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## A DECONSTRUCTION OF FRUSTRATION – AGGRESSION-THEORY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE: NIGERIA

**Frank O. ETIM<sup>1</sup>, Wilfred I. UKPERE<sup>2</sup>**

**<sup>1</sup>Department of Political Science and Public Administration,  
 University of Uyo, Nwaniba Road, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria,  
 Telephone: +234(0)-8146129875**

**Email: okonfetim@uniuyo.edu.ng, Website: [www.etimfrank.com.ng](http://www.etimfrank.com.ng)**

**<sup>2</sup>Department of Industrial Psychology and People Management,  
 School of Management, College of Business and Economic,  
 University of Johannesburg, Auckland Park Kingsway Campus, 429,  
 D-Ring, South Africa,  
 Telephone: +27115592069, Email: [wiukpere@uj.ac.za](mailto:wiukpere@uj.ac.za)**

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### **Abstract:**

*The work set out to deconstruct and reconstruct Ted Roberts Gurr's (1970) theory of relative deprivation, frustration-aggression as contained in his work 'Why Men Rebel' (1970). The study used descriptive research design and evaluated the capacity of the theory which was created to explain political violence in Africa and Asia in the colonial era, to also explicate why intense relative deprivation, frustration and aggression arising from the avalanche of poor governance in postcolonial African states such as Nigeria and many others, have not culminated into political violence and rebellion. The study presented numerous data obtained through observation and analysis of events in Nigeria, Africa and case-studies of American, French, English and Russian rebellions and distilled qualitative data which indicated lack of association between the variables. The application of the study design revealed first the*

*state as the source of relative deprivation, frustration and aggressions of the citizenry when they are denied access to the public values which they feel entitled. Secondly, it further discovered that there are no direct correlations between relative deprivation, frustration and aggression as initially conveyed by the theory since 1970. Furthermore, it exposed that there is an intervening variables identified as 'Social Movements' or 'Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)', which harness relative deprivation, intense frustration and aggressions from the sufferers and convert them to other set-of-actions which may not be political violence and rebellions but could be advocacy towards the expansion of the mechanism for supply of public good or values and to make it accessible to many to address relative deprivation. The study concluded in the light of its findings, the initial theory require deconstruction and reconstruction to include 'Social Movement' as a principal component, it is only then that it could be applied in the analysis of issues in postcolonial African and Asian states.*

**Keywords:** Relative Deprivation, Frustration, Aggression, Social Movements, Political Violence

**JEL Classification:** P11

### **Introduction and Background**

Ever since John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mower and Robert Sears created the 'Frustration-Aggression theory which was revised by Leonard Berkowits (1939-1969), the theoretical perspective of analysis, was then condensed in 'Why Men Rebel' by Robert Ted Gurr (1970). Students, analysts and scholars have applied this framework in the light of a unilineal correlation between 'Frustration-Aggression' arising from 'relative deprivation' as if it culminate into political violence and rebellion against the source of the frustration each time it occurs. It is instructive to note that since this text was published, there had not been any attempt to revisit the theory in the light of postcolonial dynamics of political violence. This is because the text and theory was an attempt to provide explanation for persistent political protests in Africa and Asia under colonialism. The pertinent question to interrogate would be how does the theory explicate political protests and rebellion in postcolonial states in the same continent and beyond? This provided the impetus for this study aimed at making the theory capable of explicating same phenomenon in the postcolonial state

It is against this submission that this study sought the ‘deconstruction of the context to enable one make logical analysis of how to respond to the sources which precipitate relative deprivation, each time citizens rise to demand good governance from the duty-bearers.

It would be recall that every State is individual-writ-large, wherein everyone had moved from the state of nature into the republic to mitigate the inconveniences of the state of nature where everyone was the judge to the propriety of his or her actions. The republic granted the advantage of politics of scale, consequent upon the social contract which had taken place. Everyone had conceded a fraction of his/her inalienable rights to legitimize the authority of the leviathan. The Leviathan also known as the Government, besides being the agent of the citizens, had the primary duty of mitigating the first conditions which pushed men/women into the republic, the security of lives and property. The Leviathan had to conduct governance – the art of distributing political and administrative authority in the most effective and equitable manner so as to drive development (value-addition) among the citizens.

The colonial states however, were created out of conquest which pulled people together for commercial colonial purposes; people who hitherto may not had wanted to be together in the same republic. This *ab-initio* set the ground for conflict in colonially created states, coupled with re-settable colonial administration. This fundamental psychology of conflict in the colonial state was not accommodated in Ted Gurr’s theoretical postulation. This is one of the elements which provided impetus for this current work.

In colonial and postcolonial states, very often governance was and is conducted in ways and manner which incrementally reduces the individual space, constrict the freedom and obstruct the exercise of individual freedom, all of which culminate into Citizens-Government trust deficit. Dysfunctional development in the state means that the state is no longer meeting the expected needs of the citizens. This often generate frustration in the psyche of the individual citizens in the state, and when there is no intervention to address the rising frustration, it cascade into aggressive behavior, ultimately culminate into anomic political participation.

