radicalized into the development of self-determination groups. The 1990s marked the era of proliferation of small arms and insurgencies in the country (Dikshif, 1994). Furthermore, the period witnessed the spread of the development of different ethnic militias. According to Abayomi (2003), the development became the impetus and the driving force for the citizenry to heighten peremptory requests for social-political changes. Worthy of attention amongst the several ethnic groups are the Al-Sunna Wal Jamma group, the Arewa People's Congress, and the Bakassi Boys. Others included the Federated Niger Delta Ijaw Communities, the Odua Peoples Congress (OPC), and the Zamfara State Vigilante Service (Abayomi, 2003). These organizations found the large pool of youths without

a paid job as a readymade source for the recruitment of mercenaries for the ethnic militias.

Founded in 1994, the OPC is the focus of this study. The founding fathers of the group sought to use the OPC as the platform to defend the interest of the Yoruba nation. The OPC made reclaiming the mandate given to Chief Abiola during the annulled June 1993 presidential election a priority (Abdulazeez, 2012). In response, the military deployed all the state resources to fight members of the group. Those that were lucky escaped assassination attempts while many went to prison without any judicial pronouncement. Eventually, members of the group were driven underground, and violence became part of their strategy. This study investigated how the OPC turned to violence as a mean to achieving its political aims.

### **Problem Statement**

There is a problem in Nigerian society concerning ethnic based homegrown terrorist groups. Inadequate governance, uneven economic growth, and ethnic divisions have led some groups to regard violence as the only means to achieve political and social ends. The uneven economic growth among ethnic nationalities has led some to form violent groups that seek to achieve policy objectives. It has also resulted in some groups that were created for political purposes to turn to violence.

These groups tend to spring up each time there is a transition in governance. Consequently, the country frequently experiences waves of political violence with ethnoreligious undertones (Ake, 1996; Kurfi, 2005). These waves of political violence have resulted in the demise of the first three attempts at republican democracy (Adesote & Abimbola, 2014). The political violence led to the death of the

First, Second, and Third Republics in 1960 to 1966, 1979 to 1983, and 1991 to 1992 respectively (Ige, 1995; Suberu & Diamond, 2003). For example, the ethnoreligious conflict that derailed the First Republic led to the first military coup d'état in 1966 (Achebe, 2012). According to Achebe (2012), the coup that was considered to have occurred because of ethnic rivalry eventually led to a bloody civil war with over 3 million casualties. After that, the military ruled for more than 30 years with attendant instability and lack of development (Akinwumi, 2004).

The Fourth Republic that came into existence in 1999 has not differed from the others. There have been various crises with ethnoreligious backgrounds, the latest of which is the Boko Haram insurgency that is pushing the country to the brink of disintegration. This insurgency has negatively affected many Nigerians who have lost loved ones and who have become displaced and have lost their sources of income because of the daily occurrence of acts of terror.

A possible cause of this insurgency is the abuse of human rights by successive governments. In this phenomenological study, I examined the role of human rights violations in the formation of the OPC in 1994, and its turning to violent strategies in 1999 (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006; Wade & Reiter, 2007). The OPC is a Yoruba ethnic militia (Abdulazeez, 2012; Guichaoua, 2007). I culminated this study with the development of problem-solving strategies that encourage social change and achievement of ethnically based political participation.

### **The Nature of the Study**

Existing literature on the topic of the ethnoreligious conflicts has multiplied many folds since the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks on the United States homeland.

For example, several studies have been conducted on the propensity for ethnic violence in a country with a multitude of ethnic and religious groups (Freedman, 2007; Ikelegbe, 2005; Ojo & Lateju, 2010). Moreover, Abdulazeez (2012) and Guichaoua (2010) demonstrated that there is a considerable array of research on what attracts people to become members of ethnic militias. The qualitative case study analysis of the OPC served to close an existing gap in the literature on understanding terrorism from the perspectives of the perpetrator. Furthermore, the research used a phenomenological method based on face-to-face interviews. A minimum of 15 participants was interviewed to obtain in-depth information (Patton, 2002) on the development of the OPC.

In this study, I used purposeful sampling to select participants (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2002) from members of the OPC in 1994 (Abdulazeez, 2012). I purposefully sampled the members to select individuals who understood the reasoning behind the study. Finally, the analysis of the acquired data used a manual approach and a computer-based software code technique (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

### **Research Question**

In this study, I attempted to answer the question of whether there is a connection between the abuses of political, personal, and basic needs rights of Nigerians during the over 3 decades of military rules (1966-1999) and the eventual turning to violence by the OPC.

### **Research Objectives**

The aim of this phenomenological research was to understudy the justification for the formation of the OPC in 1994. Through this research, I hoped to improve the

understanding of how and why the OPC turned to violence as a means of achieving its political ends.

### **Purpose of the Study**

In this phenomenological study, I attempted to demonstrate how the abuse of a citizenry's human rights influenced the turning to violence by ethnic militias in Nigeria. I explored the relationship between the abuse of citizens' rights and the formation of the OPC. More importantly, I examined why the group turned to violence as a means of achieving political ends. Furthermore, I discussed other issues such as the lack of basic needs as an extension of human rights abuse and the potential effects these shortages have on groups that turn to violence. I also attempted to determine if the experience of the OPC is comparable to the experiences of other groups in Nigeria. The approach helped to provide an understanding of violent political organizations in Nigeria.

In this study, I investigated how the abuse of political, personal, and economic rights of citizenry contributes to the establishment of terrorist groups (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006; Wade & Reiter, 2007) such as the OPC. I used the experience of the founders of one of the militant groups, the OPC, to give meaning to the basic idea behind the development of ethnic militias, which are the Nigerian equivalent of terrorist groups.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The study's theoretical framework consists of the definition of the following terms and concepts of the study that is the operational definitions.

### **Definition of Terms**

*Ethnoreligious conflicts:* In this study, the term ethnoreligious conflict refers to conflicts among groups where religion has diffused into cultural life. In this study, I contended that where there are conflicting interests along ethnoreligious lines, and that religious differences could cause acrimonious discriminations between ethnic nationalities and increase group mobilization for violent acts.

*Human rights:* These are the three fundamental rights used to measure inequality and fairness within the context of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They are the political rights, security interests, and fundamental needs rights.

*Human rights abuses:* Those acts, both violent and nonviolent, taken by state actors to reduce or deny human, political, and security rights to citizens of a nation state.

*Interview protocol:* This refers to the six questions that I asked members during the discussion sessions (Appendix D).

*Interview session:* This relates to a 2-hour face-to-face interview I conducted with participants.

*Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC):* Although the OPC presents itself as a political organization formed in 1994 at the height of abuse of Nigerian citizens' political rights, I define the OPC as a terrorist ethnic militia, which undertook violence as a means to political ends.

*Participants:* The members of the OPC selected to participate in the study.

*Political rights:* The rights of citizens to participate in the establishment or administration of the government of their country. The policy rights entitle the adult

citizen to exercise the franchise to vote, to hold public office, and to engage in related political activities.

*Population:* The group of people who came together to proclaim the formation of the OPC in 1994.

*Rights to basic needs:* The rights that lay the foundation for a life of human dignity and, therefore, give meaning to citizens' political rights. The rights to basic needs include the right to essential goods and services. The services include the provision of food, drinking water, shelter, clothing, healthcare, electricity, and education.

*Security rights:* In this study, I consider those rights that government security policies are intended to protect and control, as a normative core. Thus, I group security to include the right to live, the right to psychological integrity, and the right to liberty. Also, security involves the right to the rule of law and the right to personal property that is without prejudice.

*Terrorism:* An act of violence undertaken for a political purpose by nonstate actors or by elements of the state to undermine the stability of the country.

*Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC):* Although the OPC presents itself as a political organization formed in 1994 at the height of abuse of Nigerian citizens' political rights, however, this study defines the OPC as a terrorist ethnic militia that undertook violence as a means to political ends.

*Population:* Population in this study refers to the group of people that came together to proclaim the formation of the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) in 1994.

*Participants:* Participants in this study refer to the members of the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) selected to participate in the study.

*Interview Session:* The term “interview session” refers to a two hours face-to-face interview the researcher conducted with participants.

*Interview Protocol:* The term “interview protocol” refers to the six questions that the researcher designed to ask members during the discussion sessions (Appendix D).

### **Assumptions**

In this phenomenological study, I assumed multiple and dynamic realities that sought to understand through natural settings. Thus, data were inducted from valid, real, rich, and profound information. I also used the general assumption of a process aligned, holistically oriented, and discovery-tailored for me an instrument of observation. I also assumed that a definition of terrorism was essential to the study.

Furthermore, the study has some methodological assumptions. These included the assumptions that the interviewees would answer the interview questions sincerely and that they would understand the issues similarly.

### **Limitations**

This dissertation had two principal limitations: logistical and methodological. The logistical limitation relates to the time and resource constraints that were available for the study. The methodological limitation is a concern with the data collection design for phenomenological research. In particular, the validity of the interview sessions could be limited because the information was from the interviewees' perspective. Thus, questioning can result in a biased response from

participants because there is an inherent difference in each respondent's perception of the subject under investigation (Creswell, 2009).

Furthermore, the collection of documents for the study required the researcher access potentially inaccessible areas to gather information. There was also the possibility of collecting misleading records. Finally, the presence of an observer such as a photographer could disrupt and limit the participants' responses (Creswell, 2009). I addressed the logistic limitations by being proactive in all activities that constituted the process leading to the earliest possible completion of the dissertation milestone.

To address the identified methodological limitations, in this phenomenological research, I attempted to structure its interview sessions into what Patton (2002) referred to as "standardized open-ended interview" (p. 230). I asked all participants the same questions in the same manner that conveyed the same meaning. Moreover, I limited the search for documents to official human rights sources. I also recorded the interview sessions with a smart digital photo/recorder that did not require the presence of a photographer.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

This dissertation was limited to understand the development of ethnic militia in Nigeria through an examination of the effect of the human rights violations on the elaboration of the OPC in 1994. Therefore, the study has the delimitation of focusing on only a single group with a particular set of circumstances, thus limiting the degree of generalization of the results.

The political, personal, and fundamental needs rights violations determined the boundaries of the study. Finally, the delimitation of the participants in the study

to founding members of the OPC ensured that they had actual knowledge of the events.

### **Significance of the Study**

This dissertation represents the first attempt to examine the underlying factors responsible for the development of ethnic militias in Nigeria following human rights abuses. This research is also the first attempt to apply a general framework based on political participation, human rights violations, and economic deprivation to such development. Furthermore, the study has the potential to provide scholarly information on terrorism from the Nigerian perspective. Additionally, the study supported the development of a framework that researchers can use to understand the purpose of terrorism (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006).

Moreover, despite the fact that the Nigerian government is not a sponsor of the study, the study may prompt social change of immense capacity. This study sheds light on the degree to which general ideas about terrorism apply in the case of Nigeria. These insights help to understand the development of terrorism in Nigeria more clearly. This study adds to the literature in the field of terrorism and may help future researchers to identify factors underpinning ethnoreligious terrorism. The elements revealed may end the practice of violence by groups in Nigeria and other Sub-Saharan African states through effective policies (Gassebner, Lamla, & Vreeland, 2008)

Furthermore, policies that cause a reduction in force can improve personal economies, creating additional social change (Abadie & Gardeazabal, 2003, 2008; Crain & Crain, 2006; Harrelson-Stephens & Callaway, 2003; Mirza & Verdier, 2008; Nitsch & Schumacher, 2004).

### **Summary**

This chapter laid the foundation for the discussion of the problem in Nigerian society concerning ethnic-based homegrown terrorist groups. This problem of ethnic based homegrown terrorists has led some groups to regard violence as a means to achieve political and social ends. I also established the question of whether there is a connection between the abuses of political, personal, and basic needs rights of Nigerians and the eventual turning to violence by the OPC. This central research question was necessary to address the problem.

With a qualitative research design, I used a phenomenological methodology to examine the factors underlining the development of ethnic militias, who are the protagonists of ethnoreligious conflicts. Furthermore, I used the conceptual lens of human rights violations as the basis for the inquiry. I also employed standardized in-depth interviews (Patton, 2002) to collect data from participating founding members of the OPC.

Abdulazeez (2012), Alimi (2006), Guichaoua (2007), HRW (2003), and others literature on the OPC are relevant to the study's literature review. Furthermore, Broomhall (2004), Burgoon (2006), Piazza & Walsh (2009), and other research on the role of human rights abuses in the development of terrorist organizations were considered in the literature review.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

Several academic databases were utilized in the process of searching for relevant literatures for this study. They included the ABI/INFORM Complete, Academic Search Complete, ProQuest Central, Sage Premier, Sage Research Methods Online, and the Google Scholar. The key search terms used were terrorism, homegrown ethnic militia, terrorist groups, and ethnoreligious conflicts.

The databases afford the opportunity to access tens of hundreds of full text from multidisciplinary resources including peer-reviewed journal, reports, and working papers. The key search terms were used to narrow down the full text resources into terror and conflicts related resources. The Sage Research Methods Online database was used to explore the phenomenological research and the concept of one-on-one interview. The Google Scholar was used to locate articles by journal title and by digital object identifier (DOI). Also, the ProQuest database provided access to dissertations from many top colleges and universities around the world.

### **Synopsis of Pre 1994 Nigeria**

In this study, I considered the development of terrorism from the Nigerian perspective. I contended that the 1914 amalgamation that became the modern Nigerian state is a marriage of strange bedfellows. Consequently, protracted ethnoreligious disagreement has been the cause of national distress that has included the riots of 1945 and 1953 in Jos and Kano respectively (Maier, 2000). The frequency

of ethnoreligious conflict increased after 1960 compared to the situation before independence from the British colonial administration.

I argued that the open support given to the Hausa/Fulani by the British authority created an ill feeling among other ethnic groups (Mwakikagile, 2001). The colonial government had to postpone the independence of the country from 1958 to 1960 at the instance of the Northern Region (Adams, 2007). Accordingly, Adams (2007) concluded that the action implied that the colonial administration would hand over the government of the new country to a northern-led coalition (Adams, 2007). Consequently, the geographic entity called Nigeria was a country in perpetual crisis.

Post independence, ethnoreligious conflict debuted with the 1962 revolt by the Christian-dominated Tiv people of Central Nigeria. The revolt was against the perceived marginalization from the Northern state under the control of the Sokoto Caliphate. Indeed, flagrant abuse of political power dominated the First Republic, leading to the 1964 federal election crisis that culminated in the first military coup in 1966 (Adora, 2010).

Nigeria witnessed her darkest moment with the outbreak of a civil war in 1967. The events that led to the civil war were dispositional, situational, and systemic (Milgram, 1974; Staub, 1999, 2011; Zimbardo, 2007). The war commenced with the coup and countercoup of 1966. The organized massacre of civilians of the Eastern Region living in the Northern part of the country followed the counter-coup.

Eventually, the first military incursion led to a civil war that lasted 30 months and claimed over 3 million civilian lives (Achebe, 2012). The demise of the First Republic resulted in an era of insecurity for life and property. The security situation in

Nigeria has remained the same. The 1966 coup d'état set the tone for over 3 decades of strong governance under successive military regimes.

In addition, the country's economy at the time of the formation of the OPC in 1994 was in a state of disrepair. The military regimes had transformed corruption to official state action (Ayittey, 2005). The generals looted the country during more than 3 decades of managing the economy. Over US\$200 billion of the country's stolen money was in foreign banks at the time of the military disengagement from governance in 1999 (Ikelegbe, 2005). Education and the health sector suffered the most. The national universities had become glorified secondary schools, and the students of the universities were unable to compete with their colleagues around the globe (Achebe, 2012). Furthermore, hospitals were without equipment and drugs (Adams, 2007). Consequently, the country was and remained in a poor state of economic health in which citizenry has no access to basic needs.

The country experienced a spate of massive brain drain due to the collapse of the infrastructures and facilities. Many people educated their families outside the country. A large number of the best workers in the health sector relocated because of concerns about personal security (Achebe, 2012). The emigration of highly trained people contributed to capital leaving the country. The appalling state of the country's economy gave an added excuse for the OPC and similar groups to become violent (Soyinka, 2012).

In the turbulent politics of Nigeria, people, such as those represented by the OPC, have been denied access to what is considered a normal political life. They have not been able to address their concerns through the formal institutions of the

state because of corruption and poor governance. When people suffer economic hardship and abuse of their human rights and cannot seek help through the political process, they are often forced to look for redress outside the political system (Staub, 2011). For the OPC, this meant turning to violence and ultimately to terroristic tactics.

Ethnic, religious, and cultural diversities are salient in the postcolonial conflicts in Nigeria (Fearon & Laitin, 2003). However, the military takeover of politics shortly after independence has generated the fiercest rivalry among the major ethnic nationalities. Some of the contestations can be considered fundamental to the existence and legitimacy of the state. These include the control of state authority, asset allocation, and the citizenry.

The military rule further reduces points of agreement that can mitigate against the forces of division among the contending groups. Military intervention in politics makes the country fragile and unstable (Suberu & Osaghae, 2005). Furthermore, the long years of the army rule encouraged conditions that favored conflict between diverse groups. These conditions included institutionalization of the bureaucratically weak states (Fearon & Laitin 2003). The inability of the military to develop institutions for conflict resolution is one of the other factors (Posner 2004).

### **Defining Terrorism**

Though the term terrorism is as old as the earliest civilization, the study of terrorism has been plagued by the lack of a standard theory that may be used as the framework to research the underlying structural causes of the act of terror. The lack of an adequate framework to prosecute terror inquiry has been made worse by the lack of a standard definition of terrorism. Schmid and Jongman (1988) argued that

this state of being without an acceptable definition in every case for the field of terrorism is due to the lack of basis for objective quality.

Hitherto, terrorism researchers have tried to avoid acknowledging that there is the need for an inquiry into the structural cause of terrorism. This attempt to run away from unearthing the cause of terrorism has to do with the notion that no moral reason could justify an act of terror (Newman, 2006). The concept of moral justification died with the event of 9/11. However, defining the structural causes of terrorism became imperative.

Despite increasing enthusiasm in the quest for the fundamental cause of terrorism, a holistic theory has not been developed. In this study, I tested the human rights theory inductively as a significant contribution to the knowledge of terrorism. I investigated how the abuses of rights and poor socioeconomic conditions contributed to the development of terrorism (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006) from the Nigerian perspectives.

The studies of terrorism as a field of knowledge have continued to exist primarily around the questions of its exact meaning, understanding, and results (Jarvis, 2009; Toros, 2008). The mainstream approach to terrorism literature is one of problem solving (Cox, 1996). It is therefore not surprising that the methodological approach to terrorism investigations until after the event of the 9/11 often placed a great deal of attention on providing typologies of terrorists and terrorism (Laqueur, 1991, 2001; Rubenstein 1974; & Sederberg 1994). The logic and standard limitations of the conventional arguments have also opened a vital gap in the terrorism literature,

involving the need for analysis of the merits and faults of an oriented body of literature (Jarvis, 2009).

The term terrorism has several stages of development from 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe through to the French Revolution. Concerning the latter, terror was the official state apparatus for eliminating the perceived enemies of the revolution (Andress, 2006; Halliday, 2002).

However, by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the term '*terrorism*' began to be associated with non-governmental right and left wing groups. Groups such as the Ku Klux Klan in North America and Narodnaya Volya in the old Soviet Empire (Furstenberg, 2007; Nacos, 2012) were notable presences. The mid-19<sup>th</sup> century represents the era of the growing profile of ideas about anarchism and nationalism (Challand, 2007).

The ascendancy of state power by the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century defined terrorism as violence committed by disgruntled elements of society (Nacos, 2012). Recent life-threatening events such as the September 11, 2001 terror attack on the American soil reinforced this position (Grunwald, 2001; Heidee, Tahlia, Rashad, & Marcia 2004). A related event is the London underground train bombings (Bennetto & Herbert, 2005). Others are the Madrid train bombing (Nash, 2006), the Beslan school hostage situation (Steele, 2006), and the Moscow theatre siege (Sillin, 2007).

It is imperative that any literature on terrorism should commence with the definition of the phenomenon itself. Terrorism is a very complex individual area of study that has defied a commonly accepted definition (Schmid, 2004). Indeed, the development of epistemology in the field of terrorism has made it impossible to

achieve a permanently acceptable definition for this area of study (Campana & Lapointe, 2012). Furthermore, it is hard to create a universally acceptable definition of the term terrorism when a basis for objective quality is lacking (Schmid & Jongman, 1988).

The question of the definition of terrorism indicates that scholars and experts are predominantly interested in the terrorist actor, which may appear natural under the circumstances (Hulse & Spencer, 2008). Most significant actions of terrorism now fall under the definitions of terrorism by international conventions that are currently in operation. However, there remains an unfilled space that sustains the argument for the adoption of a definition that includes all elements of terrorism (Broomhall, 2004). Furthermore, the definition issues have the problems of faithfully representing the truth, mutual consent, and uninfluenced judgment. These problems have caused an emotional situation within the academic community in the quest for an acceptable definition of terrorism (Jarvis, 2009; Laqueur, 2003).

