INSECURITY AND RESURGENCE OF MILITARY COUPS: APPRAISAL OF ENDEMIC THREATS TO SUSTAINABLE POLITICAL STABILITY IN WEST AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Political stability and orderly transfer of political power through competitive party politics remains the hallmark of democracy. But, current happenings in Africa indicate a high rate of insecurity and military coups in many West African states. Sadly, these insecurity issues that have caused military putsches are not externally propelled rather they are internally induced by myriads of issues associated with the abhorrent African political culture. Using and adopting the Democratic Theory with Relative Deprivation Theoretical frameworks, the paper sought to investigate nexus between African democratic politics, incessant insecurity and resurgent military coups in West Africa. The study adopted qualitative research methods in which secondary data are employed for data analysis. The paper found amongst others that poor democratic culture of god-fatherism, absence of internal democracy in political parties, the absence of ideologically driven political parties et cetera are some of the factors responsible for the resurgence of military coups in West Africa. The paper concluded amongst others that the existence of an impartial electoral umpire and a well-established judicial system for arbitration can minimize the resurgence of military democratic coups in West Africa.

Key Words: Insecurity, god-fatherism, Military Coup, African States

Introduction

Leadership contestation and succession has always being problematic in human society. This systemic problem however was relieved by democratic processes through electoral procedures which outline requisites for emergence of leaders in the electoral act. These detailed processes and procedures of attaining leadership position embedded in the constitution made democracy to be one of the best and safest ways for leadership selection and succession globally. However, despite the constitutionally itemized procedures for attainment of leadership position, in Africa democracy remain number one source of violence and political conflicts that generates spiral insecurities to the national and international polity. The root cause of this contradiction between democracy and African politics appears to be poor political culture and values imbibed by African political elites which are negatively taking its tolls on efficient and effectiveness of democratic practices to generate democratic violence and insecurities in many West African states, (Meredith,2006).

Meanwhile, development in a state is a function of good governance, stable and serene political environment, action-centered and purposeful leadership, well-managed human and material resources, and committed citizenry (Sharma, et al, 2013). This means development of state contains multivariable factors that require synergy between leadership, citizens and resources but, (democratic violence), insecurity and military coups has continuously derail this synergy. There are major elements that stand out in the development equation; these are serene political environment, action-centered and purposeful leadership, (Meredith, 2006). This unstable and conflict riddles environment impede development thus, serene and stable environment is needed for development while all other variables for development are coordinated by the leadership that operates good governance. This made leadership and its emergence core in the stability and development of state. Sharma et al (2013:70) identifiesgood governance as " *effective citizens participation* in government, *accountability* by those who govern, *transparency* in which citizens have access to information on government, rule of law that is fair and *impartial in enforcement* of law, responsiveness of government institutions and processes *to serve the interests of the citizens* at all time, *inclusiveness and equity where no citizen is excluded or marginalized* because all citizens have *equal opportunity politically and economically*" (emphasis is mine). Invariably, all these aforementioned virtues are ingrained in democratic politics to make good governance the essence of democracy in a state. Consequently, a situation where the good governance is substituted for poor governance is bound to have repercussion(s) in the polity, (Chaba, 1998).

However, democracy as a globally attractive system of governance is suffering from sweeping military coups in many parts of African states in the recent time (Niger, Burkina Faso, Congo, and Mali). This unwholesome development of military putsch appears to be occurring at frightening rate due to unethical practices introduced to democracy by African political and governing elites to cause democratic violence and insecurity ravaging the continent, (Ibrahim & Cheri, 2013). These unfolding repulsive issues of democratic violence, insecurity and military putsch that have attendant consequences on national and international politics in Africa beg for inquiry into African democratic practice and its effects in distorting sustainable political stability in the continent. The beauty and relevance of democracy to modern African states starts with inclusive politics that make provision for all the citizens to share in running of statecraft which are multi-ethnic in nature. Therefore, democracy provides opportunity for an all-inclusive and adequate representations of different shades of opinions and interests from different assertive groups to participate in policy formulation and implementation that leads to state building and national integration, (Ake, 1990).

Most African states are made up of diverse ethnic groups who at their pre-colonial period are best of enemies, and this generate serious unhealthy ethnic competition among these unwieldy groups that are lumped together into one modern African state by colonialist. Thus, these colonially created modern African states require good governance offered by democracy where there is adequate representation, fairness, equity and equal opportunity to aspire to

leadership position where nation-building and national integration can create togetherness, unity and political stability (Souare, 2009). Invariably, colonial power that created these evolving modern African states seems to have partially introduced democratic politics into Africa with the aim of solving perceived problems of leadership selection, political recruitment and representation as well as good governance. Politics as complex social-psychological activities was conceived by scholars in diverse ways and one of the conceptions is that politics is 'an avenue of resolving diverse and competitive interests' through consultation, deliberation, and voting to arrive at common consensus agreeable to majority concerned while dissatisfied groups have their rights and freedom to criticize/critique of policy decision by offering alternative line of action. These freedoms, right and choice seems to have also made colonialist that created modern African states to institute democracy as a system of governance in the established African states, (Ake, 1996).

