

INTRA-INTERGROUP CONFLICTS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON INDIGENOUS AND EXTERNAL CAUSAL FACTORS

RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Intra-Intergroup Conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Critical Reflection On Indigenous and External Factors

ABSTRACT: This study discerned that prior to colonial intrusion conflicts existed in the African society, but usually in the context of conquest, expansionism or reassertion of supremacy. However, the advent of colonialism feasted on the existing primordial incongruities between ethnic groups; hence, seeded inter-ethnic consciousness as a divide and rule tactics for the advancement of their objectives in the usurped colonies. Following the fall of colonialism, the postcolonial African societies were built on unresolved/hibernated ethnic rivalries, which protruded and remained extant from the Cold War era hitherto. However, this study revealed that ethnic consciousness in Africa, such as that of Nigeria and Kenya, predates colonialism, but was exacerbated by the Cold War gladiators, and the postcolonial African leaders. Therefore, intra-intergroup conflicts in Africa are attributable to endogenous and exogenous factors. Central to the objective of this study is the advocacy of mutual coexistence of ethnic groups in heterogeneous societies such as Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia, Cameroon and other African states. In addition, the need for leaders to narrow horizontal inequalities which is a potential source of ethno-religious consciousness, and threatenful to nation building project. Frances Stewart (1998) framework of horizontal inequalities was adopted in this study in that it critically explicated how inequalities along primordial lines can be a threat to nation building in a multicultural society. In addition, theory of primordialism featured greatly in this study as it explains the inevitabilities of primordial loyalties in multi-ethnic nation states. The findings of this study, coupled with the substantive frameworks adopted, points to the need that African nations should collate horizontal inequalities data respectively, in a bid to ascertain whether groups are proportionally represented or not in public offices. The need to deconstruct colonial constructions, to attenuate catalyst of conflict is sacrosanct to amicable coexistence and nation building in African nations.

Keywords: Conflict, Colonial and Imperialism, Intergroup conflict, Intragroup conflict, Precolonialism, Postcolonialism

Conflits intra-intergroupes en Afrique Subsaharienne : une réflexion critique sur les facteurs autochtones et externes

RESUME : Cette étude a discerné qu'avant l'intrusion coloniale, des conflits existaient dans la société africaine, mais généralement dans un contexte de conquête, d'expansionnisme ou de réaffirmation de la suprématie. Cependant, l'avènement du colonialisme s'est régalé des incongruités primordiales existantes entre les groupes ethniques ; par conséquent, la conscience interethnique a été semée comme une tactique de division et de domination pour l'avancement de leurs objectifs dans les colonies usurpées. Après la chute du colonialisme, les sociétés africaines postcoloniales ont été construites sur des rivalités ethniques non résolues / hibernées, qui ont fait saillie et sont restées existantes de la guerre froide jusqu'à présent. Cependant, cette étude a révélé que la conscience ethnique en Afrique, comme celle du Nigéria et du Kenya, est antérieure au colonialisme, mais a été exacerbée par les gladiateurs de la guerre froide et les dirigeants africains postcoloniaux. Par conséquent, les conflits intra-intergroupes en Afrique sont imputables à des facteurs endogènes et exogènes. Au centre de l'objectif de cette étude se trouve la promotion de la coexistence mutuelle des groupes ethniques dans des sociétés hétérogènes telles que le Nigéria, le Kenya, l'Éthiopie, le Cameroun et d'autres États africains. En outre, la nécessité pour les dirigeants de réduire les inégalités horizontales qui sont une source potentielle de conscience ethno-religieuse et menaçante pour le projet de construction de la nation. Le cadre des inégalités horizontales de Frances Stewart (1998) a été adopté dans cette étude en ce qu'il expliquait de manière critique comment les inégalités selon des lignes primordiales peuvent être une menace pour la construction d'une nation dans une société multiculturelle. De plus, la théorie du primordialisme figurait largement dans cette étude car elle explique les inevitabilités des loyautés primordiales dans les États-nations multiethniques. Les résultats de cette étude, associés aux cadres de fond adoptés, soulignent la nécessité pour les pays africains de collecter respectivement des données sur les inégalités horizontales, afin de déterminer si les groupes sont représentés proportionnellement ou non dans les fonctions publiques. En outre, la nécessité de déconstruire les constructions coloniales, d'atténuer le catalyseur du conflit est sacro-sainte pour la coexistence amicale et l'édification de la nation dans les pays africains.

Mots clés : Conflit, Colonial et impérialisme, Conflit intergroupe, Conflit intragroupe, Précolonialisme, Postcolonialisme

Introduction

African politics attracted global attention from decolonisation hitherto due to the plethora of conflicts spurred by constellation of factors such as historical, economic, political, and social certainties that distinct the continent from others across the globe. For instance, the Armed Conflict Database (ACD) enumeration of civil conflict based on a threshold of 1000 battle deaths indicated that around 8.5% of country-years in Africa since 1950 are characterised by large-scale conflicts compared to 5% of country-years in the rest of the world over the same period (Besley & Reynal-Querol, 2013, p. 2). Scores of growth-hindering factors like ethnonational, inter-ethnic, interreligious, intrareligious, ethnoreligious, intra-ethnic, and interstate conflicts remain primordial and contemporary specificities of the African continent although on an unequal scale.

A society riddled with growth-hindering factors such as conflict, corruption, and ethnic bigotry, is bound to be distracted from nation-building projects; inter alia, conflict is a major factor inhibiting development in the contemporary Africa, as it was in the period of the Cold War and after. The questionable reality of the African society threatens the well-being of Africans, and it accounts for their overflowing presence in the developed societies. Conflict is a potential push factor that spurred the emigration of Africans to the global North. Political instability in Africa has scores of undercurrents traceable to pre-colonial, colonial, glaring neurosis, and unhealthy consciousness exuded by most African nationalist leaders. For instance, intra-ethnic conflicts predate colonialism, and it is evident in the history of most African societies such as South Africa and the Yoruba nations to mention few. Similarly, in the postcolonial phase, ethnic groups rose against each other; however, ethnic conflicts in the postcolonial Africa is different from that which existed in the precolonial epoch as it is not conquest motivated but politically accelerated by political gladiators' encroachment on primordial loyalties for strategic political gains as it was in the case of Kenya, Ghana, Northern Nigeria, Ivory Coast, and Dafur. In addition to the above claim, Aepenugo (2010), asserts that:

"There is a general perception that Africa is trapped in a never-ending cycle of ethnic conflict. The Rwandan genocide, Darfur, northern Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, and the violent aftermath of the controversial Kenyan elections, among other cases, seemingly substantiate this perception. As grievances accumulate and are defined at the group rather than individual level, the motivation for reprisals is never ending. The centuries-old inertia behind these animosities, moreover, defies resolution. The seeming implication is that Africa's complicated ethnic diversity leaves the continent perpetually vulnerable to devastating internecine conflict. This, in turn, cripples prospects for sustained economic progress and democratization. In fact, ethnicity is typically not the driving force of African conflicts, but a lever used by politicians to mobilize supporters in pursuit of power, wealth, and resources. While the ethnic group is the predominant means of social identity formation in Africa, most ethnic groups in Africa coexist peacefully with high degrees of mixing through interethnic marriage, economic partnerships, and shared values. Indeed, if they did not, nearly every village and province in Africa would be a cauldron of conflict."

Following an observation of the pattern of postcolonial African conflicts, it was discovered that colonialism fostered inter-ethnic consciousness as multiple opposing cultures were welded into a collective identity such as postcolonial African nation states 'Rwanda, Cameroon, Nigeria, and Kenya etc.' However, this is not to claim that the problems afflicting the African continent only emanated from ethnic rivalries caused by colonial imposed borders, but also from vacuum of good leadership and goodwill. Upon this premise, it is evident that conflicts in Africa are attributable to internal and external sources. Nevertheless, this hypothesis will be critically explicated in subsequent pages.

Bujra (2002) and Stewart (1998), elucidated that intragroup conflict in Africa has pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial dimensions; ethnic conflict in Africa predates colonialism, although in this face it was not in large-scale. Conversely, colonialism created conflict enhancing factors like homogenization of heterogeneous African communities 'ethnic nations'. favouring one ethnic group to the deprivation of others; subjecting inexperienced African leaders to a state of management and nation building, coupled with management of imported constitution which they barely understood.

The postcolonial period started in the 1960s when the ideological war between the Western and the Eastern blocs was rife; African states were caught in between the two mighty political and economic giants. Each of the two conflicting blocs vied vehemently for strategic space in Africa; USA annexed Zaire, while the Eastern threw its weight behind Angola. The Cold War period saw the emergence of strongmen in Africa, as a result of the external supports of their allies. The strongmen, unfortunately, turned despotic, and advanced ethnic consciousness by manipulating primordial loyalties simply to remain in power. The corollary of the emergence of strongmen in African politics is the ubiquity of weak

institutions.