At this point the citizens respond become anti-social and react violently against the public utilities in the absent of the government concern for their rights. The citizens responses to poor governance then and now, does not seem to follow the Ted Gurr’s Relative Deprivation ((relative deprivation a perceived discrepancy between men’s value expectations and their value capabilities. Value expectations

are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled. Value capabilities are the goods and conditions they think they are capable of attaining or maintaining, given the social means available to them (Gurr, 1970 p 13). Frustration-Aggression political violence and rebellion paradigm. This is the rational for seeking the reconstruction and deconstruction of the theory.

In Nigeria there was  $\neq$ ENDSARS in 2020 which was essentially a demand by the Youth for a nation that works for them. They demanded a fair treatment for the police so as to reduce the transfer of their 'frustration' with the Nigerian Police System on the Nigerian citizens which seemed to have been the case, given the treatment they received from the SARS personnel on the road when they had not been proven to be robbers. They therefore generated a five point demands on the state, which included; (i) immediate release of all arrested protesters, (ii) Justice for all deceased victims of police brutality and appropriate compensations for their families (iii) Setting up an independent body to oversee the investigation and prosecution of all reported police misconduct within a period of 10 days, (iv) carrying out psychological evaluation and retraining of all disbanded SARS operatives before they can be deployed (this should be verified by an independent body). (v) The government should increase police salary and they should be adequately compensated for protecting lives and property of the citizens. These demands were to strengthen the Nigerian Police force, the machinery for internal security meant to safe their lives and property. It did not follow the pattern prescribed in Ted Gurr's (1970) postulations.

The frustration of the Nigerian youth brought them together into a 'social movement' a loose association led by several 'Show-Business leaders' to express the demands and requested the state to address them for the common good. We would refer to the group as  $\neq$ ENDSARS movement. They did not resort to violence conduct which primarily serves as a data for this discourse.

However, this act coupled with the series of frustrating governance in Nigeria in the last seven (7) years, have not led to the kind of reactions recently experienced in Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sierra Leone and Ghana. It is situation such as this that has led to this inquiry with the aim of deconstruction and reconstruction of the theory to strengthen its further usage in analysis by students, analyst and social scientists in general. It is a criterion for theory to have its fallibility, definitional clarity, identification of relevant variables of various levels of analysis and applicability to a large universe of events for analysis (Gurr, 1970 p 17). It is only after reconstruction that it would be able to analyze colonial and postcolonial situations.

The central thesis of the theory is that in order to understand the protests, we must first of all take cognizance of 'relative deprivation felt by the citizens of the countries in these continents that generated the popular discontents. Secondly, that the relative deprivation felt by the people justified their anomic actions and thirdly, their inability because of the source of their discontent and relative derivation prompted their resort to political violence and rebellion. Put differently, persistent frustration produces aggressive behavior which translates to political violence and rebellion.

### **Research Questions**

- i) To what extent does absence of good-governance in the state frustrate the individuals to violence conduct?
- ii) What precipitates the individual to join 'social movements' rather than resort to political violence?
- iii) Are there other political factors such as the State's actions which may spark political violence other than frustration-aggression?
- iv) Could there be extant 'relative deprivation and frustration, yet it does not cascade to political violence? These issues would guide the discourse descriptively through the desk reviews to evaluate cases, affirming or repudiating the research questions.
- v) How does this explicate the Nigerian situation?

### **Objectives of the study**

The intentions of the treatise are;

- i) To establish that it is not all cases of frustration-aggression that culminate in violent political action being conveyed in the theory.
- i) To examine the role of the individual in the state, when governance is dysfunctional.
- ii) To interrogate if there is a direct correlate between relative deprivation-frustration and political violence.
- iii) To identify the intervening variables which do not create direct relationship between relative deprivation-frustration and aggressive political conduct?
- iv) To provide an alternative explanatory theory of political violence in the state.
- (v) To examine its applicability in the Nigerian situation.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem addressed in this study was that the postulations of John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mowrer and Robert Sears (1939) as reviewed by Leonard Berkowitz (1969) and condensed by Robert Ted Gurr in his classic 'Why

*Men Rebel'* (1970) wherein it is stated that when men perceived themselves as entitled to a value in the state and are persistently frustrated from accessing it, aggressive instinct is activated, and this predisposes him to political violence and rebellion. If frustrations are sufficiently prolong or sharply felt, aggression is quite likely, if not certain to occur (1970 p 37). Berkowitz, in his reformation of the theory averred that the perception of frustration arouse anger. Aggressive responses tend to occur only when they are evoked by an external cue, that is, when the angered person sees an attackable object or person that he associates with the source of the frustration (1970:34). This is the only time that violence actions and rebellion are ignited, short of this, the violence is bottled-up. In other words, when there is obstruction to these expectations and to the responses to obtain what they considered entitled to from the state, frustration is created, which ignite aggression. In the view of 'frustration-Aggression political violence theory' this automatically results into political violence and rebellion. Whereas Berkowitz differ and this study further refute such correlation, all of which made the agitation for the theoretical reconstruction a categorical imperative.

The crux of the problem is that the above theory have always been presented as if there is a unilineal correlation between 'relative deprivation, 'frustration and aggression terminating in violent political actions' whenever it occur. This is because in many submissions by postgraduate students, scholars, analysts and administrators, there seemed to have been *apriori*' assumptions that every situation which generate 'relative deprivation of the individual and group', creates frustration-aggression which culminates in violence political conduct.