Democratic violence and insecurity are not self sustaining issues rather there are certain variables that may conditioned their occurrence and continuous survival. Therefore, democratic violence and insecurity is a function of discordance tunes and existence of irreconcilable positions by African political elites who are supposed to be united and have common stand. These discordance tunes that propelled irreconcilable differences in African states manifest mostly in democratic party politics which many African political elites presumed to be a war-like situation that must be won at all cost ("do or die" of Obasanjo during his campaign for Yar'Adua in 2007 and Mugabe claims of having "degree in violence" to deal with his political opponents, (Meredith, 2006).

Conceptual Clarification

The concept of democracy is broad and multidimensional, this led scholars to conceived democracy from different perspectives. But, these divergent views are relevant in showcasing content, principles and importance of democracy as well as where African political elites deviates from the ethics of democracy. Roskin*et al*, (2010) conceptualize democracy as a political system of *mass participation* in a *competitive election that is free and fair*. The major ingredient of democracy to Roskin, et al is *competitive, free and fair election* between different political parties/candidates and in a political atmosphere of *unhindered fundamental human rights*. Lord Bryce (cited in Mahajan 2008, p.794) identified democracy as a form of government in which the *ruling power of a state is legally vested*, not in particular class or classes, but *in the members of the community as a whole*. To Lord Bryce *access to leadership and state power* is *through majority consent* expressed in free and fair election for peaceful and orderly change of government and leaders. Mayo (cited in Mahajan 2008, p.789) refers to democracy as system in which public policies are made on *a majority basis by representatives subject to effective popular control at periodic elections* which are conducted on the *principle of equality* and under conditions of political freedom. Mayo observes *principle of equality of votes* and political *freedom from compulsion* by those who occupy leadership position. Lipset andLaskin (2009) conceived democracy as a political system which supplies regular *constitutional opportunities*

for changing the governing officials and as a *social mechanism that permits largest possible part of the population to influence major decisions* by choosing among contenders for political office. Lipset and Laskin remarks the importance of *constitutional change of governing officials without tampering with term and time of office* as being done in most Africa's democratic political environment.(Emphasis is mine).

Furthermore, Mahajan (2008) see democracy as "a way of life in which the *voluntary free intelligence* and activity of man can be *harmonized and coordinated with the least possible coercion*. Thus, democracy is synonymous with harmonization of coordinated free intelligence of men in an atmosphere devoid of coercion of citizens in the state. Diamond (1989) cited in Ereke & Ogedengbe (2016) clarified democracy as "a system of government that meet essential condition of meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and groups especially political parties, for all effective positions/governmental power at regular intervals and excluding the use of force, *a highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies* through regular and fair elections. To Larry Diamond no major *social group is excluded*, and *high level of civil and political liberties* like freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations exist to *ensure the integrity* of political competition and participation (Emphasis is mine).

Bassett (cited in Mahajan 2008, p.794), regarded democracy as a *civilized way of taking political action*. It constitutes an attempt to *reconcile freedom with the need for law and its enforcement*. It is *a political method* by which *every citizen has the opportunity of participating* through discussion in an attempt to *reach voluntary agreement* as to what shall be done for the good of the community as a whole. Democracy is a process of continuous search for agreement through discussion and compromise on the basis of the maximum measure of agreement obtained. But, Roosevelt, the former American President is more concerned with *dividend of democracy* when he argued that, democracy is not mere matter of universal adult suffrage and unhampered expression of the popular will. It must *provide positive and constructive force in the daily lives of the people and provide not merely for political but for economic needs* of people also, (Emphasis is mine).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the work is democratic theory-cum-frustration aggression theory.

The Democratic Theory

The democratic theory was premised on the peaceful, workable and orderly ethical arrangements of changing and transferring of political power. These arrangements contains established electoral process centered on competitive party politics, equity and fairness to political aspirants/candidates contesting for political power, adequate representation of divergent opinions in society, tolerance of critiques and criticisms from fellow contestants, competitive elections conducted by incorruptible and impartial electoral body as well as independent

judiciary who can tackle infringement or violation of electoral laws that can mar the outcome of election. Democratic theory specified and theorized how electoral process should operate on the basis of legitimacy of political power, peaceful political environment, competitive, free and fair election, Downs (1957), Schumpeter (1976), Dahl (1956). Democratic theory is concerned with how politics is being played within a political system in terms of all-inclusive citizens' participation in party politics and electoral process, representation, leadership selection, fairness and tolerance to political opponents as well as how election is being conducted under impartial umpire and how violation of electoral laws is technically and impartially handled by unbiased judiciary. Democratic theory is concerned about ideals, actors and institutions of democracy (political party, election, electoral commission, judiciary, constitution and political elites who play the game of politics).

