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GULLENG, YOHANNA DASKYES

PEOPLE, POWER, AND CHANGE: ANALYSING THE CAUSES OF POWER SHIFTS IN AFRICA SINCE THE COLD WAR

ADIGUN, WAHEED OLALEKAN

YOUTH, ELECTORAL VIOLENCE AND RADICALIZATION IN NIGERIA

IDRIS MOHAMMED

GULLENG, YOHANNA DASKYES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF JOS
E-mail: dgullengs@yahoo.com
Phone: +2348037559531

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Introduction

There is an increasing debate on whether poverty and terrorism are related or not. The early part of the 21st century saw widespread view that poverty creates terrorism (Khan & Weirner, 2002, Collier & Hoeffer, 2004, Miguel, Satyanath, & Sergenti, 2004).

These scholars argued that poor economic conditions increase the probability of political coups and that economic variables are powerful predictors of civil war, insurgency and terrorism while political variables have low explanatory power. In particular, Miguel, Satyanath and Sergenti (2004) argued that in most African countries, economic backwardness (poverty inclusive) increases the likelihood of civil conflict. According to Abadie (2004), there is every indication that poverty and adverse economic conditions play an important role in explaining terrorism even though, it often manifests itself in form of political conflicts. At the World Economic Forum in 2002, Gloria Arroyo, the then president of the Philippines, went so far to say "terrorism and poverty are twins" (Gorski, 2002). This belief is repeated so frequently by so many that those who espouse it don't even bother to offer alternative explanations for other possible factors.

Literature at variance with this widely held view has challenged the argument that poverty creates terrorism. The U.S. State Department data on transnational terrorist attacks provided no evidence suggesting that poverty may generate terrorism. In particular, findings by Krueger and Laitin (2003) suggest that

among countries with similar levels of civil liberties, poor countries do not generate more terrorism than rich countries. Conversely, among countries with similar levels of civil liberties, richer countries seem to be preferred targets for transnational terrorist attacks (Abadie, 2004). Also, those that question the poverty-terrorism link often point out that most of the terrorist attacks being carried out; whether in poor or rich countries are done by well-educated middle class terrorists.

This is evident in the findings of Pipes (2002) who reported that in a 1980 study of imprisoned Islamic militants in Egypt, it was discovered that a typical member is "from the middle or lower middle class, with high achievement and motivation, upwardly mobile, with science or engineering education. He further reported that there are times a full 25% of Turkey's Islamic militant party, the Saadet Party, having been engineers. According to Pipes (2002), several countries that experienced great economic growth in the 1980s experienced a surge in militant Islam at the same time. Interestingly, Bangladesh, Yemen, and Niger are three of the poorest Muslim countries and they have not become hotbeds of militant Islam.

> " *Poverty and greed are most times at the forefront of the explanation of conflicts in Africa which do not reflect accurately what happens on the ground.* "

More intriguing is the report of a study on 16 Palestinian suicide bombers who never linked economic circumstances as decisive factors (Pipes, 2002). Interestingly too, Mehler (2005) argued that there is no conventional wisdom in attributing violent conflict in Africa to either ideological preferences or narrow institutional interests. Poverty and greed are most times at the forefront of the explanation of conflicts in Africa which do not reflect accurately what happens on the ground. This, according to Mehler (2005) could lead to 'mechanical and technocratic responses to varying challenges, exacerbating an already inherent tendency'. In the case of Boko Haram, their initial claim was that western education constitutes a major threat to Islam and hence it is regarded as a taboo. However, the most frequently asked question in the minds of Nigerians is whether bomb making does not require any level of education. And if it is required, those who are poor would not have had the privilege of going to school to be educated to the level of acquiring knowledge that would enable them make Improvised Explosive Devices (IED).

While these divergent findings may to some extent be empirical and scientific, they may not be a reflection of the socioeconomic and political conditions in Africa. It could also be an analysis of related events of international terrorism which may or may not be linked to any of the inequalities identified as horizontal inequalities which are typical of the socio-economic and political realities of Africa (Saferworld, 2013). More importantly, the identity of the determinants of international terrorism may not necessarily be informative about the identity of the determinants of domestic terrorism common in Africa. Much of modern-day transnational terrorism seems to generate from grievances against rich countries. In addition, in some cases, terrorist groups may decide to attack property or nationals of rich countries in order to gain international publicity.

Theoretical Analysis of the Nexus between Governance, Poverty and Terrorism

Poverty and conflict are commonly understood to be closely related. Both recall images of destitution, destruction and human suffering. Violent conflicts all over the world have led to high numbers of deaths and displaced people, material destruction and even state collapse.

The case of Somalia within the African sub region is a typical example. In this way, years of development efforts and investments are destroyed. Poverty, however, is also thought of as being a cause of terrorism. When grievances are not met, poor people will riot, question government altogether and join rebel groups. Economic decline and extreme poverty may then reinforce tendencies to resort to violent means.

At the root of conflict, however, lies a complex of factors which could be the imbalance of political, socio-economic and cultural opportunities among different identity groups; the lack of democratic legitimacy and effective governance; the absence of a vibrant civil society; and the absence of effective mechanisms for non-violent conflict management of group interests.

Scholars within the field of conflict research have tried to provide varying explanations to what causes violent conflict in society.

Coming from different orientations, there are those who argue from psychological, religious, political, social and economic perspectives depending on peculiarity of communities, nations and regions. These have several implications on policies and strategies or programmes that should be put in place to regulate societal conflict.

To properly explain the nexus between governance- poverty related issues and terrorism, frustration aggression relative deprivation and frustration aggression theory and the human needs theory are considered more appropriate. The major argument of relative deprivation theory is that conflict may be motivated by the belief that one has received less than they are due (Gurr 1970 & Sambanis 2000). Proponents of the theory argued that relative deprivation, group differences, and economic and political factors all influence the outbreak of violence (Stewart 2010). Inequality is a central concept in relative deprivation theory, a source of grievance that motivates violence.

Very recently however, a study by Bartusevicius (2014) as reported by UNICEF (2015) found that support for social inequality as a predictor of broad popular rebellion has increased (as distinguished from ethnic war). According to UNICEF(2015), a rich literature has developed that argues that previous studies found only a limited role for inequality in conflict because they measure inequality across all individuals in a country, while it must be examined between groups instead. As a result, the conflict literature in recent years has begun to distinguish vertical inequality, or the disparity in the distribution of resources across individuals "from 'top' to 'bottom'", and horizontal inequality, or inequality between groups drawn along social identity lines, such as religious, regional, ethnic, and gender(Stewart 2000).The argument advanced by the proponents of horizontal inequality is that it is the collective experience of inequality in access to resources, including education, that provides individuals with the agency to mobilize for violent action.

The human needs theory argued that all humans have basic needs which they seek to fulfill and that the denial and frustration of these needs by other groups or individuals could affect them either immediately or later thereby leading to conflict. Burton (1979) identified a link between frustration which forces humans into acts

of aggression and the needs on the parts of such individuals to satisfy their basic needs. Human needs for survival, protection, affection, understanding, participation, creativity and identity are shared by all people and are irrepressible. According to Burton (1979), these needs have components such as needs for recognition, identity, security, autonomy and bonding with others that are not easy to give up. As such, no matter how much a political or social system tries to suppress or frustrates these needs, it will either fail or cause far more damage later. Like Gurr's relative deprivation, it is believed that the tension between deprivation and potential are main issues addressed by this theory because when important needs re not sufficiently satisfied, economic and political problems would continue to worsen. For example, the absence economic opportunities, hyper-inflation, and penury are manifestations of economic imbalance constitute root causes of violent conflicts

A more practical example is the report provided by UNICEF (2015) when they argued that education is one basic need that should be made accessible to everybody. Depriving members of the society education makes them more vulnerable to all kind os violence including terrorism. Research has established that low levels of education leave societies vulnerable to conflict, as demonstrated in Thyne (2006) who shows that more education in a society as a whole is associated with greater stability using UNESCO Institute for Statisticsvdata on school enrollment rates and national spending on education. Research on sub-national regions in Sub-Saharan Africa confirms this finding, reinforcing evidence that low absolute levels of education predict greater susceptibility to violence (Østby, Nordas, & Rød 2009). Moreover, research that recognizes males as more likely aggressors in conflict has examined the relationship of male education specifically to conflict.

National-level analyses using attainment data from household surveys have concluded that population bulges of young males in conjunction with low secondary education increase conflict risk (Barakat and Urdal 2009).Using rates of secondary educational attainment among males as a proxy of opportunity cost 7 ofviolence,Collier and Hoeffler (2004) find support for their idea that where there are few options available in education and the job market, the risk of civil war is significantly great.