The concern of this work is that if there existed such a correlations which explained political violence and rebellions under colonialism, what then has changed that the theory does not present such a relationship in the postcolonial state? Why is the theory unable to explain why such variables do not culminate in political violence in post-colonial states in Africa and Asia currently? This is why we seek the deconstruction which actually refers to the interrogation, of traditional assumption about identity, certainty and the truth. Deconstruction seeks different angles of perception in order to correct the assumption and specify the type of political violence (Harcourt, 2016). This is because there are several classes of state sponsored political violence against its citizens, particularly in Africa and Asia.

The situation analysis revealed that there is no unilineal correlation; because there exist several intervening variables before political violence and rebellions occur from frustration and aggression. Consequently, we contend and accept that;



(i) persistent frustration-aggression generate very serious disappointment, being denied what one consider himself entitled; (ii) We also oppose that this state of psychology does predisposes one into violent actions automatically as conveyed by Ted Robert Gurr's submission. (iii) We contend further, that the deprived person(s) ideally would seek to align with other persons who also suffered similar relative deprivation in order to create a stronger power-base to respond to the elements generating the frustrations. (v) There are other variables which could precipitate deprivation but which do not lead to political violence or rebellion such as the minority status of the social group as the case of the African-Americans as minorities and as it was in Apartheid South Africa as in most other polities.

It is only when the theory is reconstructed as proposed herein that 'frustration-aggression' would lead to the formation of 'Social Movement' for the creation of a power base before it would be capable to cause political protest and rebellion and conversely, when it does not create 'social movement as advocated herein, it is incapable of translating 'frustration-aggression' into political violence and rebellion. It could generate anomic political participation which is not in a significant scale. It is important to note that the frustrated and aggressive person(s) would not be able to confront the state, until they must have come into a social movement to harness their power. This is because the source of frustration-aggression is often the state acting directly or through its agents with full backing of the instrument of power, which the relatively deprived persons do not have hence absorb the pains in a bottled-up anger which he carry about.

We must take notice, that the state exudes government generated inequalities (refusing to recognize the rights of some communities and extending public values to them especially in Africa where there is deficit of leadership). It is the state which generates repressive policies which intensify frustration-aggression as was the case in Apartheid South Africa, and denial of rights in some states on religious, racial or linguistic basis. Consistent poor governance which abound in Nigeria and most African and Asiatic states, is a major source of relative deprivation, frustration and aggression visited on the citizenry. Collective violence is at the level of 'Social Movements'. Thus, rather than Frustration-Aggression and political violence theory, it should be 'Frustration-Aggression Social Movement theory-deconstructed and reconstructed as this would mean the Social Movement as intervening variables could convert frustration –aggression to another set of social actions rather than political violence and rebellion. This explains the situation in Africa, Nigeria and Asia.



### **The basis of the Problem**

The problematic of this study arose from the fact that there is considerable cases of frustration-Aggression arising from relative deprivation in African states and specifically in Nigeria in the last seven years and counting, and yet it has not cascaded into political violence and rebellion. Though in few African states, Sudan, Ghana, and Senegal are exceptions, while in Asia; Sri-Lanka is acting out and partially in Nigeria. Given the avalanche of poor governance and state generated relative deprivation, the theory has been incapable of explicating the seeming peace in the continent and particularly in the Nigerian situation. We therefore observed;

i) That there is no unilineal correlation between ‘relative deprivation, frustration-aggression and political violence’. This is because there would always be several intervening variables which may divert or control frustrations from culminating into aggressive actions. This is the case when the individual realized they do not have the *skills, qualifications or the majoritarian status* to obtain the goals. The citizens, who are indeed frustrated by certain actions of the state, may be forced to still obey the law or rules of the state though grudgingly. The rule of obedience in the state could have been the internationalization of the prevailing norms and habits from the state. Consistent frustration by the state to meet the needs of the citizenry may lead to the second intervening variable being the formation of a ‘Social Movement’ such as ~~NE~~ENDSARS movement in Nigeria in 2020, the ‘Mau-Mau’ in Kenya, MEND in the Niger- Delta zone of Nigeria and IPOB in the South-eastern States of Nigeria. These social movements mitigate the relative deprivation, frustration and aggressive instinct, though they may resort to certain anomic participation to obtain attention from the State. This upholds the thesis of this study that there is no direct association with political violence because of the present of several mitigating variables, one of which is the Social Movement.

ii) Secondly, it is not all act of frustration by the state which precipitates violent reaction. This is because it is only when such act must have accumulated to a high degree as the ~~NE~~ENDSARS in Nigeria without mitigation such as the NPF exploitation of the youths. It however results of into non-violent protest until the state reacted much more violently. The question then is to what degree would the frustration get before it transform into violent political protest?

iii) Thirdly, frustration may not necessarily result into aggression which is just one of the numerous options, but could also lead to ‘withdrawal syndrome’ from the activities which generated it. In this context both the individual and the larger

society become less interested in the activities of the government of the day. They may become indifferent to events in the state. Frustration in this case, generated a different outcome rather than aggressive behavior.

In democracies where the majorities have their way, and the minority their say, many frustrated persons would not resort to aggressive behavior, but look up to the next election date to remove the agents of frustration, mobilized by the Social Movements.