Terrorism is often the result of relations with and between people rather than the product of warped personalities and ideas (Alimi, 2006; Hoffman, 1998, 2002; Peleg, 2002). Some elements provide a means of understanding terrorism (Forest, 2006; Goodwin, 2006; Hoffman, 2004; Post, 2002, 2007). These factors usually include the act of committing a criminal offense that involves the use of physical force. There is also always the intention to hurt, damage, and kill people (Agnew, 2010; LaFree & Dugan, 2004, 2007; Pape, 2005).

In this study, I defined terrorism as an act of violence undertaken for political ends by nonstate actors or by elements of the state to undermine the stability of the

country. This mirrors the definition by Bueno de Mesquita (2009): “Any act of violence undertaken for the purpose of altering a government’s political policies” (p. 339). In this sense, I considered coup plotting against constitutional authority as an act of terrorism. These are a step away from the normative nature of the definition of terrorism that relies on the view of those who are in charge of state machinery. It seems that the development of the phenomenon of ethnic militia in Nigeria is unavoidable. This assertion also removes any obstacle to the empirical study.

### **Terrorism Methodology**

The studies of terrorism as a field of knowledge have continued to exist primarily around the questions of its exact meaning, understanding, and results (Jarvis, 2009; Toros, 2008). Consequently, the mainstream approach to terrorism literature is one of problem solving (Cox, 1996).

Measuring the impact of transnational terrorism and domestic terrorism on the per capita income of African countries (Gaibulloev & Sandler, 2011) is an example of the way in which scholars have used research in the field of terrorism as a problem-solving phenomenon (Jarvis, 2009). Furthermore, investigation in the area of terrorism has habitually directed a great deal of attention to providing typologies of terrorists and terrorism (Laqueur, 1991, 2001; Rubenstein 1974; Schultz 1990; & Sederberg 1994). However, the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States and the awareness created, as a result, have generated more research interest in the field of terrorism (Gunning, 2007; Jackson, 2007).

The logic and normative limitations of the mainstream argument have also opened a vital gap in the terrorism literature for a critically oriented body of research

(Jarvis, 2009). This logic is to use a small case study that applies the broad nature of existing research to a particular context (Pedhazur, Eubank, & Weinberg, 2002; Turk, 2004; Zuleika & Douglass, 2008).

Moreover, recent researches have uncovered factors that have given rise to the phenomenon called 'terrorism.' Primarily the post 9/11 terrorism literatures demonstrated effective action. Post 9/11 researchers, such as Gassebner et al. (2008), have shown that terrorism can be costly and can cause a reduction in government stability.

Terrorism has also had an adverse impact on trade and capital flows (Abadie & Gardeazabal, 2008; Crain & Crain, 2004; Mirza & Verdier, 2008; Nitsch & Schumacher, 2004). Furthermore, terrorism results in the loss of personal and collective life satisfaction (Frey, Luechinger, & Stutzer, 2009).

In spite of its intuitive appeal, the use of the word *cause* has remained unpopular with many scholars. They are reluctant to accept that there may be any reason that could warrant an act of terrorism (Newman, 2006). Others have considered the idea of causes as problematic from the perspective of the system of methods used in the field of terrorism (Mani, 2004).

Nonetheless, a significant amount of literature is now devoted to enquiring into the idea of causes of terrorism, using logical reasoning to clarify the relevant facts underpinning terrorism (Newman, 2006). At the center of the cause argument is the proposition that some conditions that affect the wellbeing of people and society result in the emergence of terrorist and terror organizations (Newman, 2006).

The quest for the cause focuses on the larger picture and neglects the smaller image. By looking for a general set of reasons, scholars have neglected the study of specific terrorist organizations. This broad set of goals exposes a new gap in the literature. Thus, the research is a detailed phenomenological case study of a particular group that examined the degree to which these larger theories are accurate in such situations.

There are also new approaches that involve the analysis of the merits and faults of extant literature in the field to resolve problems of definition, methodology, and theory. One such is a powerful approach to terrorism research that has suggested expanding the understanding of terrorism beyond nonstate violence alone (Hulse & Spencer, 2008, Jarvis, 2009). Another is the valid approach to terrorism, and although this remains of minor importance in the field of terrorism study, the development of relevant research on terrorism has culminated in the increase in literature available for review (Campana & Lapointe, 2012).

Despite being an old field of study that predates the 17<sup>th</sup> century, much of the available literature in the area of terrorism has been designed as literature reviews, documentary evidence, and reviews of reports. There are few studies with considerable empirical evidence to support the cause of terrorism. Many of the few empirical research studies on terrorism have relied on the traditional quantitative approach even though terrorism is rarely a subject for the laboratory.

Unfortunately, many of the larger studies have addressed a general set of causes, and there are few in-depth qualitative studies to see if these ideas apply in

practice. In this study, I explored the terrorism phenomenon from the perspective of the perpetrators using a phenomenological research approach.

Therefore, this study has a design that applies the broad theoretical explanations about the causes of terrorism to a particular case: the OPC. Consequently, I focused on the OPC, a traditional ethnic militia in Nigeria. The OPC started in 1994 as a political group and a platform for the Yoruba people of South-western Nigeria to challenge the annulment of the 1993 presidential election that was won by one of its own. I also sought to explore the degree to which the OPC as a group, which later turned to violence, saw itself in the same way as others did.

### **Terrorism Theories**

Much of the current research aims to resolve the issues that revolve around finding appropriate theories in the field of terrorism. Inequality in the application of available resources to the citizenry is a cause of terrorism (Bjorgo, 2005; Robinson, Crenshaw, & Jenkins, 2006). In fact, there is a notable argument that there is no terrorism in the absence of real or imagined grievances (Chasdi, 2002).

There is an increasing attempt to find a general framework for the field of terrorism that includes most of the identified structural causes. The general anxiety explanation (Agnew, 2010) is one of the attempts at a general framework. Another is a general stress theory (GST). The GST argues that homegrown terrorism helps the principles of the practice of criminology (LaFree & Dugan, 2004). Unfortunately, those who spread and develop the idea of GST have not been able to identify the typical factors that result in terrorism, and why they are likely to do so (Agnew, 2010).

There is also the moral action theory of crime causation (Bouhana & Wikstrom, 2010). The moral action theory the idea that considers the acts of terrorism as activities that help form an opinion on what is right and what is wrong. The argument here is that moral action, comprise of the acts of terrorism, resulting from both deliberate and the processes of a behavioral pattern. Thus putting the blame on terrorism as the outcome of the interaction between a person's morality and the moral context in which he or she operates.

Furthermore, Bouhana (2008) argued that the theory could make available a basic structure for understanding the causes of acts of terror. According to the researcher, the approach can arrange the present theoretical understanding of terrorism into a structural whole (Bouhana, 2008). Also, the moral action theory could provide a general description of a research agenda according to a fixed plan (Bouhana, 2008). However, many scholars especially those that believe that there can never be any moral justification for terrorism (Nacos, 2012; Staub, 2011) tend to disagree with the theory. The moral action theory remains very controversial. Microscopic work exists that could substantiate the argument of the proponent of a moral action theory.

Other researchers have theorized many factors as structural causes of terrorism including political freedom, civil liberties, democracy, and dictatorship. Additional factors are state repression, a country's economic development, national socio-economic conditions, the national level of education and national economic inequality.

Different socio-economic conditions and personal levels of education are possible causes of both domestic and transnational terrorism (Campana & Lapointe,

2011). Researchers have also argued that the absence of social welfare is a cause of terrorism (Burgoon, 2006). Furthermore, the disparity in economic growth between the Northern and Southern hemispheres creates terrorism and terrorist business development (Piazza, 2007).

Political factors such as a failing state are a cause of terrorism (Piazza, 2007). Also, government inability to provide basic amenities has also been argued as a cause of terrorism (Piazza, 2007). Besides, the absence rather than the presence of distinguishing features that create economic growth increases the possibility of violence (Abadie, 2006, Collier & Hoeffler, 2004; Miguel, Satyanath, & Sergenti, 2004).

Alonso and Rey (2007) argued that adverse socioeconomic conditions have contributed to the recruitment of people into terroristic activities. Moreover, the authors contend that severe suffering makes citizens receptive to the inspiration of Islamic terrorists (Alonso & Rey, 2007). Accordingly, potential danger and notably deficient political and economic conditions make radicalisation easier among society's vulnerable groups (Alonso & Rey, 2007).

### **The Theoretical Framework**

This qualitative dissertation study uses social constructivist theory (Creswell, 2007). Constructivism philosophy takes it that human beings desire to achieve the comprehension of the world in which they live and work. In general, people develop meanings based on personal feelings, tastes, and opinions from their experiences. As such, the goal when conducting social research is to depend on full trust as much as possible on the participants' views of the studied phenomenon. In the constructivist

worldview, individuals form meanings as a way to become involved with the world they are interpreting.

The constructivist researchers thus rely on the use of open-ended questions that excites participants into sharing their views of the phenomenon under investigation. Peoples become involved with their world and make sense of it based on their own historical and social perspectives, and meaning is always social, coming from interaction with the human community. Qualitative emergence approach to social research is therefore predominantly inductive with the researcher generating meaning from the data collection (Creswell, 2009).

One of the fundamental tenets of the theory is that human beings construct meanings as they engage with their environment. Qualitative researchers tend to use open-ended questions so that the participants can share their views. The other is that humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspectives. The last but not the least of the social constructivist theory is that primary generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community.

The theory supports the assumption that people desire to understand the world in which they live. Also, the social constructivist theory supports the premise that people develop meaning from their day-to-day experience of the world around them. In this context, the basis of the study is to identify the intrinsic nature of human experiences about the phenomenon of terrorism in Nigeria.

The studies inductively theorize the factors underpinning the development of ethnic militias with the notion of the human rights abuses. The violations of the

human rights framework have three major analytical tools, namely: political and civic rights, rights to security of life and property, and rights to basic amenities of life. The three fundamental rights have several branches of variations and contexts to make distinctions and organize ideas for the concept (see Appendix E). Political rights are the rights of citizens to participate in the establishment or administration of the government of their country.

Also, this study groups security interests to include the right to live, the right to psychological integrity, and the right to liberty. The security interests also included the right to the rule of law and the right to personal property that is without prejudice. Also, the rights to essential amenities of life refer to the rights that lay the foundation for a life of human dignity and, therefore, give meaning to citizen's political rights. This study contended that the rights to basic needs include but are not limited to the right to essential goods. The basic products included services such as adequate food, drinking water, shelter, clothing, healthcare, electricity, and education.

The theoretical framework for this study argues that the combination of human rights abuses and material deprivation creates an environment for the formation of ethnic militias that turn to violence (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephen, 2006). As argued by Laqueur (2001), persons that are most likely to resort to a political action involving physical force are not those with a worse than usual standard of living. Furthermore, researchers have argued that citizens who are likely to encourage terrorist activities are the ordinary members of society (Whitaker, 2003). These support the notion that individuals at the upper end of the corporation are not likely to become involved in the terrorist activity (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006).

It also supports the suggestion that those in the middle of the income distribution are the most likely to support violence (Fein, 1995). These ordinary persons are usually socialized to accept the notion that they can make a difference in their communities. Theorizing the relationship between socioeconomic status and support for terrorism can appear as a hypothesis in the form of an inverted U-shape curve. The U-shape hypothesis demonstrates that the richest and the poorest in society offer the least support for terrorism.

However, theorizing the proposal that human rights violations are a structural cause of homegrown terrorism is gaining increasing support. Much literature supports this trend (Bueno de Mesquita, Cherif, Marie, George, & Smith, 2005, Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006, Cannon, 2003, Cingranelli & Richards, 2004, Walsh & Piazza, 2010). This approach also has the benefit of universal understanding that comes from the 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights.

Therefore, it is possible to trace every factor that forms part of the structure of terrorism to one human power or another (Livingstone, 2001). Also, a structure based on human rights encompasses the full range of terrorism in an acceptable definition that takes into account the current rules governing international laws that promote social welfare (Broomhall, 2004).

In this context, the human rights concept consists of three legs of a tripod. The first leg represents political rights, which include democratic or political rights such as the right to vote. Also, political rights included the rights to protest, the choice of a political party, and to disagree with the ruling government (Davenport & Armstrong, 2004, Gearty, 2007).

However, there are a lot of theoretical divergences in connection with the concepts of political freedom and terrorist activities. One conceptual view argued that the political freedom reduces terrorism because democracies proffer a way for the citizenry to articulate their interest and support for peaceful solutions to the crisis (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006). The argument is that offering a greater chance to convey unhappiness about unfair treatment can persuade the citizenry to engage in peaceful possibilities instead of terrorism. Thus, according to this line of argument, the presence of liberty decreases the potential of terrorism.

Conversely, there are those who theorize that political freedom and terrorism have a linear relationship because political freedom encourages excess freedom of behavior (Eubank & Weinberg, 2001). The contention here is that the right to act without hindrance in an environment of political freedom allows extremism to grow unnoticed within a community. Thus, this second argument contends that an excess liberty increases terrorism.

Another perspective adopts the view that half-hearted political freedom creates conditions that are particularly favorable for the vigorous growth of terrorism (Abadie, 2006). The understanding here is that the relationship between political freedom and terrorism is curvilinear, suggesting that those states that are in the middle of the spectrum between repression and total freedom are more likely to experience terrorism.

This study considered the arguments by many authors including Achebe that Nigerians experienced more than three decades of abuse of their political rights by military juntas (Achebe, 2012). Also, the study took into consideration the contention

by researchers such as Abdulazeez that the annulment of the 1993 presidential election was the height of political injustice underpinning the formation of the OPC in 1994 (Abdulazeez, 2012). The introduction of democracy that offered neither total freedom nor adopted a repressive approach in 1999 was also a precursor of violence (HRW, 2002). Unsurprisingly, the development of the OPC from a political organization to a violent ethnic militia took place in 1999 (HRW, 2002).

The second leg of the human rights tripod represents security interests. These include rights opposed to torture and extrajudicial executions, and rights to protection of life and property (Harrelson-Stephens & Callaway, 2003; Hoffman, 2004; Piazza & Walsh, 2009). The human rights published works on terrorism show a clear linkage in the relationship involving political rights and security interests. Many researchers are of the view that a democratic state will most likely respect citizenry personal rights. They include those by Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, (2006); Poe & Tate (1994); McCormick & Mitchell (1997); Poe, Tate, & Keith (1999). Thus, the relationship between political rights and security interests in one hand and terrorist activity in the other is not easy to analyze.

Political systems that inhibit and restrict the freedom of citizens rely on destructive behavior; as a result providing the condition for opposition groups to resort to violence (Whitaker 2003). Furthermore, researchers contend that the political persecution creates an atmosphere that instils fear in the general populace (Poe & Tate 1994). The theory of human rights violation argues that the relationship between the security interests' violation and terrorism is not straightforward. The rights violation theory argued that increased repression enhances the possibility of

terrorism. However, an absolute magnitude and intensity of repression must be exceeded for citizens and groups to manifest violent reaction (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006).

The infamous Abacha military junta that was in power at the birth of the OPC in 1994 was guilty of many atrocities against citizenry security rights. For example, the regime arrested Chief M. K. O. Abiola, the winner of the 1993 presidential election for treasonable offenses without any judicial pronouncement.

The country also witnessed a spate of daylight summary executions of members of opposition groups that included the OPC and sympathetic groups such as the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO). Also, many journalists are known to be critical of the military junta just disappeared without a trace. Thus, it is the opinion of this study that the abuse of security rights as a proactive action on the Southwestern part of the country encouraged the OPC to become a terrorist organization. However, the repression reached the terrorism threshold with the sudden death of Chief M.K.O. Abiola in military confinement in 1998. Shortly after, the OPC turned violent.

The third leg of the human rights tripod is the right to basic needs. Some existing works of literature including those from Piazza & Walsh (2009) and Walsh & Piazza (2010) tend to disregard the right to primary needs as a cause of terrorism. However, evidence abounds that societies that are susceptible to terrorism have a history of major needs denials that encourage recruits for terrorist activity (Soyinka, 2012).

The Nigerian military junta intentionally neglected and proactively abused its citizenry (Achebe, 2012; Akinwumi, 2004); Suberu & Osaghae, 2005). It is a deliberate neglect because the country had abundant natural resources to provide basic needs. Also, it is an active abuse if we consider that only one particular ethnic group dominated the military elite that controlled the country's resources from 1966-1999. Therefore, this study examined the argument that the resultant suffering of the citizenry was a justification for turning to violence.

Moreover, the human rights framework asserts that human rights violations do not follow a linear progression but are subject to threshold effects. The structure presupposes that people will tolerate abuses for an extended period. However, a shock event or small change in the pattern of ill treatment may puncture the equilibrium and lead to a violent response to previously tolerated behavior (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006).

A similar situation existed in Nigeria during the tyrannical military rule of the 1990s. The case led to the prominence of terror organizations such as the OPC and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB). Also, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) was a product of the 1990s. However, a complicated relationship exists between human rights, economic circumstances and terrorist activity (Poe, Tate, & Keith, 1999). This complexity has made it difficult to develop universal explanations for the tendency of groups to turn to terrorism (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006).

One attribute of the human rights theoretical framework is that political rights reflect the ability of the citizen to participate in politics and to articulate their preferences for political leaders via accepted institutions. The argument is that persons who have access to meaningful political participation can address their grievances with the government within the institutions of the state (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006). When denied participation in politics, citizens cannot act within these agencies and may consider turning to violence as a means of addressing their grievances (Essman, 1994).

### **Summary**

This chapter provided a review of the literature relevant to the problem of ethnic based homegrown terrorist groups, which arise during the unrepresentative governance. It also provided a review of literature on how this problem led to the demise of the first three attempts at republican democracy. The literature reviewed also included those relevant to how the abuses of political, personal, and basic needs rights of Nigerians during the over three decades of military rules contributed to the emergent of the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) and its eventual turning to violence.

An examination of the literature in the field of terrorism makes known why it is hard to advance the detailed analysis of the subject. First, there is no general agreement on the definition of the term terrorism. The definition has varied over time; the state used terror to deter opposition during the 17th-century French Revolution. In the moment, terrorists are the disgruntled elements of the society. More importantly, shared understanding of the definitions of the term terror is often a reflection of either being against or in favor. Even though, many of the attempted definitions contain

elements such as violence, political end, and innocent individuals, a detailed definition that is measurable is lacking. Furthermore, existing terrorism definitions require a form of judgment from the standard of the reader. Most of the existing literature especially those that were available before the 9/11 attacks on the US homeland were mainly serving to describe and arouse intense feelings (Schultz, 1990). Also, terrorism literature suffers from normative judgments that tend to put forward for consideration, sensible conclusions that strongly suggest illegitimacy. Consequently, literature in the field of terrorism suffers from the common challenges of the ugly normative inherent features of the research in the field.

The majority of available researchers on the causes of terrorism center their interests on the single level of examination, particularly those related to the mental and emotional state of the mind (Combs 2003). The individual level of analysis explains why there is a dearth of literature on the factors underpinning the act of terrorism until the events of the 9/11. According to Chasdi, (2002) inadequate research examines the set of factors working together as part of the interconnecting network causes of terroristic activity. There is a considerable amount of media and admired notice given to these types of conditions (Chasdi, 2002).

A large amount of existing research on the root causes of terrorism depends on the case studies methodological approach to research (Whitaker 2003). These are primarily due to the lack of a general theory for the field of terrorism. In fact, a general method based on socio-political factors is not easily achieved since the process will be dependent on the judgement of the political actors (Crenshaw, 2000).

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

In this dissertation, I used the human rights theory inductively to examine the act of terrorism from the Nigerian perspective as an offshoot of abuses of citizen rights and the limited opportunity for political participation. During the review of the literature and historical documents, several themes developed regarding reasons for the development of the OPC and the use of violence as a form of political participation. The items include how the postcolonial political situation in Nigeria since becoming an independent nation in 1960 contributed to the formation of the OPC in 1994. Another of the themes was the relationship between the annually reported extrajudicial killings in Nigeria by the HRW and the creation of the OPC in 1994. The issue of endemic poverty at the time of the formation of the OPC in 1994 and the emergence of other ethnic militia such as MASSOB, the Bakassi Boys, MOSOP, and MEND after the debut of the OPC in 1994 were also part of the developed themes.

Other themes included the notion that the current democratic dispensation still does not guarantee full political interests, citizenry security rights, and general rights to basic needs. Another developed theme was the argument of whether the OPC was a violent organization or not. Based on these issues, I developed questions that provided an answer to the central research question of whether there is a connection between the abuses of political, personal, and basic needs rights of Nigerians during the over 3 decades of military rules (1966-1999) and the eventual turning to violence by the OPC.