Crises of Governance, Poverty and terrorism in Africa

Rather than treating poverty as the major independent variable to terrorism, this paper sees as an intervening variable where when governance fail, people are impoverished and hence terrorism becomes the consequence. Although, researches have tried to establish a link between poverty and conflict in Africa, more evidence abound of the possibility of relating leadership and the crises of legitimacy in governance to terrorism. Saferworld (2013) for example provided how inequality in access to services can fuel conflict in South Sudan. It was discovered that Sudan was in a situation of chronic poverty with average consumption rates between US$2530 per capita per month), very little infrastructure and few health or education services were in place for communities, following years of lucrative oil production in the surrounding area.

This raises concerns over the use of oil revenues. In their view, although a proportion of these were intended to contribute to community development under the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, very little has been done to develop social services in spite of the State's oil wealth. The result has been significant public anger. Illustrating the risks of such disaffection turning to further conflict in Unity State, in October 2011, 75 people died in renewed clashes in Mayom county of Unity State, between government and rebel forces (Saferworld, 2013).

 Similar causes have driven the violent conflict in the Niger Delta in Nigeria, which is the main oil producing region, but which lags in social services. According to Ibeanu(2006), petroleum derived from the Niger Delta accounts for about 50 % of Nigeria's GDP, 95% of foreign exchange earnings, and 80% of all budgetary revenues. This amounts to nearly $20 billion annually or about $54 million daily. Regardless of this quantum of wealth being generated from the region, there is a sharp discrepancy in the peoples socioeconomic situation. Presenting data on some of the economic realities of the Niger Delta, Amosu (2015) argued that only 27% of people have access to safe drinking water and about 30% of households have access to electricity.

This contrasting situation is what had given rise to the spate of violence, kidnapping, murder that pervaded the region. The issues at the center of the violence are poverty, poor education and, environmental degradation. Commenting further on the region where Boko Haram continues to rein its terror, Amosu (2015) argued further that the sect originated from the North east which has the highest poverty rate in Nigeria. In 2012 for example, Kale (2012) reported that North West and north east geopolitical zones recorded the highest poverty rates in Nigeria with 77% and 76% respectively. This is coupled with the massive illegal accumulation of wealth Nigerian politicians, especially during the regime of the past president, Goodluck Jonathan through corruption. As a result of this, citizens are induced to take to criminality and violence at the slightest provocation as a means of survival when they perceive the society they live in does not have any plans for them (Amosu, 2015).

One of the most challenging issues related to security, conflict and terrorism in Africa is governance. According to Ban Ki Moon (2013), conflicts breed where there is poor governance, human rights abuses and grievances over the unequal distribution of resources, wealth, and power. He further argued that "tensions simmer where people are excluded, marginalized and denied meaningful participation in the political and social life of their countries" and unrest flourishes where people are poor, jobless and without hope.

At the heart of terrorism and all other forms of violence which could be categorized but not limited to ethno-religious and political crises and militancy in Africa is the legitimacy crisis of governance. The increasing manifestation of illegal antisocial and repressive behaviour of policies by government and its inability to tackle development challenges and to render goods and services to the people appear to be one of the major causes of the violence (Ogundiya, 2009). More so, Salawu (2010), argued that what we now see as ethno-religious crisis is a manifestation of the accusation and allegation of neglect, oppression, domination, exploitation, victimization, discrimination and marginalisation of citizens by the state. Most African states demonstrate the characteristics of a weak to nearly failed states.

According to Rotberg (2002), bad governance is so common in most African states with the characteristic of weak states that are gradually approaching the last phase of legitimacy collapse such that if care is not taken, they could end up as failed states.

Describing how bad governance could lead to violence, he argued that, "once the state's capacity to secure itself or to perform in an expected manner recedes, there is every reason to expect disloyalty to the state on the part of the disenchanted and aggrieved citizens". The idea of social contract as postulated by Plato is very relevant here. According to Clemmensen (2013), all societies rest on an implicit agreement between the ruler and those who have to consent for him to rule. The individual's agreement depends on the reciprocal obligation of the state. In other words, obedience to state laws is contingent on what the state does to the individual in terms of meeting his/her basic needs.

Unfortunately, most African states are gradually becoming weaker and weaker by the day giving rise to all kinds of internal security threats. Buzan (1991) provided an illustration of this situation by observing that a good number of African states are politically incoherent and they lack legitimacy. Within these states, there exist competing notions of security, which, is advanced by contending forces within the society, and competing notions of patriotism and yet national security has to be viewed as distinct from regime security and state security, which each component of the society competes to preserve. In these weak states, national interest and security has been reduced to constitute personal interests, regime security and state (Dorah, 2008).

At this point, groups begin to transfer their allegiances to their clans and group leaders some of whom gravitate towards terrorism as they try to secure communal mandate. Further arguments have put it that legitimacy crises and state collapse provides haven for terrorists to thrive where they blend more comfortably in the prevailing chaos (Rotberg, 2002). Making reference to Soyinka (2012), Alozieuwa (2013) observed that under this circumstance, politicians who have lost out in the power stakes resort to the manipulation of the situation to bring society to its knees and to create a situation of total anarchy that will either break up the nation or bring back the military.

Towards a Regional Approach to combating terrorism in Africa

The regional consequences of terrorism are obvious on states such as Mali, Niger and Nigeria. The United Nations Office on Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA, 2014) reports that since 2009, attacks by Boko Haram alone have killed about 13,000 people, displaced about 1.5 million and devastated the already impoverished northeastern Nigeria.

This, according to the International Crisis Group(ICG, 2014) has overstretched Nigeria's security service and even spilled over into neighbouring countries   such as Niger, Cameroun and Chad. In Mali, terrorist and separatist groups continue to undermine ongoing peacekeeping operations. For instance, on 7 March 2015, a deadly terrorist attack took place in Bamako, claiming the lives of five civilians and injuring seven others, including two United Nations staff (Salihu, 2015). These have made West African states to initiate a regional approach to counter domestic anti-terrorism.

According to Salihu (2015), there was little attention paid to dealing with terrorism in the past as most states prioritized tackling challenges of poverty, conflict, and underdevelopment. Now, various West African states pursue national, bilateral and regional efforts to counter terrorism, albeit with mixed outcomes. Many factors such as weak states, porous borders, availability of small arms and light weapons (SALW), relatively free movement of persons and goods, the youth bulge, and the growing networks of transnational criminals make terrorism a regional concern that requires holistic regional responses. This especially holds true for West Africa as most countries do not have sufficient human capacity, resources, legal frameworks and technology to fight terrorism.

For instance, several factors such as security sector corruption, mismanagement and lack of resources have constrained the Nigerian security force's response to the Boko Haram threat over the years (Blanchard, 2014). Related to this is the continuous perception of terrorism as a predominantly Western narrative, or a

"Western problem," and counter-terrorism as a Western-imposed priority (Salihu, 2015). It has been argued that more people are directly affected by disease, crime, poverty, and hunger than by terrorism (Ipe & Miller, 2010). As such, while the world works very hard to fight terrorism, it should be note that the war on terrorism cannot be ever won without creating the conditions that would make those who use terror as a tool less acceptable in parts of the world (Sachs, 2005).

The fight against Boko Haram for example has led to a surge in Nigeria's defence spending to an estimated US$2.35bn and US$2.25 in 2013 and 2014 respectively (International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2015). This increase in expenditure has come at the detriment of development in the largely impoverished north of Nigeria in particular, and the rest of the country in general.

> In the words of Sachs (2005:215-216):
> Terrorism has a complex and varying causes and cannot be fought by military might alone. To fight terrorism, we will need to fight poverty and deprivation as well. A purely military approach to terrorism is doomed to fail. Just as a doctor fights disease by prescribing not only medication, but also by bolstering a person's immune system through adequate nutrition and by encouraging a healthy lifestyle for his patient, so too, we need to address the underlying weakness of the societies in which terrorism lurks- extreme poverty, mass unmet needs for jobs, incomes and dignity and the political and economic instability that results from degrading human conditions. If societies like Somalia, Afghanistan, and Western Pakistan were healthier, terrorists could not operate so readily in their midst.

In this case, while military response to terrorism in Africa is necessary, the focus of the regional leaders should be on the need to address deeper roots of terrorism which are not part of global prosperity, that are marginalized in the world economy, that are bereft of hope and that are misused and abused by the rich world.