### **Social Movements**

It is a loosely organized effort by a large group of people (all of whom must have suffered relative deprivation) to achieve a particular goal typically a social or political one such as (Afenifere, Odua People Council, Niger Delta Forum etc. all in Nigeria). It may be form to resist or undo a social change (Shannon, 2011). Social movement set agenda or influence politics in a way to vitiate further frustration thereby mitigating the aggressive component of state generated frustration. Mario Dani (1992) had described it as a network of informal interactions consisting of plurality of individuals groups or organizations, who mainly engaged in political or cultural conflict on the basis of shared political identity. Charles Tilley on the other hand, described it as a series of contentions performances displayed and campaigns by which ordinary people make collective claims on others. (Tilley, 2004). A vehicle in which ordinary people participate in politics. Sidney Tarrow (2005) posited that they are collective challenges by people with common purpose and solidarity in a sustained interactions with elites, opponents and authorities. It is not a political party but an advocacy group. It is now clear that its formation is based on collective identity, shared normative orientation, concern for change of the status –quo and when they achieve success or failure, they eventually dissolves or ceases to exist (James and Van-seeters). What is critical in these conceptions of Social Movement is that they share concern for change of the status-quo. Thus, when the source of ‘frustration-aggression changes and share the values for everyone or those who consider themselves entitled, then the frustration-aggression ceases or translate to other usage and not political violence and rebellion. This affirmed the postulation of this study that Social Movements convert the predisposing factors into other uses rather than violence.

In the context of this study, the Social Movement which emerged in the light of persistent frustration-aggression of the people of the Niger Delta, led to the formation of several Social Movement such the South-South People Assembly (SSPA), Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF etc.). The campaigns and the

engagements of the Social Movements led to the creation of the Ministry of Niger Delta and Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). Thus, the frustration-aggression of the Niger Deltan could not translate to political violence and rebellion as postulated by Ted Robert Gurr (1970). This is the essence of the deconstruction and reconstruction of the theory to be able to provide foundations construction of and analysis of social issues in postcolonial states.

There are three (3) major elements of Social Movements and these are; Sustained campaigns to make claims on target authority, repertoire- press statements to the press expressing their positions. This is often followed by demonstrations, public meetings, petitions etc. The third being their 'Worthiness, Unity in Numbers and Commitments (WUNC) in the pursuit of the claims.

One of the factors which have mitigated frustration is widespread education, this has enable people and group to invent several ways of addressing state directed frustration thereby reducing considerably the propensity of aggression culminating to political unrest. Conversely, where universal education has not been allowed to flourish, there exists high probability of frustration-aggression culminating into socio-political violence. The other factors which have mitigating effect on frustration-aggression include; freedom of speech, association and the contents of Universal Declaration of Human rights.

### **The Procedure of the Study**

The study strategy adopted for the generation of primary and secondary data was 'descriptive design' meant to obtain data concerning the current status of the phenomena of relative deprivation, frustration-aggression and how it culminates into political violence. It was directed at determining the situation analysis, if indeed every act of frustration in governance have direct correlation with political violence. The goal was to describe 'what existed' at the time of the study with respect to the variables and the conditions which precipitated political violence. It was meant to seek information to explicate the relationship between frustration and aggression for the purposes of decision-making (Ndiyo, 2005 p.70). The documentary analysis of instances of political violence relating to revolutions was very instructive in this regard, it specified the nature of frustration and how it directly culminates in aggressive political violence.

The scientific process of descriptive study consisted of (i) skillful observation of the situation analysis and intelligent identification and description of the characteristics of the population involved. (b) The identification of the variables (poor governance) which accounted for the behavioral characteristics of the

population in the context. (c) It sought to establish regularities in the behavior of the frustrated and aggrieved population in the context. (d) This approach was useful in decision-making and in predicting group behavior after prolong observations. (e) Once the factors catalyzed the behavior of the population had been identified over time-then the behavior of the population could then be relatively predicted. It was assumed that when the variables and the behavior of the population have been observed over time, they would always behave in a particular manner (McCandles, 1970 p). The method was considered apt because we were concerned with the characteristics of the population, the frequency and the trend of those who transcended into violence in the face of frustration with poor governance. Since Robert Ted Gurr's (1970) work not much has been done in the area of this study, the approach then became very appropriate.

Procedurally, the design involved the observations of governance to identify instances of frustration-aggression in order to derive data for analysis. It also include the identification of the population of the people of the lower and middle social classes who are mostly the victim of relative deprivation, then the evaluation of global revolutions to examine the correlations of frustration-aggression to political violence. This approach revealed both secondary and primary data for critical analysis. This was the strategy for the deconstruction of the theory, where there was no direct association between the incidences of relative deprivation, frustration, aggression and political violence. We studied major revolutions to ascertain the association between these variables.

#### **Theoretical Framework of Analysis:** Socrates-Crito Theory of Compliant

One of the intentions of this study was to explicate why in the face of dysfunctional governance the individual remained indifference to lack of good governance. In order to evaluate and justify the individual disposition in the state, we adopted the 'Socrates-Crito theory of compliant to the state.

Socrates (470-399) a Greek philosopher hailed from Athens. He was a teacher and set up the school 'Cycle' who's most outstanding student were 'Plato Aristone' and Xenophon. He created the mode of teaching known as Socratic dialogue (questions and answers session). His mission was to make the youths as good as God- he was then accused of blasphemy and went through one-day trial and obtained a dead sentence.

