

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST OR WICKED PROBLEMS? IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE TRENDS OF MINORITY GROUP VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN THE US, MYANMAR AND NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *Citizens desire equal representation and the guarantee of their rights and privileges by the elected governments of their nations. However, minority groups are overshadowed by overarching policy processes and actions favouring the racial, ethnic or religious majority groups by which their nations are identified. The paper generally assessed governance in the United States, Myanmar and Nigeria under Trump, Suu Kyi and Buhari respectively. Emphases were on the socio-political characteristics of the nations, the citizens' expectations and their campaign promises vis-à-vis the post-electoral realities and policies implemented by their administrations. The multi-scalar analyses assessed the role of socialization processes in the leaders' conflicts of interest, actions and consequently, the future trends of minority group voting behaviour. Findings from two 5-member focus group discussions organized in Nigeria provided the bases for the development of autochthonous strategies to address the 'wicked problems' deepening the racial and ethno-religious tensions underlying socio-political relations in the nations.*

KEYWORDS: Governance, Conflicts of Interest, Wicked Problems, Moral Leadership, Minority Groups, Voting Behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Democracy is unarguably the best and most viable system of government in the world. The benefits accruable from its practice are both macro and micro. The macro benefits are the overarching effects of the rule of law and good governance. The micro benefits on the other hand, are those which impact directly on the citizens such as the fundamental human rights and freedoms and the enjoyment of minimum standards of quality of life. The influence of global dynamics on the political reawakening of polities to the rights and privileges abounding in democratic practice has led to a corresponding rise in the demands for social inclusion by the diverse groups comprising the societies.

The discourse on majority and minority group identities finds expression in federalist theory, closely tied to democratic thinking on multiculturalism, checks and balance, diffusion of power and limitations on majoritarianism (Anderson, 2016). Most federal systems represent an agglomeration of groups or nationalities into one indivisible unit which becomes a formidable identity for its constituent groups and a medium of exchange and interaction at national and international levels. In many cases, the point of divergence of these constituent groups may either be racial, religious, ethnic, linguistic, or a combination of some or all of these indices. Though 'race' is a discredited biological term, it remains an important political and psychological term (Gill, Kai, Bhopal & Wild, n.d.) that contributes a context for defining identities and roles as majority or minority groups within the political landscapes of nations.

The racial and ethno-religious groups that are the focus of this paper are those in the minority, overshadowed by overarching policy processes and actions that favour the more easily-identifiable majority groups. Osaghae (1998) asserted that they must be differentiated from ethnic minorities like post-1994 Rwanda's Tutsi and South Africa's white Afrikaaners that enjoy dominance and hegemony within the political systems in which they exist. He described ethnic minorities as groups which experience systematic discrimination and domination as a result of numerical inferiority, historical and sociological factors and must embark on political actions to further their collective interests. On this premise, our contention is that the minority groups approach politics, political processes, policy negotiations, policy making and policy implementation with agitation and expectations particularly where threats and instances of perceived and real marginalization, distrust and ensuing tensions challenge the principles of political correctness within their societies.

For democratic countries characterized by majority-minority divides that threaten their stability, the campaign promises of candidates as elaborated in the manifestos, constitute one of the fulcrums on which voter expectations and choices for the conferment of the micro and macro benefits of democracy including bridging the widening gaps between the majority and minority groups, are hinged. Sadly, most election campaigns contain a 'here today, gone tomorrow' quality (Redlawsk, 2004) that precludes total voter satisfaction and heightens dissatisfaction, distrust and disharmony.

Rittel and Webber (1973) described problems with the potential to exacerbate situations by generating undesirable consequences and yet defiant of solutions offered by conventional, traditional processes with which people are familiar, as 'wicked' (Camillus, 2008). Notably, they are not entirely 'winnable' battles but can be contained such that they do as little damage as possible.