Frustration-Aggression Theory

Theory of Frustration-Aggression contends that there is occurrence of aggressive behaviour when there is existence of frustration of people expectation and believes over a given period of time. Ted Gurr (cited in Memud, 2018) believes that 'potentials for collective violence is a function of the extent and intensity share discontent among members of society' and the potential for violence is a function of the degree to which share discontent can be blame on the political structure or institutions' such as Government, political elites, political leaders, electoral commission, judiciary and socio-economic retrogression. These unethical democratic behaviours such as electoral malpractices, manipulation of constitution and suppression of oppositions are capable of causing and escalating socio-political issues that can ignite frustration to initiate political conflicts, insecurity and military coup. Thus, political conflicts like democratic reversal occurred as a result of institutional negligence of democratic principles, values and ethics in the cause of competitive party politics. Relative deprivation of freedom of choice, denial of free and fair election as well as continuous manipulation of constitution, security forces electoral commission, judiciary and excess coercing of opposition and mass media. All these can leads to frustration of citizens in the polity to propel the military into coup d'état, (Siollum, 2020).

Furthermore, deprivation of certain basic tenets of democracy can leads to frustration that begets aggressive behaviour in the polity. Thus, it is frustration that leads to exhibition of aggressive behaviours to cause insecurity and coups, i.e. the genesis of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria are traceable to politics and election. It was desire of Modu Sherrif to secure electoral victory that made him to engage the service of extremist cleric with large followers. Meanwhile, the desire of the extremist cleric is to have unrestraint influence on state/Government. The integration of this group and determination of state curb their excesses led to crisis between Sheriff and the group and Nigeria is yet to come out of the crisis created. Therefore, deprivation leads to frustration and frustration leads to exhibition of aggressive behaviours that constitute insecurities and coups, (Arase, 2018).

The linkage here is that while democracy created ideal and ethical ways of producing and change political leaders, the political class, elites and leaders in Africa are littering political environment with unethical behaviours that are contradictory to democratic ethic and principles. These aberrations are railing polity to the anal of democratic violence. Most of the contradictory behaviours exhibited by the politicians in African generate apprehension and repulse people away from democracy to the extent that citizens overact and misbehave to cause democratic violence and political conflicts. Nwolise (2011) argues that 'Government as agent of state has obligations toward the citizens who surrender part of their rights, pledge their allegiance and discharge their duties to the state. But, when expected obligations from state such as dividends of democracy, freedom of choice are replaced by excessive use of coercive state power on perceived opponents by incumbent government. There is tendency for people to clamor and instigate military coup against dictatorial and repressive democratic government which cannot be remove by electoral votes.

Basic Principles and Pillars of Democracy

Based on the aforementioned scholars' deductions, democracy have basic universal principles and pillars attached to democratic political system and these are tenets upon which ethics, values and ideologies of democracy are based, Schumpeter (1975). O'Donnell (1999). These values and ethics are used as traits, parameters and attributes for recognizing and measuring democracy. These principles are:

Freedom: The first principle or tenetof democracy that must not be trample upon is freedom of choice, association, expression of opinions and views. This entails "free competition" by individual aspiring to compete for political leadership; 'freedom of choice' by the prospective electorate who are enlightened to freely make their choice among the candidates competing for people's vote; freedom of expression and right to campaign without intimidation; freedom of speech and right to criticize government policies and actions without any covert reprisal on the critics. As well as free and fair election where voters are not intimidated or coerced to vote a leader, Merki (cited in Mahajan, 2008). Denial of this core principle has been major cause of democratic violence and insecurity in Africa and by extension military coup.

Periodic Free, Fair, Credible and Competitive Election: An essential and crucial tenet of democracy is regular/periodic free, fair, credible and competitive election in which aspiring politicians and political parties are made to test their popularity and acceptability in the polity. Democracy put the political leadership and power in the hands of people as electorate who vote for candidates of their choice based on available information or political education. Election enables realization of popular consultation and entrenched political sovereignty where power belongs to the people (electorate). Thus, democracy made it mandatory for political office holders to present themselves and their intending program of activities which can be used as a measure of performance or dividend of democracy**.** Democracy as a system provides equity and equality between the people because every vote carries equal weight, (Oni &Ojo, 2018).Inability

to have enough level playground for candidate and political parties is a causal factor of democratic violence and insecurity in Africa. The use of foul means to secure electoral victory and denied citizens political sovereignty leads to democratic violence and reversal.

Vibrant and Ideologically Driven Political Party: An equally critical trait of democracy is vibrant and ideologically driven political party that provides both platform for actualizing and realization of political aspiration of individual. In democracy political party is a permanent institution with the goal of aggregating interests, presenting candidates for elections with the purpose of controlling governments, and representing such interests in government. It is thus a major vehicle for enhancing participation in governance (Foley & Edwards, 1996, cited in Agbaje, 1999). Political party also serve as means of converging opinions of its adherents to formulate good public policy proposal as manifesto to be use as incentives to woo electorates and membership to the party. Since the hallmark of democracy is good governance achieving this laudable objective is through well-established ideologically minded political parties. The problem of Africa's democracy emanate from the dearth of ideologically driven party and its replacement with threats, intimidation and organized violence against perceived vibrant political party(s) and aspirants due to desire to mope emerging formidable political party that serve as opposition causes democratic violence and insecurity that breed military coups in Africa,(Ereke & Ogedengbe, 2016).