ADIGUN, Waheed Olalekan BSc (Ife), MSc (Lagos)
Programme Officer,
Tel. No: +2348136502040, +2347081901080
Email: adgorwell@gmail.com

PEOPLE, POWER, AND CHANGE: ANALYSING THE CAUSES OF POWER SHIFTS IN AFRICA SINCE THE COLD WAR

Abstract

What are the causes of political changes in Africa in the 21st century? Are these changes people-led? What are the challenges militating against people-led political changes in Africa? To provide answers to these questions, the author takes a look at the nature of the post-colonial states of Africa since the Cold War.

Key Words: power shifts, political change, social movement, political violence, Cold War

Introduction

The 21st century has brought some drastic and dramatic changes in the political landscapes in African states. These states have some of the highest representation of women in national parliaments in the world today with post-conflict Rwanda having about 64 percent [1]. In addition, at least seven African countries have had female heads of state or government with Mrs Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf becoming the first elected woman president in Africa in 2005. Many countries have seen incumbents lose democratically-conducted elections in Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Benin Republic, and the likes. Mugabe's nearly four decades old regime came to an end in November 2017 without bloodshed against all predictions.

There are mounting pressures on presidents Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Paul Biya of Cameroon who has both spent about three decades in power. As against Collier's prediction that armed conflicts in Africa are always "nasty, brutish, and long" (2 p.7), conflicts in Africa (with the exceptions of Somalia and South Sudan) have ended in peaceful resolutions. Africa has also shown that peaceful political transitions are, in fact, possible with post-election crises in Ivory Coast and Gambia resolved quickly thereby preventing violent conflicts. This leads us to the question of the role of the people's or mass-led movement in all these.

Due to their influential activities in political mobilisation and participation, civic or mass-led movements have become a well-established topic of research in political science [3]. Their roles in the diffusion, especially with the influence of the social media, have seen the increased and continuous questioning and in some cases, bringing down authoritarian and autocratic regimes in Africa in the past decade. However, the debate is still on as to whether these protests are citizens-led or elite-led for them to make these political impacts.

The past three decades have seen four cross-national waves of anti-regime mobilization in different regions of the world: 1) popular opposition and regime change in Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s, 2) the spread of popular challenges to communist party rule that occurred in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe from 1989–1991, 3) the "colour" revolutions of post-communist Europe and Eurasia 1996–2005, and finally 4) the protests between 2010 and 2014, which erupted in thousands of cities in over one hundred countries around the world [4].

Further, isolated cases of popular anti-authoritarian protest include the Chinese Tiananmen Protests in 1989, the Indonesian Student Revolt in 1999, the Saffron Revolution in Myanmar in 2007, the Green Movement in Iran 2009 – 2010 and the Chilean students' movement in 2011-2013. A cursory look at all these protests shows that they are elite-driven contrary to what some scholars [5 p.2] have earlier maintained.

As against Skocpol's classical "social revolution" [6] in his study of revolutions in three countries- France, Russia, and China- scholars [7] have maintained that authoritarian regimes will hardly permit organised public protests that will lead to the citizens questioning its legitimacy will be rare, spontaneous, and largely uncoordinated. In that case, it will become so difficult for the citizens or the masses to pose a serious threat to the authoritarian regimes except they have some support from a faction of the political elite either in the military [8] or ruling party [9]. In any case, this has been the focus of existing scholarship in political science [10]. In my case, I look at the possibility of exploring or expanding the factors that cause or promote power shifts under the peculiar conditions in Africa.

Political Change in Africa Since the Cold War

Aside colonialism, the Cold War has influenced African politics than any other thing. The internal affairs of most, if not all, African states have been shaped by the ideological conflicts between the United States and USSR, the two key warriors in the Cold War. This may be because many African countries gained independence in the peak of the Cold War 1960s and 1970s which looks like an opportunity for the superpowers to increase their spheres of influence. Due to their fragile, vulnerable, and volatile nature, many African countries looked up to some super powers for their leaders to consolidate their powers (11 p.126).

The intense search for spheres of influence created the quest for African clients the superpowers support and sustain many undemocratic regimes. In turn, these regimes in their increasing level of unpopularity resorted to brute force, violence, intimidation, and in many cases, the assassination of the opponents of the regimes. Civil society organisations, opposition political parties and groups were outlawed as these regimes hoped to strengthen their grips on power relying heavily on their superpower allies.

During this period, African states began to take multiple personalities partly manifesting characters of their own and those

of their ex-colonial masters. This identity crisis occurring as a result of the multiple personality syndromes soon reveal they have inherited state institutions which they barely understand. They were understandably fragile, and in some cases, economically unviable.

The fragilities in these states soon became obvious and were exposed to several lights: Newly-independent Congo soon became caught up in a long and bloody conflict in which approximately 5 million people have died as a direct or indirect consequence of the conflict, making this the bloodiest war since the Second World War [12]; Egypt and Togo were soon to witness military coups and these became a fashion in virtually all African countries; series of events led to the collapse of democratic institutions in 1966 and subsequently, a bitter Nigerian Civil War; bloody wars of liberation took place in Algeria, Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe and many others; and Liberia and Sierra Leone will later endure long and bloody ethnic conflicts.

With more African countries gaining independence, former nationalist movements took over state institutions in their respective countries. These nationalist parties soon became dictatorial, ruthless, and corrupt [13] in their bid to stay in power. The soldiers that have earlier accused politicians of corruption, mismanagement, maladministration, and fraud soon became a reincarnation of the vices they claimed to correct when they took over in the first instance [14]. Many nationalist parties have become so synonymous with their countries' liberation that their leaders find it difficult for them to be defeated. The nationalist leaders having seen the perquisites of state power did not wish to leave office or function on a multi-party basis allowing for free and fair elections in their realms.

Leaders like Algerian Marxist Socialist President Ahmed Ben Bella who himself fought fiercely against the French in his bid to "liberate" his country, soon became ruthless and dictatorial. He outlawed all opposition to his newly-formed regime in 1961. His regime was overthrown in 1965 by a military coup. This same fate befell many of such leaders at the time.

In the 1980s, there was only one case, Mauritius, of peaceful democratic transition of power in sub-Saharan Africa. Aside from that, dictators reign supreme in African capitals with little or no effort to relinquish power anytime soon. Those who succumbed to pressures of leaving office peacefully hurriedly conducted sham elections to legitimize their "anointed" candidates as successors from their own parties to guarantee them peaceful retirements [15].

The Cold War finally ended in 1991 with the collapse of the former Soviet Union and the Berlin Wall. These also have had their consequences on the changing patterns of African politics.

The end of the Cold War came with increased democratisation, competitive elections, multiparty democracy, the decline of the communist ideology and parties in Africa and the increase in the demands for human rights, social justice, and liberal democracy. In Zambian 1991 presidential election, Marxist leader, Dr Kenneth Kaunda, and his part the United National Independence Party (UNIP) lost to Frederick Chiluba's Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD).

Between 1991 and 1996, there were 20 changes in governments and parties in power in 12 sub-Saharan Africa countries [16]. The 1980s and 1990s also saw increased popular oppositions to military regimes in several African countries and the demands for transitions to democratic rule. The Apartheid regimes in South Africa began to collapse as majority parties took over in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa effectively ending several years of violent strife.

Between 1989 and 1997, about three out of every four African countries had adopted multiparty elections [17 p.11]. According to Adejumobi [18] there are four observable patterns to explain the increasing trends leading to democratization and change in the 1990s: first, civil society and human right organisations demand change and the political elites concede; second, civil society and human right groups demands change but is co opted by elites; third, the state decides on its own to transition to multiparty elections; and fourth, a significant social conflict preceded the

transition. In each of the four cases, except when civil society is able to exert itself and force the state to concede, the transition to democracy resulted in superficial reforms. Many of the political elites who decided to adopt democracy did so tactically to avoid full reform programs [19]. As a result, many countries experienced an incomplete democratic or fractured transition. That is, the political institutions exist on paper, but in practice, they lack capacity, and in many cases, they are degrading quickly [20]. Furthermore, these transitions largely left executive powers largely intact [21]. Today, most African countries experience some form of hyperpresidentialism, in which the powers of the executive dwarf those of other political institutions [22].

As the millennium winds down, many African countries either fully or partially succumbed to the pressures from civil societies, human right groups or international organisations. President Quett Masire of Botswana stepped down voluntarily in 1998 after ruling the country for 18 years. He handed over to his deputy, Festus Mogae. The political transition programme that started finally led to the handover of power to civilians in 1999 in Africa's most populous country, Nigeria. The soldiers were down but not out yet. One of them, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, was elected as President even though he himself was head of state between 1976 and 1979. Many generals who served in the late General Sanni Abacha and wanted him to continue under a dubious transition programme earlier in 1995 have formed their own party, All Peoples Party (APP).