### **The Study Design**

This research was a phenomenological study and qualitative dissertation that commenced with a central research question. The study design was born not out of contestation for superiority between quantitative and qualitative approaches. Rather a choice of qualitative approach came from the conviction that the phenomenon of terrorism is best from the view of its actors. The study design commenced with the understanding that both qualitative and quantitative approaches to research designs have assisted social studies to make valuable discoveries (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). Moreover, the design followed a systematically repeated examination of the facts underlying the development of ethnic militia as a means of obtaining successively closer approximations to the solution of the phenomenon. The aim was to achieve a complete written account of the phenomenon under study without making value judgments (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

Documentary evidence and video recordings were reviewed to assist with the development of specific questions to ask during in-depth, face-to-face interviews (Patton, 2002). The documentary evidence and video recordings were obtained mainly from the National Human Right Commission, Abuja (Appendix C). Restricting the source of documentary evidence and video recordings to the National Human Rights Commission provided a positive peer reviewed advantage on the data collected for the study. However, I avoided putting forward any hypotheses either as forms of argument or as assumptions of fact. The aim was to keep the fundamental characteristic of the survey intact (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1994). Consequently, I included a brief fact-finding visit to the National Human Right Commission

headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria. The purpose of the tour was to inquire about the administrative procedure for using the Commission's library and archive for the study (Appendix C). The outcome of my first visit was to determine if subsequent visits were needed to present an introductory letter from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals. The visit was necessary because past HRW reports on Nigeria have constituted a significant source of the documentary evidence of human rights abuse a vital element of this study. Moreover, the National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria is necessary for the dissemination of the results of the survey to the relevant stakeholders. Also, the National Human Right Commission remains the officially recognized source for human rights reports.

The qualitative phenomenological research design also entailed a comprehension of how I sought support for the theory of the relationship between human rights abuses and political violence. I focused on political, security, and basic needs human rights violations as the factors underpinning the development of terrorism. The concept was to use the study to gain an understanding of the threshold of human rights abuses that resulted in the group turning to violence. The study site was Southwestern Nigeria, the natural environment of the OPC.

Furthermore, I sought a comprehensive explanation for the OPC's decision to turn to violence. I gathered data that captured the perceptions, views, attitudes, and recollections of participants. The data came from members' personal experience using in-depth interviews so that analysis could come naturally into view (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993).

Two major factors contributed to the choice of the OPC for this study. The first is that the OPC merges notable characteristics of armed groups that have come into being during the existence of Nigeria as a democratic country. The second factor is that the OPC remains the most famous and active among the litany of the ethnoreligious militia, vigilantes, and other groups that use firearms.

I also relied on the premise that the phenomenology is better understood as a whole rather than two or more factors. I assumed that phenomenological research works in a natural environment without the imposition of bias, restrictions, and limits by the researcher (Leedy, 1997).

The study also renders an account of the experiences of the participants to the furthest extent. I faithfully represented the accurate position of members to show the objective reality of terrorism from their perspectives. Consequently, I avoided deductive conclusions of a causal relationship of a logical sequence (Wiersma, 1995). Furthermore, the criterion for evaluating the dissertation research included a design that was suitable for the purpose of the study.

Thus, a phenomenological study was employed that generated a holistic picture of the OPC and its role in Nigeria. I used purposeful sampling to select participants. While the OPC has a broad membership base, relatively few of these members have the knowledge and experience of the organization to provide information for this study. Therefore, I selected individuals from a small group of the 1994 founding members for this inquiry. This selection criterion is pertinent because I sought information on the motivation for forming the OPC and it was thus suitable for the stated purpose. The identification of the potential participants encompassed a

temporary plan drawn up in anticipation of the project that eventually emerged as the study unfolded.

As part of the survey's preliminary plan, I visited the OPC headquarters to seek information about potential participants for the study and to find telephone and email contacts for members. Therefore, the context of the initial contact with potential participants was a phone/email discussion format. During the first contact, I explained to the potential participants that they had the right to accept or decline participation.

The preliminary plan also included selections of interview sites within the Lagos metropolis. However, I restricted sessions to the office, home, or other locations chosen by the participants. These reduced the burden that the survey placed on members because they must share personal information and agree to spend an appropriate amount of time on the research. After the initial contact, each member was approached by courier mail with a prepaid return envelope. In the process, I obtained the participants' informed consent before proceeding with the research. Such a process allowed members to review the available information on the study and to ask questions before giving consent for participation.

The consent form required a participant's signature (Appendix A). As an alternative, members were directed to right mark one out of the two square boxes marked "agree" and "disagree" at the bottom right-hand corner of the form to proceed. In this context, the consent form, as part of the interview protocols, did not require a participant's signature or thumb printing. A member was only required to mark the right to continue. Also, participants' demographic information was not included in the

study's report to prevent indirect identification of members. This approach was part of the confidence-building strategy designed to boost the privacy of participants' identities, which the study has sworn to protect.

The consent form also included a statement that the survey would not disclose members' names to preserve their privacy. The consent form was in both the English and Yoruba languages. I paid a qualified English-Yoruba language interpreter to design the consent form. Preparing the consent form in the two languages removed any ambiguity about the meaning and understanding of all the information in the form. I mailed copies of the consent forms to participants in both the Yoruba and English languages. The members retained extra copies of the consent forms sent in the mail.

Furthermore, the consent form included information on the criteria for selecting OPC members for the research. The criteria included membership since 1994 and enough education to understand the essence of the study. A further criterion was that participants must be non-vulnerable adults, meaning they were medically able to participate. The consent form also included a complete account of the design of the study and stated that the data collection procedures were mainly face-to-face interviews. The consent form further stated that a meeting would last for a maximum of 2 hours. Furthermore, it clarified that when the meeting took place in an office, the time would not disrupt the regular working hours of the interviewee.

The consent form made clear that participation was voluntary, and that initial acceptance did not constitute an obligation because a participant could decline to continue at any point during the study. Moreover, the form was explicit that acceptance did not preclude the member's legal rights. Thus, I sought a participant's

legal assent only after his or her agreement to participate in the study voluntarily. The consent form also included information about the potential risk to participants. Such risks could be emotional, economic, legal, and relational. Participants were asked to consider the risks before deciding to participate in the study. This issue was especially relevant because the study was not designed to benefit members individually; it was intended to benefit society as a whole. Finally, the consent form included the telephone and email addresses of Walden University's research advocate. The information about Walden University allowed participants to make a formal complaint against the researcher if there were ethical violations.

Essentially, the final decision on the interview sites was the prerogative of the members. The study prevented intrusion from persons not connected with the survey. Also, I took note of the possibility of intruding on the privacy of a participant's family members where a member chosen to provide data at home. This respect for family members shows that I respected the private lives of the participants. These were in addition to the full Walden-IRB protection for the participants in the study.

I encrypted the gathered information and data to prevent unauthorized access. I also kept participants' information in computer files with passwords. I shredded the physical data on participants after putting it in the written form. I paid a professional transcriber who assisted in transcribing the interview sessions. The transcriber signed a confidentiality agreement in line with the format that is available on Walden University's IRB website. Moreover, I used purposeful sampling to select participants among the founding members of the OPC. I ensured that each member was not

placed under any emotional stress that was beyond what he or she usually encounters in daily life.

The interview protocol contained six questions that did not require disclosure of previous violations of any laws. The questions I asked participants were such that answers did not cause economic or professional work ethic risks. I also minimized the possibilities of physical harm to members by conducting the interviews either at the office, home, or any other location suggested by participants. I used smart phones for the audio-visual recording of the data collection process to reduce any physical risk due to the placement of interview technology.

The study faced relative risk due to the possibilities of participants knowing each other. In addition, this becomes pertinent since the study's target population was a small group of people who started the OPC in 1994. Therefore, to reduce the relative risk to the bare minimum, I adopted the protection of anonymity that maintained the highest professional standards regarding the researcher/participant relationship.

Finally, the rationale and plan for the study were to understand the phenomenon of the homegrown terrorist and terrorist group. There have been recurring waves of ethnic militia events that have caused endless trouble since the birth of the Nigerian state in 1914. Therefore, I explored the phenomenon using the experience of the individuals involved in the formation of the OPC (Abdulazeez, 2012).

I shared the conclusions of the report with the community of stakeholders, especially policy makers. The sharing protocol involved a presentation of copies of

the report to the National Human Right Commission, Abuja at a ceremony (Appendix C). Members of the press at the presentation ceremony reviewed the report.

Moreover, the foremost national dailies were willing to disseminate the report of the study because the issue of terrorism is currently at the forefront of federal discussed.

### **The Phenomenological Study**

I carried out research into the factors behind the founding of a notable ethnic militia group in Nigeria, the OPC. The goal of the inquiry was to consider, understand, and interpret the reason d'être behind the waves of political violence and the development of ethnic militia.

Repeated occurrences of violence due to ethnoreligious conflicts have made Nigeria's politics and economic management unstable since after independence in 1960 (Maier, 2000). In this study, I examined the phenomenon of ethnoreligious conflicts in Nigeria using the phenomenological research design. The phenomenological analysis is also an instrument that originates from the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence.

Furthermore, in this phenomenological research, I attempted to perceive the significance, explanation, and design of the development of ethnic militia. The data came from the views and experience of some of the 1994 founding members of the OPC (Adesoji, 2005; Adora, 2010).

As a senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2007-2011) and a politician with prospects, it is in my personal interest to identify the factors responsible for ethnic conflicts. Thus, my interests agree with the aims and objectives of the study. Furthermore, my Yoruba ethnicity made it easy to work closely with the OPC for the

purpose of collecting data. Additionally, I alerted participants of my status in the society and let them know that the study had nothing to do with politics. As such, members were expected to answer interview questions to the best of their ability with the full power of anonymity.

I structured the collected data into a whole. The two coding techniques reduced the collected data into a primary format. These techniques are context coding and comprehension coding. I comprehensively adopt the coding techniques for the data analysis process. The coding techniques recorded information that is correct in all detail and are useful for the practical purpose of understanding the phenomenon of ethnic militia.

Such techniques help to reduce the abundant quantity of field records and notes and enable efficient and effective refining. Also, comprehension coding was used to record participants' observations regarding the understanding and interpretation of the circumstances that led to the development of terrorist groups.

The detailed written account of the study discussed the topics that frequently recur during the interviews. Also, the study report indicates the regular and intelligible form or sequence discernible in the process of interviewing the participants. I conveyed its conclusions to the research audience through appropriate means.

### **Population**

I designed the dissertation's phenomenological research to investigate terrorism from the Nigerian point of view using the OPC as the focus of the study. The OPC represents the largest group among Nigerian ethnic militias. Therefore, the

people under the study's investigation include all the registered members of the OPC. According to research, membership of the OPC ranges between 1000 and 5000 people from the Southwestern Region of the country (Human Rights Watch, 2003).

However, due to the intricate nature of the phenomenon of terrorism, I used purposeful sampling to select members. The participants are members of the OPC, who have held their membership since 1994. The participants were among the founding fathers of the group as such I collected valid and generalizable data from them.

Although the OPC became violent from 1999-2003, analysts believe that such violence occurred after the formation of a splinter group. Furthermore, the OPC's ideological views are now considered acceptable within the Nigerian polity. In fact, the civilian government of President Jonathan convened a National Sovereign Conference (NSC) between August-November 2014 with active participation of the OPC hierarchy. Convention of a NSC was one of the cardinal political demands of the OPC at its inception in 1994. Many of the founding members are also politically active in the Fourth Republic. Therefore, the study's participants are not in any way similar to individuals from notable criminal organizations such as Al-Qaeda. Also, the individual members are knowledgeable enough to understand the purpose of the inquiry.

A handful of people founded the OPC. Researchers are of the opinion that the OPC was the idea of nine persons (Abdulazeez, 2012), although a score of others joined at inception. Therefore, the study concentrates on a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 20 participants. This number, although small, represents a sizable

number of the founding members of the group. Furthermore, the small number of participants allows the study to focus on obtaining in-depth information.

Importantly, the study's sample size follows the practice advocated in the Bertaux principles of using a minimum number of 15 participants (Bertaux, 1981, cited in Mason, 2010). At the same time, the maximum number of 20 participants adheres to the principle of Ritchie et al. (Ritchie, Lewis, and Elam, 2003, cited in Mason, 2010).

Moreover, the actual number of the study's participants does not depend on saturation. The Ph.D. study does not have the luxury of open-ended research without the challenges of time limitation (Mason, 2010). The factors that determine the study's sample size have more to do with the criteria for selection of members, and the data collection process designed for the study (Ritchie, Lewis, and Elam, 2003).

Also, I restricted sampling to people that were members of the OPC group in 1994. Such an in-depth study allows the researcher to profit from the advantage of significant information about the central issue of the study (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). The study main site is Lagos the political capital city of the Yoruba people (Akintoye, 2010). However, the interviews took place at offices, and homes locations chosen by the participants within the Lagos and the Ibadan metropolis. Besides, many of the founding fathers of the OPC live in Lagos, and the group's headquarters have remained in the city since 1994 (Abdulazeez, 2012).

### **Instrumentation and Materials**

The study employed the standardized, open-ended, one-on-one, interview technique as a tool for gathering data. I formulated six interview questions that addressed each of the six themes developed during the review of literatures for the study. The standardized interview technique made use of the interview protocol that encompassed the six interview questions designed to ensure that interviewees answered the same issues under similar arrangements (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). The standardized, open-ended, one-on-one interview technique is an entirely structured interview tool with a standard protocol (Patton, 2002).

The following six questions were asked during the 15 interviews:

The first question is did the lack of political space for Nigerians in over three decades, contribute to the formation of the OPC in 1994. If so, how?

The second question is how did the extrajudicial killings of Nigerians, especially among groups that opposed the military rule; affect your decision to create the OPC in 1994?

The third question is did the continuing spread of poverty among ordinary Nigerians, contribute to the formation of the OPC in 1994. If so, how?

The fourth question is are the conditions that led to your formation of the OPC different from those that prompted the formation of other ethnic militias such as MEND, the Bakassi Boys, and MOSOP?

The fifth question is does the current democratic dispensation guarantee full political rights, the citizenry's security interests, and general rights to basic needs?

The sixth question is how would you convince the critics that OPC is not a violent organization?

The study synchronizes the feedback from the interviewees by categorizing it according to importance, text, expressions and paragraphs (Creswell, 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). Furthermore, one of the rationales for choosing an instrument for the study is that the committee members and other supervising authorities can quickly evaluate it. Other rationales are that the tool encourages the efficient use of time while reducing differences among participants' responses to facilitate data analysis.

### **Research Validity**

Generally speaking, validity defines the quality of an emerging approach to a design pursued by a study (Creswell, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). Moreover, validity in a qualitative study is used to establish that the deductions of the study are accurate (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

To ensure the design integrity, otherwise known as internal validity, I adopted interpretive and integrity arguments. The interpretive arguments provide assurance that the survey encouraged the advancement of research, and provide a report that is rich in the description (Altheide & Johnson, 1994). Also, to achieve analytical validity, I took control of the interview sessions. It is necessary to take control of the discussion sessions to eliminate any element of bias from the study's report. The report also adheres strictly to a consistence reporting style to make the report of the findings authentic.

Furthermore, I put in place the following strategies to examine its content to determine accuracy. The first approach is to adopt a multiple data collection processes that include the gathering of interview data from participants with different perspectives. The argument for this is that no two people can answer any question in a way that was 100% equal. Also, the data collected includes documents and reports from the human rights community. The collection of triangulated data assisted in building a consistent logical argument for the themes that emerged from the various participants.

The second strategy that guarantees the accuracy of the study conclusions is the use of participant checking. The strategy involves showing copies of the unpublished transcripts of interviews to the interviewee. The respondents were asked to adjudge the accuracy of the transcript and recommend any necessary adjustment. This process ensures that the outcome of the study is accurate, at least from the perspectives of the participants. I also use rich descriptions as a strategy to define the different interview sessions so that readers can feel and share the experience. Thick descriptions gave the report a practical context.

Also, I clarified how the education, experience and social circumstances of the researcher might have shaped an explanation of the deductions from the study. For instance, the fact that the researcher is a Yoruba man plays a significant role in the decision to use the OPC as the focus of the study. Also, the decision to use the OPC satisfies the language related ethical issue imposed on the study. Furthermore, the researcher was involved in a structured interview data collection process and must be able to speak the local languages of the interviewees.

Also, the fact that I am a former Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has the potential to intimidate participants. As part of the informed consent form, the study makes this information available to members. They were encouraged to discount the information while making a decision on whether or not to participate in the study.

Also, the study report passed through a stringent external auditing approval process of the Walden University. Walden University support includes committee oversight, University Research Review (URR) approval and IRB approval. Furthermore, the Walden University approval process provides an objective assessment of the project from conception through to resolution.

Lastly, to ensure integrity, I asked questions in such a way that the procedures and the data collected for the study do not jeopardize the participant's legal and physical safety. I used a standard confidentiality agreement to protect the identity of participants from the third party. This environment ensures that the process always produce identical conclusions (Gall, Borg, and Gall, 1996).

### **Research Reliability**

To ensure that the study is reliable, I used standard procedures that are compatible with those of other researchers conducting investigations of the same type. The standard method ensured that the approach taken by the study accords with the use of emerging qualitative methods to Ph.D. dissertation studies (Gibbs, 2007).

Moreover, I took steps to ensure the compatibility of the approach to other related projects (Yin, 2003). First, I checked the interview transcripts thoroughly.

The possible mistakes at the time of transcription were corrected during crosschecking.

Also, I ensured that there are standard definitions of prearranged and emerging codes used in the data analysis process. The standard definition is necessary to avoid any digression of meaning and understanding of the data collected from the participants. Therefore, the researcher always measured data generated from participants with the codes that have similar meanings.

Also, I developed an intercoder agreement (Creswell, 2009, p. 191) with the supervising authorities under the auspices of the committee chair. The additional opinion thereby given eliminates doubt that the codes used for similar passages of the report are in agreement. These measures strengthened the reliability arguments for the study. Walden University IRB also provides external validity for the study with regards to confirmability and transferability.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

The major data analysis challenge faced by the study was how to uncover and develop findings and conclusions from the significant amount of data. The research generated a lot of data from interview sessions, documented human rights abuses before and post 1994 Nigeria and field notes.

The study's data analysis began by making sense out of the unprocessed data from different sources. Furthermore, the study involved a thorough examination of collected raw data so as to isolate pieces of information with the little value from those that are significant. In this regard, data analysis involved establishing noteworthy patterns and themes. Also, it meant bringing together different conceptual

elements to build a system underpinning the process of communicating the importance of what the study reveals to the audience.

I began the data analysis process from the data collection stage with two strategies. The first was manual coding as a pre-coding technique. Manual coding was applied to identify themes and patterns for the state of human rights abuses in the Nigerian context from the primary data collected from the human rights community. The pre-coding process involved a manual selection of up to 60 themes and ideas for the study in an open format. Manual selection resulted in efficient analyses of the information in the documents from the human rights community. The pre-coding process served as a benchmark for comparing the patterns and themes created from the fieldwork.

The second strategy was the use of a contact summary sheet. Such sheets contained a brief account of the answers provided to the questions by the participants (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Also, the contact summary sheet had a column for field notes and general observations made during interview sessions. Therefore, the contact summary sheet provided a summation of all of the researcher's experience from each aspect of the data collection process. In this way, the contact summary sheet helped to reduce the amount of raw data from the fieldwork to a manageable proportion. The contact summary sheets also confidently established that the results and data obtained from the interviews were reliably accurate. Also, the contact summary sheet had the propensity to change the focus of the research as the discussion progresses and propose recently discovered themes from the interview sessions (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

After completion of data collection by the rules of the research protocol, the researcher began the final data analysis. The final data analysis drew inspiration from two sources. One is the question of how abuses of political, personal and fundamental need rights have contributed to the development of the Nigerian ethnic militias. The other is the use of logical reasoning to gain an accurate and in-depth intuitive understanding of interpretations that emerge during the data collection process.

The data analysis process for the study used the six steps format advocated by Creswell (2009, p. 185). The first step involved the organization of the information gathered from the field in preparation for analysis. The organization of the information included typing, sorting the information recorded on the contact summary sheets and arranging themes and ideas. Preparing the study's raw data for analysis in this way involved transcribing the interview recordings. The professional transcriber mentioned earlier performed this function. The transcriber signed a confidentiality agreement (Appendix B) as a condition for the assignment. Also, as part of the preparation for the analysis, the study produced several prearranged manual codes from existing human rights data on Nigeria.

The second step of the data analysis process involved reading through the refined data collected for the study. The aim was to secure a comprehensive rationale for the information and to think carefully about the meaning of the data as a whole. At this stage, I began writing about the main themes and elements in the information gathered while disregarding exceptions.

The third step of the data analysis involved digital coding using the computer-based software. In this regard, I used digital coding to organize transcripts into words and themes that could be grouped together for processing as single ideas. Also, text material from the contact summary forms was subjected to the same coding to segment the texts to give meaning to the information on the sheets.

This coding process involved codes manually determined in advance of the first step and systems that are expected to emerge from the digital coding of transcripts and other texts. The purpose of combining the two coding variations was to validate the accuracy of the study's findings. The study's coding system enabled the systematic analysis of generated textual data. In this context, the data analysis focused on ideas that address codes based on the existing literature on the nature of human rights violations in Nigeria. Also, the analysis concentrated on systems that brought out the perspectives held by participants and introduced regulations at the commencement of the study.

At the proposal stage, I planned to use NVivo to generate second order analysis to create codes, theme, and phrases from the interview transcripts. Nvivo is the qualitative data analysis software for the education. NVivo can be used to condense the codes and make the data into limited amounts of themes, depicting the data in figures, tables, and discussions (Creswell, 2007). NVivo is also useful for comparing emerging codes across interviewees, searching for themes in thematic analysis and comparing predetermined and developing systems.