This study will make a critical analysis of intragroup conflict in Africa since it is a concept that enshrines variations of conflict within the continent. Similarly, conflicts within a nation are generally intragroup conflict but can be divided into subgroups such as intra-ethnic, inter-ethnic, inter-religious, and intra-religious conflicts. For a better analysis of this conundrum, this work will be divided into six segments; viz: conceptual definition, theoretical background, pre-colonial, colonial, Cold War, and post-Cold War era. Furthermore, a critical assessment of the causal relationship between the identified phases 'pre-colonial, colonial, postcolonial' will be strongly considered. This thematic division is vital to this discourse in that it will enhance the understanding of how conflict endorsing factors were seeded in Africa and moved from one era to the other. In addition, it will bring to the fore how conflict endorsing factors were carried from one phase to the other. However, the main purpose of this work is to find out whether external factors are the sole causes of intra-intergroup conflicts in sub-sahara Africa or not and the consequences of horizontal inequalities. The study is focused on analysing conflicts in precolonial sub Sahara Africa, and how it started from one epoch and extended to succeeding eras. In addition, it aims to bring to the fore that identity politics in Africa predates colonial intrusion but was amplified by colonialism and postcolonial sub-Saharan African leaders.

Conceptual definition/clarification

Conflict

Conflict is an inevitable reality of human society; political, cultural, and economic events has proved the inevitability of conflicts such as the Cold War, Rwanda genocide, Boko Haram occupation, killer herds-men and crisis in the anglophone region of Cameroon. Closer (1964) cited in Thakore (2013, p. 7) is of the view that human interactions are a sociation, in that it could be associative or dissociative; therefore, conflict is an inevitable fact of human reality. In the view of Closer, conflict in its nature deters or solves the possibility absolute fission. In consonance to the above view of conflict, Bohannan cited in Thakore (2013, p. 7), sees conflict as inevitable to humanity, just as culture is intrinsic to human society, as it controls and brings about better social development and order. To Schellenberg cited in Thakore (2013, p. 7), conflict is neither praiseworthy nor condemnable, but it is essential to the social life of human.

Thakore (2013, p. 7) sees conflict as a medium of expression of hostility, dissatisfaction, antagonism, rivalry, and misunderstanding. In addition, conflict has to do with opposing views, interests or incongruities emanating from the convergence of two or more values or philosophies. In a nutshell, common to conflict is the burning desire to gain recognition, acceptance, or to wield influence over the other; it is an inevitable fact of living creatures' interpersonal relations. Animals, humans, companies, states, insects, and philosophies are leashed to the inevitability of conflict by nature.

Intragroup conflict

Conflict has been conceived as inevitable in human social relations which deters or solves absolute fission. Conflict unfolds at multiple levels such as within group members and between groups. Intragroup conflict is infighting or incongruities within a group. The prefix 'intra' simply means 'within'; this means that intra-conflict in its simplest sense means conflict within a group. Thakore (2013, p. 9) accented that intragroup conflict unfolds simply within a group, and there are two typologies of intragroup conflicts which are resource and relationship conflicts. Resource conflict has to do with the distribution of resources, where some members are abundantly served, and others underserved. This is a type of conflict common in a multiracial or multicultural society. The underserved members of a group often have the proclivity to pose mild or violent resentment in a bid to have their needs or rights observed. Relationship conflict as explicated by Thakore (2013, p. 9), is a variation of intragroup conflict resulting from social incompatibility which often triggers annoyance, animosity, intolerance, and rivalry. Relationship conflict is an inevitable phenomenon of human relations. Zeleza (2002, p. 6) listed the following as intra-state conflict: secessionist wars, irredentist wars, wars of devolution, wars of regime change, wars of social banditry, and armed inter-communal insurrection. The examples of intra-conflicts highlighted by Zeleza (2002, p. 6) featured in the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial African societies.

Intergroup conflict

Contrary to intragroup conflict, intergroup conflict is centred on group rivalries, competition, or incongruities between groups for one objective or the other. A group could be a nation state, ethnic group, race, class, region or organisation. Thakore (2013, p. 9), asserts that competition can heighten conflict between groups. Examples of intergroup conflicts are interstate conflict, inter-ethnic conflict, and inter-regional conflict.

Intra-intergroup conflict

Intragroup conflict is incongruity or disagreement within a group, while intergroup conflict, is incongruity between groups. However, conflicts in Africa present a case of existence of intergroup conflict in an intragroup. Meaning, Africa as a continent embodies the existence of multiple nation states. Nation states as a group equally has subgroups within them, hence clashes sporadically. For instance, Nigeria from a global or continental level of analysis is a group, against this premise, conflict within Nigeria is intragroup conflict, as conflicting groups are all Nigerians. From a national level of analysis, conflict within Nigeria or in any African country can be identified or labelled as intergroup conflict due to the heterogeneity of most African nations. For instance, Nigeria has experienced interethnic conflict as did Rwanda. Similarly, Nigeria has experienced inter and intra-religious/party conflicts.

Precolonialism

This is the epoch in the civilization of Africa that preceded colonial usurpation, occupation, and balkanization of the African society into nation states. The precolonial African society featured the existence of kingdoms and empires controlled mostly by centralised monarchs in the acephalous societies and council of chiefs in the non-acephalous societies (Besley & Reynal-Querol, 2014, p. 10). Prior to the imposition of national identities on African societies, the African continent was an encapsulation of communitarian states, also known as ethnic nations, such as the Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele, Sotho, Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Shona, Luo, Masai, and Tswana nations. The African continent was made up of autonomous indigenous entities where each had its system of governance, language, material and non-material cultures.

Colonialism and Imperialism

Colonialism is conceived as the period that saw the formal usurpation of colonies by colonial masters 'British, France, Portugal'; this was the era that some indigenous political systems were destroyed, and others reinforced. Similarly, nation states were created along colonial lines without consideration of ethnic autonomy in Barling in 1884 (AHA, 2020); slave trade thrived, forward linkage, westernisation of colonies, importation of constitution, and consolidation of western values to the detriment of indigenous heritage were all elements of colonialism. Kohn & Reddy (2017), sees colonialism as the removal of humans from their geographical habitat and relocating them in a territory alien to them, where they became settlers but upheld political allegiance to their ancestral source. Imperialism on the other hand is the authority of one country over a foreign territory by means of settlement, sovereignty, or indirect mechanisms of control. The conception of imperialism and colonialism proved pertinent to the explanation of the political logic that altered the indigenous evolution of the African society, and equally explained the deconstruction and construction of the African continent.

Postcolonialism

This is the epoch that saw the debacle of colonial occupation, destruction of colonial heritage, maintenance of colonial heritage and the refinement of colonial heritage. Similarly, postcolonialism saw the transfer of political and economic power from traditional political elites to western educated African political elites, constitutional supremacy, convergence of indigenous and western cultures, and the existence of autonomous ethnic entities in a collective national identity such as Nigeria, South Africa, Cameroon, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Togo, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia and many others.

Theoretical Background to the Study

The work of Frances Stewart (1998) proved relevant to this discourse for its elucidation and dissection of the root cause of conflict which according to him is traceable to economic, political, and cultural factors. To Stewart, these factors are almost impossible to disentangle because each element is embedded in the other. The aforementioned trios are independent variables which determine peace or conflict in any given society. Stewart (1998) work was based on the identification of root causes of Complex Humanitarian Emergencies "CHE"; horizontal inequality was identified as the root cause of most organized conflicts across the world, although only when it coincides with identity.

Similarly, the primordialist accounts of conflict proved relevant to this study as it explains the existence of ethnic groups and nationalities based on their predication on primordial sentiments in the context of material and non-material cultures which encapsulates philosophies, geographical location, and language. Central to the primordialist accounts is the bond of kinship between members due to their shared primordial cultural and philosophical heritages. The pioneer of primordialism theory is Clifford Geertz, who argued that each human has a natural attachment to his or her ethnic group (BAČOVÁ V., 1998).

Furthermore, Geertz cited in BACOVÁ V. (1998, p. 31), that primordial ties in certain conditions can be a potential source of conflict when there is convergence with other primoradial loyalties and can be destructive to civic society or nation state. Bačová, V. (1966) cited in Bačová V, (1998, p. 32) stressed that "central to primordial inclinations is history and ancestor in the development of a community. The relevance of primordialism is strongly pronounced in this study, as it would be used for the analysis of intragroup conflicts in Africa. Furthermore, in this study there will be a synergy of the primordial theory and horizontal inequality, as the primordial theory strongly emphasised identity, and the latter focused economic inequality coupled with primordial identities such as ethnic, gender, and religion.