The issues presented by the majority-minority debate in the countries whose political landscapes are beclouded by it are easily describable as wicked problems for two main reasons. One, they satisfy virtually all of Rittel and Webber's (1973) characteristics of wicked problems. Secondly, they have tugged at the nations' political fabrics for decades without clear-cut solutions and in this instance, the incumbent leaders' actions or inactions have contributed to the quagmire. Evaluating the patterns of the debate based on the analyses of their complexity, uncertainties and value divergence (Head, 2008) across these three political landscapes enables a clear 'mapping' of the issues to determine the level of 'wickedness'.

The paper, based on a multi-scalar analyses, engaged variables of social exclusivity, marginalization, moral leadership, voter education and empowerment, and so forth. It examined leadership culpability in aggravating the crises by overemphasizing the centrifugal rather than the centripetal forces within the societies and offers strategies for ameliorating the consequences.

METHODOLOGY

The paper focused on the influence of the majority racial and ethno-religious identities of incumbents, Trump, Suu Kyi and Buhari on their policy positions and policy outputs and how these have both negated the campaign promises made to their polities and heightened the disunity and distrust dotting the majority-minority group relations in the United States,

Myanmar and Nigeria respectively. The paper adopted evaluatory methods strongly reliant on secondary data sources in assessing the events, trajectories and trends of governance administration in the three countries.

It addressed the following questions to enable the appreciation of the inherent problems of racial and ethno-religious bias underlying the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of their respective polities with governance processes:

- Have the actions, inactions and policies instituted by these leaders deviated from their campaign promises?
- Have these leaders been more representative of their immediate majority racial and ethno-religious constituencies than of the desires of the entire citizenry?
- Have their actions or inactions reflected, deepened or assuaged the divide between the majority and minority groups in their climes than during the administration of their immediate past leaders?
- Is the dissatisfaction of the polities with governance policies more pronounced under the present leaderships than with the past leaderships?

Objective

The paper examines the experiences of the citizenry with these ‘wicked problems’, the governance styles of the leaders and what these portend for the future trends of minority group voting behavior. To achieve this objective, primary data were derived from three focus groups in Nigeria.

CASE STUDIES

The United States of America (US): Political Landscape and Trump’s Campaign Promises

The history of America’s political environment is one of tribal, local, state, federal, political and governmental institutions of public policy and the exchanges between these and the groups of political leaders, theorists, organizations, movements, grassroot political activities, and so forth. The political ideas and democratic aspirations of the American society are represented by two dominant political parties, the Republican and the Democratic parties (Blake, 2016).

Trump, a very successful businessman of international repute and the first American president to come into office without a military or political background (Irwin & Rappeport, 2016; McGill, n.d.), campaigned and won the presidential slot on the platform of the Republican Party. One of the selling points of his bid to ‘Make America Great Again’ was his acumen which was germane to the actualization of this American dream. His campaign promises included building a \$25 Billion wall along her border with Mexico to curb the illegal migrant Latino groups flooding the US in search of better living standards, the temporary ban on Muslims (especially those linked to or from terrorist nations) from entering the US, the downplay of outsourcing, imposition of tariffs on Chinese and Mexican goods, tax cuts portending more reliefs for the top 0.1% than for a combination of the bottom 60% of taxpayers and a consequent federal deficit likely to worsen America’s debt profile, and so on. (Qiu, 2016).

Trump administration's handling of ISIS and the state of the economy was commended for consolidating the role played by the US over the years in ensuring global peace, stability and socio-economic development. These notwithstanding, a widespread dissatisfaction pervades America's political landscape on matters of the US election system, party politics, healthcare, women's immigration rights, his approach to North Korea, racism and support for white supremacy, and so on (Taylor, 2018). These raise fundamental fissures that 'demystify' her and contribute to the fading aura of her powers and hegemony (Zhixin, 2017; Pieterse, 2018).