As a result of the experiences of many years of military dictatorship, the seemingly antagonistic relationship between the civil society and the state, heavy rigging of elections, weak democratic institutions, it was clear that the newly-elected post-military civilian administrations have not given up their military instincts of violence. Elections are rigged in favour of the ruling parties with reckless abandon. In some other cases, election results are nullified as it was the case of Yahya Jammeh who lost his bid to be re-elected President of The Gambia in December 2016 but chose to annul it citing "some irregularities" after initially congratulating the winner, Adama Barrow. In some cases, institutions are manipulated to do the biddings of the parties in

power. Court Judges who refused to do the biddings of the ruling parties are either sacked, molested, cajoled, blackmailed, or intimidated into submission. Opposition leaders are arrested, intimidated or assassinated in the case of Ivory Coast in the early 2000s. Opposition parties, civil societies, are bribed with promises of "juicy appointments" in government. Since many opposition parties are often weak financially and lacking in funding to compete favourably with their ruling rivals who have unfettered access to state funds, the offer to partake in the "national cake" is too tempting to ignore [23 p.162-3].

This was the case of the deal-making under the guise of National Unity Government which opposition leaders were allocated some "juicy" positions like prime minister or some senior ministers in government in Kenya (after the 2007 elections), Zimbabwe (after the 2008 elections) or Nigeria (after the 2007 election) [24].

Having shown that much progress, the question of who or what directs these changes then arise. Some [25] have argued that the change is "mainly coming from citizens themselves. Maybe they have just lost patience with corrupt dictators." While, as some scholars [26, 27, and 28] might have argued that those "who take part in civil disobedience or political violence are discontented about something" within African contexts especially, it is difficult to show that any protests or political mobilisation can take place effectively without the support of some members of the political elite who may either subtly provide the resources for the organisation or overtly being part of the movement.

The weakness in this theory is that it tends to reduce collective actions to individual behaviours which are not always the case. These theorists may argue that the resignation of Mugabe's Zimbabwean president deals primarily with the "anger" of the people against his regime, but in fact, the opposite may be the case. The swearing-in of his former deputy, with whom he earlier had a political disagreement, who has been in power with him for 37 years shows that the movement was primarily elite-based. It is difficult to prove that the pockets of protests against him on social media by the youths could have accounted for his fall. At least, their expressions of these "anger" did not transform into meaningful

political actions that immediately threaten the regime until his disagreement with his erstwhile deputy, Emmerson Mnangagwa, became public. We, can, as in the Arab Spring, grant that "the wider availability of information about what corrupt leaders are–and are not–doing, and awareness of what is happening in neighbouring countries, looks like a growing factor." [29].

As we have seen above, political changes that have taken place either through military coups or elections, there have been significant contributions civil society organisations, pressure groups or interest groups directly or indirectly connected to political elites. In the next section, we shall be looking at some more specific instances of elite-led movements.

Discussions: Accounting for Power Shifts

In our review of power shifts in Africa, we noticed that there are some recurrent themes which include: regime changes, improved women and youth participation in politics, decline in post-election violence, and relatively improved confidence in electoral democracy. In this section, we shall be taking a look at the key factors underpinning these themes.

Cultural Changes

Africa comprises societies that are firmly rooted in strong tradition and cultures dating back to pre-colonial times [30]. Incremental changes in these cultural beliefs, especially in technology, have had lasting impacts on her political life. These "Incremental changes" are what Frazier [31 p.31] sees as including technology, customs, habits, values and resulting personality.

With significant "culture contacts" [32] much of other cultures have been incorporated into Africa societies. This was what led Linton [33] to contend that diffusion of cultures creates changes as a result of the rippling effects of the changes taking place in other lands. There were strong indications that the military coup in Egypt in the 1950s provides the wave of the fashionable trend of military coups that swept through Africa, and in West Africa through Togo.

Also, we can argue that the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe that led to democratization provided a strong impetus for the demands by African intellectuals for liberal democracy. We can also justify the earthquake of democratic transitions through the ballot box especially in West Africa with the Senegalese and Ivory Coast elections in 2012 where opposition candidates became victorious.

When The Gambia president, Yahya Jammeh refused to step down peacefully after losing the country's presidential election in November 2016, West African leaders under the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) quickly intervened to avoid bloodshed which may spread quickly to neighbouring states through Senegal. It was also possible that, had the leaders not intervened early enough, such practice may soon become the fashion in the sub-region with Ghana election just a few months away.

Another aspect of changing cultural patterns in Africa is in the increasing influence of social media.

Technology is an aspect of culture just like customs, habits, and values. So, any change(s) in technological innovations automatically brings about changes in political culture in societies. Political culture itself is a subset of national or subnational culture. Technology is part of a culture. Technological changes bring about changes in political culture and political consciousness [34].

Social media is a recent invention in the world just as it is an essential source of political activism and engagement. This is why it must be studied for its own uniqueness. It functions through its platform comprising of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other social websites. It got the influence to transform the methods through which political as well as social activities are prepared and implemented.

The face of protests is changing all over the world with the influence of social media. The earthquake of political changes brought about by the "Arab Spring" explains the changing nature of

protests and political activism brought about by social media.
Inspired by the Arab Spring mobilisations, Nigerian citizens organised themselves for a showdown with the government in January 2012 over the rumour gaining grounds that it was launching a full-fledged deregulation of the downstream sector of the economy. This led to a series of a week-long protest against neo-liberal reforms in the country.

While it is still disputable how as to whether social media, and not, other factors are responsible for the changes brought about by online activism, the role of social media in political mobilisation is still being studied by scholars. Going through developments in Zimbabwe, it is highly contestable as to the influence of hashtags on the power shift in November [35].

In Nigeria for instance, the attraction of the youths to social media has been one of the key strategies for youth groups to mobilise them for political participation and engagement. These have brought significant results. The #NotTooYoungToRun and #OccupyNigeria movements are social media initiatives which heavily attracted youths to the need to get involved in politics in Nigeria.

Changes in Demography
Population patterns have the capacity to transform societies. There appear to be profound changes taking place in African population today. According to an AU [36] report, State of Africa's Population, the population pyramids of the various regions of Africa generally show that Africa's population is largely young and one of the youngest in the world. The report claims that about 40% of Africa's population is under 15 years an average for all its sub-regions [37]. Also, according to UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in its 2014 report, claims that "Africa is a continent of young people with 65 percent of the population below the age of 35 and nearly 50 percent under the age of 19."

Also, according to World Bank data cited in UN Population Fund report [38] shows that African children have 'higher poverty rates than adults in the poorest countries of sub-Saharan Africa, with more than half of children living in conditions of extreme poverty. In

many countries, access to and quality of education remains low. According to UNESCO, 22 million of the 69 million eligible adolescents in the world that did not attend secondary school in 2011 lived in sub-Saharan Africa. 35.89% of adolescent girls are not in secondary school in sub-Saharan Africa, compared to 7.39 in Latin America and the Caribbean. While 30% of youth aged 15 to 24 worldwide were considered "digital natives" in 2012 (five or more years of online experience), under 10% qualified at this level in sub-Saharan Africa.'

Looking at the data above, we can see that the youthfulness of African population which has been negatively affected by disease, poverty, hunger, migration in search of greener pastures, unemployment and the likes have the potentials to ensure power shifts. These may also be exploited by some members of the elite for some political advantages.

The Role of Ideas
African societies are no strangers to the power of ideas. Many of her early nationalists have travelled to study in Europe and America and have imported some of their ideas. Weber [39] argued that the development in Western Europe was largely due to the influence of ideas of work ethics introduced by early Protestants.

The intellectual ideas of Frantz Fanon especially his The Wretched of the Earth and Black Skin, White Masks reportedly influenced anti-colonial struggles in Africa and Latin America in the 1960s, 1970s and in Southern Africa in 1980s and 1990s.

University students across Africa played key roles in the demands for the return to democracy; campaign against human right abuses; decolonisation; an end to dictatorships. The National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) in collaboration with civil society organisations were at the forefront of the campaign to return to democracy in the 1990s [40].

Changing Frequencies of Violent Conflicts
The word "conflict" appears to have become synonymous with Africa as used by Western scholars. Some scholars like Collier [41] have raised concerns that Africans "might die in one" conflict or

the other. But contrary to Collier and theorists of his school of thought, evidence shows that wars are on the decline in Africa and there are great prospects for peace since the 200s (42, 43, 44, and 45).