The trial of Socrates and the sentence appeared foreordained even before the evidence were advanced. A group of his friends conspired to free Socrates while

awaiting execution by taking him to a new location where he would be safe. Socrates refused to escape the dead sentence on the following facts;

- i) A social contract existed between the citizens and the state.
- ii) Any person in the state has ample opportunity to acquaint himself with the way of life in the community.
- iii) He observed the custom, traditions, institutional life the working rights and duties.
- iv) If all these are offensive, he/she may go elsewhere, which is more suitable and satisfactory.
- v) However, should he stay, he must accept the duties of a citizen as the price of his rights.

Socrates opined that an adult enters into a contract with the states which involves these terms; the state promises to protect the individual and to promote his well-being. In turn the individual promised to respect the state and to obey its laws. If an individual objects to a particular law, the contract requires him to obey it until he succeeds to secure a change through established procedures for that purpose as provided for in the law.

Socrates then told Crito that if he were to escape, he would have violated his promise to obey the law. He concluded that he was not prepared to repudiate his obligations merely because the law had worked to his detriment in this case, citizens should obey all of the laws, all of the time, being neither selective nor inconsistent.

Suppose the state defaults on its part of the bargain? Suppose it becomes self-serving and tyrannical at the expense of the people or denies them an effective opportunity to change an unjust law. Perhaps then the individual's obligation to obey the law would cease. It is instructive to note that the individual would not on his own confront the state but in conjunction with others in an organized manner through a social movement which would harness the collective deprivation of the people against the state. We could come against the state in a mass voting to displace the government, engage the state for change of public policies and lastly in a revolt where the state remains adamant to the democratic ventures for change.

The second analytical framework applied was *Relative Deprivation versus Insurrection* derived from Leon Trotsky. It conceived relative deprivation as a powerful motivator for social actions as people are pushed to theft, rioting or more peaceful protest actions against those depriving them of necessary items of life. Social Movements based on deprivation stem from four conditions; not having

items; knowing someone else has the item, wanting the items and believing it is possible to obtain these items. Trotsky averred in reality the mere existence of privation is not enough to cause an insurrection; if it were, the masses would always be in revolt' of greater importance is the existence among a group, or groups of a feeling that prevailing condition limit or hinder their economic activity (Trotsky cited in Crane Brinton, 1965 p.33). These feelings of relative deprivation must be raised to an effective fever pitch by propaganda, pressure-group actions, public meetings like the 'Boston Tea Party' did before it translate into public riots.

It is now clear from the above, that relative deprivation, frustration-aggression does not have association and do not culminate into political violence and rebellion but rather into other social actions and that political riots is just one of those social actions that may happen through the social groups. The outcomes may not be political violence but others which could accommodate and assuage the socially deprived group.

### **Data Presentation**

i) Nigeria, seven (7) years of governance under the President Buhari led government, Nigeria had been rated by the Global Terrorism Index (2019) as the third-worst nation prone to terrorism with no improvement since 2017. Aside from insurgency, banditry, kidnapping and secessionist violence pushing Nigeria towards the brink of collapse (Ayitogo, 2021), Unemployment currently stands at 33.3 per cent (approximately 60 per cent of the youth demographic) despite schemes such as N-Power, Conditional Cash Transfer, Government Enterprise and Empowerment Program (GEEP), Tradermon and Special Works Programme. The criteria of poverty, unemployment and underemployment, has multiplied (Olaniyi, 2022). Governance in Nigeria in the last seven (7) years had the commonest source of energy (npk kerosene) used by the lowest rung of the populace sold at N700.00 and Diesel (DPK) sold for N800.00. Inflation is at all time high at 19.5 per cent rendering the income of the middle class unsustainable. The current currency shortage after the printing of new denominations have led to crises only in the Southern States while the North remained calm with some political leaders acting in a reasonable manner, yet there are no civil society violence to the cash shortages. For all these frustrations cannot generate enough aggression to culminate in civil society anomic participation, then the correlation has obstructive variables.

Insecurity had spread from the North-East to every state with schools being forced to close. Corruption in the public service is widespread with Accountant General of the Federation taking away about N200 billion. The Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) has reported that the document relating to N17.158



billion were eaten by termites. According to the CBN, document relating to N6.7billion fuel subsidy were missing. In another development N5.9 billion was used to train 177 youth in telephone repairs (N33.3million per youth). The Pension Commission custodian of workers contribution fixed minimum monthly salary for staff at 2.5 million. The Educational sector had collapsed with tertiary education on strike (for seven months and counting).

The telecommunication sector and the electricity national grid collapse very often. The cumulative effect of the above is a revolution of rising frustration because people have not been able to meet the purpose for their existence in a state where they are paying various forms of taxation imposed on them. People are therefore consistently frustrated by the above incidences to achieve their goals, yet these politicized discontents have not translated into political violence.

ii) Resource Curse: This has become the major features of the African continent. Resource curse or the poverty paradox, is a spectacle where African countries with richness of resources such as fossil fuels (oil. Coal, gases, hydrocarbon) and inorganic resources which would have been translated into wealth end up having less economic growth, dysfunctional governance and worst economic outcomes and depend on international aids with the attendance outcomes where individuals and groups are unable to meet lives requirements for a better standard of living.