Unfortunately, Nvivo was not compatible with the inductive approach to research. The Nvivo software is typically a window based computer software

program; it worked perfectly in a deductive coding scheme that considered variable, mutually exclusive, exhaustive, and details of the coding process (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008).

In the study, I introduced a basic inductive coding scheme (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008) to replace the Nvivo software. Furthermore, I coded the thick and robust amounts of data obtained from the contact summary sheet and the interview transcripts. The summary sheet helped to combine and analyse the collected data into a meaningful, coherent whole that reflects the researcher's thoughts about the information.

The fourth step of the data analysis procedure involved the use of codes to create written ideas that frequently recur during the interviews and other text data. The emerged codes, themes, and categories are described to understand the meaning of the development of the Nigerian ethnic militias.

The fifth step of the data analysis process was to proceed in a positive way to establish how the written texts and ideas generated from the study reach the scholarly community. I documented the written texts and ideas that communicated the multiple views of the participants and provide detailed descriptions of the interview sessions. The presentation also includes historical details of participants' experiences.

The last step of the data analysis included an explanation of the meaning of the study's findings. Furthermore, the study report at this stage took into account the rationale behind the development of the Nigerian ethnic militias and the negative consequences. Moreover, if proven in the affirmative, the theoretical lens of human rights abuses could collaborate to offer an action agenda for the study of terrorism.

### **Limitations**

The weaknesses in the dissertation include the process of collecting data, which involved interview sessions, documents, and audio-visual materials. Therefore, the potential limitations of the study's discussion sessions included filtering indirect information through the views of the interviewees. Another possible limitation of the interview sessions was the possibility of bias in the participants' responses due to the presence of the researcher. Also, the interviewees' potentially disparate views about the phenomenon under investigation are a possible limitation (Creswell, 2009).

The potential limitations that document collection imposed on the study included the need to look for information in places that are hard to access, incomplete records, and the possibility of collecting inaccurate records. Also, audio-visual documentation required another observer in the person of a photographer whose presence could disrupt the participants' responses (Creswell, 2009).

The study addressed the identified potential weaknesses. For example, the interviewees answered the same questions. Also, during the interview sessions, the interviewee does most of the talking so that the interviewer may not influence response. Furthermore, by choosing participants with above-average educational backgrounds, the researcher was able to ensure required cognition (Patton, 2002).

Also, I addressed the potential limitations on the use of documentation through the restriction of documents to those of peer-reviewed institutions and multilateral sources. In particular, most materials for the study came from the National Human Rights Commission. Also, video recordings of the interview sessions with a smartphone did not require the presence of a photographer.

Lastly, I tried as far as possible to reduce the threat to reliability by detailing in the report every possible personal bias that he might have about the study. Also, the participants were given the opportunity to review the draft report to ensure that it matches their submissions (Creswell, 2007). However, the challenge of not being able to pursue issues outside the pre-arranged questions during the interview sessions remained a potential weakness for the study because of the instrument used for data collection. The structured protocol questions also reduced the degree of any difference in perspectives.

### **Ethical Concerns**

In the phenomenological study, the possibility of improper participant consent is an important moral concern, particularly as interview sessions produce a large amount of data. As part of the strategy to prevent the unethical practice of improper participant consent, the interview protocol for the study included a consent form. The participants also endorsed a sub-consent form before every interview session (Cooper & Schindler, 2001).

Also, I informed participants about the right to refuse to continue at any point during the interviews. Furthermore, after initial identification, each participant was given a serial number. All subsequent documents and data from the participants bore the allocated serial number. Serial numbering enabled the researcher to track information from various sites without disclosing their identities. Labels on the notes and manuscripts collected from each part of the project also have serial numbers. Thus, serial numbering hides the identities of the study's participants (Creswell, 2007, 2009).

Also, the research assistants that doubled as the transcribers and the typists used in the data collection process signed a confidentiality agreement. The research assistant was prohibited from disclosing the identity of participants under oath. Finally, I tried as far as possible to ensure that interview sessions did not impose additional stress on the members beyond the routine stress of daily life. For example, when a meeting takes place in the home of the interviewee, the researcher ensured the comfort of the family members. In an interview at the place of work, the researcher provided that the time chosen does not affect the official business of the respondent.

### **Summary**

This chapter detailed the research design selected to answer the primary research question of whether there is a connection between the abuses of political, personal, and basic needs rights of Nigerians during the over three decades of military rules (1966-1999) and the eventual turning to violence by the OPC. This primary research question provided the rationale for development of the six interview questions, utilized in the phenomenological approach.

The research design was a Social-Constructivist philosophical perspective with the underlying assumption that human beings desire to achieve the comprehension of the world in which they live and work. The goal of the research was to use phenomenological research approach to understanding the meaning of the events that led to the founding of the OPC. The study also examined how the OPC turn violent at a later stage in the struggle to seek political relevance for the citizenry.

The phenomenological research conducted in-depth one-on-one interviews that asked flexible, open-ended questions that continued to evolve from the study. The

subject of the study included a minimum of 15 and maximum of 20 of the 1994 inaugural members of the OPC. The researcher while conducting the interviews collated the data from the field. However, the investigator did not impose personal views when conducting the interview sessions.

The research data include jotted notes, audio-visual recordings from the interview sessions. Data also included documentary, human rights abuse records on Nigeria. Also, data analysis was a fundamental process that converted codes, themes, and patterns into standard reports that are very rich in literature. The study also ensured the use of the standard definitions of prearranged and emerging systems in the data analysis process. These strict interpretive approaches to data analysis conferred validity and reliability in the study. Lastly, the study addressed the ethical concern by introducing a consent form at every contact juncture to remind the participants of the voluntary nature of their involvement.

## Chapter 4: Results

### **Introduction**

Nigeria is an underdeveloped country that is rich in natural resources with an ethnically diverse population, a situation that fits the character of a conflict-prone nation (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004). Nigeria provided a perfect environment for the development of many ethnic militias. There is a problem in the Nigerian society concerning ethnic based homegrown terrorist groups that tend to spring up each time there is a transition in governance. Conflicts of ethnic-based undertones thwarted the nation's first three attempts at Republican democracy. The Fourth Republic that came into existence in 1999 is also experiencing instability due to ethnoreligious conflict spearheaded by the Boko Haram insurgency.

The problem of incessant ethnic based insurgency aids instability in governance leading to reduce indices of economic and human development. This problem of poor management and violence has severely affected many Nigerians. The severe effects include losing loved ones and sources of income to terror attacks. Moreover, many Nigerians have become refugees living in emergency camps as internally displaced persons due to an act of terror perpetrated by an ethnic-based militia. A possible cause of this problem is human rights abuses by stable governments.

This study addressed a gap in knowledge through the application of the existing extensive literature in a particular context to understudy the OPC, a local pan-Yoruba terrorist ethnic militia. The research methodology also moved away from the usual orthodox approach by using open-ended standardized interview sessions as

the primary tool for gathering data for the inquiry. Moving away from the conventional approach becomes pertinent because the study is the notion that the act of terrorism is better understood from the narratives and experience of the actors. I developed an interview protocol that contained six interview questions designed to answer the study's central research question of how the abuses of citizenry political, security, and personal needs rights affect the formation of the OPC in 1994 and its eventually turning to violence.

### **Interview Questions**

1. How did the lack of political space for Nigeria over a period of 3 decades that culminated in the annulment of the June 1992 presidential election contribute to the formation of the OPC in 1994?
2. How did the wanton extrajudicial killings of Nigerians, especially among groups who have shown opposition to military rule, affect your decision to create the OPC in 1994?
3. How did a continued spread of poverty among ordinary Nigerians despite the availability of abundant resources from petrol dollar contribute to your decision to take part in the formation of the OPC in 1994?
4. How would you consider the general understanding that the conditions that led to your formation of the OPC cannot be different from those that push the formation of other ethnic militia such as MEND and Boko Haram?
5. How would you consider the notion that the current democratic dispensation still does not guarantee full political interests, citizenry security rights, and general interests to basic needs?

6. How would you convince the critics that OPC is not a violent organization?

### **Settings**

Though the OPC started as an obscure activists army of Yoruba youths, now it is a structured organization with branches in more than 60 countries. This institutionalization against autocratic leadership and human rights violations facilitated the support for this research and influenced membership participation in the study.

### **Participants Demographics**

Age, gender, location, and education level were the demographic factors relevant to the study. The participants were in the six age strata. They included 40 to 44 =1 (one person), 45 to 49 = 4 (four people), 50 to 54=5 (five people), 55– 59=1 (one person), 60 to 64=3 (three people), and 65+=1 (one person). As for gender demography, 14 of the 15 participants were male respondents while one was a female dependent. On location, 13 of the 15 members were located within the Lagos metropolis; the remaining two locations were in Ibadan the political headquarter of the Yorubas. Furthermore, three categories of education level were discovered among the 15 participants. 10 of the participants had the minimum education requirement for the study that is a high school certificate, three are with Bachelor's degrees, and two participants have Ph.D. degrees.

### **Data Collection**

The research was carried out over the period of approximately five weeks. I telephoned, emailed, and reached the members in-person. The course of the first two in Lagos took me to the residence of the two leading leaders of the OPC to enlist their

help in the study. These initial contacts served as an opportunity to identify and initiate contacts with potential participants. However, the first contact with the leadership took no part in bringing together different elements needed to ensure expert interviews, including obtaining consent forms. The second visit took me to the corporate headquarters of the OPC at Shomolu Lagos where many of the participants were met in person and got copies of the consent forms for perusal. The potential participants learned about the voluntary nature of the study, including that their names and their personalities would remain confidential, and the potential risks and benefits connected with the survey. After the collation, 23 persons indicated a willingness to take part in the study. Eventually, only 15 people met the study criteria and became the participants. The other eight persons were discovered to have joined the OPC at various times between 1996 and 1998. Telephone conversations were used to book interview sessions with the members.

### **Interviews**

Each of the interview sessions took an average of 40 minutes. The steps taken commenced with the exchange of pleasantries and explanation of the reason for the study and the rights of research participants. There was an original consent form for member signature. The interviewee name, date of birth, house address, e-mail address, and telephone numbers was hand-written on the contact form. The interview was voice recorded with a smart voice recorder and a passport blackberry phone as a backup. I transcribed the recorded documents and the hand written notes on the contact form into English. During the interview sessions, a list of six interview questions was used to design the interview protocol. These six interview questions

provided a structured approach to the discussion sessions and made certain that interviewees were not inundated with interview questions. The idea was to use the interview protocol to elicit other insights about the topics in question. The transcriber doubled as the research assistant and assisted me in reading the six research questions as the interviewees responded one after the other. When needed, I asked follow-up questions to clarify participant responses.

The employer of the research assistant allowed me to make notes on the contact form (Miles & Huberman, 1994) as the interview session progressed. Furthermore, the use of the research assistant to read the question ensured that the six questions were presented to the XV participants in the same way and with the same understanding (Patton, 2002). The encrypted generated document in a computer format is safe for at least years, by the requirement of the Walden University.

The interview sessions, once scheduled, were conducted over a period of two weeks. The first batch of interviews involved 11 participants, and on average two meetings per day took place in 1 week at the Shomolu headquarters of the OPC. The second batch of interviews also covered a period of one week at one session per day because of the distance and the protocol in seeking an appointment with the interviewees. One of these interviews took place in the private office of the spiritual leader of the OPC located in Lagos, and another in the living room of an OPC National officer in Lagos. The third one took place in a participant's home. The fourth and the last interview took place in the office of a member who is a lecturer at the African Institute Department of the University of Ibadan.

There was one major variation in the real-time data collection and the earlier planned data collection process presented earlier in the study. After the first and the second interactions with the eventual participants of the study, it became apparent that the OPC members now see themselves as promoters of the Yoruba culture and by extension the Yoruba language, and they promised their participation research questions in the Yoruba language. Subsequently, I had to prepare the Yoruba version of the study protocol term “Ibeere Ni Ede Yoruba” now Appendix D (a) to the dissertation.

### **Observation**

Observatory data collection is very limited in the study, being a phenomenological research study with an emphasis on interviews. However, my view included the rotating display of enthusiasm towards the study and the public display of happiness noticed at the group headquarters during the 5 weeks of interaction.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis was accomplished consistent with the research methodology developed during the proposal phase. The process commenced with the transcribing of the audio-recorded interview data into the transcript by the active transcriber for the study. Also, hand-written notes and jottings on the contact forms were typed into the transcript. The transcripts are labeled as Comrade No1, 2.... 15 as a measure to keep the identities of participant secret.

The next step taken to analyze the data was to read through the transcripts with the view to identify the framework to structure, label, and define the data as a coding program. The coding plan included a manual coding structure as a conceptual

framework for the study that is attached to the dissertation as Annex E. To generate post analysis codes; I arranged the responses in the transcripts into categories based on the six research questions. The earlier plan as presented in the proposal was to use Nvivo to generate second-order analysis to create codes, theme, and phrases from the transcripts; unfortunately, Nvivo was not compatible with the inductive approach to research. The Nvivo software is typically a window based computer software program; it worked perfectly in a deductive coding scheme that considered variable, mutually exclusive, exhaustive, and details of the coding process (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008).

In the study, I introduced a basic inductive coding scheme (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008) to replace the Nvivo software. This inductive coding was best for this study because of the exploratory nature of the investigation. More so, it was computer based and assisted in retaining, operating, retrieving, and analyzing data quickly. I developed the coding system by the response to each of the six open-ended questions on the research protocol. I created six folders on the computer that were labeled Q1 to Q6. For instance, the 15 responses to the first question (Q1) were put in the Folder Q1 with the participant tag. The same with the replies to the other five questions in their respective folders. I then read through the folders several times to identify and mark with red ink resembling un-identical phrases, relationships, patterns, themes, distinct differences between subgroups, and typical sequence folder by folder. I generated codes by each of the folders. The collated systems were tabulated to determine the frequency of occurrence of each of the particular piece of data in the respondent responses in each folder. I then processed identified patterns

into commonalities and differences, if any. The detected pattern followed a careful arrangement of a small set of general statements that is accurate in the database and that forms the basis for the defined categories. The generalizations were investigated thoroughly to draw knowledge in the form of theories and constructs.

For instance, on the question of what led to the formation of the OPC in 1994, particular themes that emerged including “Chief Awolowo”, and “Chief MKO Abiola”. These two names are the shortchanged Yoruba leaders’ who did not attain the highest political office in Nigeria in 1979 and 1983, and 1993 respectively. The most common phrases included “continued marginalization of the Yorubas in Nigeria politics” and “the cheating of Chief Awolowo in 1979 and 1983 presidential elections.” The others included “Chief MKO Abiola the presumed winner of the annulled 1993 presidential election,” “a general understanding among democracy groups that the 1993 annulment was primarily a Yoruba problem,” and “annulment as the primary reason for the emergence of the OPC.”

Furthermore, the question of how the wanton extrajudicial killing contributed to the formation of the OPC generated themes/phrases. The phrases included Military Junta, “General Abacha, Decree 4, NADECO, Suliat Adedeji Kudirat Abiola, Shola Omoateyinwa, Ken Saro-Wiwa, and Pa Alfred Rilwani, as notable victims of extrajudicial killings. The common themes and phrases also included “extrajudicial killing as a primary concern to the members of the OPC” and “use of African protection or Voodoo by the OPC members to render military bullet useless.” Others are “arrest and disappearance of many journalists,” “rampant killing of many innocent persons especially the Yorubas,” and “the annulment and the formation of the OPC

exacerbate extrajudicial killings”. The question on widespread poverty generated phrases that included “corruption and embezzlement as the cause of poverty,” “the majority of Nigerians (about 80%) are poor,” and “poverty is a permanent feature of Nigeria, not a reason for the formation of the OPC.

### **Evidence of Credibility and Dependability**

#### **Credibility**

To achieve personal credibility, I took control of the interview sessions. This power became pertinent in order to eliminate any element of bias from the study’s report. The elimination of bias ensures that the quality of the design approach for the study is high (Creswell, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). The study report is also tailored to follow the practice of a consistent reporting style to authenticate the report of the findings (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This consistency also gives credibility to the study report.

#### **Confirmability**

Each of the participants got the unpublished copies of the report for crosschecking to adjudge the accuracy of the transcript with the view to correct any discrepancy. This crosschecking is what Creswell (2009) referred to as participants checking. The study report also included a visualized description of the interview sessions that gave the final report a practical context (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The combination of the participant’s checking and possible context confirm with the assurance that the report of the study is true.

### **Transferability**

The interview process asked questions under a confidential agreement that did not jeopardize the legal and physical safety of the participants (Patton, 2002). Also, the study report and process have gone through a stringent external auditing approval procedure of the Walden University. This authorization process included committee oversight, University Research Review (URR) approval, and IRB approval reference number #09-21-15-00315909 confers external validity for the study with regards to transferability.

### **Dependability**

The standardized open-ended one-on-one interview (Patton, 2002) system used in the study is compatible with the tools used by other researchers conducting investigations of the same type. The standardized system is readily available, reliable, and maintainable. This availability, reliability, and maintainability characteristics of the standardized system confer dependability on the research in line with the emerging qualitative approaches to Ph.D. dissertation studies (Gibbs, 2007).

### **Results**

How did the lack of political space for Nigeria over a period of three decades that culminated in the annulment of the June 1992 presidential election contribute to the formation of the OPC in 1994? (Interview Question 1)

This section is the results of the analysis of the responses to the question of how the lack of political space for Nigeria over a period of three decades that culminated in the annulment of the June 1993 presidential election contribute to the

formation of the OPC in 1994. In summary, the result indicated that on the scale of 100, participants agreed that *the perceived aged long marginalization of the Yoruba ethnic groups in the national politics* contributed 79 percent in the decision that led to the formation of the OPC (see Table 1 and Fig. 1). The *annulment of the 1993 Presidential elections* and *the existence of other pro-democracy group* contributed only 12% and 9% weighted average in the decisions that led to the formation of the OPC respectively.

The transcripts of responses used in the process of the data analysis generated Codes/themes/phrases and their frequency of occurrences (see Table 1). The theme includes Chief Awolowo, Chief MKO Abiola, Kudirat Abiola, Gani Adams, and Fredrick Fasheun. The phrases includes “Handing-over of Nigeria to Hausa/Fulani in 1960”. Also, we generated “The incarceration of Chief Awolowo in Phantom treason trial” and “The cheating of Chief Awolowo in 1979 and 1983 presidential elections” as phrases. “The annulment of free and fair election again in 1993” and “Chief MKO Abiola was the presumed winner of the annulled 1993 election” are part of the phrases generated. Other phrases include “Existing umbrella pro-democracy groups include JACON and NADECO” and “A general understanding within the pro-democracy group that the annulment was primarily a Yoruba problem.” “Canvass for the reinstatement of the June 1993 election,” “Need for the formation of a Pan-Yoruba group,” and “Emergence of the OPC in August 1994” is another set of the phrases. Also, “Annulment has a significant contribution to the formation of the OPC” and “Annulment as the primary reason for the emergence of the OPC” are phrases. The last of the phrases is “Dire economic condition and the hope of Abiola presidency

contributed to the formation of the OPC”. The study summarized the codes/themes/phrases and the frequency of occurrences (see Table 1) into three broad categories (key ideas) as analyzed below. Each of the three broad categories underscores the meaning of the codes that were compressed to arrive at the category.

Table 1  
*Codes/Themes Frequency of Occurrences From the Responses to Interview Question 1*

Codes	Themes/Phrases	Frequency
1.	Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Chief MKO Abiola, Kudirat Abiola, Gani Adams, Fredrick Fasehun	13
2.	Handing-over of Nigeria to Hausa/Fulani in 1960	4
3.	The Imprison of Chief Awolowo in Phantom treason trial	2
4.	The cheating of the Yorubas in 1979, and 1983 presidential elections	9
5.	The annulment of free and fair election again in 1993	5
6.	Chief MKO Abiola was the presumed winner of the annulled 1993 election	9
7.	Existing umbrella pro-democracy groups include JACON and NADECO	3
8.	A general understanding within the pro-democracy group that the Annulment was primarily a Yoruba problem	5
9.	Canvass for the reinstatement of the June 1993 election	2
10.	Need for the formation of a Pan-Yoruba group due to political marginalization	9
11.	Emergence of the OPC in August 1994	5
12.	Annulment has significant contribution to the formation of the OPC	12
13.	Annulment as the primary reason for the emergence of the OPC	3
14.	The hope of Abiola presidency on the economy contributed impetus to the formation of the OPC	5
TOTAL FREQUENCY		86

### **Age Long Marginalization of Yorubas in National Politics**

The question here is for the annulment of the June 1993 presidential election. The majority of participants about 9 out of 15 representing 60% of participants were of the view that the formation of the OPC was by the attempt to squeeze the Yorubas out of the national politics. They sighted events such as the British handing-over of Nigeria to the Hausa/Fulani ethnic nationalities in 1960. The second event is the politically motivated conviction of treason and felony in 1963 of Chief Jeremiah Obafemi Awolowo the active leader of the Yoruba nation, and perhaps the modern day deity of the Yoruba race. Chief Awolowo was then the head of the action group and by extension the leader of the opposition in the House of Commons during the first republic. The other events were the 1979 & 1983 presidential elections in which the Northern oligarchy denied Chief Awolowo victory. The referred events mentioned above shows that the Yoruba marginalization in the politics of the central government is dispositional, situational and systematic (Zimbardo, 2007). Staub (2007) argued that in a multiethnic society would come together to fight political marginalization violently. They argued that annulment of the 1993 election won by another Yoruba man was the threshold of the injustice (Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens, 2006) and necessitated a pan-Yoruba response that led to the formation of the OPC. Codes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, & 12 in the Table 1 were compressed into this category.