As against many expectations, there were peaceful political transitions in The Gambia, Nigeria, Ghana, Benin Republic, Zimbabwe, and several other countries where incumbents were defeated. Even though there were serious concerns over tenure elongations in Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda in 2016, post-election conflicts were either short-lived or largely averted. It is still uncertain if the post-election tensions in Kenya will degenerate into full-blown ethnic conflicts between the Luos and Kikuyus. All these show that these countries are achieving high degrees of stability.

Conclusion

So far, we have looked at power shifts in Africa and how they came about. Looking at the patterns of the power shifts, it is clear that they have been elite-led, rather than people-led. The challenges to the achievement of a people-led movement for power shifts can be traceable to the nature of the state which lacks civil society orientations.

As the recent case of Zimbabwe shows, power shifts have been led by the political elites with the support of the people. This should have been the other way round.
If the current tempo is sustained in the digital age, the prospect of having a youth or people-led movement to achieve power shift in the nearest future is bright.

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IDRIS MOHAMMED
M.sc Student of Mass Communication
Bayero University, Kano
Contact: idrismpyar@gmail.com,
+2347063424263, 09030336970

YOUTH, ELECTORAL VIOLENCE AND RADICALIZATION IN NIGERIA

Abstract

Youth in Nigeria are usually characterized with jobless, drug abuse and other social vices, due to misplace priority our policy makers attached to them despite their active and important role they are playing in nation building. Politicians and unpatriotic citizen were accused of misguiding and misleading the youth by recruiting the as political thugs and hooligans which often expose them to electoral violence and vulnerable to radicalization.

The paper therefore sets out to analytically x-ray the issues and challenges that confronted youths in relation with electoral violence and radicalization in Nigeria.

The paper implores the use of vivid descriptive scenarios to make sound and logical arguments on the plight and strive of youth in forestalling equity and fair play in our electoral process and also on the strides recorded thereof. Using variables such as unemployment, poverty, ignorance of religious teaching, political instability and lack of parental upbringings are the main causes of youth radicalization and electoral violence., the researchers conclude that youths have in better future being the leaders of tomorrow, despite their active involvement in electoral violence and radicalized ideologues, they proper sensitization to make them more meaningful to the society. It therefore recommends amongst other things that, it is imperative to create awareness among the youths, reform educational system, providing job opportunities, reform judicial system, proper monitoring and regulation of

religious preaching, enhance the capability of youths to take part in the electoral process by creating a robust orientation programme and also engaging them to become financially and morally equip, so as to drastically reduce if not totally eradicate arm-twisting or manipulation of youths in the society.

Key words: youth, electoral process, electoral violence and radicalization

Introduction

Ever since independence in 1960 to date, Nigeria has facing threat to its existence as a nation, such threat include electoral violence and radicalism among the youth especially in northern Nigeria.

Such incidence of electoral violence and radicalism is becoming everyday concern to everyone because of it implication to the security of life and property. Electoral violence and radicalism have existence for so many years in Nigeria, since Nigeria became an independent country on October 1, 1960 conducting a violence-free election remains a goal yet to be achieved. Electoral violence has been the primary threat to democratic consolidation in Nigeria since independence. From the first federal election after independence in 1964 to that of 1983, 1993, 2003, 2007 and 20011, electioneering in Nigeria has been characterized by violence.

Throughout this journey, youths have been used and played important role in making these elections realistic. However, these youths have been sidelined and abused, mainly used by politicians to disrupt peaceful democratic transition in Nigeria. Several studies and observations revealed that youth were the prime mover of violence in Nigeria, this has to do with nothing but the unfavorable situation that characterized with unemployment, corruption and drug abuse. A recent study suggests that the youths are prosecutors of 90-95% of violent conflicts in Nigeria (Omeje: 2007)..

According to Ekwuruke (2007) this is the period of vigor, curiosity, spiritedness action and inexperience. Most of these youths who in

most cases are colleges and universities drop-outs often end up in urban centers in search of menial jobs, some others end-up on the streets, high way junctions, and in traffic hawking different items as "mobile super markets (Ekwuruke, 2007). All these societal problems further contribute to the continuous problem of youth violence and radicalization which most of the Nigerian youths are constantly involved in today.

Electoral violence and political violence are the same and it can be seen as all forms of collective attack within a political system. With this, Anifowose (1982) opined that, electoral violence is the use of threat or physical act carried out by an individual or group of individual within a political system against another individual or individuals and/ or property; with the intent to cause injury or death to persons or damage/destruction of property; and whose objective, choice of targets or victim, surrounding circumstances, implementation and effect have political significance which tends to modify the behavior of others in the existing arrangement of a power structure that has consequences for the political system.

While, radicalization is a process by which an individual, or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspiration that reject or undermine the status quo or undermine contemporary ideas and expression of the nation. Jaffer (2009) defines it as the process by which individual usually young people are introduced to an overtly ideological messages and belief system that encourages movement from moderate, mainstream belief towards extreme views. However, radicalization does not always lead to violence. Though, radicalization becomes problematic when it leads to act of violence such as terrorism. Therefore, this paper is aim to examine the youth, electoral violence and radicalization, the paper divided into two phases. The first phase will look at the introduction and conceptual clarification of the youth, electoral violence and radicalization while, the second phase will investigate the relationship between youth, electoral violence and radicalization with hope of finding the lasting solution to the issues.

Conceptual clarifications

Youth: Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa with the largest population of youth in the world. The National Youth Policy (2009) defined youth in Nigeria as citizen of the Federal Republic of Nigeria aged 18-35 years. Nigerian constitute two-third of the population about 70,000,000 (National Bureau Statistic 2012). While, the total of youth between 10-24 in Nigeria was 45.4 million in 2006, which is 34% of the total population. The government characterize youth as ambitious, enthusiastic, energetic and promising

While, the United Nation, for statistical consistency across region, define youth as those persons between the ages of 15-24 years, without prejudice to their definition by member state. (Wikipedia, 2016).UNESCO adopts this definition of youth as used by a member state.it can be based for instance, on the definition given in the African Youth Charter (2006) where youth means " every person between the age of 15 and 35 years.

From the aforementioned definitions, youth mean someone who is young and energetic. In this regard, Moses (2017) argued that "the appearance, freshness, vigour, spirit etc characteristic of one who is a young" The concept of youth has been subjected to diverse interpretations and flexible usage. At one level the youth are conceptualized in terms of their futuristic role as leaders of society. However, in his interrogation of the youth as a category Obi (2006: 5), aptly notes that:

> The categorization of the youth as future leaders assumes the non-interrogation of the existing power relations in society and is a recipe for preparing the youths to perpetuate a particular mode of power relations that suggest a permanence of structures of dominance and interests, but with the entry and exit of occupants' overtime

Obi continues:

> This conceptualization also suggests the sub-ordination of youths to the power structure controlled by elders in order to facilitate system stability, cohesion and continuity. Political time then becomes a conveyor belt

that takes the loyal and disciplined youth into future power, when the elders pass into myth and history (Obi; 2006: 6)

It is also important to understand that for some youths particularly in the poverty stricken economies of the developing world, Nigeria inclusive, what is paramount is survival. They must first of all survive before they can begin to think of fighting for a future. Indeed, as Obi (2006: 9) notes:

Where the very fact of survival is embedded in conflict, then the struggle for survival for the future is ambushed by more violence that sucks in young people into the vortex of class, ethnic, generational, communal and political agendas.

Youth comprises all young persons of ages 18 to 35, who are citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This category represents the most active, the most volatile and yet the most vulnerable segment of the population. They are individuals (male or female) above ten but below thirty years of age. The youth has also defined as the period in an individual's life which runs between the end of childhood and entry into the world of work (Onuekwusi and Effiong, 2002).

Commitment to the enlightenment of the youth has been reinforced by resolution of various international organizations which draw attention to the need to concretely address the problems of the youth and empower them (Olujide, 2008). These youth must be developed intellectually, morally, socially and with relevant skills to face a rapidly advancing technological world (Laogun, 2002).

A review of studies such as Fenley (1986), Odusanya (1972) and Olujide (1999), have also revealed that the youths constitute the highest percentage of the Nigerian population, and therefore International Journal of Education and Research Vol. 1 No. 9 September 2013 are seen as "vital sources of manpower for development''. They are rightly seen as leaders of tomorrow. Hence, the kind of education (formal or informal) that youth are exposed to or have access to will determine the nation's overall development (Odusanya, 1972, Olujide, 1999).

