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Youths, Electoral Violence and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria: The Bayelsa State Experience

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ABSTRACT No human collectivity can experience any meaningful and sustainable level of progress if it fails to systematically, deliberately and constructively engage and harness the drive and energy of the youths. It is based on these premises that the paper decided to investigate the role of youths in the ugly phenomenon of electoral violence and its implication for democracy in Nigeria. The basic proposition of this write up is that how the political elites behave and the roles they assign to the youths will go a long way to demonstrate whether Nigeria is heading towards democratic consolidation or not. The paper which is an empirical study based its analysis on data derived from the sample population of 400 youths in Bayelsa State. The statistical analysis technique of Pearson Product Moment Correlation was employed to arrive at the conclusion that there is a significant relationship between youths' involvement in electoral violence and the crisis of democratic consolidation in Nigeria. The conclusion of the paper is that Nigeria will not experience democratic sustenance until its political class inculcate in the youths relevant democratic culture.