The theory of primordialism proved relevant to the understanding of intergroup conflicts.

Horizontal inequality does have political, economic, and social dimensions; it is a key element in understanding the factors spurring group violence in a given society. Lonsdale cited in Stewart (1998, p. 9) claims that in Kenya, conflict between political elites for state control, hence economic power is the main source of political tribalism. It is an instance showing how economic interest mixed with political ambition can be a catalyst of identity politics or divided loyalties.

Violence, to its instigators is not an end but a means; instigators of violence often declare their objective as political to secure power, which they believed would yield economic benefit provided their activism prevail. Organised bellicose groups often tie political interest to economic interest and this fact differentiate crimes from politically oriented conflicts (Stewart, 1998, p. 8). Furthermore, Stewart made a glaring distinction between horizontal and vertical inequality in respect to its conflict potentiality.

Horizontal and vertical inequality in relation to conflict

In the logic of Stewart (1998), inequality cannot unilaterally trigger intra-intergroup conflicts, but when intertwined with identity, conflict becomes inevitable and imminent; for instance, Kenya, Thailand, Pakistan, and Brazil have record of high inequality, but these countries record low on conflicts. It somehow can be because of the improved living condition in the countries, or the state capabilities to curb potential conflicts (Stewart, 1998, p. 18). Inequality is a potential source of conflict, but the horizontal inequality precisely due to its synergy with group identity.

Measurement of inequality is traditionally done vertically; it measures individuals' asset from top to the bottom of social hierarchy. In other words, traditional inequality measurement is vertical, and it only takes into account economic status of individuals. On the other hand, a horizontal measure of inequality makes a better analysis of conflict, because it measures inequality along social markers, such as geographical region, ethnic group, gender identity, and religion (Stewart, 1998, p. 18).

High level of horizontal inequality is likely to trigger conflict, although it depends on the importance or influence of the group or groups involved; for instance the Khoisan in South Africa has increasingly expressed that since the fall of apartheid, they have not been fairly represented and treated despite being the foremost primordial ethnic group in south Africa (Mitchley, 2019).

The agitation of the South African Khoisan ethnic group has not gone past mild protest from its inception

hitherto; this can partly be because the Khoisan group has been rendered inconsequential by dominant ethnic groups such as the Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, Ndebele, Venda and Tshonga that has occupied key public offices in the country from 1994 to date. Even in a society where groups are very small, when there is too much discrimination or marginalisation, the potential of conflict can be robust (Stewart, 1998).

Horizontal inequality analysis can best describe the issues that precipitated the Rwanda genocide of 1994, the ethnonational conflict ongoing in Cameroon at the moment, and the secession agitation of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the contemporary Nigerian society. Although, Stewart cautioned that data may not be available for horizontal inequality, since government often concern itself with the measurement of income inequality. However, government in a politically tensed society could display reluctance in providing horizontal inequalities data due to hypersensitivity it might arouse. But the need for provision of horizontal inequality is essential for peacebuilding in a society but should be classified and used for policy purposes (Stewart, 1998, p. 19).

Indicators to be considered in the compilation of horizontal inequality data, could be the extent of political representation, regional data to represent differences among ethnicities, distribution of lands, revenue allocation, distribution of national infrastructures, and award of national scholarships.

Horizontal inequality between groups in Africa evidently has an undertone of primordial loyalties such as ethnic and religious consciousness; it is validated in the 8.5% of country-years in Africa since 1950 that was characterised by large-scale conflicts. The four phases 'precolonial, colonial, Cold War, and postcolonial' that would be discussed in the subsequent pages all has a glaring undertone of horizontal inequality coupled with identity politics. Evidently, in the African reality, not all regions in nation states are equally developed, not all ethnic groups are equally privileged, and not all ethnic groups have equal access to political and economic privileges. There is always one group benefitting to the detriment of the deprived groups. The Department for International Development (2001, p. 13) identified inequality between groups as the root cause or primary cause of conflicts in Africa, and further categorized other sources as secondary and tertiary.

Precolonial African Conflicts and Legacy

Conflict is an inevitable phenomenon in human society due to multiple factors such as clash of primordial loyalties and philosophies, dispute over resources such as lands and other resources. However, central to the existence conflict is the need to achieve individual or group desires. The reality and prevalence of conflict could have people think or assume that it is a phenomenon alien to Africa, or an inevitability brought into existence in the continent by colonialism. Contrariwise, intragroup and intergroup conflicts in Africa predate colonialism; in fact, the precolonial African continent featured intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic conflicts which were mostly based on territorial expansion, quest for political offices and battle of lands. The precolonial Africa featured state and stateless societies (Bujra, 2002, p. 22; Timothy and Reynal-Quero, 2014, p. 11).

Bujra (2002, p. 22) observed that conflicts in the acephalous societies were limited. The acephalous societies were non-expansionists. Inter-ethnic conflicts were mostly caused in the Southern Kaduna by disputes over land ownership, control of fishing and hunting areas. The difference with conflicts in the acephalous society is that it is usually on a small scale. For instance, in the Northern precolonial Nigeria, inter-ethnic conflicts occurred between the Southern Kaduna zone and the proximate emirates. The conflicts were feudal and was mostly orchestrated by the Hausa Muslims. Central to the conflicts between the Hausas and the acephalous people of the Southern Kaduna, was the expansion of the Hausas on the ground of international trade. The agents of the Hausa feudal Lords indulged in slave raids which weakened and depopulated the Southern Kaduna.

The precolonial African conflicts were a process of indigenous state building as it was in the medieval Europe for instance, this was the case in Bunyoro-Buganda conflict in the present time Uganda as far back 1600. Similarly, Songhai-Gourma conflict in today's Mali in the 1488. In the precolonial epoch, records proved the occurrences of civil wars between kingdoms; however, the political historical accounts of Africa submitted by anthropologists echoed that territorial wars were more pronounced (Timothy and Reynal-Quero, 2014, p. 11). Radcliffe-Brown (1940) cited in Timothy and Reynal-Quero, (2014, p. 11) claimed that:

“Amongst the various different kinds of warfare that can be distinguished, what we may call wars of conquest have been important in Africa, as they have been in Europe. When such war is successful it establishes one people as conquerors over another who are thus incorporated into a larger political society, sometimes in an inferior position as a subject people.”

The above submission is evident in the expansion of the Oyo Empire, the Zulu kingdom, the Ndebele in modern-day Zimbabwe and others. According to the historical accounts of the Oyo Empire penned by ethnohistorian Ogunmola (2010, pp. 6,7), it was deduced that three significant missions championed by Basorun Yamba and Gbonka Latoyo saw the defeat of the Dahomeans and was annexed under the administration of Alaafin Ojigi of the Oyo empire. The accounts of the Oyo empire expeditions during its golden age in foreign territories featured expansionism, usurpation of existing monarch as it was in the case of Allada and Whydah in the modern-day Republic of Benin. In the quest for expansionism Alaafin Ojigi visited Abomey with three invasions. All conquered territories were absorbed into the Oyo Empire prior to colonial intrusion which saw the balkanisation of Africa (Ogumola, 2010, pp. 7,8).

Similarly, the account of Shaka Zulu’s expedition revealed that fundamental to his occupation was expansionism. Shaka Zulu defeated Zwide, and destroyed the Ndwandwe Kingdom; following the conquest, Shaka wielded absolute control over the heartland of Nguni (Allen, 2014, p. 9). Precolonial conflicts were chiefly one of conquest, expansionism, and resource accumulation; while the intra-ethnic conflicts were either caused by insurrectionism or competition for public office, as it was in the case of Yoruba ethnic-nation civil war of Ekiti Parapo, Afonja and Bashorun Gaa quest for power.

The Kiriji war also known as Ekiti Parapo war spanned for a period of 16 years between Ibadan and Ekiti which are the subgroups of the Yoruba ethnic group. The cause of the conflict was the aspiration of Ibadan to exercise authority over other sub Yoruba groups perceived as passive following the debacle of the hegemonic Oyo Empire. The Kiriji war unfolded between the Western and Eastern Yoruba blocs. The Western Yoruba bloc led by Ibadan included Offa, Modakeke and all Oyo forces, while the Eastern Yoruba bloc led by Ijesha comprised other Yoruba groups such as Ekiti, Ife, Igbomina, Akoko, Egbe, Kabba and the Oworro, Lokoja- Kogi State. However, the Kiriji war was different from preceding ones where medieval weapons and voodoo such as cutlasses, bows, poisoned arrows, cutlasses, knives, spears, and swords were used, but the Kuruji war featured the use of canons which was the first of its kind in Yoruba intra-ethnic conflicts (Shittu, 2019; Ogundero, et al., 2015).