Estimates of African resources are on the whole tentative. Africa has 96 per cent of the former none-Communist world's diamonds, 60 per cent of its gold, 42 per cent of its cobalt, 34 per cent of its bauxite and 28 per cent of its Uranium. Africa's Iron reserves are probably twice those of the United States of America and Africa's reserves of Chrome are highest in the world outside of the (Committee of Independent States (CIS) old Soviet Union (Frank, 2021 p 93). The 54 states in the continent belong to the least developed states in the world, and are states which generate intense relative deprivation, frustration and aggression in large quantities to the citizenry with very little exception. Instead of these cascading into political violence and rebellion, men, women and the youths have refused to rebel according to the theory. They rather migrate to Europe through the Sahara desert and the Mediterranean Sea to become refugees in Europe. It is therefore a categorical imperative to deconstruct the theory to be able to explicate this phenomenon.

iii) Transfer of Allegiance to Social Movements

In this section, we evaluated the four known revolutions in the global scale, to ascertain if relative deprivations, frustrations and aggression suffered translated directly to revolutions. or social movements;



(a) The American Revolution 1765-1791, the American Merchants Committee (AMC) organized to resist measures of imperial control. They stirred up popular demonstrations and propaganda against the imperial British government. Similar organizations culminated into the Boston Tea Party. They served as social movements to heighten resentment against the relative deprivation of the British colonial administration. They galvanized those who suffered relative deprivations towards the goals of the state addressing the sources of frustration and aggression.

(b) The French revolution 1787-1789, the relative deprivation consisted of bourgeoisie and peasant resentment, the consequential economic poverty of the French who backed these American revolt, economic difficulty from poor harvest occasioned by prolong winter and the emerging renaissance which dispel the legitimacy of the 'Divine Rights of the King'. The *Societes des pensee* an informal social movement took the great ideas of the Age of Enlightenment to a higher degree thereby eroding the basis of legitimacy of the French king. This gradually turned into political agitation for reforms and finally helped steer election to the Estate-General of 1789 (Brinton, 1965 p 40). This eventually culminated in the 1789 notable event in France.

© The English revolution 1215-1219 King John 1 ruled over England as an absolute monarch, his words were laws. Consequent on his misrule, he taxed the English nobility, the barons, heavily and confiscated the church property. The archbishop of Canterbury Stephen Langton called on the barons (who served as the direct representative of the citizenry) to request a charter of freedom from the King. The Barons mobilized the serfs who alongside with them stormed on June 15, 1215 the Runnymede the official resident of the monarch and forced the King to sign a charter which was later to be known as 'Magna Carta'. This gave birth to constitutional monarchy restricting the role of the monarch in England. The nobility or barons formed a social movement (the 25 Barons) which metamorphosed into the modern legislature. They consummated the relative deprivation, frustration and the aggression of both the serfs and the nobility giving birth to a new society with rights and freedom of the individuals. They watched over the actions and in-actions of the Monarch and approved the expenditure of the monarch. They became the modern legislature (Frank, 2015 p 25).

(d) The Russian Revolution 1917-The Czarist government like anyone in Russia had citizens and social groups which were not able to access service adequately from it and therefore felt alienated in different degree. The inadequacy of values for everyone was due to several reasons ranging from enormous corruption and

ineffectiveness of the czar, peasants alienation because they got less than they contributed to the imperial Russian state, widespread dissatisfaction among the fighting force, and monarchical authority over the Orthodox Church as the basis of divine right of the king. The distrust of the priest's whose sermon became propaganda in favor of the czar. Those who felt distrust from the government were in the majority, hence, they constituted the Bolshevik as against the Menshevik who were complacent with the situation. The Bolshevik translated into a political party and challenged the frontiers of the State under the leadership of Victor Lenin. They did not only want to address the frustration-aggression of the Bolshevik, but choose to form the Government that would wither away relative deprivation, frustration and aggression and eventually form the government where these variables would not be the symbol of the state through the revolution.

### Data Descriptions and Analysis

The above case-studies generated enormous data to interrogate the problematic and validate the quest for the deconstruction of the theory. The theory which constituted the problem of the study is herein stated in Algebraic form as

$$(i) Rd + F + Ag = Pv + R$$

The legend would indicate that 'RD' is Relative Deprivation, 'F' is frustration, 'Ag' represents Aggression, 'Pv' – Political Violence and 'R' Rebellion.

The deconstructed theory would be stated as (ii)  $Rd + F + Ag + Sm = Epv + Pp$

Where 'Rd'-Relative Deprivation, 'F'-frustration, 'Ag' Aggression, 'Sm' Social Movements, 'Epv'-Expanded Political Values, 'Pp'-Political Participation

Equation (i) contended as in the problematic that a direct correlation exists between the variables and political violence and rebellion while the data presented indicated to the contrary. The Equation indicated that there is no intervening variable social movement hence, no direct association between the variables to result in political violence.

Equation (ii) on the other hand, explicated that with Social movement or Civil Society Organizations expanded political values which assuage relative deprivation, through engagements, sensitization and public demonstrations with anticipation that the state would expand the scope of public values. These diminish frustration and convert aggression into political participation and inclusion. Political violence would only occur in extreme cases where the state remains impervious to social movement engagements for inclusiveness.

The translation of the above to the Nigeria case, indicated that there is an avalanche of relative deprivation in the governance space with about three (3)

persons that have jumped over the bridge into the Lagoon to take it no more. It took the Social Movement 'Hashtag-ENDSARS' to galvanize the deprived youths together to make a statement at Lekki –Toll gate. The State responded with military attack on the protesters killing several people in the process.