Electoral Violence

Violence is a multi-dimensional concept which defies any precise definition (Ologbenla : 2011). According to Anifowose (1982.1) quoted in (Ologbenla: 2011), the concept of violence "serve as a catch-all for every variety of precetest, militancy, coercion, destruction, or muscle-flexing which a given observer happens to fear or condemn".

Ologbenla defines violence as the use of illegitimate or illegal means to achieve desired political or non-political goals. He states that violence could be an instrument employed by non-governmental organizations, individual and group to press forward certain demands

The Electoral Process

To fully capture the enormity of the topic at hand, it will be proper to understand the scope and electoral process in the Nigerian concext. Electoral process is a dynamic, evolving and controversial one and subject of constant calls for reform (Abubakar 2003: Cook 2003; Okosun; 2003) quoted in (Omeje : 2007). Apparently, the electoral process is robust, albeit in principle, but operates at the behest of INEC alleged controlled by the behest of INEC alleged controlled by the president. The electoral process includes:

- Ø Registration of voter
- Ø Registration of political party/ political party campaign
- Ø Preparations by the electoral body (procurement of electoral materials and recruitment of adhoc staff)
- Ø Holding of elections
- Ø Post-election

In an ideal situation, these steps and arrangement should be clearly understood by the stake holders and indeed the electorates for the credibility and legitimacy of the process. The quality of each steps has profound impact on the subsequent steps and quality of the outcome of the process. Even though INEC served as the ultimate umpire of the electoral process; it engages in several activities aimed at regulating the overall conduct of all stages of the election-

release of guidelines but studies and observations have shown that INEC has inefficiencies. According to Omeje (2007:93), the followings are the key reasons cited for INEC's inefficiency:

a.   Its dependence on the government, particularly the presidency, who appoints electoral commissions and control funding of the commission. There is a need to reform INEC to make it more independent and financial autonomous.

b.   Its inefficient and selective stance on the regulation of political parties and politicians. There are allegations that INEC favour the ruling national party in it policies and activities;

c.   Its rigid bureaucratic orientation particularly towards civil society, the media and pressure groups...

d.   He states further that a key indicator of Nigeria's faculty electoral the electoral act has been a subject of controversy since 1999. Dissatisfaction with document has been consensual; and attempts to review it have generated disagreements, including legal battles.

According to Jega (2011) "As has been observed by some political analysis, Nigerians have for long aspired for democracy and they have been repeatedly frustrated. For nearly 30 years out of Nigeria's 50 years of independence from colonial rule, the frustration of Nigerians with shattered democratic aspirations were caused by authoritarian military regimes, which engineered transitions to civil rule programmes to gain legitimacy but then systematically subverted these to continue to hold Onto power by military flat... the frustration of Nigerians with the subvention of their democratic aspirations has largely been occasioned by civilians in power; essentially reckless politicians or 'militicians' who, possessed by a 'do or die' mindset in political, abused, misuse and generally undermined the political and electoral processes to hold onto power arbitrarily, but hiding under periodic, procedural electoral 'victories' to 'legitimize' their actions. Indeed, in no sector has the frustration of Nigerians been as manifest as manifest as in the electoral process in the past decade".

Brief historical overview of electoral violence in Nigeria

Between independence in 1960 and 1999, Nigeria produced only two elected governments - both later overthrown in military coups. Nigeria's military ruled the country for nearly 30 of its first 40 years of independence. However, in 1999, Nigeria made a transition to civilian rule. The 1999 elections, which brought a retired general, Olusegun Obasanjo, to power, were blighted by such widespread fraud that observers from the Carter Center concluded that "it is not possible for us to make an accurate judgment about the outcome of the presidential election."

Federal and state elections in 2003 were again marred by fraud as well as serious incidents of violence that left at least 100 people dead and many others injured. Human Rights Watch found that members and supporters of the ruling party were responsible for the majority of abuses, though opposition parties also engaged in political violence. Most deaths occurred when opposing bands of armed gangs fought each other in an effort to control an area and displace supporters of the opposing party. Human Rights Watch documented how ruling party politicians in the oil-rich Niger Delta mobilized and funded armed groups to help rig elections. That led to a sustained increase in violence and criminality in the region.

> " *Despite the abysmal record of the 1999 and 2003 elections, the government did not correct the problems in the next elections.* "

Despite the abysmal record of the 1999 and 2003 elections, the government did not correct the problems in the next elections.

Observers from the European Union described the 2007 elections, which brought Umaru Yar'Adua, a Muslim from northern Nigeria, to power, as among the worst they had witnessed anywhere in the world. Human Rights Watch estimates that at least 300 people were killed in violence linked to the 2007 elections.

Corrupt politicians, in many cases backed by mafia-like "godfathers," openly mobilized gangs of thugs to terrorize ordinary citizens and political opponents and to stuff or steal ballot boxes. The police were often present during such incidents but frequently turned a blind eye or, at times, participated in abuses. In other locations elections simply did not take place, yet the electoral commission reported ruling-party victories with high voter turnout.

Following Yar'Adua's death in May 2010 from natural causes, Goodluck Jonathan, his vice president, was sworn in as president.

An internal zoning agreement within the ruling People's Democratic Party provides that a northerner should have held the presidency following the eight-year administration of Obasanjo, a Christian from southwest Nigeria.

Despite opposition by some of the northern leaders, Jonathan managed to secure the ruling party's ticket in the party primary in January 2011 and went on to sweep the predominately Christian south during the April elections. His main opponent, Muhammadu Buhari, the candidate for the Congress for Progressive Change, won the majority of votes in the largely Muslim north. The election left the country deeply divided on religious and ethnic lines.

Youths and Electoral Violence in Nigeria
Looking at the level of post-election violence in Nigeria, especially the 2011 election which was characterized with violence almost all over the country. The situation led to loss of lives of more than 800 people and resulted in the displacement of approximately 65,000 people according to YIAGA`s report on youth participation in Nigeria 2015 general elections, 28 march and 11 April 2015, hence the need for ensuring a peaceful democratic transition significantly increased in the 2015 elections in order to pave way for democratic consolidation and sustainable development.

However, several studies in the past have often revealed that youths form bulk of the perpetrators of election related violence in Nigeria and around the world. This is in line with the view point of Akinboye (1987), McAllister (2004), Nweke (2005), Bazza (2008), that youths have been repeatedly used as instruments of violence: they have participated actively in destructive anti-social behaviours such as violent demonstrations, intra and inter political party fighting and other politically motivated violence, ritual killings, kidnapping and hostage taking, arson and cult related violence. Answers to the reason why youths are ever available and vulnerable instruments in the hands of unscrupulous politicians to perpetrate electoral violence have also been advanced thus; A closer look at the Nigerian political circle, reveals to the observer that bulk of the youths who are perpetrators of election related violence are unskilled, uneducated or ill-educated, unemployed and children of parents of poor socio-economic status.

This view point is in line with Nwekes (2005) postulations. He posited that factors that are responsible for youth-led electoral violence include the following: a good number of youths who participate in acts of electoral violence come from embattled and economically poor homesteads; they are either uneducated or school drop-outs.

High rate of unemployment and underemployment especially among graduates of tertiary institutions is yet another factor that accounts for the high incidence of youths participation in electoral violence; moral decadence in youths and as well as the political manipulation of the psycho-cultural dispositions of youths towards elections by political elites has equally generated violent competition at elections.

The political elites have always convinced the youths that violent struggle at elections to ensure the victory of their ethnic-nationality or religions man or party member is a struggle in their favour and against marginalization or other forms of socio-economic discrimination. This position is confirmed by Akinboye (1987) who observed that most youths especially those who are desperately needy have problems in making and taking decisions.

This largely explains why some politicians could capitalize on the weakness of youths about decision-making and taking and involving them in destructive anti-social behaviours the youths could not have loved to engage themselves in. It is also no gainsaying that; government intervention policies and structures towards tackling the problems of unemployment and poverty among youths are ill-motivated, poorly packaged and are more of palliatives.

And even were such government s interventionist instrument of confronting the problems of youth joblessness and restiveness exists – like that which was being implemented by the Ministry of Youths, Conflict Resolution and Employment Generations – it is not effective enough. Moreover, governments   poverty eradication programmes are too elitist and too far away from the needy youths. For instance, the SURE-P empowerment scheme meant for youths eventually ended up in the garages of the ruling party stalwarts and other senior government officials. In line with the above outcomes,

this aligns with the positions of Baba and Ogundiya (2005), Nweke (2005) and Ajayi (2007) who have asserted that; youth restiveness is the bane of electoral violence in any society. It was also observed by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA 2001) that the lack of a clear adherence and respect for the rules guiding the electoral process is another obstacle thwarting the positive role expected of youths in elections.