### **Annulment as the Only Reason for the Emergence of the OPC**

Though all participants agreed on the importance of the cancellation of the June 1993 presidential election in the decision to create the OPC. However, the transcript from this category shows that 6 out of the 15 participants representing 40%

argued for the annulment as the only reason behind the formation of the OPC. Those in this category contended that without the annulment probably there would not have been the OPC. In their view, the June 1993 presidential election was the freest election ever held in the history of Nigeria. Thus, the annulment of the 1993 Presidential election represented the height of political injustice (Achebe, 2012). Some of the respondents also think that people saw Abiola as the Messiah destined to change the challenging economic condition of Nigeria in the early 1990s. So the OPC emerged in 1994 principally to canvass for the de-annulment of the 1993 election won by Chief Abiola. This category is made up of the codes 7, 8, & 9 in the Table 1.

#### **JACON and NADECO are Prodemocracy Umbrella Groups**

This umbrella group class argued that the OPC emerged from the existing pro-democracy groups including the CD, JACON, and NADECO. The situation concurs with the notion that there is no terrorism in the absence of real or imaginary grievances (Rosenfeld, 2004). The contention among the participants is that the general understanding among the pro-democracy groups was that the annulment was a Pan-Yoruba problem. The Yoruba members of the pro-democratic organizations took up the challenge and form the OPC, a Pan-Yoruba organization. Thus, the OPC at birth was seeing as the Yoruba extension of the existing group. They explained that this was why the OPC was not well known in the early years. Codes 13&14 in Table 1 are compressed to arrive at this category.

Table 2

*Percentage Contribution of the Main Themes from the Responses to Interview Question 1*

Codes	Categories (Key Themes)	Frequency	%
1	<i>Age Long Marginalization of Yorubas in National Politics (Codes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, &amp; 12 in Table Q1)</i>	68	79
2	<i>Annulment as The Only Reason For The Emergence of The OPC (codes 7,8, &amp; 9 in the Table Q1)</i>	10	12
3	<i>Existing Umbrella Pro-Democracy Groups Include JACON &amp; NADECO (Codes 13&amp;14 in the Table Q1)</i>	8	9

How did the wanton extrajudicial killings of Nigerians especially among groups that have shown opposition to military rule affect your decision to create the OPC in 1994? (Interview Question 2)

In this section, the study examined the elements of the responses received to the question of how did the wanton extra-judicial killings of Nigerians especially among groups that have shown opposition to military rule affect your decision to create the OPC in 1994. The result indicated that on a weighted average scale of 100, participants were of the view that *wanton extrajudicial executions* contributed 8% weighted average in the decision to form the OPC, and 86 percent of the decision that led the OPC turning to violence tactics (see Table 3 and Fig. 2). Also, incessant incarceration of democracy activist without judicial trial contributed 6% to the decision to form the OPC.

The themes/phrases and frequencies generated from the data analysis of the transcripts of responses to interview question 2 (see Table 3). The themes include Gani Fawehinmi, Beko Kutu, Alao Akabatorun, Femi Falana, Chima Ubani, Fredric Fasheun, Chief Olu Falae, and Senator Durojaiye Olabiyi. Other themes are Alhaja

Suliat Adedeji, Kudirat Abiola, Shola Omoateyinwa, Ken Saro-Wiwa, and Pa Alfred Riliwan. The phrases includes “Extra-judicial killing as the primary reason for the formation of the OPC,” “Use of African Protection or Voodoo by OPC against military bullet,” and “Confrontation between Operation Sweep and 20, 000 OPC members.” The other familiar phrases also include “Abacha 2 Million-Man March in Abuja Vs Fawehinmi 5 Million-Man March in Lagos” and “Rampant killing of innocent persons especially Yorubas.” Also, “Constant infringement on people’s personal rights” and “General killing of the members of the opposition” is part of the phrases generated.

“Decree 4 as a tool for keeping away the opposition,” “Arrest and disappearance of many journalists,” and “Worst democracy better than the best military government” are part of the phrases. “Perpetually imprisoned were Gani Fawehinmi, Beko Kutu, Alao Akabatorun, Femi Falana, Chima Ubani, Fredrick Fasheun, Chief Olu Falae, Senator Durojaiye Olabiyi” is also one of the common phrases. “Standardize democracy as practiced in Germany, USA, and Britain” and “Denial of the right to life” are also part of the phrases generated. Also, “OPC human rights agitator” and “Operation Sweep, a special police squad to suppress NADECO” is another set of phrases. “The annulment and the formation of the OPC exacerbate the killings” and “OPC lost many members to extrajudicial killing though cancellation led to the formation of the OPC” are also conventional ideas. The ideas/phrases highlighted above resulted in the identification of the three broad categories (key ideas) discussed below.

Table 3  
*Codes/themes Frequency of Occurrences From the Responses to Interview Question 2*

Codes	Themes/Phrases	Frequency
1.	Perpetually imprisoned were Gani Fawehinmi, Beko Kuti, Alao Akaborun, Femi Falana, Chima Ubani, Fredrick Fasheun, Chief Olu Falae, and Senator Durojaiye Olabiyi.	4
2.	Alhaja Suliat Adedeji, Kudirat Abiola, Shola Omoateyinwa, Ken Saro-Wiwa, and Pa Alfred Riliwan were prominent victim of extrajudicial killings	4
3.	Extrajudicial killing as the Main Reason for the formation of the OPC	3
4.	Use of African Protection or Voodoo by OPC against military bullet	4
5.	Confrontation between Operation Sweep and 20, 000 OPC members	1
6.	Abacha 2 Million-Man March in Abuja Vs Fawehinmi 5 Million-Man March in Lagos	1
7.	Rampant killing of innocent persons especially Yorubas	4
8.	Constant infringement on people's personal rights	5
9.	General killing of the members of opposition	5
10.	Decree 4 as tool for keeping away opposition	3
11.	Arrest and disappearance of many journalists	2
12.	Worst democracy better than the best military government	2
13.	Standardize democracy as practiced in Germany, USA, Britain	1
14.	Denial of right to life	3
15.	OPC a human rights agitator	2
16.	Operation Sweep, a special police squad, to suppress NADECO	3
17.	The annulment and the formation of the OPC exacerbate the killings	9
18.	OPC lost many members to extrajudicial killing though annulment led to the formation of the OPC	8
TOTAL FREQUENCY		64

### **The Extrajudicial Killing Resulted in the Decision to Form the OPC**

Although nearly every one of the participants supported the notion that extrajudicial executions were a very common phenomenon at the time of the formation of the OPC. Only a few of the respondents alluded to extrajudicial killing as a contributing factor in the decision to form the OPC. The majority of the participants are of the opinion that citizens have been experiencing insecurity since the military took over the affair of governance in 1966. The position of the members agreed with the notion that citizens will only react to security abuse after passing a threshold point (Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens, 2006). They contended that citizenry insecurity was part of the factors that provided the necessary environment for the emergence of the OPC. The themes 3 & 15 (see Table 3) fall into this category.

### **Extrajudicial killings Led to OPC Turning to Violence**

The general view expressed by the respondents is that extrajudicial executions became more rampant after the annulment and more so after the formation of the OPC. The participants mentioned that many journalists from ant-military publishing houses vanished without traces. The notable examples of killings referred to by members occurred after the formation of the OPC and the annulment of the presidential election of 1993. The readily mentioned killings include that of Alhaja Suliat Adedeji, Kudirat Abiola, Shola Omoateyinwa, Ken Saro-Wiwa, and Pa Alfred Riliwan, all members of NADECO. Also, all the demonstrations that witnessed mass police brutality occurred after the annulment. It is the contention of the respondents that the death of Chief Abiola in the military detention in July 1998 represented the threshold point Callaway

and Harrelson-Stephens, 2006) that marked the turning to the violence of the OPC. The phrases numbers 2,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14, &16 (see Table 3) fell into this category

### **Unrestrained Imprisonment of Activist Without Judicial Trial**

The question on the extrajudicial killing also elicited discussion on incessant imprisonment of Nigerians without recourse to judicial pronouncement. They argued that extrajudicial murder and detainment without trial under Decree 4 were the two sides of the same sword. They charged with phantom offenses those that the murder squads are unable to arm with the state apparatus under Decree 4. The findings agreed with the notion that human rights abuses created an environment for the development of the ethnic militias that later turn violent (Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens, 2006). The members recalled those that were frequently in and out of prison around the time included Gani Fawehinmi, Beko Kutu, Alao Akabatorun, Femi Falana, Chima Ubani, Fredric Fasheun, Chief Olu Falae, and Senator Durojaiye Olabiyi. The theme code one made-up this category (see Table 4).

Table 4

*Percentage Contribution of the Main Themes From the Responses to Interview Question 2*

Codes	Categories (Key Themes)	Frequency	%
1	Extrajudicial Executions Led to the Decision to Form The OPC	5	8
2	Extrajudicial killings led to the OPC Turning to Violence	55	86
3	Unrestrained Imprisonment of Activist Without Judicial Trial	4	6

How did the continued spread of poverty among ordinary Nigerian despite the availability of abundant resources from petrol dollar contribute to your decision to take part in the formation of the OPC in 1994? (Interview Question 3)

This section of the report is the results of the examination of the responses to the role played by the spread of poverty among ordinary Nigerian in the decision that led to the formation of the OPC in 1994. This spread of poverty is despite the availability of abundant resources from petrol dollar. The results show that poverty is not a factor in the formation of the OPC. However, the result shows that on the scale of 100, 44% of the participant's contributions considered poverty as an age long problem for the country. Also, 36% of the contributions found endemic poverty as providing an environment for the development of the phenomenon of the ethnic militia. The rest 20% of the argument found the system of governance as parochial and responsible for endemic poverty (see Table 5 and Fig.5).

The generated codes/themes/phrases from the transcript of responses to Q3 (see Table 5) include phrases such as "High Level of Poverty" and "About 80% of Nigerians are paupers." Others phrases include "Farming as the mainstay of Yoruba occupation," "Corruption as Cause of Poverty," and "Selfish Leadership." Also, "Restructuring of the system of governance," "OPC poverty eradication model," and "Too Much Emphasis on Oil" are part of the phrases. "Implementation of 2014 SNC Report," "Poverty a Motivating Factor for the Formation of Ethnic Militias," and "Poverty not the Reason for Forming the OPC" are also part of the phrases generated by Q3. The following categories emanated from the data analysis examination of the codes/themes/phrases that emerged from the Q3 responses.

Table 5

*Table showing codes/themes frequency of occurrences from the responses to Interview Question 3*

Codes	Themes/Phrases	Frequency
1.	High Level of Poverty	13
2.	About 80% of Nigerians are poor	6
3.	Farming as the mainstay of Yoruba occupation	2
4.	Corruption and Embezzlement as Cause of Poverty	6
5.	Selfish Leadership	13
6.	Restructuring of system to remove corruption answer to poverty	4
7.	OPC designed unique model to minimize poverty among its rank	3
8.	Too many emphases on Oil	2
9.	Implementation of 2014 SNC Report	3
10.	Poverty a Motivating Factor in the Formation of Ethnic Militias	12
11.	Poverty is a Permanent Feature, Not Reason for Forming the OPC	13
TOTAL FREQUENCY		77

### **Poverty as Age Long Problem of Nigeria**

The argument of most participants on this topic is that Nigeria lacks good leadership for the proper management of its resources. They argued that poverty is being pervasive since Nigeria's existence. They contend that the majority of those in the leadership position have shown a selfish and corrupt tendency. In fact, the majority alluded that corruption is the bane of poverty in Nigeria and that poverty is endemic in more than 80% of the population. The submissions correlate with the theory that at the time of the formation of the OPC the country's economy was in a

state of disrepair due to official corruptions in very high positions of government (Ayttey, 2005). The phrases 2, 3, 5, & 11 belong to this category (see Table 5).

### **Parochial System of Governance**

A good number of the participants are also of the view that the old colonial system of government is the cause of endemic poverty. This group argued that the system requires a major restructuring that tapped available natural resources fully. Some participants in this category derided the reliance on only one commodity while others remain untapped. There is also the argument for digitalized approach to governance that encouraged young and enterprising Nigerians to occupy highest positions of authority. The majority of participants in this category advocate the implementation of the 2014 SNC report as a step toward restructuring. This member's response is in line with the argument that the British colonial master bestowed on the developing country a poor legacy of governing institutions (Ayandele, 1979; Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). The themes 4, 6, 8 & 9 are in this category (see Table 5).

### **Poverty Provides Environment for Development of Ethnic Militias**

Those that argued along this theory are of the view that pervasive misery as found in Nigeria provides the environment for the development of ethnic militias. They contended that though general poverty might not have been a factor when forming the OPC, the prevailing economic condition was a continuing motivating factor. Though they also agreed with both corruption and conventional systems as original arguments for poverty. The view supports the notion that the appalling state of the country's economy gave the OPC and other ethnic militias reason to turn

violent (Soyinka, 2012). The themes 1, 10, & 7 come under this category (see Table 5).

Table 6

*Table showing percentage contribution of the main themes from the responses to Interview Question 3*

Codes	Categories (Key Themes)	Frequency	%
1.	Poverty as Age Long Problem of Nigeria	34	44
2.	Parochial System of Governance	15	20
3.	Poverty Provide Environment For Development of Ethnic Militias	28	36

How would you consider the general understanding that the conditions that led to your formation of the OPC cannot be different from those that push the formation of other ethnic militia such as MEND, and Boko Haram? (Interview Question 4).

The section examined the responses to the question on the general understanding that the conditions that led to the formation of the OPC cannot be different from those that push the formation of other ethnic militia such as MEND, and Boko Haram. The result of this question shows that about 60% of the times the participants referred to the OPC as being a visionary organization. Also, 21% of the times the respondents contended that the struggle for power and liberty is the bottom-line for all militia agitations including that of the OPC. The rest 19% of the times, the respondents argued that the aim and objectives of the OPC and other ethnic militia are quite distinct (see Table 7 and Fig. 6 in Appendix FQ4).

The following generated codes/themes/phrases and frequencies of occurrences were from the analysis of data collated on Q4. The phrases include “OPC primary objective is to liberate Yoruba race from political marginalization which is different

from that of Mend and Boko Haram.” Another one is “OPC now fully involved in the business of promoting Yoruba cultural heritage with branches in more than 60 countries.” The other phrases include “Gani Adams led the effort to rebrand OPC as a Pan-Yoruba cultural organization” and “OPC has prudent leadership.” Also, “The vision and mission of the OPC are different from that of MEND and BOKO HARAM” and “OPC formed to add value and promote the culture and tradition of the Yoruba race” are some of the phrases. “OPC never carries a gun nor throw a bomb to kill or destroy government property” and “The story of the OPC is a lesson to other ethnic militias” is another set of phrases. “So much injustice in Nigeria,” “Violence use as propaganda to destroy the OPC,” and “BAKASSI BOYS, MASSOB, MEND, BOKO HARAM have no clear cut vision” are also phrases from responses. “SNC as a solution to the restructuring of Nigeria,” “OPC fighting for social justice and equitable distribution of wealth in Nigeria,” and “Agitation of the OPC, MEND, BOKO HARAM similar struggle for power and liberty” are also phrases. A further analysis of the generated codes/ideas/phrases led to the categories discussed below.

Table 7  
*Table showing codes/themes frequency of occurrences from the responses to Interview Question 4*

Codes	Themes/Phrases	Frequency
1.	Our primary objective is to liberate Yoruba race from political marginalization which is different from that of Mend and Boko Haram	6
2.	OPC now fully involved in the business of promoting Yoruba cultural heritage with branches in more than 60 countries	7
3.	Gani Adams led the effort to rebrand OPC as a Pan-Yoruba cultural organization	5
4.	OPC has prudent leadership	3
5.	The aims of the OPC is different from that of MEND & BOKO HARAM	9
6.	OPC formed to add value and promote the culture and tradition of the Yoruba race	4
7.	OPC never carry gun nor throw bomb to kill or destroy government property	4
8.	The story of the OPC is a lesson to other ethnic militias	2
9.	So much injustice in Nigeria	3
10.	Violence use as propaganda to destroy the OPC	3
11.	BAKASSI BOYS, MASSOB, MEND, BOKO HARAM have no clear cut vision	4
12.	SNC as solution to restructuring of Nigeria	4
13.	OPC fighting for social justice and equitable distribution of wealth in Nigeria	4
14.	Agitation of the OPC, MEND, BOKO HARAM similar struggle for power and liberty	5
TOTAL FREQUENCY		63

### **OPC versus Other Ethnic Militias**

All participants were of the opinion that the OPC primary purpose is different from that of MEND and or Boko Haram. They argued that the OPC was born primarily to fight the partial annulment of June 1993 presidential election. MEND from the point of view was fighting for economic injustice to the people of Niger

Delta. On the other hand, they contended that Boko Haram is fighting a religious course. To buttress their argument, they reiterated that the OPC does not carry guns and never result to kidnapping the typical modus operandi of MEND. The case also contended that the OPC does not throw the bomb and never indulges in destroying government property as is often done by the Boko Haram sect. This submission on the primary objectives of the OPC tally with the argument the OPC is an organization fighting for the self-determination of the Yoruba people that often assumed the position of a vigilante group (HRW, 2002; 2003). The themes code 1 & 5 fall into this category (see Table 4).

#### **OPC a Visionary Organization**

A colossal percentage of respondents agreed that the OPC right from inception has a vision for the future that is the promotion of the Yoruba value and culture. The primary goal that the OPC set out to achieve as stated in its constitution was to enunciate the past events and cultures that confirmed Yoruba origins (HRW, 2003). Other goals included organizing and encouraging the lineage of the Oduduwa so as to restore the former glory of the Yoruba nation for the sake of posterity (HRW, 2003). The respondents contended that in line with the vision, the OPC is now a rebranded organization with branches in more than 60 countries around the world. The OPC is also promoting about eighteen cultural festivals annually under the “Olokun Foundation” (Adams, 2007). Also, they contended that other notable ethnic militias including BAKASSI BOYS, MASSOB, MEND, and BOKO HARAM have not demonstrated any clear-cut vision for the future. The phrases codes 2, 3,4,6,7,8,10, 11 falls into this category (see Table 7).

### **Similar Struggle for Power and Liberty.**

The argument in this category is that there is a lot of injustice in the Nigeria project. It is contended that though the OPC may be different from others in its *modus operandi*, and vision, all the ethnic militias are the child of one injustice or another. This contention is in agreement with the remarkable argument that there is no terrorism in the nonexistence of real or imaginary unfair treatment (Chasdi, 2002). The participants also contended that restructuring the current system of governance under the SNC would guarantee social justice and equitable distribution of wealth. The phrases 9, 12, 13, & 14 are compressed into this category (see Table 8).

Table 8

*Table showing percentage contribution of the main themes from the responses to Interview Question 4*

Codes	Categories (Key Themes)	Frequency	%
1	<i>OPC versus Other Ethnic Militias</i>	15	19
2	<i>OPC a Visionary Organization</i>	47	60
3	<i>Similar Struggle For Power And Liberty</i>	16	21

How would you consider the notion that the current democratic dispensation still does not guarantee full political rights, citizenry security interests, and general rights to basic needs? (Interview Question 5)

This section deal with the analysis of the responses collated on the notion that the current democratic dispensation still does not guarantee full political rights, citizenry security interests, and general rights to basic needs. 34% of the times the respondents argued that recycling of old politicians put the democracy on the red alert. The rest 27% of the times the defendants contended that restructuring of the existing systems was imperative (see Table 9 and Fig. 9 in Appendix 5).

The codes/themes/phrases generated from the data analysis include phrases such as “Democracy as an evolving phenomenon” and “Can’t compare Nigeria to old democracy like USA Britain.” Also, the phrases include “Nigeria still in search of good leaders” and “Though apolitical, the OPC is not a political organization.” “Restructuring via Sovereign National Conference Central for solving Nigeria political issues” and “Political class only interested in personal gain” are also part of the phrases. “Last sixteen years better than the best military regime” and “Obasanjo, Jonathan, and now Buhari have taken charge under the new dispensation” were also generated phrases. “Prevailing hunger does not represent the presence of a real democracy,” “Need to get education right,” and “State police and regional autonomy are relevant restructuring issues” are also part of the phrases. “Citizen rights including the right to life are abuse,” “Extrajudicial killing is still common,” “Present democracy can be rated on 80/20 +ve & -ve ratio respectively,” and “The survival of democracy on red alert” are also phrases. The codes/themes/phrases mentioned above resulted in the categories discussed below.