Terms of Office: An essential precept dear to the heart of democratic politics is principle of 'term of office' and 'time in office'. Democratic leadership position is time-bound and time-honored principles because leadership is for a given period of time and not for life. Democracy stipulated time in office and term of office which is sacrosanct and must be honored by putting limitation on prospective political leadership years in office**.** Democracy put definite term of office of political leaders to a 4 or 5 year two-terms as elected executive president. There is time for the official commencement or assumption of office and relinquishing of power which must not be exceeded by the incumbent political leader under whatever guise. However, African political leaders and political elites have created a new political concept of "imperial President" "life President", "third term agenda" and "institutional coup" in their political lexicon. (Alhassan Qattara, Lauren Gbagbo) (Jega, 2021). Jettison the principle of tenure of office by many African democrats has caused series of democratic violence and insecurity in many part of Africa, (Joseph, 1991).

Tolerance: Furthermore, there is principle of tolerance of divergent views and opinions by both political parties and politicians in democratic politics. Divergent of ideas and ideologies, opinions and views are allowed to flourished and not crushed to death. Thus, there is no unwarranted and unnecessary use of state power or any other form of violence on perceived oppositions to mute their efforts/activities in order to secure electoral victory. Tolerance of opposition parties and critiques is critical to democratic politics but in Africa hostility by incumbent on perceived opponent heat up the polity inform of democratic violence to cause insecurity. (Jega, 2021).

Impartial and Independent Electoral Commission: Success of election in a democratic politics rest majorly on impartial and independent electoral commission. Credible election conducted by impartial electoral body in an atmosphere of peace that is devoid of threats, intimidation and organized violence against political opponents. Thus, impartiality of electoral umpire makes results nationally and internationally acceptable as well as confers legitimacy on elected political leaders. However, muddy political environment colored African democratic process to make electoral commission to become partial and dependent electoral umpire that citizens do not have trust in the presumed "doctored election results'. Thus, compromise the sanctity of electoral results, political legitimacy and authority conferred on elected leader to govern, (Jawo, 2021; Jega, 2021). Exhibition of partiality and bias for incumbent candidate and political party is a cause of democratic violence and insecurity in most of the African states operating democracy.

Efficient and Impartial Judicial System: Competitive nature of Democratic Party politics envisaged there is going to be infringements. But, these infringements must not be allowed to degenerate to fracas thus; provisions are made for amicable legal resolution of violation of electoral processes through efficient and impartial judicial system to handle emerging constitutional breach of electoral laws by the competing political parties or its candidates. But, filthy democratic practice in Africa have compromised judicial system and made judiciary failed in resolving emerging issues of breaching electoral process in the conduct of election and some of these breaches usually degenerate into heavy democratic violence (Dunmoye, 2018; Saliu & Ifejika, 2016).

Legal and Political Equality of Citizens and their Votes: A foremost principle of democracy is legal and political equality of citizens and their votes. It means being fair and justto participants in the game of Democratic Party politics. Aspirants and candidates involved in competitive democratic elections are given equal treatment and level playground and none will be unduly treated to the advantage of others. But, due to unethical democratic practices by Africa political leaders and elites where partiality and injustice replaced the fairness and justness recognized by democratic ethos. Continuous sabotaging this fairness, equality of citizens and votes had destabilized democratic states in Africa to cause insecurity (Jega, 2021).

Manifesto: A fascinating principle of democracy is manifesto where political party and candidates present program of action to improve socio-economic conditions of people if elected into power. This enables electorate to make right choice and input into policy-decision. Manifesto as actionable programme is use as mechanism to measure performance and to hold elected official accountable for electioneering promises. Manifesto also generates robust debate on best alternatives to arrive at public policy and offer opportunity for critique of party policy proposal. Meanwhile, in Africa unethical democratic practices of character assassination, personal assault on political opponents has tuned debates to abuse and total neglect of political issues to raising sentiment and emotional matters that usually leads to clashes between supporters of different candidates and political parties, (Jawo, 2021).

Representation: Democracy believes inadequate representation of diverse groups of people that makeup the state. Establishment of representative government through election of representatives from diverse interests, opinions/groups in society encouraged state and nation-building as well as consensus and compromise on issues of national concerns. Representatives emanates from different competitive political parties that represent diverse interests to vie for political posts in the polity. But muddy political environment in Africa made effective representation difficult as viable political aspirants are hunted, harassed and intimidated to pave way for weakling that collaborate with ruling party or incumbent leaders. Thus, robust and effective opposition views to be enjoyed from such groups are driven underground(Albright*et al*., 2003). Inability to have qualitative representation among the people leads to democratic violence in Africa.

Dividends of Democracy: Democracy is concerned about stewardship and performance of elected political leaders informs of good governance and wellbeing of citizens, therefore measurement of leadership performance is a vital aspect of democratic principle. Dividends of democracy comprise of both socio-economic and political goods inform of sound public policies that positively impacted on the lives of citizenry. Democratic government laid emphasis on inclusive responsible and responsive government to social and economic needs of citizens.Thus, dividends of democracy are measuring rod of gauging performance and efficiency of leaders keep to his proposed manifesto and how well he is able to deliver and keep his promises vis-a vis time, finance, and other resources committed to his administration. African elected political leaders are neither responsible nor responsive towards given account of their stewardship. This lackadaisical attitude by elected political leaders toward stewardship caused non-performance and absence of dividends of democracy. Absence of democratic dividends and irresponsiveness of elected political leaders contributed to high poverty and poor economic growth/development that made most democratic African states volatile and prone to democratic violence and insecurity that provide breeding ground for military coup, (Jega, 2021).