The above examples are a scintilla from the scores of conflicts that characterised the precolonial African societies. The conflicts were intragroup and intergroup in nature, but the common ground was expansionism, quest for hegemonic status and resources. However, the disputes in the precolonial era created consciousness along ethnic lines which remain indelible hitherto. Past conquests by monarchs and warriors created territorial disputes that reverberate to this day and so shape contemporary politics (Reid 2012, cited in Besley & Reynal- Querol, 2013, p. 12). Similarly, Jack Paine cited in Knispel-U (2019) stress that: “Many African countries have experienced considerable ethnic strife.” “These tensions have roots in deeper historical events. Frequently, precolonial political organizations sowed the seeds of later discord”

War of conquest caused by expansionism and the need for resources in the precolonial African society, triggered ethnic consciousness which was further exacerbated by the colonial creation of nation states which conjoined autonomous ethnic groups in a collective national identity. The hibernated unresolved conflicts across African societies were carried over to the colonial phase (Bujra, 2012, p. 29); the hibernated unresolved conflicts turned out to be a potential tool in the hand of the colonial masters. The imperialists awareness of Africa’s pre-colonial past assisted them in administering direct and indirect colonial rule in Africa. It can be labelled desocialisation and re-socialization; meaning destruction and disruption of African indigenous evolution, and initiation of Africans into a foreign culture.

Conflict causing potentials in the precolonial phase: the war of conquest, reciprocal killings over kin, heterogeneity, quest for scarce resources, the quest for hegemony, sub-Saharan slavery and slave trade, and strong inclination to primordial sentiments. The precolonial African history was characterised with goriness as conflicts was a humdrum (Bujra, 2002, p. 29). Upon this premise, no doubt that the sociocultural, socio-political and socioeconomic activities of the founding fathers of the precolonial African societies, coupled with colonial intrusion precipitated conflict causing factors in the postcolonial Africa. The subsequent pages will make emphasis on how colonialism exacerbated conflict trigger factors,

and how they used it to their advantage.

Colonial Conflicts and Legacy in Africa

Colonial conquest in Africa was met with resistance from the indigenous population, but the resistance was frail, and as a result of this, the foreign explorers/exploiters wielded control; existing hostilities in the African societies under colonial dictates, directly and indirectly were exacerbated by the colonial administrators (Bujra, 2002, p. 29). However, Ethiopia was an exception, in that the country ward off colonial intrusion (Austin, 2010, p. 6). After the Western conquest of African territories, colonial administrative offices were established; scores of colonial models were adopted. Direct rule, indirect rule, paternalism, assimilation for effective control of conquered territories, and settler approach were adopted in their occupation. South Africa for instance, was a settler colony and this accounts for the uniqueness of South Africa's colonial experience. South Africa was colonised by the British through the Dutch East Indian Company (DEIC) led by the Voortrekkers 'Boers'; however, the Voortrekkers who owed allegiance to the Queen of England turned against the British, embraced the South African identity and colonised the Black South Africans till the black south Africans gained their freedom after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Contrariwise, British adopted indirect rule in most of its colonies, France and Portugal adopted direct colonial style and paternalism.

In spite of the dissimilar colonial approach across the African continent, there were scores of common experience Africans suffered in the hand of the colonial masters. Colonial experience was a bitter one; it exposed Africans to a culture of violence, it disrupted Africans way of life, and imposed on them a foreign culture which threatened the survival of their indigenous way of life. Kingdoms were reinforced in places where indirect rule was applied, some monarch were relegated, trade in slavery, exploitation of natural resources, pilfering of artefacts, welding of ethnic nations, introduction of western education, and importation of Western religion (Bujara, 2002, pp. 29-32; Besley & Reynal- Querol, 2013, p. 12).

The colonial period was characterized by the importation of foreign culture, the creation of single based economy which mostly benefitted colonial exploiters and their African patrons, acceleration of identity differences, and homogenization of heterogeneous African communities "artificial borders." The above synopsis of colonialism in Africa simply indicated how the intrusion of colonial masters and their legacies exacerbated challenges of the African societies. This is not to say that prior to colonial intrusion Africa was free from conflicts; conflicts in Africa predates colonialism but it was mainly a conflict of conquest not that of hatred created and nurtured by colonialism.

Importation of foreign religion and education

Foreign culture in Africa is a social package which enshrines language, education, model of governance, rules and regulation, fashion taste, and even the type of foods consumed; it is an encapsulation of imported material and non-material cultures. But emphasis will simply be on language, model of governance and mode of education since this topic is based on factors blowing the ember of intra-conflict in Africa. Colonialism brought French, English, and Portuguese to Africa; these languages are beneficial to Africa, but they also seem to be a source of division in Africa. For instance, the ongoing ethnonational conflict in Cameroon has a glaring connotation of lingual differences, despite all effort made by the Cameroonian government to blur the division along colonial language lines, the anglophone and francophone Cameroonians remain strongly divided along colonial lines; similarly, it is a problem encountered at the regional and continent levels. Francophone countries in Africa blend better with one another compared to the anglophones and Lusophones. Ethnically, Cameroon is heterogenous, but colonially bilingual; despite the cultural heterogeneity, the country is only divided along colonial lines.

The colonial masters used education to divide Africans as it was in the case of Nigeria; non-Moslems in the north were taught how to read and write, they were given Christian education which made them literate. Although this was because church schools were the only dominant academic institution for acquiring education, and slowly they converted to Christian. On the hand, Moslems maintained their religion but were less educated compared to the African Christians during the colonial occupation. It is a fact that precipitated group consciousness between the Christians, Muslims, and the traditionalists specifically the Southern Kaduna region of Nigeria (Bujra, 2002, p. 12).

Ethnic conflict in Southern Kaduna took the form of Muslim versus Christianity polarity. The 1980s saw

the escalation of religious fundamentalism coupled with an influx of foreign ideas on Muslim and Christian sect (Bujra, 2002:21). Unfortunately, in this contemporary time, the Southern Kaduna region of Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and Mali are plagued by ethno-religious crisis which claims the life of people almost daily (Akhaine & Abdulganiyu, 2020; ICC, 2020; CSW, 2020; Balestrierie, 2020).

In as much as monotheism is an imported heritage in Africa, it is starting to take the shape of a primordial heritage as it shapes the identity of Africans. This accounts for the existence of ethno-religious crisis as opposed to the past ethnic crisis. In addition, it is arguable that ethnic and religious consciousness have been used by political profiteers in a clandestine manner for the advancement of their political objectives. Recent events, especially in Nigeria, Mali, and Burkina have proven the existence of ethno-religious politicisation. Similarly, Aapenguo (2010, p. 2) strongly stress that, ethnicity is not the core driving force of conflict in Africa, but a tool used by political profiteers for the mobilisation of supports in pursuit of strategic interests. It is an indication of encroachment in primordial loyalties, a type of divide and rule tactics that pits one group against the other, hence consolidating horizontal inequality.

Colonial economic disruption

Colonial administrators disrupted precolonial economic model and replaced it with a single based economy which saw the exportation of raw materials to Western countries; this model of economy accelerated rivalries in almost all African states as it introduced private ownership of lands. Private and commercial farming led to the shortage of arable lands, and economic differentiation between groups and nations (Bujra, 2002). Similarly, Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson and James A. Robinson (2001; 2002) cited in Austin (2010, p. 10), maintain that:

“Africa’s relative poverty at the end of the 20th century was primarily the result of the form taken by European colonialism on the continent: Europeans settling for extraction rather than settling themselves in overwhelming numbers and thereby introducing the kinds of institution (private property rights and systems of government that would support them) that, according to Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson, was responsible for economic development in Europe and the colonies of European settlement in North America and Australasia.”

For instance, in peasant colonies where lands were directly in the hand of Africans, the service sectors were absolutely monopolised by the Europeans, coupled to this was the policy of coercive recruitment consolidated by colonial administrators to work either for the state or private enterprises. This was the reality in peasant and settler colonies (Fall 1993, Northrup 1988 cited in Austin, 2010, p. 4).

Commercial utilization of fertile lands by the colonial masters subjected peasant farmers to misery, which later became a source of conflict, and also conflict over other resources. This was accompanied by uneven development which indicated the difference between the privileged ethnic groups in the well-developed urban areas, and the deprived ones subjected to underdeveloped areas. It led to the migration of people from rural and underdeveloped areas to the developed/urban areas; class formation consciousness equally has its source in the uneven development (Bujra, 2002, p. 31).