The IDEA further posited that the ease by which politicians are able to manipulate, influence, mobilize and arm disgruntled, jobless and needy youths to commit all sorts of election related violence is a major challenge to credible and transparent elections in Nigeria. This position is understandable because a credible, peaceful and fair election engenders a peaceful and legitimate means of political succession.

Moreover, electoral violence as the ultimate form of electoral fraud is an aberration as well as anathema to the fundamental tenets of democracy: it deprives the people voice in governance; it stalls communication between the politicians (government) and citizens; it has encouraged political apathy and indifference of the citizenry; it makes government unrepresentative, unaccountable, unresponsive and irresponsive; it creates a conducive atmosphere for unscrupulous individuals to hijack the instrument of the state; and more importantly, it puts a big question mark on the legitimacy of the government.

Even more worrisome is the fact that electoral violence, especially with youths involvement in it, has become an established and "legitimate" mode of political behaviour in Nigeria.

RADICALISATION: The concept of radicalisation is not only central to this mapping study, but is also a subject that has gained significant currency in usage by government officials, media practitioners, scholars and security officials in discourses on terrorism and violent extremism. It is apposite to clarify the way it is understood and applied to this study.

There is no generally acceptable definition of the concept "radicalization" because it is different thing to different society but

the scholars and peace and conflict expert defined the concept based on their psychological position. As Schmid has rightly noted, "the terms 'radicalisation' and 'de-radicalisation' are used widely, but the search for what exactly 'radicalisation' is, what causes it and how to 'de-radicalise' those who are considered radicals, violent extremists or terrorists, is a frustrating experience" (Schmid 2013:1).

Ashour, for instance, posits that radicalisation is "a process of relative change in which a group undergoes ideological and/or behavioural transformations that lead to the16rejection of democratic principles (including the peaceful alternation of power and the legitimacy of ideological and political pluralism) and possibly to the utilisation of violence, or to an increase in the levels of violence, to achieve political goals" (Ashour 2009:4).

For Sodipo, radicalisation is "a process by which an individual or group adopts extreme political, social, or religious ideals that reject the status quo, undermine contemporary ideas regarding freedom of choice and expression, and condone violence to achieve ideological ends, including undertaking terrorist acts" (Sodipo 2013:4). It typically starts with changes in one's self-identification. Grievances, frequently driven by personal or group concerns regarding local issues as well as international events, fuel this change.

In the view of Schmid, radicalisation entails: an individual or collective (group) process whereby, usually in a situation of political polarisation, normal practices of dialogue, compromise and tolerance between political actors and groups with diverging interests are abandoned by one or both sides in a conflict dyad in favour of a growing commitment to engage in confrontational tactics of conflict-waging.

These can include either (i) the use of (non-violent) pressure and coercion, (ii) various forms of political violence other than terrorism or (iii) acts of violent extremism in the form of terrorism and war crimes. The process is, on the side of rebel factions, generally accompanied by an ideological socialisation away from mainstream or status quo-oriented positions towards more radical or extremist

positions involving a dichotomous world view and the acceptance of an alternative focal point of political mobilisation outside the dominant political order as the existing system is no longer recognised as appropriate or legitimate (Schmid 2013:18).

Although there is no unanimity among scholars on the definition of the term, analysts are almost in agreement that radicalisation is a process. Factors that engender the radicalisation of individuals or groups have remained a subject of debate among experts. It has been argued that the causes of radicalisation are as diverse as they are abundant. In other words, experts believe that there is no single factor that leads an individual or even a group to become radicalised, but rather, it is the complex overlap of concurring and mutually reinforcing factors (see Evans and Neumann 2009; Kirby 2007; Ferrero 2005; Stern 2003).

To this end, a study on causal factors of radicalisation concludes that a complex interaction between factors at three levels – individual, external and social – is likely to be crucial for the intensity of the readiness for radicalisation (Danish Institute for International Studies 2008).

External factors manifest themselves independent of the individual. They shape and constrain people's environment, but individuals have only minor influence on their environment. External factors can be subdivided into political, economic and cultural dimensions. Social factors refer to mechanisms that position the individual in relation to relevant others and hence can include people from in-groups as well as out-groups.

Wiktorowitcz has identified four interrelated stages of the radicalisation process as follows: i) cognitive opening whereby individuals conditioned by both internal and external factors like economic and social circumstances become receptive to new ideas; ii) religious seeking during which individuals seek religious understanding of the issues; iii) frame alignment where the new ideas which are often radical in nature become meaningful to them, and iv) Socialisation during which individuals internalise radical ideas that enable them to join extremist groups (Beutel 2007). This process may not entirely explain the circumstances for all

radicalised people and Islamic groups but certainly illuminates how youths get radicalised in the West and other parts of the world.

These factors can manifest in different forms depending on the individual and context.

However, agreement tends to revolve around a broad set of parameters that act as ingredients in the radicalisation process: grievance, ideology, mobilisation, and tipping points. While grievance is understood to be the sense of alienation or disenchantment that provides a cognitive opening, ideology entails the extreme set of ideas that provides the individual with a new outlook and explanation for the world an individual finds him or herself.

Mobilisation captures the process by which the individual is slowly integrated into a community of individuals who are like-minded and create a self-reinforcing community, and finally, tipping points are the specific events that push an individual or group from rhetoric to action (Beutel 2007). External forces can also facilitate and reinforce these factors.

While these varying definitions and explanatory frameworks illuminate our understanding of radicalisation, it is important to bear in mind that what attracts young people to radical behaviour differs from person to person with the most important being the individual factor. As experts have argued, "the part to radicalisation is a highly individualised one, with very different characteristics from a person to person" (Vidino, Pantucci and Kohlmann 201:230).

According to the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), radicalisation is a gradual process that, although it can occur very rapidly, has no specifically defined beginning or end-state (Danish Institute for International Studies 2008: 6). Rather, radicalisation is an individual development that is initiated by a unique combination of causal factors and that comprises a drastic change in attitudes and behaviour.

This study, therefore, defines radicalisation as the process by which an individual or group transits from a state of passive reception of

revolutionary, militant or extremist views, ideas and beliefs to active pursuit of the ideals of such views, ideas and beliefs, especially through supporting, promoting or adopting violence as a means to achieving such intentions. It is such transition that underlies violent extremism or terrorism.

What makes Youth vulnerable to Radicalization in Nigeria?

In 2013, the U.S institute of peace commissioned a study from the CLEEN Foundation in Nigeria to examine factors contribution to youth radicalization and recruitment in to arm group. In addition to reviewing media reports, databases, policy reports, newspapers and academic literature, the foundation conducted primary research involving surveys, interviews and focus group discussion. Consultants and experts ran field studies in two towns in each of the six states in northern Nigeria selected for the study: Borno, Kaduna, Sokoto, Yobe, Gombe and Kano state. The major finding of the study revealed main factors which are economic, social, political and religious in nature and cut across all six states included in the research. However, specific factors that lead youth vulnerable to radicalization are:

- Ignorance of religious teaching: young people are vulnerable to recruitment and radicalization by independent and roaming preachers, extremist group and religious ideologues who often distort religious injunction. These roaming preachers claiming to be Islamic scholars deceive impressionable youth. In others, youth are radicalized in the training camps of terrorists groups through distorted interpretation of the Holy Book.

- Unemployment and Poverty make youth vulnerable to radicalization: unemployment and poverty are socio-economic challenges that are not only intricately interconnected but glaringly especially in northern Nigeria. National Bureau Statistic show that the country's unemployment rate in 2013 is was 23.90 percent while Nigeria's poverty rate to 60.9 percent. This means that Nigerians lived in absolute poverty and 12.6 million more were moderately poor. This is not argue that unemployment and poverty are direct causes of youth radicalization; rather privation and other frustrating conditions of life render youth highly vulnerable to manipulation by extremists ideologues.

· Children with difficult upbringings: the growing number of children without parental guidance is a societal condition that has contributed to the problem of youth radicalization in Nigeria. Children who lack protective societal environment are more likely to be exploited

Major Causes of electoral violence and radicalization among youth in Nigeria

Poor Economy and Unemployment: The escalating state of violence in Nigeria has been incessantly linked to poor economy and high level of youth unemployment. Nigeria's economy has been marred by corruption and thorough mismanagement of public funds. This has led to widespread of unemployment, frustration and restiveness among the youths which makes them susceptible to violence.