Table 9  
*Table showing codes/themes frequency of occurrences from the responses to Interview Question 5*

Codes	Themes/Phrases	Frequency
1.	Democracy an evolving phenomenon	6
2.	Nigeria not comparable to mature democracy like US and Britain	5
3.	Nigeria throws up non-committed, selfish leaders	4
4.	Though apolitical, the OPC is not yet a political organization	2
5.	Restructuring via Sovereign National Conference necessary for solving Nigeria political issues	8
6.	Political class only interested in personal gain	3
7.	Last sixteen years better than the best military regime	3
8.	Obasanjo, Goodluck, and now Buhari have taken charge under the new dispensation.	2
9.	Prevailing hunger does not represent the presence of a real democracy	2
10.	Nigeria still in search of real leadership	7
11.	Need to get education right	2
12.	State police and regional autonomy are pertinent restructuring issues	5
13.	Currently abuse citizen rights includes right to live due to corruption	5
14.	Reduced state of extrajudicial killing though not eliminated	2
15.	Present democracy can be rated on 80/20 +ve & -ve ratio respectively	1
16.	Continue reliance on old hands places the survival of democracy on red alert	7
TOTAL FREQUENCY		64

### **Democracy is Evolving in Nigeria.**

All the participants agreed with the view that the last sixteen years of democratic governance has been more positively productive than the years of the military juntas. In the word of one participant, “the worst democracy is better than

best military government”. The proponent of this category argued that it would be unfair to compare Nigeria’s democracy to old democracies like the USA and Britain. They also suggest that the leadership provided by Obasanjo through to Buhari is laying the necessary foundation for the development of democracy. This view agreed with the notion that the democracy hurriedly introduced by the military in 1999 offered neither total freedom or adopted a repressive approach to governance (Abadie, 2006). The themes that made up this category are codes 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, & 10 (see Table 9).

#### **Restructuring of Existing Political Structure Imperative.**

This group agreed on the evolving nature of democracy and argued that the existing political structure needs restructuring to lay a sound foundation for democracy. The respondents are also of the view that regional autonomy and decentralized policing are germane to the development of the active democratic environment. The participants advocated for the convening of an SNC and the implementation of the recommendation of the SNC held in 2014. This advocacy conforms to the understanding that the OPC agitation is center on a real federal system and the convening of a Sovereign National Conference (Ogbeidi, 2005, p.171).

Also, the finding is in line with the notion that an autonomous Yoruba nation within a well-structured Nigeria would serve the interests and aspirations of the Yoruba people (Abdulazeez, 2012). In the same vein, in the O’odua Bill of Rights, the OPC stated its readiness and resolve to see that the Yoruba-dominated states in Nigeria would be a federated component of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (HRW, 2003). The participants in this group contended that the current democracy does not

guarantee food on the tables of Nigerian. Neither does the current democracy guarantee good education, a particular ingredient necessary for developing democratic cultures (Abadie, 2006). The themes code 5, 9, 11, & 12 belong to this category (see Table 9).

### **Democracy on the Red Alert**

The group in this category is pessimistic about the state of the modern democracy in Nigeria. They argued that the abuse of the citizenry rights including the rights to live continue, even though not at the same level seeing during the military incursion. They contended that extrajudicial killing was still common. The group tends to rate the nascent democracy on 80/20 positivity and negativity ratio respectively. They argued that democracy without enthusiasm as practiced since 1999 creates favorable conditions for political violence that could demise the Fourth Republic (Abadie, 2006). The codes 3, 6, 13, 14, 15, & 16 gave meaning to this category (see Table 10).

Table 10

*Table showing percentage contribution of the main themes in Interview Question 5*

Codes	Categories (Key Themes)	Frequency	%
1.	Democracy is Evolving in Nigeria	25	39
2.	Restructuring of Existing Political Structure Imperative	17	27
3.	Democracy on The Red Alert	22	34

How would you convince the critics that OPC is not a violent organization?

(Interview Question 6)

This section of the study results deliberated on the responses to the question to how the participants intend to convince the critics that OPC is not a violent organization. The results indicated that on a weighted average, the participants argued 38% of the times that the OPC violence is a direct response to the violent disposition of the military juntas, 37% of the times they contended that the OPC involvement in the promotion of Yoruba cultural heritage is to convince critics about its non-violent credentials, and 27% of the times they refuse to accept the notion that the OPC is a violent organization (see Table 11 and Fig. 11 Appendix 6).

The phrases generated from the responses of participants include “Violent perspective of the OPC created by government propaganda,” and “OPC members are law abiding, and organization activities always restricted within the law”. Other phrases also include “OPC started as a peaceful group without violence” and “OPC became violent because Nigeria is a violent country.” Phrases also include “At a point OPC has to defend its members against military/police brutal confrontations” and “Violent confronted with violent lead to peace.” “Incessant confrontation with security operatives between 1999-2003” and “OPC tagged enemy of government during the first term of Obasanjo presidency” are also part of the phrases. Also, “OPC now re-branded as a driving force for the promotion of Yoruba cultural heritage” and “OPC now attracts new members both at home and in Diaspora due to favorable image” are part of the phrases. “Olokun foundation an important annual activity of the OPC that keeps members busy all year round” is also one of the phrases generated. A

further analysis of the codes/themes/phrases identified three categories of thinking discussed below.

Table 11

*Table showing codes/themes frequency of occurrences from the responses to Interview Question 6*

Codes	Themes/Phrases	Frequency
1.	Violent perspective of the OPC created by government propaganda	4
2.	Members are law abiding, and organization activities always restricted within the law	4
3.	OPC started as a peaceful group without violence	6
4.	OPC became violent because Nigeria is a violent country	5
5.	At a point, OPC has to defend its members against military/police brutal confrontations	6
6.	Savage confronted with strong lead to peace	5
7.	Incessant confrontation with security operatives between 1999-2003	3
8.	OPC tagged enemy of government during the first term of Obasanjo presidency	3
9.	OPC now re-strategizing and now re-branded as a driving force for the promotion of Yoruba cultural heritage	6
10.	OPC now attracts new members both at home and in Diaspora due to favorable image	6
11.	Olokun foundation an important annual activity of the OPC that keeps members busy all year round	9
TOTAL FREQUENCY		57

### **OPC Not a Violent Organization**

A large proportion of the interviewees argued that the OPC is not an extreme organization. They premise their argument on the fact that the OPC was raised as a political pressure group to correct the annulment of June 1993 presidential election. They contended that government propaganda tagged the OPC a violent organization to create disaffection for the group among the general public. They also argued that

despite the incessant confrontation with security operatives the OPC never carry a gun and is always prepared to shield its members from bullets with voodoo. The respondents in this group are also of the view that the rebranding of the OPC for the promotion of Yoruba cultural heritage should convince critics that the organization never had violent intentions. This view agreed with the argument by the Human Rights Watch (HRW) that the primary goal that the OPC set out to achieve as stated in its constitution was to enunciate the past events and cultures that confirmed Yoruba origins (HRW, 2003). The theme codes 1,2, & 3 fall into this category (see Table 11).

### **Violent Confrontation Elicits Violent Response**

This group argued that though the OPC did not start off with extremist views, turning to violence became inevitable at certain junctures due to the violent confrontation from security operatives. In their opinion, the Nigerian state remained a violent entity. Thus, such an entity is better confronted with violence for eventual realization of peace. Several of them even referred to the quotation from the “Holy Bible” that says that the kingdom of God suffers violence, and only the violence takes it by force. Some of them argued that to achieve political end under the military administration required some element of violence. Other contended that the government intrusion into the privacy of the organization without prior warning provoked violent confrontations. The HRW reported that the period between 1999-2002 marked the darkest period of the OPC violent activities (HRW, 2003). The explanation for these respondents’ views has two theoretical propositions. One is that the democratic process introduced by the military in 1999 was without energy and thus encouraged terror activities (Abadie, 2004). The other is that political freedom

and terror have a linear relationship, thus, the right to act freely in an environment of political freedom allows extremism to grow (Eubank & Weinberg, 1994). The phrase codes 4,5,6,7 & 8 are in this category (see Table 11).

### **The Olokun Foundation Festivals**

The participants contended that the election of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo in 2003 for a second term as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria marked the end of the political struggle for the Yorubas and by extension the OPC. The OPC used the opportunity to focus on the core business of its existence, which is the promotion of the Yoruba cultural heritage. The OPC used the Olokun Foundation to organized 18 Yoruba festivals annually. In the words of the participants, the Olokun Foundation festival started in 2003 with about four festivals and had grown to 18 festivals by 2015. Some of the festivals include the “Eledumare Festival” that holds for 21 days, the “Okota Festival” that holds for 2 days, the “Olokun festival” that covers the period of 11 days, and the “Ogun festival” that takes 2 days. The others are the “Ifa Festival” also hold for 2 days, the “Oro Festival” that takes place in 3 days, the “Osun Festival” that takes 3 days among others. This finding supports the argument that promotion of annual Yoruba festivals through the Olokun Foundation keep members of the OPC positively busy all year round (Ogbeidi, 2005). The themes 9, 10, & 11 belong to this category (see Table 12).

Table 12  
*Table showing percentage contribution of the main themes from the responses to Interview Question 6*

Codes	Categories (Key Themes)	Frequency	%
1.	OPC is Not a Violent Organization	14	25
2.	Violent Confrontation Elicit Violent Response	22	38
3	The Olokun Foundation Festivals	21	37

### Summary

This Chapter provided a detailed analysis of responses to the six interview questions. The interview questions sought to provide answers to the primary research question. The research question is whether there are the abuses of political, personal, and basic needs rights of Nigerians during the over three decades of military rules (1966-1999). Also, the research question inquires on the formation and the eventual turning to violence by the OPC. The results generated from the responses of the participants provided insights and recommendations used to developed the chapter five of the study report. These ideas and recommendations addressed the overarching problem of ethnic based homegrown terrorist groups that regarded violence as the only means to achieve political and social ends. These results contained the answers to the question of how the abuses of human rights led to the formation of the OPC and it's turning to violence as well as the implications for social change.

As submitted by the participants the annulment of the June 1993 presidential election won by Chief MKO Abiola a Yoruba man caused the forceful formation of the OPC in August 1994. The objective behind the creation was to put an end to the perceived marginalization of the Yorubas in national politics. Also, the foundation

members of the OPC were drawn from existing pro-democracy groups including JACON & NADECO. The result further shows that extrajudicial killing became more rampant with the annulment of the 1993 presidential election and constituted a factor considered in the formation of the OPC (see Appendix K).

The participants also submitted that poverty has been an endemic problem since the inception of the Nigerian State, but poverty did not play a significant role in the decision to form the OPC. Also, the result shows that the OPC's aims, objectives, and mode of operating are different from other ethnic militias particularly MEND and BOKO HARAM. On the state of Nigerian democracy, the results indicated that participant perceive that democratic norms are gradually taken root in national politics. The result also affirmed that the OPC was formed as a peaceful group. Participants also reported that the OPC was forced by circumstances to carry arms at a juncture, and later retreat to peace in line with the dreams of the founding fathers.

Importantly, the need for the restructuring of the present system of government under a Sovereign National Conference (SNC) came up prominently in the interviews. The proposition for convening an SNC provides a possible direction for some of the recommendations that emerged from the study. The bar charts in Fig.7 (Appendix K) demonstrate the importance and the position of the key themes in the formation of the OPC in 1994 and the groups turning to violence later.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Recommendations, and Conclusions

### **Introduction**

This research was conducted to provide an understanding of one ethnic-based homegrown terrorist group, the OPC. Groups such as the OPC tend to spring up each time there is a transition in governance. This reoccurrence of ethnic-based terror groups accounted for the demise of the first three attempts at a democratic republic in Nigeria. Though with a religious undertone, the Fourth Republic is being threatened by the Boko Haram insurgency. The phenomenon of ethnic-based terrorist groups has negatively impacted numerous Nigerians. Many have lost family members, have even been displaced, and have missed a source of income because of the daily occurrence of the acts of terror. In the study, I used OPC, a Yoruba ethnic based terror group, as the point of focus. I explored the connection between the abuse of citizens' political, personal, and basic needs rights (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006; Wade & Reiter, 2007), and the formation of the OPC, and its turn to violence. The study also provides insight into the factors that brought about the OPC vis-à-vis other ethnic militias including MEND and Boko Haram.

I used standardized open-ended one-on-one interviews to gather in-depth information from 15 participants to review the events that led to the formation of the OPC in 1994. The demographic report of the study takes the form of a holistic approach given the need to keep the identity of the participants' secret. The approach is comprehensive due to a limited number of qualified participants. For instance, there is only one member of the age category of 65+ and only one female on the gender clarification. Demographic information can identify such individuals if attached to the

responses.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

In this section, I provide a detailed discussion about the responses to the question of whether there is a relationship between the abuses of the human rights of Nigerians and the last turning to violence by the OPC. These human rights violations happened throughout over 3 decades of military rules (1966-1999). The scope of the study is the 1994 founding members of the OPC, particularly the individuals who were around at the formation of the organization on the 27<sup>th</sup> August 1994. On the principal interview question, the participants' responses show that the annulment of the June 1993 presidential election majorly led to the formation of the OPC in 1994. There are also indications that the typical extrajudicial killings and incarcerations of people, in particular among the groups who opposed military governance, contributed to the decision to form the OPC. However, the responses I received from the participants was that the dearth of basic need was not an issue considered in the decision that led to the formation of the OPC. The general argument was that the general lack of basic amenities is due to the institutionalization of bad economic policy under the military administrations. Also, it was argued that the majority of the populace had always lived in poverty.

In the context of the full interview questions, six open-ended interview questions were asked the participants. The questions provoked discussions on the structural factors and environmental conditions that led to the formation of the OPC in 1994. The interview questions also elicited debates on the factors underpinning the OPC adopting violence as a strategy. The interview questions further drew out

deliberations on the prevailing social-economic conditions in 1994 and the quality of the democratization in Nigeria's fourth attempt at a republic democracy from 1999 until now. The interview questions also led to discussions on the similarities and differences among various ethnic militias.

On the denial of the citizenry and the rights to participate in governance (1966-1999), the results of the inquiry indicated that the participants are in tandem with the notion that the military establishment has deprived Nigerian citizens of the rights of participating in the administration of the government of the state. This denial started with the first military coup in 1966 and culminated in the annulment of the June 1993 presidential election. The study confirmed the argument by authors such as Achebe (2012) that Nigerians suffered over 3 decades of political abuse by military juntas from 1966 to 1999. The participants recalled that the annulment of the June 1993 presidential election was the most important factor in the considerations that led to the formation of the OPC in August 1994 (see Appendix FS).

The position of the participants in the June 1993 election also aligned with the opinion that the annulment of the election represented the threshold of the abuse of political rights, particularly to the Yorubas (Abdulazeez, 2012). The findings are in line with the theoretical argument that political repression increases possibilities of terrorism. The notion is that democracies encourage the citizenry to articulate publicly their interest in the process and so paved the way for peaceful solutions to a crisis (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006).

On the state of democracy in the Fourth Republic, participants were of the generally opinion that the democracy was in an infant stage and evolving. They

argued that democratic indices were still missing but are hopeful for the future. They contended that there was no basis for comparing the Nigerian democracy with those of the United States and Great Britain. They concluded that the military hurriedly returned the country to democracy without enthusiasm in 1999 due to pressure from the international community. These findings are in line with the divergent view on political freedom that contends that half-hearted democracy has caused conditions that give consent to the rapid growth of terrorism (Abadie, 2006).

On the issue of citizenry rights to live, the participants were in unison that extrajudicial killings, journalist disappearance, and incarceration without judicial pronouncement as phenomena were commonly experienced under military governance pre and post June 1993. Most importantly, they all recalled that these three activities became more rampant after the cancellation of the presidential election in 1993. The killings of Suliat Adedeji, Kudirat Abiola, Ken Saro-Wiwa, and Pa Alfred Rilwani and incessant incarceration of democracy activists like Gani Fawehinmi, Fredrick Fasehun, and Beko Kutu were instances sighted by participants. Some interviewees argued against the notion that repression contributed to the decision to form the OPC in 1994. However, the majority of the respondents agreed that repression made a significant contribution to the decision to form the OPC in 1994. This finding is in conformity with the theory that democratically elected governments are more probable to give due regards to own citizen rights (Poe et al., 1999).

The participants also believed that the OPC started as a peaceful obscured organization in 1994. They contended that after General Abacha took over the

government in November 1994, the tempo of repression increased. They recalled that Abacha junta killed, incarcerated, and sent opposition figures to exile in the bid to transform himself into a civilian president. According to the results, the OPC was the only visible opposition by the time Chief MKO Abiola died mysteriously in Abacha prison in 1998 and it soon introduced violence into its modus operandi. The result matched the Human Right Watch's (2002) assertion that the group became violent around 1999. This outcome validates the human rights theory argument that the repression must reach a threshold extent to display violent reaction (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006). The death of Abiola in July 1998 marked the limit point of repression in the struggle to right the wrong done with the annulment of the June 1993 election.

On the proactive denial of the rights to essential amenities, the participants unanimously agreed that there was a general level of poverty in Nigeria at the time of the annulment in 1993 and the date of the formation of the OPC in 1994. However, they all view poverty as a recurring feature of the Nigerian state resulting from the policy programs that arose from the military incursion into the politics of governance. The finding that debt has become a public policy in Nigeria matched the assertion by some scholars that abuse of basic needs rights is intense violence (Achebe, 2012; Akinwumi, 2004; Suberu & Osaghe, 2005). The consensus was that the state of poverty of the citizenry did not play any role in the decision to form the OPC. This finding that poverty plays no role in the decision to form the OPC and the OPC turning to violence in 1999 aligns with the position of some existing literature on the role of poverty in terrorism (Piazza & Walsh, 2009; Walsh & Piazza, 2010).

The participants reported a stage of presaging economic disaster in the 1990s. Despite the dire financial condition, Nigeria was rated as one of the 10 richest oil-producing countries in the world in the 1990s, so believed by some of the participants. Several of the participants mentioned that Nigeria has many types of vegetation and minerals and an abundance of human resources that remained untapped. They concluded that the dire economic conditions were due to the lack of good governance providing a fertile environment for the development of the ethnic militias experienced in the 1990s. This finding corroborated the theory that severe socio-economic conditions are the probable root of homegrown and international terrorism (Campana & Lapointe, 2011).

Perhaps the most familiar phrase that appeared as a recurring theme elicited by all the interview questions was the need to restructure the system of governance. All the participants took a turn to advocate for restructuring under a Sovereign National Conference (SNC). The argument was that the current systems are old and archaic and unable to meet the present day needs of Nigeria. They argued that the current problems of Nigeria including corruption and other vices are systemic in nature. Participants cited the 1999 constitution as not meeting the status of a Nigerian people's constitution. They contended a new law fashioned under a sovereign conference that involved all stakeholders as the solution to the problem of ethnic agitations.

The theoretical framework for this study was the assumption that states that deny subsistence rights along with security and political rights created the environment for the genesis and growth of terrorism (Callaway and Harrelson-Stephen, 2006). The study inductively theorizes as earlier done by Fein (1995) that

the relationship between subsistence rights and terrorism is an inverted-U graph in which citizens at both extremes of the purpose of the livelihood spectrum are less likely to engage in terrorist activity. Thus, those who are most liable to resort to political violence are not those with a worse than usual standard of living (Laqueur, 2001). Citizens who support terrorist activities are those in the middle of the spectrum and the ordinary members of the society (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006; Whitaker, 2003). Moreover, the persons at the upper end of fundamental human needs do not engage in terror activity (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006).

Similar to the subsistence rights, the human rights framework contended that the violation of security interests of the citizenry and terrorist activity is not a linear relationship but depends on the threshold that provides justification for the citizenry to result in terrorist activities as a consequence of state repression (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006). This human rights framework mirrored the situation in Nigeria in the 1990s that led to the emergence of terror organizations such as the OPC, MOSSOP, and MEND. Although there exists a direct relationship between political rights and security interests (Poe et al. 1999), the relationship between security interests, political rights, and terror activity cannot be easily analyzed and understood (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006).

Furthermore, political rights refer to the extent that citizens can take part in government. This policy includes the right to vote and the right to be voted for, the right to protest, and the power of association (Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006). Political rights represented the hitherto framework for addressing the human rights violation because of its linear relationship with terrorism. The hypothesis is that a

citizen with formal means of contributing to political changes is less likely to resort to terroristic methods than the citizen without similar opportunities (Essman, 1994).

Alternatively, the findings could be explained by the moral action theory of crime causation (Bouhana & Wikstrom, 2010). The moral action theory is the notion that the desperate acts of terrorism help form a judgment on what is good and what is bad. The exemplary action theory argued that the acts of terrorism are both intentional and the systems of a behavioral pattern. The moral action method is assigned the responsibility of an act of terrorism as a consequence of the reciprocal action between a citizen's morality and the moral context of the operation.

Furthermore, Bouhana (2008) argued that the theory could use a primary structure to comprehend the causes of the terroristic activities. I contended that the exemplary action method could put the theoretical framework for the study of constitutional order (Bouhana, 2008). The moral action theory could also provide a written representation of the survey objectives according to the emerging plan (Bouhana, 2008).