Similarly, in the Southern African region where the colonialist had settler colonies, for mining and commercial farming, legacies of discords were seeded in the form of land usage, recruitment, and administration. Arable lands were occupied by the settlers, civilian laws were imported from metropolitan countries simply for the settlers, minority group were imported from Asian and other African countries to work in service sectors as clerks. The settler colonies were manned by blacks under the control of colonial and settler officers. The aftermath of the economic legacy pitted ethnic groups against one another, as those that benefitted from colonial occupation and the oppressed groups harboured deep seated animosity against one another. Unfortunately, this legacy remains extant and accounts for identity politics in Africa hitherto. Bujra (2020, p. 30) asserts that:

“The conditions for conflict between different ethnic groups, between the colonised and the colonisers, and between the different racial groups were created and deepened. As a result, there were many conflicts all over Africa resulting from the political and administrative system of the colonial situation, which took place, and which were unreported.”

The economic disparities between the rural and urban settlements commenced in 1900; it became glaring in the 1950s; this period also saw an expansion of the African population. The economic process and ballooning population triggered tensions and conflicts over scarce resources like arable lands across the African continent. In the Urban settlements, the conflict was purely between the pauperized majority and the colonial authorities; the enraged groups were the pauperized landless peasants, the

small poor traditional farmers, and the pastoralists who lost lands and cattle. The enraged groups resented their own people too who benefited from the colonial administration. This was how economic factors reactivated the hibernated ethnic conflict in the colonial era and carried it over to the postcolonial phase (Bujra, 2002, pp. 30-31).

Colonial political structure and its conflictual legacy

The political structure of the colonial authorities took the form of direct and indirect rule, assimilation and paternalism. The political structure seeded by the colonial powers has glaring catalyst of conflict, in that it lacked even distribution of power between ethnic groups, instead, an ethnic group was picked to pre-empt over other groups. Kingdoms were empowered and retained to serve the interest of the imperialists (Bujra, 2002).

The colonial administration was comprised of selected indigenous people and the whites who were on ground to fulfil the objectives of their sending nations. The selected traditional rulers were given more political power which automatically generated economic opportunities, while the majority were subjected to deprived. As a result of the bias political structure established by the colonialist, the common Africans had a series of violent altercations, which led to conflict with the privileged Africans during the colonial reign, and this deepened old conflicts which manifested in the postcolonial African societies. The primordial conflicts exacerbated by colonialism protruded in Nigeria, Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda (Bujra, 2002, p. 30).

Similarly, DFID (2001:13) made allusion to primordial sentiment as a strong causal factor of conflicts, which proved the most difficult to resolve. Central to this, is horizontal inequality, which pits one or more ethnic groups against others as it was in the case of Rwanda, DRC, and Burundi. Similarly, it is the case in the contemporary Southern Kaduna in the northern region of Nigeria, where Hausa/Fulani Muslims in the form of killer herdsmen, Gunmen and bandits are alleged of incessant sporadic attacks on indigenous inhabitants of Southern Kaduna. Observers claimed that the incessant killings in the Southern Kaduna region has an undertone of ethno-religious conflict, while the government's body language to the conundrum is questionable as the attackers' act with impunity (Ewang, 2020; Channels Television, 2020).

The colonial authority deliberately indulged in the selection of particular ethnic groups and showered them with preferential treatment, as the new chiefs, civil servants, as recruits into the police and army. This explains why some Africans are privileged to be educated and wealthy compared to the ostracised majority from other groups (Bujra, 2002, p. 30); it is a validation of Stewart (1998) claim that "horizontal inequality mixed with identity, is a potential catalyst of conflict in any given society." Horizontal inequalities coincided with identity politics in the colonial era, and it was carried over to the postcolonial, as a result of this, the African continent finds itself in rigid identity politics in an ethnically diversified nation state.

The colonial political structure can best be labelled as the divide and rule type as it pitted ethnic groups against one another, and consolidated uneven development which saw the acceleration of persons from rural to urban areas. The colonial political structure mitigated inter and intra-ethnic conflicts but seeded ethnic conflict by propagating horizontal inequality which saw one ethnic group privileged and others deprived. The seeded ethnic conflict metamorphosed into ethnic consciousness following the fall of colonialism and led to widespread ethnic rivalry.

Bujra (2002, p. 21), noted that:

When Nigeria got its independence from the British in 1960, the various contradictions and points of inter-ethnic conflict had not been resolved. The post-colonial order was founded on the same socio-economic and political structures which were already in existence.

Based on the above premise, colonialism reinforced ethnic consciousness in Africa, by building on primordial sentiments, and passing imbalanced political and economic system to postcolonial African leaders.

Postcolonial African Conflicts

Postcolonial African conflicts are sharply distinct from the typology of conflicts that characterised the

precolonial and colonial epochs. This is because conflicts of the postcolonial African societies featured ethno-religious consciousness, large-scale inter and intra-ethnic conflicts, inter and intra-religious conflicts, and inter and intra-political party conflicts coupled with global conflict such as that of the Cold War and terrorism. However, evidence in the conflicts that characterised the postcolonial African conflicts are a long unresolved conflict carried over to the postcolonial phase from the precolonial and colonial periods. The post-colonial African conflicts were triggered by scores of factors such as inept nature of African leaders, interference from colonial masters, the Cold War blind support, ethnicity, corruption, human rights abuse, and economic crisis. However central to the postcolonial African conflicts is the prevalence of horizontal inequality fostered by political profiteers. Two zeitgeists clouded the euphoric decades of the African society: the nationalist leaders reign and the Cold War (Bujra, 2002, p. 32).

The euphoric decade (1960-1970)

African states gained independence in a period of conflict between the Western European and Eastern European blocs, but this was not instantly a source of conflict in Africa (Bujra, 2002, p. 32). Ethnic consciousness that were seeded during the colonial phase were carried over to the postcolonial era where it roved instrumental in the hands of political profiteers. However, the euphoric atmosphere (nationalist government era) in early postcolonial Africa maintained a decade "1960-1970" of peace which suppressed inherited conflicts (Bujra, 2002, p. 32). Partly, the euphoric decade could be due to the belief that since colonialism had fallen, collective interest of the society would be prioritised, but unfortunately individual and political party expediency loomed largely which later thwarted the euphoric decade. Albeit, the euphoric decade recorded few interstate conflicts and rebellion against internal sovereignty but on a small-scale (Bujra, 2002, p. 32). Bujra cautioned that the euphoric decade should not be tagged conflict free, in that media coverage and research data collection of conflicts in this phase was a challenge, therefore, many conflicts went unrecorded and were not even noticed by the government. As put by Bujra:

It is important, however, to remind ourselves that during this period there were many smaller or low intensity conflicts, especially those between ethnic groups, which went unnoticed. For example, there were violent conflicts over land disputes in Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, etc.; there were also inter-ethnic urban conflicts in Zambia, Kenya, Nigeria, etc.; and some antigovernment rebellions in Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda, Zanzibar, etc (2000, p. 32).

The early postcolonial Africa was profoundly under the influence of Western powers whose primary interest was simply to promote their national interest by exploiting the ignorance of the African nationalist leaders. Overt and covert operations were instigated by the colonial powers in Africa, although it was done in the form of technical assistance, whereas the primary objective was to exploit inept nationalist leaders (Bujra, 2002, p. 32).

It was the grip of colonial powers on African nationalist leaders, that initiated some African States in the Cold War, but not at the same level; some African states like Zaire, Mozambique, and Angola were fully involved in the Cold War, but at a quasi-level. The involved African countries were divided along ideological lines, rejuvenated ethnic conflicts, and this period also saw the heavy influx of funds from the Cold War warriors to the involved African leaders. The Horn of Africa and Southern African region were hotly contested by the superpowers. Furthermore, it was observed that the Cold War reinforced interstate conflicts such as the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia which lasted up to 1980s (Zezeza, n.d., p. 4; DFID, 2001, p. 7). The euphoric decade featured interstate conflict in the Horn of Africa and Southern African region which were accelerated by the East and West blocs. Zezeza (n.d., p. 4), argued that Cold War facilitated the decolonisation movement but equally gave the African leaders the avenue to manipulate the rivalries of the East and West blocs. However, the deeds of African leaders during the Cold War persisted, even after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1991.

Institutionalisation of ethnic consciousness in the euphoric phase

Ethnic consciousness was evidently seeded by the colonial administrations and advanced by the nationalist leaders in the euphoric phase from 1960 and 1970. However, ethnic consciousness preceded colonial occupation in Africa, as it is evident in intra-ethnic conflicts and inter-ethnic conflicts, but it was obviously reinforced by the colonialist to the advantage of their colonial occupation. The conundrum of ethnic consciousness in Africa is that successive powers at one time or the other in history had used it for political and economic gains. It was used strategically by the colonial masters, nationalist leaders, and in the contemporary Africa used by political profiteers to the extent that it has manifested as a core

determining economic and political factors in Africa. Bujra (2002, p. 18) made allusion to how catalyst of conflicts was seeded in Nigeria and Kenya by the colonial usurpers and how it was carried on to the postcolonial Africa.