Social Movements or Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are the cauldron in which the ideas as to how to address relative deprivation contain further frustration and aggression are generated. The data further showed that in the African continent where there is a resource curse and intensive frustration, there is also a short fall of Social Movements to aggregate and articulate how to vitiate the situation. This has made the conversion of relative deprivation of the citizenry into movements to be prolong, however in few countries where social movements had emerged, we had the Arab-Spring in 2011 that swept through the Maghreb states and pocket of other countries; Sudan, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Senegal.

The second case scenario, illustrated in the American revolt of 1776, the American Merchant Committee and Boston Tea Party as Social Movements said 'No representation no taxation', while the French rebellion had *Societes des pensee* ...The English case had the Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, the barons and the serfs being mobilized against the Feudal King John 1, which culminated in the creation of the '25-Baron' which translated into modern Legislature. The Russian political violence had the Bolsheviks arising to organize the women, workers and all those who suffered relative deprivation from the Czar into violence political overthrow of the establishment.

The analysis has demonstrated that the second algebra which included the social movement as an intervening variable could create positive political participation rather than anomic political violence which disrupts the system equilibrium. Consequently, the theory as contained in 'Why Men Rebel (1970)' indeed requires deconstruction and reconstruction as proposed herein. What would play the role of the social movement in Nigeria? The February 2023, presidential election may play the role.

### **Nigeria on the Precipice**

In this section of the study we looked at the application of the theory in Nigeria particularly in the period before during and after the 2023 elections. We herein posit that Nigerians are faced with considerable frustrations at both the individual and societal or external levels. It would be recalled that frustration arises from perceived persistent obstruction to individuals will or goal. A good number of Nigerians considered themselves entitled to good-life and happiness which Aristotle (384-322 BC) said is the highest good of man and the purpose of the state.

Nigerian are not excluded from this. For inexplicable reason, they have constantly been unable to achieve it. The response to this, is an emotional response defined by anger, annoyance and a sense betrayal swells up in him. This sense of anger translate to aggression. When it build-up to a very persistent and heightened level for the Nigerian to contain. This then disposes Nigerians to aggressive behaviour to solve the inherent problem in a way that may be harmful to the society. Currently Nigerians are stripping naked in Banks just to access their own money duly deposited in the banks.

This same Nigerians have not been able to access the most basic existential elements of life easily in the last eight (8) years. The frustration at this level arose from the fact that Nigerians are citizen of a very wealthy nation, hence the personal goal, desires and their instinctual drive grounded on 'the wealth of Nation' to have a higher standard of living, longer-life expectancy and a general positive Human Development Indices (HDI). However, these are not to because of the dominance of what the World Bank (1992) described the characteristics of bad governance. These include; failure to properly distinguish between what is public and what is private, leading to private appropriation of otherwise public resources...inability to establish a predictable framework for la and government behaviour in a manner conducive to development or arbitrariness in the application of laws and rules \*World Bank, 1992). This inclination consistently, create frustration on Nigerians because the boundaries between what is public and what is private is not define. Consequently, primitive accumulation by the political actors leave Nigerians with more hardship, frustration and dispose to aggressive behaviour.

External frustration happen when the conditions giving rise to the frustration of Nigerians occur outside of their control such as the insensitivity of the government to the plight of the citizenry. The object frustration confronting Nigerians include;

- (i) high and unpredictable cost of petroleum which drive the cost of living in the society occasioned by the states inability to fix the refineries but prefer to import refined petroleum product, and loose all the products associated with the use of the bye-product of petroleum refining. This have driven up the cost of the pump-price of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) and kerosene use by the generosity of Nigerians.

- ii) The rehabilitation of terrorist, Boko-Haram and without any program for the victims of their heinous acts who are languishing in Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camp. This is connected to the persistent state of insecurity in the country. This feeling of uncertainty and insecurity have consistently blocked many from fulfilling their needs at the individual and corporate level respectively.

iii) The persistent killing by specific group of others, yet to make the claim of killings openly yet the state fail to act appropriately there by creating anomic situation in the country.

iv) The collapse of the judicial institutions where in recent time, the pronouncement of the court appear to be that of the highest bidder. How could a person and political party which came in the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) position in a general election (Imo State) be declared a winner in an election. How could people who contested presidential primaries and who were never candidates in a senatorial election, be declared legible to contest election by the supreme court.

v) How could the state claim not to know the locations of criminals in the forest, yet governors have met and have failed agreement with them, yet the state claimed to know their whereabouts.

vi) The ENDSARS episode embodied the frustration of Nigerians and the response of the state to the killings of Nigerians.

vii) The management of changing from the old to the new currency have driven Nigerians into the high level of frustration to the extent that Nigerians have to stripped naked in Banks before they could access their monies. Nigerians are at the tip of revolt.

**Aggression:** The cumulative effect of all these and the stubborn refusal of the state to address these sources of frustration predisposes Nigerians into a state of readiness which may result in hostile or violent behaviour, readiness to attack or confront the source of aggression (Brown, 1954).

### **Elections 2023: The Ides of March**

Nigerians are currently at the bottled-up anger point. The impending election provides a window of pacifism to suppress the bottled-up anger on the expectation that there is a contestant they perceived as decent enough who would turn the rising frustration and expectation into satisfactory fulfillment of the Aristotelian good life which they have been denied for so long. Where this is further frustrated by manipulations of the election results, there may be an implosion of aggressive instinct into aggressive actions.