Causal Factors of Democratic Violence: Insecurity and Military Coups in Africa

A sustainable democratic political culture in Africa cannot cause democratic violence, political conflicts and insecurity that is paving ways for democratic reversal inform of military putsch. Africa's democratic practice is full of contradiction and aberrations that are inimical to sustainable democratic culture and these contradictions and aberrations heat up the political space in the continent of Africa. These causal factors are:

Imperial Presidency: One of the biggest banes of African politics that is affecting good democratic ethics, culture and procedures is personalization of political power. Democratically elected African political leaders personalize political power to produce democratic demagogue who are authoritarian or dictatorial president that cause misery to the democratic governance. The tendency to assume unrestraint or absolute political power where president is not bound by the constitution to become imperial presidency in plural African states causes democratic

violence, conflicts and insecurity. Inability of electoral process to change this unlimited political power introduced by political demagogue to democratic politics is a major cause of democratic violence, insecurity and military coups in Burkina Faso, Niger, Gabon, Sudan and Chad. Imperial presidency is where a few individuals dominate the politics of African states and prevents institutional driven democratic political process to take place, (Souare, 2009), (Nwolise, 2011), (Omotola, 2021).

Life Presidency or sit-tight syndrome: A dreaded heinous political habit in African politics is sit-tight syndrome where elected political leader remain perpetually in power. Continuous refusal of African elected political leaders to leave office at the expiration of their tenure even when they had become unpopular in the democratic survey is another source of democratic violence and insecurity that paved way for military coups. Political desire by African leaders to stay in power indefinitely through unconstitutional means has caused many democratic violence and political instability that provides leeway for insecurity and military coups in Africa. African democracy is full of debacles that made non-sense out of democracy. A situation where democratically elected president willingly nominated and approved his own biological son as vice-president in Guinea Bissau, where a serving president groomed his son for succession in Gabon, Togo and Uganda; where president's wife is endorsed as incoming president in the face of failing health of Mugabe in Zimbabwe are all institutional coup that is promoting democratic violence, insecurity and military coups in Africa. This institutional coups in states like Cote d'Ivoire (Gbagbo), Zimbabwe (Mugabe), Gambia (Yahya Jammeh), and Cameroon (Paul Biya), (Souare, 2009), (Nwolise,2011), (Omotola, 2021).

Tenure Elongation and Suppression of Opposition: Official one-party system envisaged by the political elites is a great limitation to democracy ethics, many African political elites once in power clamped down on competitive democratic environment because they want to be in power indefinitely. Thereby making major factor causing democratic violence, insecurity and military coups in Africa to tenure elongation where democratically elected African political leaders are reluctant to leave office after expiration of their constitutionally allotted terms of office. Perpetuity of leaders in power has brought turbulence in many African states creating tension between protagonists and antagonists of perpetuity idea to provide avenue for underground movement to subvert political authority. Attempt to prevent chaos and insecurity provide enabling environment for militarycoup, (Chigozie& Oyinmiebi,2022). Technical stagnation and annihilation of opposition party structure by the incumbent president causes democratic violence, insecurity and military coups. Victimization and unleashed of terror by state security on opposition parties,immediate ethnic groups of identified political opponents and presumed supporters that become threat to self-succession bid are some excuses for military coups, (Omotola, 2021). (Nwolise, 2011). This becomes worrisome when these political leaders become complacent, devoid of ideas on good governance, senile or authoritarian like Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Paul Biya of Cameroon, Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo, Omar Bongo of Gabon, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Paul Kigame of Rwanda, (Souare, 2009).

Giddy Constitution Amendment: Another paradoxical practice that causes recurring democratic violence in many African states is the giddy constitution amendment to favour incumbent leader's desire of tenure elongation or denied promising political opponents opportunity of contesting election. Perceived denial of political opponent level play ground to contest on many occasions leads to an imosity between supporters of aspirants/candidates that was wrongly denied his political right, (Omotola, 2021).

Absence of Internal Democracy and Party Discipline: Africa's politics is full of unhealthy democratic practice that is anathema to democratic ethics. Denial of internal democracy where god-father fixed who qualify to contest and who are not. Thus, unethical democratic practice of forceful imposition of candidates in a democratic setting made Party primaries in many African states places of conflicts where qualified aspirants are squeezed out by threats or manipulated through electoral financing. Absence of internal democracy in many parties has led to defection from one party to another when contenders are not satisfied with the result/outcome of the primary election. Prohibitions of internal/grassroots democracy by godfathers create emergence of hired political thugs to curtail perceived capable political opponents. Intraparty conflicts contradict ethics of tolerance that allowed individual group to float aspirants and allows the party delegate meritoriously decide who becomes the party candidate/flag bearer. Meanwhile, existence of many political factions and fractional groups recruiting, equipping and possessing their own political thugs breeds unprecedented democratic violence, (Souare, 2009), (Omotola, 2021).