Nigeria

Idowu (1999) cited in Bujra (2002, p. 18), argue that the continuous conflict in Nigeria took political dimension due to the absence of democracy, the badly structured Nigerian federal system fuelling ethnic loyalties, the monopolisation of the central government by the northern Hausa/Fulani, and the oppression of other regions and ethnic groups.

Contrary to Idowu (1999), Bujra (2002, p. 19) ascribed the prevalence of conflict in the postcolonial Nigeria to the dearth of genuine citizenship, and existence of baffling contradiction, such as political conflict and instability, irreconcilable struggle for power, reflected in antagonism and warfare, politics of alienation, exclusion, and domination coupled with pseudo-nationalism. More so a search for the establishment of vibrant of democratic governance. The above allusions made by Idowu (1999) and Bujra (2002) evidently acknowledged bad governance as the main drive of ethnic consciousness in the post-colonial Nigeria.

Kazah-Toure (1999) cited in Bujra (2002, p.19), looked at conflict in the postcolonial Nigeria from a retrospective perspective of ethnic rivalry exported to colonial and postcolonial periods. Kazah-Ture cited in Bujra claimed that the Southern Kaduna region of Nigeria has been perforated by inter-group conflicts and tensions. Central to the conflicts is social inequality, citizenship, community rights and democracy. But the conflicts are mostly common in the rural zone which is a miniature of Nigeria the region has about forty ethnic groups.

Kazah-Toureb (1999) cited in Bujra (2002) claimed that ethnic consciousness was seeded by the colonialist administration as the emirate aristocracy were imposed on people of Southern Kaduna as overlords where the Hausas became the chiefs. All institutions in the region were under the authority of the Hausa-Fulani backed the British government. It was in this period religious divide was seeded. During colonial occupation, church schools were the dominant avenue for the acquisition of western education, and involvement in western education during this pperiod was an automatic apostasy. This fact led to a division between the Christians, Muslims and the traditionalists. Also, from 1910 the Hausa/Fulani led administration faced revolts from other ethnic groups in the region. Furthermore, in the wake of decolonisation movement, Nigeria was divided along ethnic lines on the basis of regionalism. The process of decolonisation was fraught with ethnic consciousness rather than national consciousness. Inter-ethnic consciousness was carried into the newly forged national identity 'Nigeria' that saw the welding of autonomous ethnic groups.

Bujra (2002, p. 21) asserts that "When Nigeria got its independence from the British in 1960, the various contradictions and points of inter-ethnic conflict had not been resolved. The post-colonial order was founded on the same socio-economic and political structures which were already in existence".

Hitherto, Southern Kaduna is a victim of ethnoreligious fracas which predates formal colonisation of Nigeria. Similarly, Nigeria suffers marginalisation along ethnic and religious lines as the Hausa/Fulani occupied core public offices. In addition, the contemporary Nigeria is afflicted with terrorism which has been wreaking havoc for the past two decades. The emergence of the killer Fulani herdsmen, criminal bandits and kidnappers are equally threatening the internal sovereignty of the country. In fact, Global Terrorism Index ranked Nigeria as the 3rd most terrorised country in the world due to the spate of extra-judicial killings across the country along ethnic and religious lines (Akhaine & Alabi, 2020; Uman & Arji-romanus, 2019; acaps, 2020; GTI, 2019, p. 8; Demarest, et al., 2020).

Kenya

Like Nigeria, Kenya was writhed with the prevalence of horizontal inequalities which accounts for the domination of two ethnic groups, the kikuyu and Luo, precisely at independence. Central to the prevalence of the horizontal inequality was the legacy of ethnic consciousness seeded by the colonial administration. According to Bujra (2020, p. 22), the closeness of the Kikuyu and Luo to the colonial administration was because their areas were deeply penetrated at the onset of colonial occupation in Kenya. The alliance of the Luo and Kikuyu led to the formation of KANU which became the ruling national

party, while the other ethnic groups in balancing against the Luo and Kikuyu domination established the KADU which maintained that regionalism is the way forward in Kenya's body politics as opposed to the centralised and unitary system advocated by the KANU. Bujra claimed that the centralised system of governance advocated by the KANU was aimed at the advancement of the Kikuyu and Luo interest. Jomo Kenyatta was the President of Kenya at independence, and was also the leader of KANU, while Arap Moi was the leader of KADU. In 1964 Kenyatta convinced Moi, and the two parties were merged; this was how Arap Moi of KADU became the Deputy President of Kenya.

Following the independence of Kenya, the government and political domain was clouded with the presence of the Kikuyu-Luo due to their proximity with the colonial administrators. Unfortunately, former President Kenyatta promoted ethnic interest to the detriment of national interest. The ethnic consciousness advanced by Kenyatta led to the ethnic conflicts that erupted in the Rift Valley and Coastal Region in the 1990s. After the demise of President Kenyatta, President Moi assumed the Presidency in 1978, and he observed that the strategic offices in Kenya were occupied by the Kikuyu. According to Bujra (2002), for 14 good years as the Vice President, Moi learned and perfected how his predecessor used the state as an instrument to create the domination of the Kikuyu people in strategic sectors across Kenya. In departure from his departure, President Moi was bent on addressing the challenges of horizontal inequality affecting national cohesion.

The Cold War

The Cold War was an ideological battle between the capitalist bloc headed by the USA and the socialist bloc headed by Russia; both external axes did not limit their rivalries to their region or countries, but instead stretched it beyond their regional or continental frontiers. It is upon this backdrop that the Southern and Horn of Africa was dragged into the Cold War conflict despite being newly initiated to the international community. However, the Cold War rivalries erupted when Most African nations were leashed too colonialism but was at its peak during decolonisation and after colonialism. The East and West bloc rivalries were a Cold War for the superpowers and their key allies 'NATO and Warsaw Pact; but paradoxically it reverberated into civil war in the global South, Southern Africa and Horn of Africa precisely (Zezeza, n.d., p. 4).

This study considered the Cold War occurrences as it was a catalyst of interstate and intrastate conflict in Africa. For instance, the Angola, Mozambique, DRC, Ethiopia, and Eritrea conflicts prompted by the Cold War featured interstate and intrastate conflicts.

Cold War saw the transmutation of multiparty system to one-party system, where African leaders maintained that multiparty system is a potential source of conflict and ethnic consciousness inter alia luxury for Africa. It was during the Cold War that the supported African leaders received external support to crush opposition parties despite glaring abuse of power and maladministration. The oppressive regime of African leaders led to an upsurge of coup d'état, open rebellion and secessionist movements against incumbents. The Cold War exacerbated existing conflicts in Africa by fuelling excesses of some African leaders and financing conflict in allied nations in Africa (Bujra, 2002, p. 34; DFID, 2001, p. 7). The Cold War, just like colonialism exacerbated existing conflicts, supported corrupt African leaders; it resulted in public grievances which gave room to secession threats, military usurpation and accelerated ethnic consciousness.

Trade in arms

The Cold War triggered arms trade in Africa. State to state arms transfer involved heavy, high maintenance equipment tank, transport aircraft, and jet fighters. It was a largescale destructive transaction in that era. In 1988 when Cold War was on its last leg, imported weapons amounted to more than \$4 billion. But in 1995 after the Cold War, the transaction in weapons dropped down to \$270 million. The aftermath of the heavy inflow of weapons from East and West blocs was a sharp increase in commercial arms dealing and illegal trafficking in low maintenance light weaponry like AK 47 RIFLE and rocket-propelled grenade launchers within Africa. The illegal flow of weapons and trade in weapons in Africa after the Cold War triggered large-scale conflicts in Africa since the weapons bought in the black market were used mainly by rebels and ethnic groups fighting for power (DFID 2001, p. 8).

The emergence of strongmen in the Cold War era

The Cold War fostered autocracy in Africa, it helped power-hungry leaders remain in Power despite the national meagre balance of payment account which made public welfare services almost impossible. The government inability to provide essential needs for their citizens led to heightened dissatisfaction which aroused existing ethnic consciousness. It equally provided the various bellicose ethnic activists the privilege to boost their violent aspirations against the oppressive regimes. Unfortunately, the two Cold War giants helped oppressive regimes remain in power, despite glaring corrupt practices and mal-administration (Bujra, 2002, p. 17)

Another factor that threatened the legitimacy of some African leaders was the loss of external support which weakened their political and economic strength (DFID, 2001, p. 8); it was the case in Liberia, Somalia, Sierra Leone, and Congo.