The Wicked Problems (Majority-Minority Issues and the Complicity of Leadership)

Diversity and multiculturalism in the United States (US) are premised on its composition as a 'salad bowl' of racial minority groups comprising Hispanic-, African-, Native-, Irish, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders (Nittle, 2018) besides other races. Since the 1950s, the United States has faced an urgent problem of how it treats its minority groups (Worldview, 1960). More contemporary debates center on whether matters of society and government intervention in the form of government programs or policies for her minority groups are cultural privileges or rights. This question arises from the inherent subconscious bias by members of the dominant culture against members whose cultures do not conform to the standards and behavior of the majority (McCullough, 2013).

Trump's pander towards white supremacy antedates to 1973 when he was sued alongside his father for anti-Black biases at their rental property (Blow, 2016a). His purveyance towards hate speech and actions or inactions that directly or indirectly engender the rise in anti-Black and anti-Semitic sentiments in the US with devastating consequences, is unequivocal. Besides his campaign promises exuding anti-Black, anti-Latino and anti-Muslim sentiments (Blow, 2016a), he is accused of reinforcing the whispers and fueling dislikes for anything that modifies 'American' (Tolentino, 2016).

Trump's assertion that 'the president can't have any conflict of interest' (Kenney & Norris, 2017), contradicts the race-cum-ethnic card playing out since his assumption of office. His liaison with Steve Bannon and the Alt-Right movement that protects the 'white identity' while challenging policies prioritizing multiculturalism, political correctness and social justice (Piggott, 2016; Blow, 2016a) further confirmed the suspicions of the polity. Trump's victory is assessed as stemming from the fact that he is white. His vilification of the immediate past president of the US, Barack Obama as a bad, illegitimate, untalented and inferior individual (Blow, 2016b); his responses to the Charlottesville incident where a 32 year-old white female was killed at a counter-protest organized against white supremacists (Daniel, 2017); the repeated reference to the conflict of interest represented by the ethnic descent of the Mexican judge, Gonzalo Curiel, in the case against his university and his plans to build a wall along the US border with Mexico (Tolentino, 2016), have done nothing to douse the racial tensions already existing in the US.

Trump's handling of immigrant issues and the abandonment of directly dependent countries like Haiti, Mexico and the African continent, for which the US has had some responsibility, shows the extent of social exclusivity and insensitivity of his policies to non-Americans and the community of immigrants. These groups largely constituted of Blacks and Latinos (Babawale, 2016; Blow, 2016a) have been relegated and the countries in Africa and Haiti described as 'shithole countries' (Darby, 2018). His policies reflect conscientious efforts to discourage the influx of blacks into the US and the possibility of the deportation of those who lack 'genuine' reasons to be in the country. Liberians resident in the US since the era of the

Liberian civil war in the 1990s have been given one year to leave under the Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) policy. Similarly, the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) policy that enabled Haitians reside in the US to escape the effects of the devastating earthquake of 2010 and the hurricane in 2016 has been withdrawn though the order was relaxed to allow for an eighteen-month period over which the policy can come into effect (Madhani, 2017).

Myanmar: Political Landscape and Suu Kyi's Campaign Promises

Political development in Myanmar is characterized by the collision between federalization and unification. The National Army (Tatmadaw) plays undeniably strong leadership roles in determining the context of the 'union', controlling the phases of the federating process in her transitional politics and guarding the union from fragmentation (Preecharush, 2018). Myanmar is roughly comprised of 135 ethnic nationalities. Of these, the Rakhine, Chin, Mon, Kachin, Karen, Karenni and Shan are the 7 largest, officially recognized as dominant ethnic groups (Amnesty International, 2010) through which some of the smaller ethnic groups and political affiliations are identified (Crisis Group Asia Report N°266, 2015). Politicking and political party formation in Myanmar are personality-driven and determined by the ethnic base of the country (Nehru, 2015). The participation of the electorate in politics and differentiations between parties is dependent on the identification with their leaders. Consequently, some ethnic groups identified with the 2 major contending parties in the 2015 elections through their representatives – the incumbent Thein Sein for the USDP and Aung San Suu Kyi for the NLD which had enjoyed widespread support over the years (Pattison, 2012; Nehru, 2015).