Electoral Malpractices/Abuse of Electoral Process: Elections and electioneering periods in many Africa states is always a tense period and most volatile time since the inception of democratic politics in Africa. Tense because of unpredictability of events and level upheaval that may erupt informs of democratic violence unleashed on the society by the supporters of political giants. Fraudulent electoral practices denies country of credible election results where foul means are used to amass votes to secure victory at poll like Yahya Jammeh of The Gambia, Faure Eyadema of Togo and Lauren Gbagbo of Cote d'Ivoire in their general elections. For instance, it was introduction and insertion of "Full Ivorian blood" into political lexicon of Cote d'Ivoire by Gbagbo and appointment of loyalist as electoral commission chairman to doctor election results in the favor of incumbent that leads to democratic violence and insecurity. Abuse of electoral process creates issue of legitimacy for leadership right to rule. Continuous absence of legitimacy by the self-imposed political leaders appears to have been major cause that ignite conflict and insecurity in many African states which the military capitalize on to plan and execute coup, (Jega, 2021). Little disagreement between two party big-weights can snowball into major democratic violence and insecurity.

Misguided Electioneering/Political Campaign and Rallies: Democratic party politics is an intellectual activity where (national policy decision is based on logical argumentative reasoning known as parliamentary debates in which people with superior argument usually carry the day, also) intellectual prowess of candidate is tested in debates and their ability to convince

floating voters. But, these democratic ethos are prone to emotional feelings that can leads to violent argument and confrontation between two opposing parties and descended to democratic violence. Abuse of electioneering campaign or issues usually turn political campaigns in Africa to open assault and verbal accusation of perceived opponents to raise emotional and sentimental issues. The Africa's political elites use campaign to fan ember of animosity by glorifying religious bigotry and ethnic politics rather than politics of national integration and nation-building that will benefit citizens irrespective of their pre-colonial disposition and religious faith. Wrong usage of campaign and electioneering rallies contributed to democratic violence that is predominant in Africa. This kind of democratic violence as a brainchild of perverted democracy created opportunity for military incursion into African politics to cause coup in many African states, (Souare, 2009), (Nwolise, 2011), (Omotola, 2021).

Absence of Good Governance and Dearth of Dividends of Democracy: Most democratically elected African leaders are neither responsive peoples' needs nor responsible to electorate that elected them into power. This poor response to people persistent calls for progressive improvement in the infrastructure and welfare of citizens is attributable to absence of good governance. Absence of good governance in democratically governed African states precipitates mismanagement, nepotism, corruption and poor functioning of political institutions and rule of law to cause democratic violence, insecurity and military coups, Chabal (2009), (Arinze, 2017), (Jega, 2021). Absence of leadership performance appraisal due to imperial presidency has contributed to infrastructural deficits, underdevelopment and endemic poverty ravaging many African states. Inability of elected political leaders to deliver dividends of democracy aggravates poverty that heightens democratic violence and insecurity. Existence of excruciating poverty from wrong policiesof democratic polity created various contending political issues such as terrorism, banditry, militancy, kidnapping, youth restiveness and violent demonstrations, political thuggery and separatist agitation etc. that are breeding insecurities in many African states. This made democracy to be seen as non-performing system of governance since it is unable to improve the wellbeing of citizenry. Revamping economic and restoration of peace and security has always being parts of heroic speech by the coupists (Tenuche, 2018).

Denial of Freedom of Speech: One of the main problems and impediment to sustainable democracy in Africa is denial of freedom of speech and expression. Without freedom of speech and expression, it is impossible for citizens to make their contribution as input into the society and state for policy output. Freedom of speech and expression is the basis of developing robust and healthy public opinions that guides and assists government in identifying needs of people as well as critique short-coming of government. Absence of the freedom of speech and expression is a causal factor of democratic violence and democratic reversal. Mahajan (2008)

Political Violence: Democratic Party politics in Africa is associated with violent political conflicts from emotional laden; non-issue based political campaigns and rallies as well as selective persecution of perceived political opponents presumed as political enemy. Competitive party politics in Africa do not believe in politics as a game in which a winner will emerge, rather

politics is consider as war in which your enemies must not only be defeated but must eliminated to pave way for unopposed candidacy. Democracy in many African states is a potential threat to many states internal peace and security, Arase (2018). Democratic Party politics in African states over years as practiced by political and governing elites accentuates election related violence such as intra-communal crises, religious politics and political thuggery that motivate crimes and criminality like Offa Robbery incidence. In this era of proliferation of small and light arms that can trigger vulnerable youths to armed struggle and armed robbery. Possession of ammunition by restive youths in a turbulent political environment where orderly pursuit of competitive democratic politics can give way to chaotic and hostility with latent potential for protracted conflict and endemic violence that affect security, wellbeing and economy. All these are invitation to democratic reversals, (Souare, 2009;Nwolise, 2011; Omotola, 2021).