The emergence of strongmen

In the Cold War era, democracy was endangered and short-lived due to assumptions put forward by African nationalist leaders; they argued that democracy is a western dogma, some argued that it is a luxury for the African continent, and some even claimed that it is a divisive tool which fosters ethnic consciousness. But the western axis found this appealing because they knew it will facilitate their ambition just how it did during colonialism where the indirect rule was used to exploit the African people. The logic of indirect rule reverberated in the Cold War era through the emergence of strong men who promoted self-interest and interest of their western partners; this was what Bujra (2002, p. 34) labelled "blind support", but one cannot expressly assert that it was a blind support because the blind support was a means to a greedy end.

The Western leaders showed interest in curtailing intra-conflict in Africa, but it was a pretext; they picked and supported despotic leaders in Africa who used corruption, oppression, and enhancement of ethnic consciousness which divided people and plague nation-building as a tool to remain in power. The strongmen expediency led to the weakening of national institutions and continuous underdevelopment of the African continent. National resources were irrationally utilized; in the sense that it was used to sponsor division, self-aggrandizement, and conflicts of different types. Convergence of the above-highlighted factors precipitated intra-conflicts in Africa at national level "macro", "meso", "inter-ethnic", and at the grassroots levels where common people fight within themselves (Bujra, 2002, p. 35). The last leg of the Cold War saw the weakening of strongmen, the emergence of second wave of democracy, and resurgence of ethnic conflicts.

The supposed End of History in Africa

The end of the Cold War saw the fall of Berlin Wall which coincidentally triggered the fall of African strongmen, reawakened the African elites and international actors regarding the need to consolidate democracy to quell the conflagration of crises in Africa. The post-Cold War Africa received pressure from the international community to promote liberal democracy, and a consociational type of democracy in an heterogenous society, in a bid to attenuate conflict causing factors such as horizontal inequalities.

It is evident that most intra-conflict in Africa cannot be eradicated but can be resolved or managed by the devolution of power "power sharing", respect to human rights, respect for minority groups, elimination of horizontal inequalities and criminalisation of manipulation of ethnic difference.

Ethnic differences or dissimilarities on its own cannot be a potential source of intra-inter conflicts, but ethnic differences mostly erupt in cases of horizontal inequality as put by Stewart (1998, p. 19). Horizontal inequalities account for intra-interethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts that unfolded in the postcolonial African society.

As explicated by Bujra, cultural heterogeneity in a nation state is not the main driver of conflicts, but the political profiteers' encroachment in primordial loyalties. For instance, the colonial masters encroached in primordial loyalties for the advancement of divide and rule which postcolonial African leaders inherited.

In allusion to cultural heterogeneity as an independent variable in the context of conflict, Cohen (1974) cited in Stewart (1998, p. 10), has this to say regarding ethnic conflict:

Men may and do certainly joke or ridicule the strange and bizarre customs of men from other ethnic groups because these customs are different from their own. But they do not fight over such differences alone. When men do, on the other hand, fight across ethnic lines it is nearly always the case that they fight over fundamental issues concerning the distribution and exercise of power, whether economic, political or both.

The above submission of Stewart perfectly captured the primary source of ethnic consciousness in the postcolonial African society. Central to the ethnic consciousness in Kenya under President Jomo Kenyatta was lopsided political representation and economic disparity. Similarly, the Biafran war in Nigeria had glaring element of horizontal inequalities as the Igbo people cried out against marginalisation.

The second wave of democracy in Africa was expected to be a case of *End of History*, but unfortunately, the political inadequacies that characterised the Cold War era continued in the second wave of African democracy. Similarly, the third wave of democracy in Africa saw a resurgence of ethno-religious consciousness and conflicts as it is the case in Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, and Niger.

However, the ethnic consciousness that blighted national cohesion in some African countries during the euphoric phase remained indelible, as it is evident hitherto. For instance, the foremost contemporary Nigerian statesman “former President Olusegun Obasanjo and Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka” avowedly stated that Nigeria is more polarised along ethnic lines under the leadership of the incumbent President of Nigeria.

Central to this claim according to them is based on the premise that the presence of Hausa/Fulani is alarming in core public offices and the questionable body language of the Presidency to insecurities afflicting the entire country, especially the heinous occupation of identified killer Fulani Herdsmen in none Hausa/Fulani communities across the Nigeria. Below is a submission made by former President Olusegun Obasanjo on horizontal inequalities in the contemporary Nigeria, which was surprisingly buoyed by Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka:

“I do appreciate that you all feel sad and embarrassed as most of us feel as Nigerians with the situation we find ourselves in. Today, Nigeria is fast drifting to a failed and badly divided state; economically our country is becoming a basket case and poverty capital of the world, and socially, we are firming up as an unwholesome and insecure country. And these manifestations are the products of recent mismanagement of diversity and socio-economic development of our country. Old fault lines that were disappearing have opened up in greater fissures and with drums of hatred, disintegration and separation and accompanying choruses being heard loud and clear almost everywhere (Obasanjo cited in Iroanusi, 2020).”

“The nation is divided as never before, and this ripping division has taken place under the policies and conduct of none other than President Buhari – does that claim belong in the realms of speculation? (Soyinka cited in Ezeamalu, 2020)”

“Does anyone deny that it was this president who went to sleep while communities were consistently ravaged by cattle marauders, were raped and displaced in their thousands and turned into beggars all over the landscape? Was it a different president who, on being finally persuaded to visit a scene of carnage, had nothing more authoritative to offer than to advise the traumatised victims to learn to live peacefully with their violators? (Soyinka cited in Ezeamalu, 2020)” “And what happened to the Police Chief who had defied orders from his Commander-in-Chief to relocate fully to the trouble spot – he came, saw, and bolted, leaving the ‘natives’ to their own devices. Any disciplinary action taken against ‘countryman’? Was it a spokesman for some ghost president who chortled in those early, yet controllable stages of now systematised mayhem, gleefully dismissed the mass burial of victims in Benue State as a “staged show” for international entertainment? (Soyinka cited in Ezeamalu, 2020)”

The reality of the contemporary Nigeria and its governance, in summation was captured in the opinion of Obasanjo and Soyinka. Their views and questions echoed the existence of gross horizontal inequalities in Nigeria and a rigid inclination of leaders at the helm of public affairs to primordial sentiments.

Cohen (1974) cited in Stewart (1998, p. 10) posits that men ordinarily do not fight other men over opposing customs and traditions but when they do, it is probably over fundamental issues that has to do with the distribution of economic or political power, or both. Upon this premise, unequal socio-political and economic distribution merged with primordial loyalties can be a source of potential threat to the cohesion of a heterogeneous nation state. This is a claim validated by the occurrences between African ethnic groups during colonialism, the euphoric decade, Cold War, hitherto specifically in the case of Nigeria (Okiwo 2013 cited in Damarest et al. 2020). Below is a caricature in validation of horizontal inequalities in the contemporary Nigeria, specifically in the context of political appointments and response to security threats:



(Punch Newspaper Cartoon, 2020)

However, the Nigerian State acknowledged the inevitability of consciousness along the lines of primordial loyalties caused by the colonial merging of autonomous ethnic nations. It is a realisation that birthed the existence of the Federal Character Commission (FCC), to ensure the fair representation of Nigerian ethnic groups and religions in all tiers of government and their agencies across the nation (Demarest, et al., 2020, p. 3).

Unfortunately, the existence of Federal Character Commission from its inception hitherto has been unable to narrow horizontal inequalities, especially at the federal level, it is evident in the claim of Mustapha (2009) cited in Demarest (2020, p. 7); similarly, recent opinion in response to the detractors of President Buhari's administration by an incumbent political elites has evidently indicated the existence of horizontal inequalities in Nigeria, its causal source, and inevitabilities (Sahara Reporters, 2020). Upon the premise of horizontal inequalities and rigid primordial polarity, the postcolonial African states are confronted with variations of inevitable identity politics and conflicts which has proved invincible; hence, thwarting amicable coexistence making the dividend of democracy a mirage.

Discussion

Ethnic consciousness in Africa is a primordial thing in that it predates both colonial and post-colonial civilisations. Also, the precolonial Sub-Sahara African societies had multiple occurrences of intra-ethnic and interethnic conflicts caused by factors such as expansionism and quest for arable lands. The Kiriji war between the Yorubas such is an example of precolonial intra-ethnic conflict; similarly, inter-ethnic conflicts between the Yoruba and Nupe, Yoruba and Fulani, Shonna versus Ndebele, and Zulu against other ethnic groups were evident in the precolonial era. However, before the actual consolidation of colonialism and monotheism in Africa by the colonial masters, some parts of Sub-Sahara Africa had cases of ethnoreligious crisis, such as the Southern Kaduna region of present-day Nigeria and the Western region of Nigeria occupied dominantly by the Yorubas. Hausa/Fulani Christians raided the minority Christian groups, while the Fulani Jihadist descended on the Yorubas that were dominantly animist. It is an indication that the precolonial Sub-Sahara African society was marred with ethnic, and ethnoreligious rivalries. Based on this, it can be concluded that intra- and inter-ethnic conflicts in Africa are natural phenomena.