Nigeria's unemployment rate is above the sub region's average that increased to 23.9% in 2011 compared to 21.1% in 2010 and 19.7% in 2009 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2012). Unemployment rate has been on the increase in Nigeria, the youth constitute 60% of the country's population, and majority of them are unemployed and underemployed. Since they are idle and frustrated, they become susceptible to violence, societies with strong economies and low unemployment rates record low percentage of violence.

Lack of Equality and Justice: Nigeria is a rich country with alarming number of poor people. The country is vast in natural resources and oil wealth which is controlled by the political class. While a lawmaker earns bogus salaries and allowances, a classroom teacher is paid meager amount which is usually delayed, sometimes for a few months. Civil servants earn far less salaries and the salaries are delayed.

More also, government tax citizens yet the infrastructural deficit in the country is depressing; intra and inter states roads are extremely poor, power supply is a mirage, public healthcare is lagging behind, fuel/gas scarcity is incessant among others. Inequality and injustice in Nigeria has instigated provocations and led to violence many times. Violence has become an instrument to seek equality and justice.

Religious and Ethic Sentiments: Nigerians are overwhelmingly obsessed about religious and ethnic identities; sadly, religious and ethnic identities play more important roles in election, appointments, employment and admission into public institutions in Nigeria. The thick cloud of religious and ethnic sentiments has given birth to violence; this has brought global attention and scrutiny to Nigerian. Religious and ethnic sentiments have triggered major violence in Nigeria.

Political Instability: most of the depicted that they do not believe in the Nigerian government because of government failure over the years. Nigeria's political terrain is characterized clash of interests, mismanagement, and corruption.

Major implication

Loss of Lives and Properties: Violence of various types has claimed the lives and properties of many Nigerians. The previous post election violence that claimed the lives of 9 NYSC members in Bauchi state and the deadly cycle of electoral violence in River state. Over 2 million Nigerians in north east have been displaced by Boko Haram attacks, including over 800,000 children while thousands of lives have been lost, government, corporate and private properties lost in billions of Naira as a result of youth radicalization successfully carriedout by Boko Haram sect. This has come with the task of rebuilding the affected communities in a post Boko Haram era.

Socio-Economic Stagnation: For states affected by Boko Haram attacks in North East Nigeria, social and economic activities were paralyzed for several months; schools were shut down and pupils withdrawn, businesses were shut down and economic movement in the region became extremely difficult. The violence has stagnated socio-economic activities, peace is paramount to economic growth.

Recommendations:
In order to effectively respond to the problem of youth radicalisation and electoral violence in

Nigeria, the following measures are suggested.

Creating awareness: Media should take the responsibility of creating awareness among the youth that the future belongs to them and that it must not be destroyed by them; sensitizing them to the fact the future and its nature depend on the decisions and choices they make; creating them a sense of history, especially of the noble and heroic contributions of the youth in the past to the development of Nigeria, in comparison with the ignoble role of many youth today; sensitizing them to embrace the rule of law and democratic ideals; liberating them psychologically and mentally from radicalization and electoral violence. Encouraging them to raise issues relating to unresolved problems of nation building and the problem of neglect of the youth in the development process at every for a; mobilizing them against abuse of system through sanction; sensitizing them to seek greater employment and educational opportunities as a means of redirecting their energy and ideas from anti-social activities to creative efforts.

Job Creation and Economic Growth: The Nigerian government must embark on effective poverty alleviation and human capital development programmes in order to empower the teeming youths who are most vulnerable to be easily recruited and radicalised for violent extremism and electoral violence. Unemployment must be addressed, inflation must be addressed, infrastructure must be put in place to create conducive environment for businesses to strive. Nigeria must keep her citizens gainfully engaged in various economically viable activities. If unemployment is reduced, violence will be reduced, when the economy grows and infrastructure is put in place for businesses to strive, violence is reduced and peace is restored.

Enhanced Provision of Education and Literacy Programme: Due to high level of illiteracy in Nigeria, most young people have become easily susceptible to manipulation and recruitment into criminal

and extremist groups. Although the right to education is one of the basic rights of every Nigerians, access and entitlement to this right is hardly attained.

To reduce the number of people who are likely to fall prey to radical preaching and recruitment into violent groups, education should be made free and compulsory for every child in Nigeria. Better monitoring and regulation of religious Preaching, as is done in some countries with a history of religious extremism, such as Saudi Arabia, religious preachers as well as places of worships are closely monitored so as to avoid using such avenues for propagating violent and extremist ideology or distortion of religious teachings. Given the finding that independent (roaming) preachers are key purveyors of distorted religious preaching, there is the need for a regulatory and monitoring framework in Nigeria.

Therefore, the issue of compulsory primary and secondary education in Nigeria should transcend mere statement to practical delivery of this basic entitlement to the Nigerian child. Thus, what is need is for the local and state governments to muster the right political will to deliver quality and accessible education to more children in Nigeria through enhanced allocation and judicious utilisation of funds in the educational sector.

Youths in Politics, electoral reforms and Social Justice: As part of a build-up of youth in the political processes, youth should learn and acquire skills for campaign management, fund raising, recruitment etc. there should be focused effort on assisting youth party members to develop and implement coordinated electoral strategies and encourage voter participation.

Youth activities should incorporate education of themselves, colleagues, families and friends about the current and important issues facing their communities. Apathy is dangerous – particularly amongst youths – participation in the nation s political process is a central belief within the teachings of our diverse traditions. As the nation continues to grow more diverse the need for diverse participation in the electoral process by the electorate becomes even more compelling, the country s leader must hear from

younger generation during the electoral process. Voter registration and participation should not merely be encouraged but stressed as an absolute necessity.

Youths should also engage in exchange in knowledge and expertise that would strengthen their participation in building democratic processes. Two out of the major critical observation advanced by Anifowose and Babawale (2003) is that „the structure of the Nigerian federation is deficient thereby creating problems for the political processes and, that the need for further research into youth crusading is most essential.

Therefore, government and other stake holder should develop and enhance the capability of youths in the electoral process by creating a robust orientation programme and also engaging them to become financially and morally equip, so as to drastically reduce if not totally eradicate arm-twisting or manipulation of youths in the society.

Judicial Reform: Nigeria's judiciary is undeniably weak. In many cases, it victimizes the poor and acquits the rich. Nigeria needs to strengthen the judiciary and make it a strong institution which is not controlled by the rich. The growing inequality and injustice in the country can be reduced by a strong and committed judiciary. Corrupt judges and lawyers should be restricted from the justice system, obsolete laws should be reviewed, treaties ratified by Nigeria that protects human rights should be domesticated and coherent judicial policies should be made.

Educational Reform: The Nigerian education system has descended from the sky of excellence. Violence among other social issues confronting Nigeria reflects in the crumbling education system. Education is pertinent to development, it is the bedrock of progress, and no nation can develop beyond its level of education.

Nigeria needs to make educational reforms in curriculum; the curriculum must accommodate thematic topics such as history, Nigeria languages and cultures, peace and development, peace and economic growth, religious understanding and race relation. These topics must also be made practical in relation to the Nigerian society. Today in many Nigeria schools, history, culture e.t.c are not

offered as subjects. Since some are ignorant or under-educated, they become vulnerable to sentiments that can trigger violence.

Beyond use of military or police force in ending violence, Nigeria must implement sustainable solutions as listed above. Nigeria needs to give a different approach to ending violence, military is good, however, with well educated population, strong judiciary and glowing economy, violence will be minimized.

Conclusion

The paper attempt to examine the nexus between youths, electoral violence and radicalization in Nigeria. It was established that the role of youths in previous elections have been mostly violent and how unconducive atmosphere will render the youths vulnerable to radicalizaton.

It was also established that youths are vulnerable instruments of electoral violence as a result of dislocated and poor parental background, poor education, unemployment and underemployment, moral decadence and as well as political manipulations by an irresponsible political class.

Moreover, the paper established that in the 2015 elections there was a twist to the role played by the youths, as most youths refused to be treated by the conventional way of being used as political thugs and agent of destruction.

The paper holds that creating awareness by media and civil societies helped in this regard, therefore, youths who are an integral part and the backbone to the economic and political growth of a society must be given top priority in times of empowerment and that since most youths that are perpetrators of electoral violence are either unemployed, uneducated and idle, that is why they are bamboozled to beat up political thuggery, this should be given strict attention and addressed.

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