Nexus between democratic violence, insecurity and military coups in Africa

There is a great relation between unhealthy democratic practices, democratic violence, insecurity and military coups in Africa. This is because African democratic practices are full of shoddy acts to generate violence, conflicts and insecurities into the national polity to attract the attention of military men interested in planning coups. Meanwhile, an insecure polity is an invitation to military coups in many African states, also the rate at which institutional coups are springing up in Africa cannot but encourage insecurities and military coups. This was witnessed in Gabon where Omar Bongo groomed his son and successfully passed baton and mantle of leadership to him after his demise. Arinze,2017; Omotola, 2021).

The same practice was adopted by the Equatorial Guinea president who single handedly appointed his son as vice-president without National Assembly approval and amendment of constitution to give the appointment constitutional backing. These institutional coups are done in preparation to make it easier for incumbent president's son to take over in case of sickness that incapacitates the president or death at old age. The same act was repeated by Mugabe of Zimbabwe toward the end of life when Mugabe nurtured his wife for leadership succession before his regime was truncated by the military coup. In another dimension, Alhassan Quattara of Cote d'Ívoire as the incumbent president became king maker who prefers to anoints who will succeed him if he must vacate presidential seat (Nwolise, 2011; Jega (2021).

However, the irony of political anointing is that each time Quarrara anoints an individual as his successor, within days of anointing the anointed successor will died mysteriously only for Quattara to renegade on leaving the office since his anointed candidate is dead. The question here is that under which democratic law permits incumbent president to anoint his successor. After a couple of death, Alhassan Quattara claimed since he could not get a credible successor he is contesting for presidential post after his second five year term. Togo witnessed such institutional coup when Gnassingbe Eyadema nurtured Faure Eyadema his son as successor after his demise. This institutional coup footsteps is being technically followed by Yoweri Museveni of Uganda who made his son as one of the top military officers in Uganda and his daughter as

Central Bank Governor. Joseph Desire Kabila did everything possible that his son remains one of the top military officers in the DR Congo Army, this facilitate his ascendance to leadership position after the death of his father (Nwolise, 2011; Jega. 2021).

Threats of Democratic Violence, Insecurity and Military Coups to African Politics

Culture of Tolerance: From the foregoing, democratic violence, insecurities and military coups are big threat to sustainable democratic political culture and democratic consolidation. Democratic violence is a threat to democratic culture of tolerance, free and fair election. Continuous democratic violence dampen popular participation in politics and discourage many people from taking part in electoral processes, lack of political participation by electorate kill their contributions as inputs into articulation and aggregation of interests.

Political Education: Democratic violence, insecurities and military coups are big threat to democratic culture of political education and enlightenment that usually occurs during peaceful electioneering campaigns and political rallies. The trios can inhibit culture of robust political debates by the party loyalists in the process of canvassing for their political party and candidates. Violence and conflicts prevents reasonable arguments to be put forward intellectual and ordinary citizens in society.

Political Recruitment: Democratic violence, insecurities and military coups are threats that discourage good aspirants from being mobilize for political recruitment as many people are scared of violence that may ensue in the process of conducting election. Inability to recruit good aspirants as contestants' means good governance and good policy remain mirage in the polity and dividends of democracy averted. Insecurity prevent democratic culture of campaign and mobilization as many presumed areas prone to insecurity are avoided and without proper political campaigns and rally where political education are disseminated democratic political culture is incomplete.

Dialogue and Deliberation: Democratic violence, insecurities and military coups are threat that can destroy democratic political culture of debate, dialogue and deliberation and constructive criticisms and critiques (from opposition parties) which facilitate formulation of sound public policy that enhance political stability and development. Thus, democratic violence insecurities and military coups are threats to sustainable legislative deliberative culture that can enhance nation-building and national integration.

Orderly Change of Leadership: Democratic violence, insecurities and military coups are threats to peaceful and orderly transfer of power and change of political leadership and government. Democratic violence that causes political conflicts and insecurity have adverse effects of peace, orderliness and political stability needed for democratic ethics to flourish in a state, thus these identified variables provide fertile ground for political conflicts that prevent stability and development in a state.

Internal Democracy: Democratic violence and insecurity are threat to grassroots and internal democracy that supposed to genuinely evolve from society that possesses culture of good governance and accountability

Nation-building and State Cohesion: Democratic violence, insecurities and military coups are threat to nation-building and national integration which can facilitate unity, cooperation and understanding. Democratic violence, insecurities and military coups are threat to political and state cohesion because perennial violence and insecurity creates animosity and lack of trust that prohibit cohesion needed for political stability and development. Also, democratic violence, insecurities and military coups are threat to organized opposition, freedom of choice and representation all of which are germane to political stability and development.

Ideologically Driven Party: Democratic violence, insecurities and military coups are threat to ideologically driven political parties which are ingredient that can facilitate development of ideas on political stability and development.

Nationally Acceptable Leaders: Democratic violence, insecurities and military coups are threat to emergence of nationally acceptable political leaders which breeds partial legitimacy and discordance tunes of emotional opposition that caused conflict and insecurity.

Good Governance: Democratic violence, insecurities and military coups are threat to political accountability and good governance needed for stable polity to carry out national development.