Available shreds of evidence proved that conflicts in Africa predate colonialism; this in no small extent is appalling in that the African societies before colonial intrusion existed in their indigenous construction, but still, the conflict proved inevitable. The conflicts that characterised the precolonial Sub-Sahara African society weakened their political and economic fabrics, hence, created an avenue for the colonial intrusion. The intra- and intergroup conflicts met by the colonial masters were exacerbated, and this made the divide and rule plot of the colonial usurpers a success. It is upon this premise that it was concluded in this study that the colonial masters exploited the strong primordial sentiments exuded by the precolonial African societies.

The colonial masters in British Africa such as Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, and Ghana adopted an indirect system of governance where indigenous political elites worked in conjunction with them, while other colonial masters adopted direct rule. The indirect rule in Sub-Sahara Africa seeded ethnic divisions as one or two ethnic groups were given particular preference compared to other ethnic groups. It was the case Nigeria, Kenya and most African nations. The colonial masters, according to the findings of this study, exploited the gaps in the precolonial Sub-Sahara African societies for the accomplishment of their colonial objectives. It was an era that saw the merging of unrelated autochthonous African

societies that ushered into nation-states. The aftermath of the colonial construction of nation-states in Africa is intra-intergroup conflicts and bias, which is stifling nation-building project and good governance. However, successive governments such as the Kenyan, Nigerian and other African governments have created commissions or bureaus to address horizontal inequalities. However, unfortunately, the problem persists as inclination to primordial sentiments has increasingly gained consciousness, hence, threatening nation-building and good governance. In the assessment of intra- and inter-ethnic, and ethno-religious conflicts in Africa, periodisation of root causes cannot be expunged. It explains why this study adopted a retrospective approach, looking at the internal and external catalyst of conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa. Besides, it validated the theory of primordialism, and horizontal inequalities adopted.

Colonialism is the first external factor that exacerbated inter-ethnic, and intra-inter conflicts in Africa; the colonial usurpers seeded conspiracy in African communities by promoting horizontal inequalities which were escalated in the Cold War. The aftermath of the seeded horizontal inequalities led to the acceleration of primordial sentiments evident in the form of nepotism, ethnic politics, and religious rivalry. The problem identified is not in the homogenisation of autochthonous societies but the consolidated horizontal inequalities which have proven to be the live-wire of primordialism in multicultural post-colonial African societies. Similarly, Cohen (1974) argued that men only become conscious of ethnic differences when fundamental political and economic privileges are unequal or inequitable. Upon this premise, primordial dissimilarities are not the problem but horizontal inequality which arouses hot primordial sentiments. However, the inevitability of horizontal inequalities in Africa can partly be blamed on the colonial reconstruction of the Africa communitarian states into nation-states.

The Cold War was a phase that triggered ethnic conflicts, cross-border wars, the emergence of strongmen, nepotism, patrimonialism, oppression, the loot of national resources, and weakening of national institution; The Cold War devalued democracy in Africa, and further reinforced primordial loyalties. There is no doubt that primordial loyalty can be cancerous to a multicultural society; primordialism gives room to ethnic consciousness, nepotism, patrimonialism, and threatens the rule of law. At extreme, primordialism fostered by horizontal inequalities can be a significant catalyst of conflict in any society be it developed or developing.

The Cold War gladiators exploited the ineptitude of African leader that was involved as the same indirect rule strategy adopted during colonialism was used. The superpowers selected some African leaders to promote objectives that were not beneficial to the nation-building of African states. In this light, it is valid to argue that the ember of conflicts in Africa was fanned by external factors such as colonialism and the Cold War; however, the machinations of post-colonial African leaders cannot be expunged.

The reality of the post-colonial African society hitherto can tempt one into thinking that the African continent is the hands of aliens, as African leaders indulged in the promotion of horizontal inequalities that has given room to the edifice of primordialism in the multicultural Sub-Saharan Africa. It is upon the premise of the unethical conducts of the African leaders that neo-colonialism thrives, and the continent continues to experience intra-inter conflicts such as intrareligious and interreligious conflicts, and sharp ethnic consciousness which is threatful to a nation-building project.

Colonial occupation revealed that colonial administrators diligently advanced the biddings of their countries, respectively. Nevertheless, contrariwise in the post-colonial era, the African administrators did the biddings of their African paymasters 'leaders'. The aftermath of a relationship predicated on loyalty as it is in most of the sub-Saharan African institutions is that it makes patrimonialism indelible. However, contemporary African leaders like the President of Rwanda and very few others are changing the tide to the promotion of national interest. However, the small number of these types of leaders in contemporary Africa is an indication that most African leaders are unwilling to rule in good faith. The disinclination of sub-Saharan African leaders to constitutional provisions where the rights of all groups are encapsulated is instrumental to the prevalence of primordial sentiments and horizontal inequalities.

The historical and contemporary realities of sub-Saharan Africa present observers with pessimism, especially when the primordial, colonial, and post-colonial factors are considered. Judging from the present, undoing colonial constructs such as nation-states, and imposed colonial languages might prove impossible, but solutions are not farfetched provide the African leaders, and people have the will to change the reality of the African society. For example, the achievements of President Kagame in Rwanda have blurred ethnic lines 'narrowed primordial sentiments', and equally narrowed horizontal

inequalities. As a result of this, Rwanda can boast of national peace in contemporary Africa. However bicultural nature of Rwanda nation-state might have aided the achievements of Paul Kagame.

Conclusion and recommendation

In conclusion, intra-intergroup conflicts in the postcolonial sub-Sahara Africa are attributable to internal and external factors. The internal factors have its roots in inherited pre-colonial identities which remains indelible despite the prevalence of nation-states and a representative system of governance inherited from the colonial masters. Intra-ethnic, inter-ethnic, and ethnoreligious conflicts remains a continuous thing in sub-Sahara Africa due to the existence of inclination to primordial sentiments caused by horizontal inequalities fostered by the postcolonial leaders. The prevalence of lousy leadership has made peaceful existence of merged multiple ethnic groups a difficult due to the presence of horizontal inequalities seeded by colonialism and advanced by the postcolonial sub-Saharan African leaders. The extant horizontal disparities, according to the findings of this study, is a potential threat to nation-building and good governance. Also, it has proven to be a catalyst of conflict in which oppressed groups assembled against the privileged groups as it was in the case of Kenya. Similarly, horizontal inequalities account for the emergence of balkanisation, and threat by the oppressed group to form a new nation as it is in the case of Biafra in Nigeria in the 70s and the contemporary. Horizontal inequalities are a significant push factor of primordial sentiments which threatens the existence of the state and stifles democratic dividend.

In a nutshell, most African leaders from the euphoric decades hitherto lacked credible commitment and have always exuded overflowing narcissism, which has precipitated protracted conflicts, as one group have access to national wealth. In contrast, other groups are either underrepresented or underserved; this is the claim of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in Nigeria that the Hausa-Fulani under the leadership of President Buhari has occupied most significant offices at the federal level. National resources meant to accomplish social contract between the rulers and ruled were and are still squandered hitherto. The aftermath of the banality of such unethical behaviour accounts for the prevalence of poverty, unemployment, underdevelopment, ethnic consciousness and the emergence of ethnoreligious consciousness, terrorism, and secessionism in Sub-Sahara Africa.

The way forward in a multicultural society such as Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Somalia and others is primarily the goodwill of strongmen, solons, political and economic elites. Consociationalism would have been proffered, but in the absence of political leaders' goodwill, it will yield nothing laudable, as it is in the case of Nigeria and Kenya. Goodwill of leaders is a threshold that will empower constitutionalism, consociationalism, and weaken horizontal inequalities. To claim that conflicts in Sub-Sahara Africa are caused by the seminal absence of the rule of law and devolution of power is entirely invalid. Sub-Sahara African nations have the most nuanced statutes and policies. Still, the lack of goodwill and the implementation of existing laws have increasingly stifled the excellent intent of the constitutional provisions that would have effectively manage conflicts.

Furthermore, the domestication of policies that will make horizontal inequalities die a natural death should be considered. Such an approach can be the government nationalisation of student's access to certain benefits such as scholarships, medical services, and social grants. Devolution of power and consociationalism is equally a factor that can help bring down the edifice of horizontal inequalities. Also, the rights of minority ethnic or religious groups should be observed uninterrupted in a bid to deter insurrectionism or the threat of secession.

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