### **Social Constructivist Theory**

The other famous theory that emerged as a finding that describes the methodological approach to the study is the social constructivist theory (Creswell, 2009). Constructivism philosophy believes that human beings desire to comprehend the world in which they live and work. In general, people develop meanings based on personal feelings, tastes, and opinions from their experiences. As such, I depended as much as possible on the participants' views of the formation of the OPC, and its turning to violence. In the constructivist worldview, as was with this study;

individuals frame meanings as a way to become involved with the world they are interpreting. These explained why my use of open-ended questions excited participants into sharing their views on the investigation. The members were involved with their world and made sense of it based on their own historical and social perspectives as expressed in responses to the interview questions.

The theory supported one of the assumptions underlining the study that people desire to understand the world in which they live. Also in line with the social constructivist theory, the study developed meaning from recording participants day-to-day experiences, as founding members of the OPC. In this context, I identified the intrinsic nature of participant's experiences about the development of the OPC and terrorism in Nigeria.

### **Policy Discussions**

According to Ayittey (2005), Nigeria's economy was in a poor condition at the time of the formation of the OPC in 1994. This state of disrepair was due to about 3 decades of looting by eight military regimes (Ayittey, 2005). Ikelegbe (2005) reported that more than US\$200 billion of the state's stolen oil money was in foreign banks at the time of the birth of the Fourth Republic in 1999. The education and the health sectors of the economy suffered the most. The Nigerian schools were mediocre at best, and the products of its universities in the 1990s could not compete with their equivalents around the world (Achebe, 2012). In addition, hospitals were without drugs and the necessary items needed for diagnostics. The country continued to exist in a poor state of economic health where citizenry had no access to primary needs.

The characteristics of the national politics were conflict, disorder, and confusion. These conflicts denied the average citizens the opportunities to participate in the governance of the nation. Many people were unable to protest through the traditional institutions of the state due to poor management infrastructures. These are in line with the argument that when people experienced economic privation and denial of their rights and cannot seek redress through a formal process, they are often forced to look for help outside the political system (Staub, 2011). The contention was that it was this situation described by Staub (2011) that turned the OPC to resulting to terroristic strategies. The findings in line with the various scholarly arguments above confirmed that OPC came about due mainly to the perceived political marginalization of the Yorubas in national politics at the 1960, 1964, 1979, 1983, and 1993 national elections.

Campana and Lapointe (2011) theorized socio-economic conditions and individual levels of education as causes of both homegrown and transnational terrorism. Also, the state of government being unable to provide basic amenities has been argued as a cause of political violence (Piazza, 2007). The absence rather than the presence of features that create economic growth contributed to increase the possibility of violence (Abadie, 2006; Collier & Hoeffler, 2004; Miguel, Satyanath, and Sergenti, 2004). Alonso and Rey (2007) were of the view that adverse socioeconomic conditions have contributed to the recruitment of people into terroristic activities. Moreover, they contended that severe suffering makes citizens receptive to the inspiration of Islamic terrorists (Alonso & Rey, 2007). Accordingly, potential danger and notably deficient political and economic conditions make

radicalisation easier among society's vulnerable groups (Alonso & Rey, 2007). The study findings though did not implicate miserable social-economic conditions as a factor in the decision to form the OPC. However, it alluded to the economic disrepair that provided the environment needed for its emergence.

### **Limitations**

The weakness of the phenomenological research process and the findings are more than two but not many. The limitations became apparent in the form of methodological shortcomings, specifically, as it relates to the number of participants and the logistic needed to locate the members. This methodological flaw has to do with the research design that limited participation to the 1994 membership of the OPC.

#### **The Inherent Lack of Time and Monetary Resources**

These were a source of significant constraints on the study in the process of locating the members. For instance, in the proposal, the study site was restricted to Lagos metropolis. During the search for participants, it was discovered that some of the living founding fathers of the OPC have relocated to their ancestor's homes outside Lagos. Thus, to get enough participants for the study, there was the need to conduct some part of the survey outside Lagos. Due to the time and the financial constraint, it was only possible to add the city of Ibadan to the study site. Extra time and money needed to visit other towns and villages to locate some other 1994 members of the OPC that have migrated out of Lagos were not affordable. This explains why I interviewed only 15 participants, the minimum number in the proposal.

### **Old Age Complications**

The other methodological limitations encountered by the survey arose from the research design criteria that restricted participation to the 1994 membership of the OPC. Some of the few founding members of the OPC alive were with the old age complications. For instance, only four of the nine persons that gathered to announce the formation of the OPC in 1994 are alive. Only two out of the four people actively met the study criteria. The other two are living in facilities that are considered not fit for the interview.

### **Impromptu Yoruba Interviews**

Another methodological limitation was the unexpected conduct of some discussion sessions in the Yoruba language. Interviews were translated into English and it is possible that some information was lost in the process of translation. The study employed an experienced Yoruba-English translator to reduce the chances of loosening text during translation.

In spite of the methodological limitations identified above, a rigorous interview process elicited rich, in-depth information from the small number of participants. However, these limitations are certainly worth planning for in the future studies.

### **Recommendations for Future Studies**

The study relied on the responses obtained from the interview sessions with 15 founding members of the OPC in 1994. The essence was to understand the nature of terrorism from the Nigerian perspectives with the OPC as the group of focus. The underlying assumption for restricting participation to the 1994 membership was to extract the main reason that led to the formation of the OPC. However, with the

benefit of hindsight extending cooperation to all members of the OPC in the 1990's could have elicited more information and data for the study. It is, therefore, the view of the researchers that a more extensive study using the same research Protocol, but involving a larger population of the OPC is warranted.

The study revealed that the modus operandi of the ethnic militia to a large extent is a function of the religion and the cultural background of the ethnic nationality involved. This study identified a gap in knowledge and the need to examine further the role that religion and culture play in the development and operations of ethnic militias. Study of the OPC alone is a limitation for the generalization of the report. There is the need that other ethnic militias are examined, using the same research protocol.

This recommendation to study other ethnic militias with different cultural and religious backgrounds could confer the validity of generalization in the study. Also, additional studies with larger sample size will remove the validity and the reliability limitations that few numbers of participants conferred in this study.

### **Implications**

This study identified the abuse of political rights, abuse of citizenry rights, and poor socioeconomic conditions as factors that aid political violence in Nigeria. To take these identified factors and construct public policies that address these issues of violence will positively affect citizenry life expectancy and individual family economies. Ethnic based violence reduces total life expectancy and interferes with the national economy (Saheed and Egwaikhide, 2012). The construction of public

policies to address the abuse of political rights, abuse of citizenry rights and poor socioeconomic conditions, will positively impact the living situation of Nigerians.

The study used six open-ended questions to generate meaning, themes, phrases, and categories used in analyzing data for the research. Thus, the analysis depended on the participant responses to the questions. This methodological approach conformed to the constructivist worldview that argues that people form meaning and become involved in the phenomenon they are interpreting. This emergence of the social constructivist theory is a positive change to the terrorism field of knowledge.

The study, the first of its kind, examined the factors underlying the development of one ethnic militia following human rights abuses from the Nigerian perspectives. The research findings support the development of political and personal rights abuses as part of the general framework that can be used to understand the cause of terrorism. Also, the findings showed that the political and personal rights violations must reach a certain threshold to elicit violent reactions. The death of Chief MKO Abiola in military detention in July 1998 represents the threshold of the OPC turning to violence. These findings create positive social change by furthering the development of theories in the field of terrorism and providing evidence to support the development of public policies to impede future development of homegrown ethnic based terror groups

At the national level, the finding that a Sovereign National Conference (SNC) is famous was a recurring theme among all the participants. Thus, this study provides the empirical evidence that policymakers may use to sell the idea of an SNC to organize a new system of governance within a new constitution.

The findings that government policy initiatives that contain features such as economic development and a planned series of activities to offer amnesty for those that are willing to abandon terrorism could help in the fight against terrorism. In connection with the points elucidated above, the recommendations arising from the findings of the study that is appropriate for scholarly practice include:

- Re-branding that depict the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) and other security agents as friends of the people.
- Training programs for the security operatives in the application of political tools. The objective is to demilitarize as much as possible the counterterrorism activities by security agents including the members of the NPF. The training in political machine applications becomes pertinent because the over-militarization response could be self-defeating.
- The security officer must maintain a sense of proportion when reacting to ethnic group activities.
- Comprehensive amnesty programs for the rehabilitation of insurgency groups into the mainstream of the society.
- Dissemination of information that challenges group ideology and solidifies national identity. A crucial problem for debate is the inability of the state to create and develop effective information operations capability to counter radical messages.
- The systematic introduction of information that disproves the validity of religious extremism worldviews.

- The presentation of youth employment programs that focus on entrepreneurship training with the objectives to drastically reduce the high unemployment rate within a short space of time.
- The introduction of policies that create a prominent role for ethnic minorities in traditional institutions, specifically, the Obas from the Southwest Region, the Emirs from the north of the country, and the Obis from the Eastern part of the Federal Government counterterrorism measures.
- The introductions of transparency in the application of the rule of law that gives citizens confidence in government institutions and values the diversity of opinions, language, and religion.
- The introduction of a transparent process to identify and resolve when a citizen could be considered a threat to the national security.
- The need for government to monitor the concerns of every ethnic nationality at every juncture of governance through the creation of an adaptive learning environment.
- Conduct of a Sovereign National Conference (SNC) to draft a new Republican Constitution that addresses the above recommendations and a host of other national issues that have remained unresolved. An unsuccessful attempt to conduct an SNC would continue to strengthen narratives of marginalization, cheating, corruption, selection, etc. from ethnic nationalities.

## Conclusion

This qualitative analysis utilized a phenomenological approach to identify the factors that led to the formation of one ethnic militia in Nigeria that was very rampant in the 1990s. The focus of the study was the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC), the Yoruba ethnic militia. The date of the formation of the OPC was the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 1994 (Abdulazeez, 2013). The study employed and used open-ended questions that encouraged participants to evoke their understanding of the events that led to the formation of the OPC in 1994. The information gathered from the participants indicated that lack of respect for citizenry political and personal rights was rampant in military regimes. These rights abuses formed the core reasons that ethnic nationalities turned to violence as means to political ends. The participants also agreed that inept leadership caused by an archaic system of governance is responsible for economic disrepair. The interviewees concluded that all stakeholders must be involved in the restructuring of public policies.

The birth of the OPC was in response to the failure of the Nigerian state to ensure equity in the distribution of power and resources, and provide social justice. The formation of the OPC constituted a vote of no confidence in the nation (Babawale, 2003). Prior studies characterized the OPC and its resistance behavior but did not adequately address the motivation for the formation of the OPC. This research found that aggression and violence of the military contributed to the development of the OPC and their use of violent tactics.

The study revealed that the present policies lack the ingredients of the rule of law and the general standards for democracy. The research also demonstrated the

widespread contention that military undertones are still plaguing many of Nigeria's policy permutation. Unsurprisingly, despite the fact that the elections have been conducted every four years in Nigeria since 1999, none of the elections has been considered to meet the essential standard requirement of democracy. These normal conditions include the right to vote, and the rights to ensure that every vote counts, among many others. The background is that most Nigerian institutions exist as if they are under the military rule. For instance, the participants cited that during the 2015 general election, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was pressured by the ruling government to change the presidential election date from the 14th of February 2015 to 28th of March 2015. The move was meant to provide the advantage of time for the sitting president when every available opinion suggest that the opponent was set to win the election on the earlier slated date.

The study has demonstrated the empirical evidence that oppression, marginalization, and social injustice pervade the policies of administrations of governance during the first forty years of the state of Nigeria from 1960-1999. Consequently, the Republic has witnessed an avalanche of violent negative, reactions that include civil unrest, armed banditry, violence protest, strikes, kidnapping, political turmoil, etc. as a response to bad government policies and marginalization. This type of adverse reaction is not peculiar to Nigeria; available evidence shows that people across the world react violently to systemic oppression and marginalization. A recent example is the Arab Spring that started spontaneously in Tunisia in Dec 2010. The revolution consumed the stable seat governments of many Arab nations including Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria, Algeria, and Iraq within a space of

twelve months (Davies, 2014). The OPC was developed as a pan-Yoruba organization to fight for the course of the emancipation of the Yoruba people around the globe (Adams, 2007).

The conceptual framework structured mainly on Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens (2006) that investigated human rights conditions and activities of terrorists. The framework outlined the human rights theory for the origin and the mode of the formation of terrorist groups and argued that nations that deny citizens the rights to support themselves at the minimum level along with civil and political rights create the conditions that make the development of terror groups possible.

The study concluded that the denial of political space created the environment for the development of ethnic groups, but that refusal of security rights is the catalyst for violence by these groups. We examined the cause of ethnic-based terrorism in Nigeria inductively in the light of the human rights theory. Precisely, we explored the degree that the regular violations of the citizenry human rights helped to bring about the formation and growth of ethnic-based militia violence in Nigeria. The findings uncovered a systematic elimination of the members of the Yoruba race of Nigeria out of the national politics. They argued that in 1960, the Hausa/Fulani and Igbo Alliance took control of the center. The attempted effort to further keep the mainstream Yoruba party out of the national politics in the 1964 elections ended the first Republic with the military takeover in 1966. The threshold of injustice that brought the Yorubas together under the banner of the OPC was the annulment of the June 1993 presidential election, in which a Yoruba won the election. The June 1993 annulment

was the third time in which the State voided the results of the presidential elections won by a Yoruba man.

1960 marked the start of the long suffered political and social discrimination of the Yorubas at the national level. It also includes the incarceration of Chief Awolowo before the 1964 general election. Moreover, the findings often referred to the denial of political and civil rights in Nigeria as the impetus for the development of the ethnic militias and their support of violence.

The results of the study may have made stronger the academic knowledge on the issue of the development of homegrown terrorist groups both from the Nigerian perspective and from the international outlook. The results of the research indicated that the continued military repression that led to the death of Chief MKO Abiola was a catalyst for the development of violent tactics by the OPC. Also, the results of the study show that the government declaration of war against the OPC between 1999-2003 hardened the youthful faction of the OPC to becoming desperately violent. The evidence from the findings also suggested that there are myriad paths to violence that are neither linear nor rapid, and before groups get involved in the acts of violence, some threshold is reached. As suggested by Mantri (2011) poor state of economic condition provided the sanctuary that increases the chances of groups resulting in violence.

These findings and recommendations could serve as a policy framework for government institutions, non-governmental organization (NGO)'s, and the general public within the sub-Saharan African nations in response to the extremist group activities that result in violence. The policy recommendations could also serve to

form an opinion for evaluating current counterterrorism policy measures in dealing with the extremist group such as Boko Haram that is perpetuating violence. Despite the methodological limitations faced by the study, a vigorous attempt was made to ensure and maintain the reliability of the collected data. An effort was also made to eliminate any preconceived opinion about the study given my personal disposition as a former Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2007-2011.

Findings from the study corroborate the conclusion reached in other research attempts of similar scope. The findings also introduced a particularly remarkable perspective on the issue of ethnic group terrorism within the sub-Saharan African nations. This study can provide direction to new areas of research on the matter of ethnically based group terrorism, and on the relationship between government security measures and militarization of ethnic militias. Nonetheless, this study represents a necessary step in the effort at moving the scope of research in the field of terrorism in the direction of a more complete, general understanding of the root causes of terrorism.

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## Appendix A: Confidentiality Agreement

**Name of Signer:**

During the course of my activity in collecting data for this research: “Rights Abuse As The Root Cause Political Violence In Nigeria” I will have access to information, which is confidential and should not be disclosed. I acknowledge that the information must remain confidential, and that improper disclosure of confidential information can be damaging to the participant.

By signing this Confidentiality Agreement I acknowledge and agree that:

1. I WILL not disclose or discuss any confidential information with others, including friends or family.
2. I WILL not in any way divulge, copy, release, sell, loan, alter or destroy any confidential information except as properly authorized.
3. I WILL not discuss confidential information where others can overhear the conversation. I understand that it is not acceptable to discuss confidential information even if the participant’s name is not used.
4. I WILL not make any unauthorized transmissions, inquiries, modification or purging of confidential information.
5. I agree that my obligations under this agreement will continue after termination of the job that i will perform.
6. I understand that violation of this agreement WILL have legal implications.
7. I WILL only access or use systems or devices I’m officially authorized to access and I WILL not demonstrate the operation or function of systems or devices to unauthorized individuals.

Signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read the agreement and I agree to comply with all the terms and conditions stated above.

**Signature:****Date:**

## Appendix B: Sample Letter of Cooperation from a Research Partner

National Human Right Commission

Abuja

Date

Dear Sen. Andrew Babalola,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled Rights Abuse as the Root Cause of Political Violence in Nigeria within the premises of the National Human Right Commission, Abuja. As part of this study, I authorize you to use our library to collect data on the state of human rights abuse in Nigeria and our facilities for result dissemination activities. Individuals' participation WILL be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: The use of our library and its staffs to locate documentary evidences of past and present human rights abuse in Nigeria, and to make our conference room available for the event of disseminating the result of the study. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected WILL remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

Executive Secretary

## Appendix C: Interview Protocol

RQ1

How did the general political situation in Nigeria since becoming an independent nation in 1960 from the British Colonial Administration contributed to the formation of the OPC in 1994?

RQ2

How did the large numbers of annually reported extra judicial killings in Nigeria by the members of the international community on human rights especially the Human Rights Watch (HRW) affect your decision to create the OPC in 1994?

RQ3

How would you consider the believe in certain quarters that poverty in the midst of abundance resources from petrol dollar contributed to your decision to take part in the formation of the OPC in 1994?

RQ4

How would you assess the conditions that led to the proliferation of the emergence of other ethnic militia such as MASSOB, the Bakassi Boys, MOSOP, and MEND after the debut of the OPC in 1994?

RQ5

How would you consider the notion that the current democratic dispensation still does not guarantee full political rights, citizenry security rights, and general rights to basic needs?

RQ6

How would you convince the critics that OPC is not a violent organization?

Andrew Babalola  
(Researcher)

Participant  
(Interviewee)

## Appendix Ca: Ibeere Ni Ede Yoruba

Q1

Ipa wo, ni aini anfani ijoba oloselu ni orilede Naijiria laarin nkan bi ogbon odun si idibo osu-kefa ninu odun 1993 ti ijoba ologun danu, ko ninu ero ngba lati da egbe OPC sile ninu odun 1994?

Q2

Ipa wo ni pipa ogunlogo awon omu orilede Naijiria laise, paapa laarin awon abenugan awon tiwon lodi si ijoba-ologun, ko ninu ero ngba lati da egbe OPC sile ninu odun 1994?

Q3

Ipa wo ni itankale ise ati oshi laarin ogunlogo awon omu orilede Naijiria nigbati opolopo owo epo dola nwole si apo ijoba lojumu, ko ninu ero ngba lati da egbe OPC sile ninu odun 1994?

Q4

Oju wo ni ale fi wo awon oye to Kari aye nipa wipe gbogbo awon ero ngba to sokunfa dida egbe OPC sile lee ma yato si awon nkan to sokunfa orisirisi egbe ajajagbara eleya-meya to dide lehin-o-rehingege bi MEND ati Boko Haram

Q5

Oju wo ni ale fi wo ero to gbalẹ laarin awon ara ilu wipe eto ijoba tiwantiwa alabalakerin ti abere ninu odun 1999 ko se onigbowo oselu eto, idaabobo to peye, ati gbogbo nkan eto igbe aye irorun fun ogunlogo awon omu orilede Naijiria?