There is a great relationship between democratic violence and insecurity, this is because democratic violence is a product of emotional feelings which are not properly guided by reasoning or rationality, (Chaba, 1998). Democratic violence and insecurity provide avenue for mutiny and military coups to thrive and where there is preponderance of military putsches democratic ethics and culture wither away. Conclusively, democratic violence, insecurities and military coups is a function of poor democratic cultures that practically corrupted ethical democratic principles. The only means to avert these anti-political stability and development variables of democratic violence, insecurities and military coups is by having good political education and orientation, strictly adherence to basic democratic principles in the conduct of Democratic Party politics in Africa. (Adejumobi, 2000;Agbaje&Adejumobi 2006).

Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

Findings

The current and ongoing insecurities and resurgence of military coups in Africa is self inflicting caused by African political elites and espoused filthy political culture. Unlike what was obtainable in the Cold War era where there exist proxy and ideological war in the international political system. But, submissions from different scholars' shows there exist absorption of unethical democratic values into African Democratic Party politics and electoral processes such

as life presidency, tenure elongation, indiscriminate constitution amendment, absence of internal party democracy, and lack of ideologically driven political party etc. This incorporation of unethical democratic values made African democratic politics riddled with violence, conflicts, partial legitimacy, weak institutions and insecurity. All these problems serve as opportunity for military opportunist to carry out revolt and reverts sustainable democracy in Africa.

It was also identified that denial of democratic ethos such as tolerance, freedom of choice, impartial electoral commission created frustration that degenerates into aggressive behaviour exhibited inform of democratic violence. This continuous democratic violence promotes insecurity that provides enabling ground for military coupists to strike.

The significance of the unethical democratic values on the continent of Africa is negative on both the citizens and the state. On the citizens, unethical democratic values cause distrust and disunity between proponent and opponent of certain negative values. While on the state unethical democratic values cause partial legitimacy and weak political institution. Another outcome of unethical democratic values is the inability of state to produce quality and visionary leadership from the compromised electoral process. Democratic violence in Africa produced nuisance intolerant Democratic Party politics that made emergence of a nationally acceptable political leaders and government very difficult. Unethical democratic values lead to reliance on unconstitutional means to secure and retain electoral victory. Meanwhile, illegitimate use of state coercive power or "force rule" by political leaders leads to denial of citizens' freedom of choice and formation of aggressive opposition party. Obvious electoral malpractices and force rule usually degenerates to partial loss of authority that aggravate democratic violence and political conflicts in many African states. It worthy to note that democratic violence, electoral fraud and manipulation of constitution are veritable tools of sustaining individual hegemonic agenda of remain in power perpetually. These unethical democratic values introduced to African democratic politics prevents emergence of sustainable democratic culture in Africa.

Meanwhile, protracted democratic violence polarized the polity and continually put many democratic African states in turbulence situation of politically unstable state from intrastate political conflicts and insecurity. Africa's democratic violence experience have made democratic party politics to be devoid of robust and intellectual policy-oriented manifestos between party candidates, to produce incompetent political leadership that deny people dividends of democracy.

These unethical democratic values in Africa are detrimental to the fundamental ideals and are 'violence against democracy'. Ake (1996) describes violence against democracy as the reversal of democratic gains, occasioned by perversion and inefficiency of structures, institutions and actors saddled with the promotion and protection of democracy. These African political actors (Paul Biya, Yuweri Musaveni, Robert Mugabe, Lauren Gbagbo among others) by their actions and utterances are not democrats. Democrats have democratic mindsets, which are pivotal to the promotion of a democratic political culture and good citizenship (Jega, 2021). The

actual political behavior of Africa's elected officials to personalize power and create the impression of popularity by engaging in undemocratic practices and forms of power intrinsic to autocracy.

Africa's democracy are bedeviled by problems of conducting credible elections where political parties have confidence of equal participation and opportunity of winning electoral contest in the polity. Presence of blemish electoral process under compromised electoral commission and there is apparent intimidation of opposition political parties cannot produce sustainable democracy.

The core function of political parties is providing connection between politics and society thereby play crucial functions of representing groups of interests. But, in filthy African democracy, political parties have no clear political ideology, lack internal party democracy, riddled and hijacked by the 'godfathers' which seriously undermined its important roles in the democratization and nation-building projects (Ibrahim, 2009). There exits low level of political participation and competition, with all its negative implications for the consolidation of the fledgling democracy in Africa, (Agbaje & Ajetunmobi, 2006). All these serve as avenue for military incursion into politics and reversal of sustainable democracy.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Africa needs good democratic governance because of her colonial emergence that arbitrarily grouped unfriendly ethnic nationalities together to cause unhealthy political rivalry. But where instituted democratic rule can produce inclusive and good governance that yield valuable democratic dividends, sustainable democracy will emerge and tendency for military coups will die naturally. On the premise of this, the paper recommends reorientation of Africa's political elites and leaders to imbibe real culture of democracy which are tolerance, freedoms and spirit of sportsmanship. Africans political elites should make a distinction between traditional and modern political system. In traditional political system you are the leader for life, there is royalty and the leaders are not totally bound to uplift the life of certain "presumed" class of people. But, the modern political system believes in equality and leadership is seen as service to humanity. The paper concluded amongst others that the existence of an impartial electoral umpire and a well-established judicial system for arbitration can minimize the resurgence of military democratic coups in West Africa.

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