The election is therefore the 'Ides of March' a climax which may provide a spark for series of civil actions with an instant social movement as ENDSARS.

### **Validation of the Research Goals**

In this section of the study report, we are set to validate the intentions of the study thus; (i) it is not in all cases of frustration-aggression that violent political conflict and rebellion occur. This is because the sufferer of relative deprivation in a

state, could be a member of a minority ethnic group, racial or religious sect that suffering majoritarian tyranny. We then alluded to the Nigerian state where intense social deprivation arising from poor governance in the last seven years and counting have been the case, yet not leading to popular uprising. This is in contrast to the Maghreb states where similar issue had led to the Arab-Spring, though there have been a return to the status-quo. We then posited that it is only when a Social Movement emerges to harness the intense anger, frustration and aggression into an organize force, that it can translate into collective social actions which often time is not violence in the state such as happened in the #ENDSARS in Nigeria.

(ii) In line with the submission above, we had identified that there is always an intervening variables between relative deprivation, frustration-aggression before it cascade into political rebellion. The intervening variable was acknowledged to be the Social Movement. In many climes they assumed the form of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) which derived their funds not from the Government of the day and are therefore able to speak truth to the authorities. To this end, no direct correlation exists between these variables and political violence.

(iii) Taken from the first framework of analysis of the work ‘Socrates-Crito Dialogue’ the individual in the state is to obey the laws and not break them until the general election present the chance to effect the change that would mitigate relative deprivation, the frustration and aggression that is inherent in the system. The state obligates itself to promote the welfare of the citizens, and to provide a mechanism for changing the law when its ‘commands are unjust’. When it becomes self-serving and tyrannical at the expense of the people, or denies then an effective opportunity to change an unjust law... then the individual’s obligation to obey the law would cease Socrates educated Crito. Every citizen in the state is to be an active participant and eternally watch what is acceptable by the state and act accordingly.

(iv) We identified the elements of the intervening variables as; (a) the powerlessness of the individual against all powerful state; (b) the absence of Social Movement herein referred to as the Civil Society Organizations ready to harness the energies of all those who have baggage of relative deprivation, frustrations and aggression to demand accountability and justice from the duty bearers; (c) the decision to be careless about whatever the state does but to migrate on the basis of brain-drain in search of greener pastures, (d) Qualification to access public values when it is given on some criteria; (e) the minority status of the sufferer as a member of minority groups, race or ethnic group suffering majoritarian tyranny.



(v) Given the identification of the intervening elements which confront the individuals and groups which experience alienation, frustration and aggression, Ted Robert Gurr (1970) would do well to identify the predisposing factors to political violence and rebellion as relative deprivation, frustration and aggression as conveyed in 'Why Men Rebel' are but weak predisposing factors. The element that goad men to rebel are the Social Movements they belong rather than the factors identified in 'Why Men Rebel.'

vi) Nigerians are face with frustration at the individual and societal levels. At the individual level, there are many obstacles, one of which is the incessant closure of universities. It is because of the state's inability to provide the relevant infrastructure, many Nigerians complete four year programs in six years, which imply additional burden on them and their parents. It took almost one year to negotiate minimum wage of thirty thousand Naira with the State. At the time of approval, the poor management of the economy had vitiated the utility value of the amount. The petroleum price index is yet another source of external frustration. The inability of the state to address these generate frustration. The civil society organizations assume the roles of Social movements. The 2023 election serves as buffer, wherein Nigerians look-up to changing the situation. Where the election does not change the situation, then there may be an implosion as the 'ides of march'.

## **Conclusion**

We had interrogated the theoretical construct that the source of the human capacity for political violence in colonial state was the relative deprivation, frustration against the incapacity to access public value which we considered ourselves entitled to and the subsequent aggressive disposition it generate. The theory explained political violence in Africa and Asia in the colonial but proved incapable in the postcolonial era.

The problematic of this study was that; (i) there are no direct correlations between relative deprivation, frustration-aggression and political violence and rebellion.

(ii) The theory is incapable of explicating why intense relative deprivation-frustration and aggression in Nigeria and African states have not culminated into several political protest and rebellion in the modern states. (iii) The theory requires both reconstruction and deconstruction to be able to be functional in modern descriptive analysis.



The study revealed the missing link which is the intervening variable which aggregate relative derivation with intense frustration and aggression to the ‘Social Movement’ sometimes referred to as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) or revolutionary vanguard. Social Movements are geared towards altering the state’s modus operandi to provide more public values and make them accessible to all in order to vitiate relative deprivations that abound in the states. By so doing political unrest and rebellion are not often the outcomes of relative deprivation and its associated variables.

Nigeria, is not immune from social changes that often emerge when there is implosions caused by persistent frustration and undressed aggression.

In four of the case-studies of American, English, French and Russian revolutions, the uniformity found was the emergence of Social Movements to harness the citizens for change of the old regimes and not on individual basis. Against the backdrop of these revelations, the theory should then be restated with Social Movement having a prominent part in its caption as prescribed herein.

It is herein recommended that governance in Nigeria should be based on the Periclean moral and political rightness and above all, on the Utilitarian principles of the greatest good for the greatest number. Where the the frustrations get heightened by stealing the mandates in which the election provide to change the situation, then the ‘Ides of March’ may take place.

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