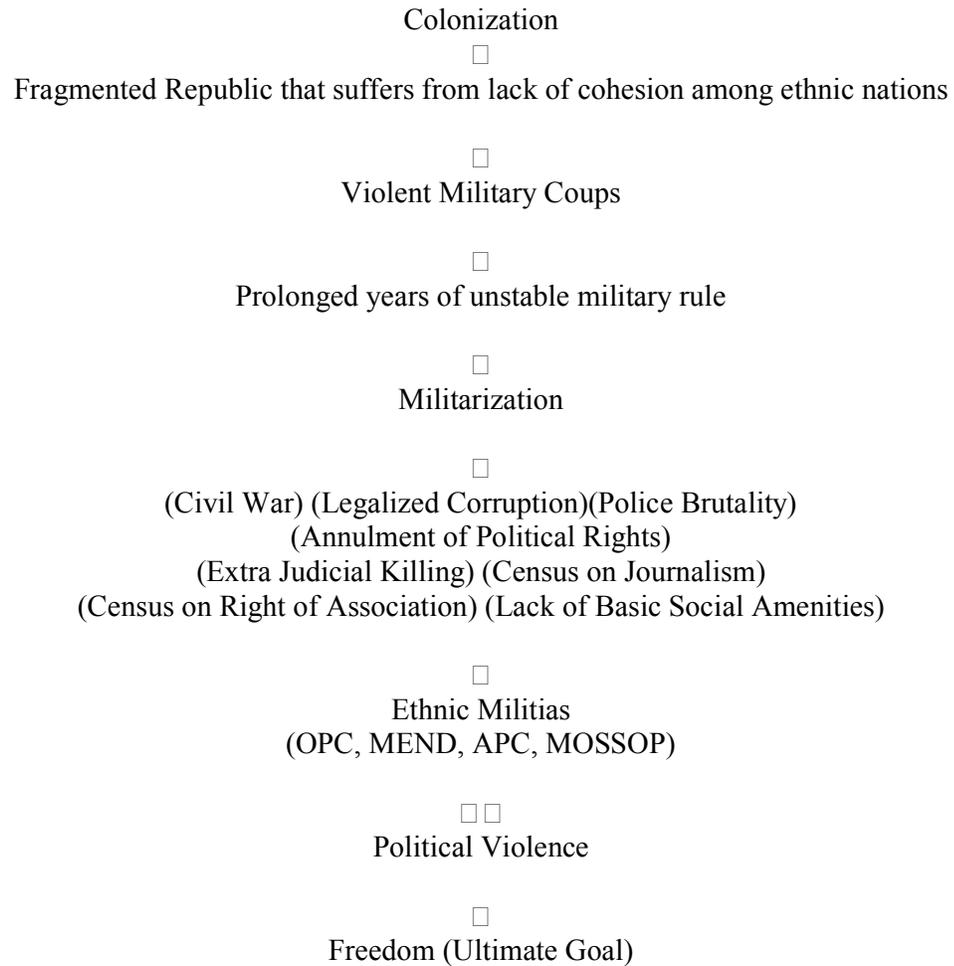
Q6

Bawo ni a se le parowa fun awon alariwisi pe egbe OPC ko si fun jagidijagan

Andrew Babalola  
(Researcher)

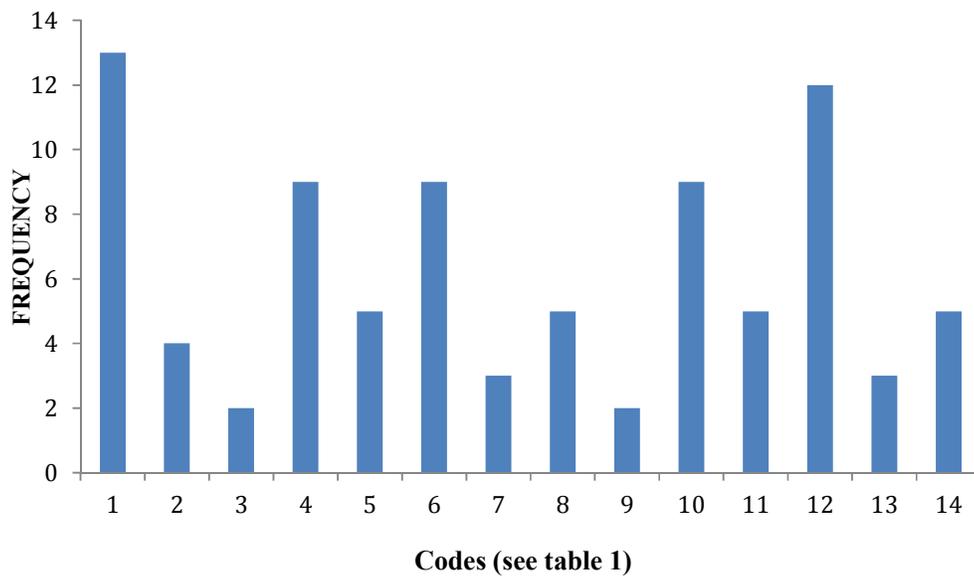
Participant  
(Interviewee)

## Appendix D: A Conceptual Model of Dissertation Research

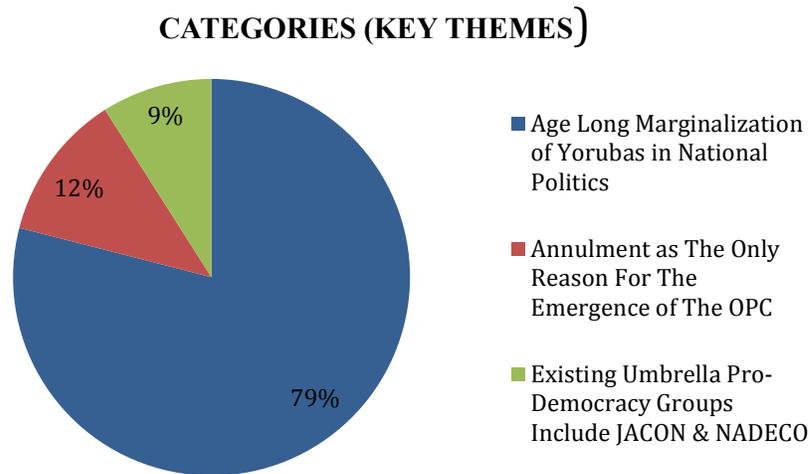


**Andrew Babalola**

## Appendix E: Bar and Pie Chart Interpretation of Results of Interview Question 1

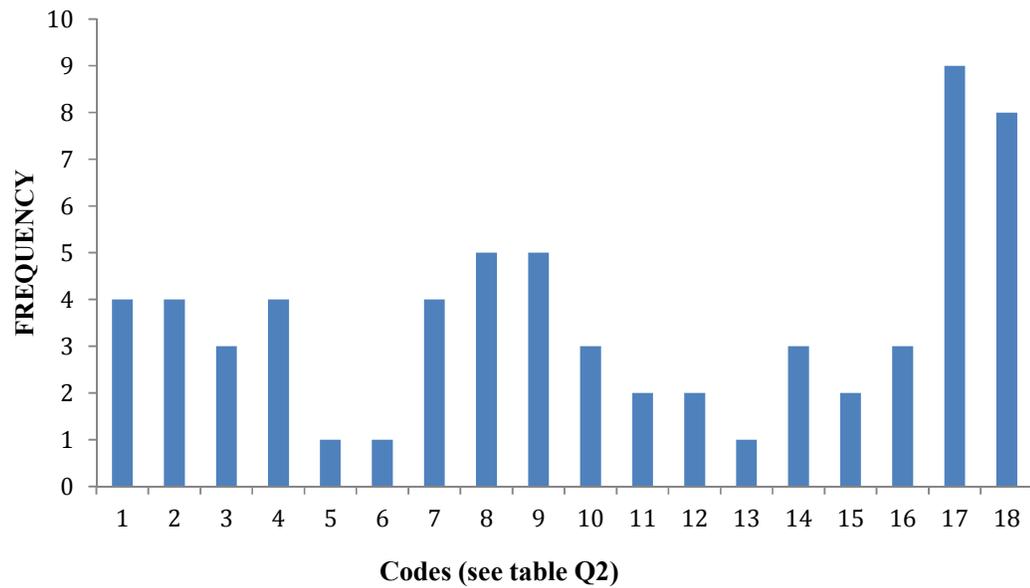


*Figure 1:* Frequency of codes/themes from Interview Question1 displays in numerical value.

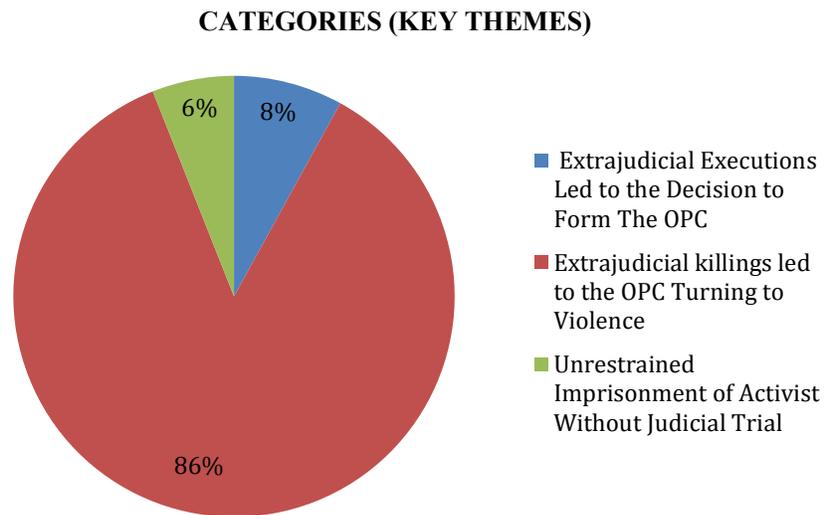


*Figure 2:* Pie chart demonstration of results of Interview Question 1 showing percentage contributions of key themes.

## Appendix F: Bar and Pie Chart Interpretation of Results of Interview Question 2

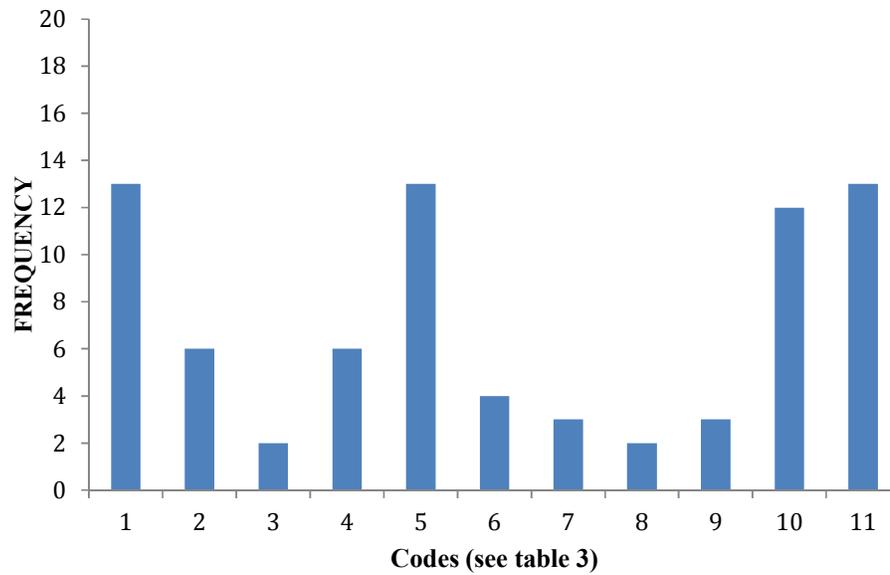


*Figure 3.* Frequency of codes/themes from Interview Question 2 displays in numerical value.

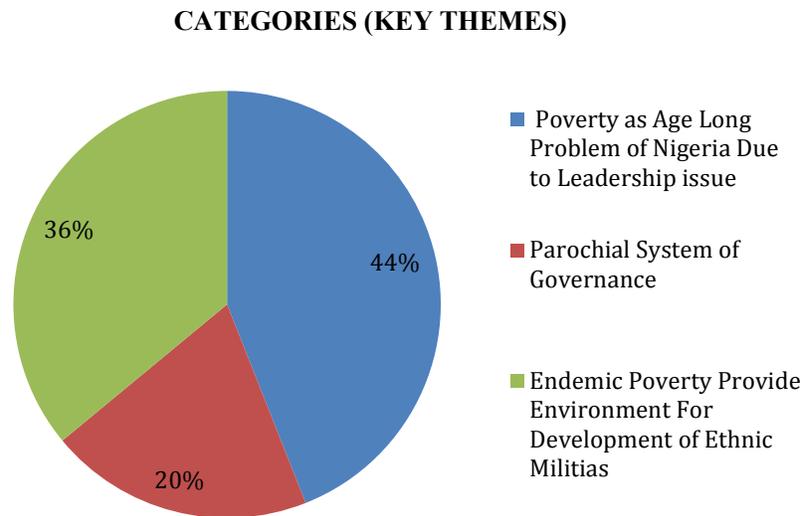


*Figure 4:* Pie chart demonstration of results of Interview Question 2 showing percentage contributions of key themes.

## Appendix G: Bar and Pie Chart Interpretation of Results of Interview Question 3

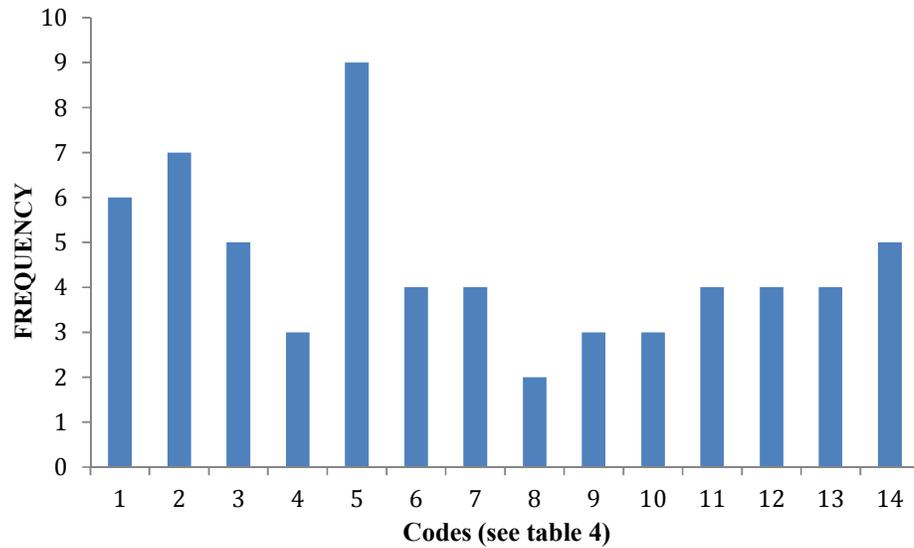


*Figure 5:* Frequency of codes/themes from Research Question 3 displays in numerical value.

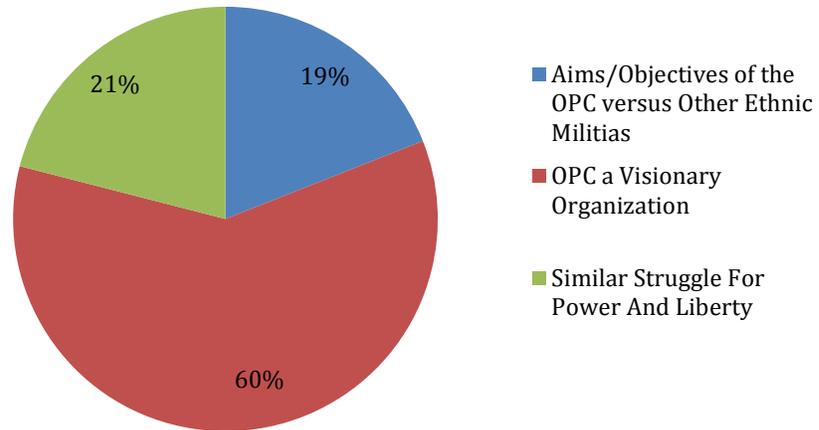


*Figure 6:* Pie chart demonstration of results of Research Question 3 showing percentage contributions of key themes.

## Appendix H: Bar and Pie Chart Interpretation of Results of Interview Question 4

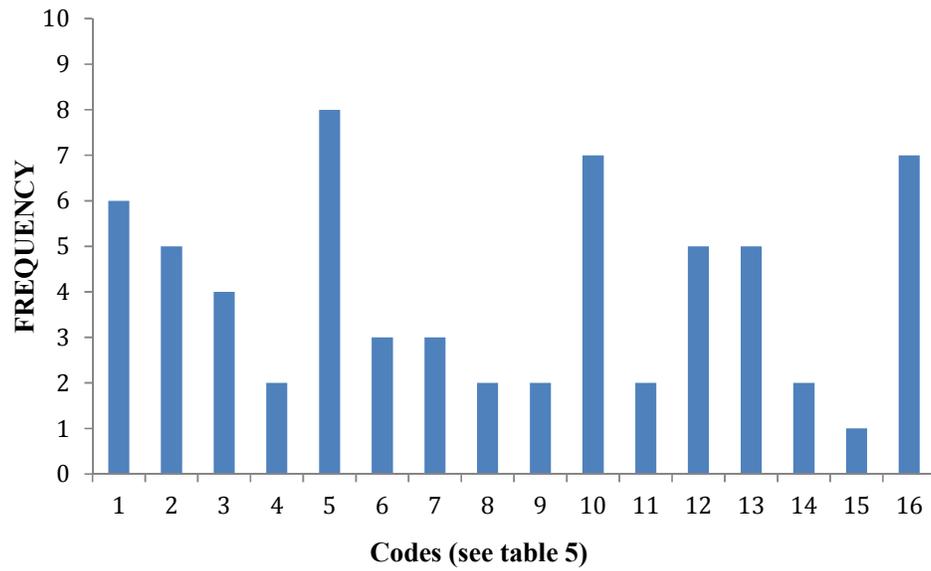


*Figure 7:* Frequency of codes/themes from research question 4 displays in numerical value.

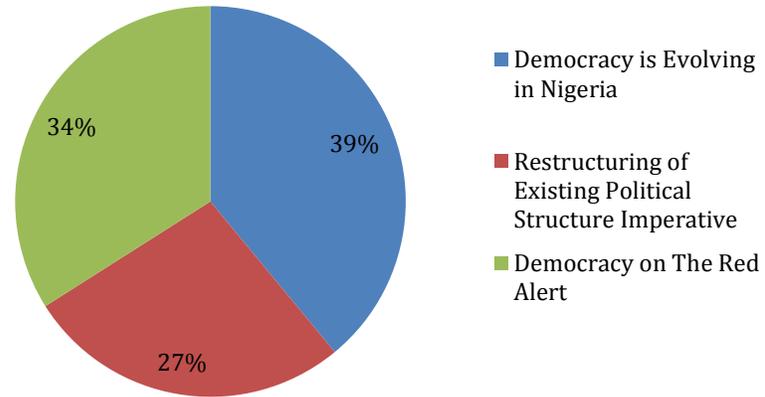
**CATEGORIES (KEY THEMES)**

*Figure 8:* Pie chart demonstration of results of Research Question 4 showing percentage Contributions of key themes.

## Appendix I: Bar and Pie Chart Interpretation of Results of Interview Question 5

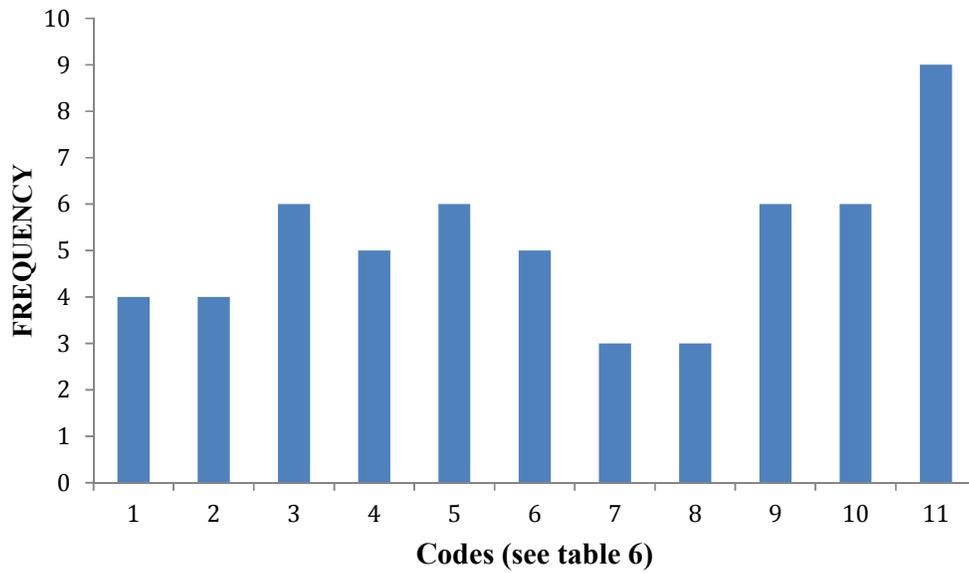


*Figure 9:* Frequency of codes/themes from Research Question 5 displays in numerical value.

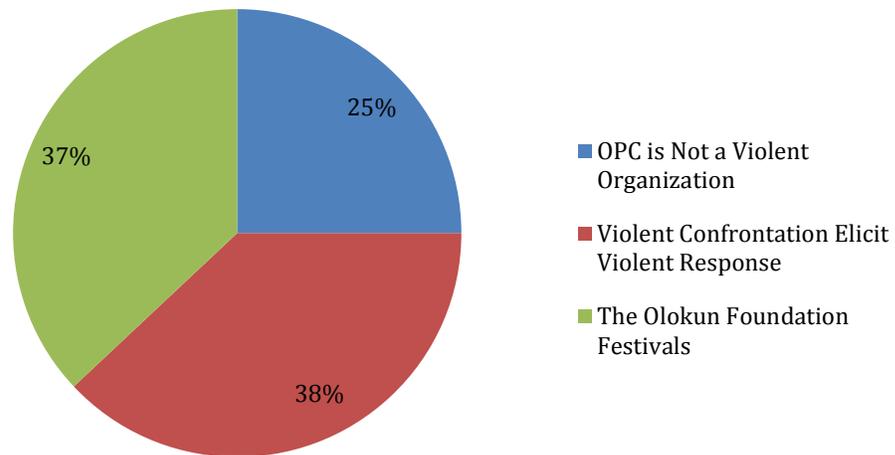
**CATEGORIES (KEY THEMES)**

*Figure 10:* Pie chart demonstration of results of Interview Question 5 showing percentage contributions of key themes.

## Appendix J: Bar and Pie Chart Interpretation of Results of Interview Question 6



*Figure 11:* Frequency of codes/themes from Interview Question 6 displays in numerical value.



*Figure 12:* Pie chart demonstration of results of Interview Question 6 showing percentage contributions of key themes.

Appendix K: Bar Chart Interpretation of Key Themes from the Six Interview

Questions