By May 2015, 73 political parties registered to contest the general election though only four (the Union Solidarity and Development Party [USDP], the National League for Democracy [NLD], the National Unity Party [NUP] and the National Democratic Force [NDF] - a splinter group from the NLD) had any notable national presence. All other political parties including the Nationalities Brotherhood Federation (NBF) which is a coalition of about 25 ethnic parties cooperating on various key issues, filed behind the two major parties (the incumbent USDP and the opposition NLD) in contention for Myanmar's leadership position (Nehru, 2015).

The November 2015 elections were to be the first credible nationwide poll in decades intended to renew the polity's trust in the electoral commission after the experience with the flawed 2010 elections (Crisis Group Asia Reports N°143, 2014; N°266, 2015). Several contradictions within Myanmar's political environment threatened the authenticity or legality of the elections. The social unrests and wars between the national army (Tatmadaw) and the ethnic armies threatened the nascent democratic reforms, heightening glaring anxiety, protests and calls for the recognition of Myanmar's minority ethnic groups (Pattison, 2012; Preecharush, 2018). In solidarity, the West had over the years, campaigned for the isolation of Myanmar in reaction to its undemocratic practices, unenviable human rights records (Payne, 2015) and armed conflicts between the national army and the ethnic and religious militia groups.

Other contradictions arose from rising Buddhist nationalism, the disenfranchisement of the majority of Muslim voters in the Rakhine state, ignorance and a lack of familiarity with democratic processes, lack of media freedom and the presence of a number of undemocratic provisions in the national constitution (Crisis Group Asia Report N°266, 2015). The constitution allows for the occupation of only 75 per cent of the parliamentary seats to be determined by democratic processes and gives the remaining 25 per cent of the seats to the military (Crisis Group Asia Report N°266, 2015). Chapter 3 no 59(f) of the constitution directly affected Aung Suu Kyi, denying her the right to vie for the position of president or vice

president on the grounds that members of her family are foreigners – her husband was a British academic and her 2 sons are also British citizens (Barker, 2015). During the campaigns, she promised a government free from corruption, workers empowerment, democratic reforms, constitutional amendments and an end to reliance on foreign aid (Reuters, 2015).

After the 2015 elections, Suu Kyi, an internationally renowned dissident who had been under house arrest for a total of 15 years over a 21-year period and a 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner widely acknowledged for her stance against the repressive military rule in Myanmar and the non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights, was made the bona fide head of state of Myanmar. She was (Moe, 2009; Barany, 2018). The victory of Suu Kyi's NLD did not only portend victory for the majority of the Myanmar people but also for the international community.

The Wicked Problems (Majority-Minority Issues and the Complicity of Leadership).

Of the dominant ethnic groups, the Rakhine, through which the Rohingya are identified, is the most sidelined. The Rohingya ethnic group constitute the country's much-persecuted Muslim population and differ from Myanmar's predominantly Buddhist groups ethnically, linguistically and religiously (Albert, 2018). The 2015 elections, despite being adjudged free and fair by international monitors, had no parliamentary candidate of the Muslim faith. This mirrored the country-wide anti-Muslim sentiment that presents a political difficulty for the government with regard to policy- and decision-making to accommodate or support Muslim rights (Albert, 2018).

Article 3 of the 1982 Immigration law describes them as illegal migrants from Bangladesh who must prove their ancestry in Myanmar prior to 1823 to claim citizenship. Citizenship laws from 1948 had been exclusionary and at some point non-existent for the Rohingya until the 1990s when they were issued 'white cards' conferring limited rights but not proofs of citizenship. By 2015, these white cards were revoked, totally disenfranchising the Muslim Rohingya whose Rakhine State is Myanmar's least developed state with a seventy-eight percent (78%) poverty rate (Albert, 2018). These policies have aggravated the onslaught and ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya (Pattison, 2012) who have been at the receiving end of the sectarian violence and security campaigns (Albert, 2018) tainting Myanmar's political landscape.

In August 2017, under the guise of a counteroffensive in reaction to attacks by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) regarded as Bengali terrorists on police and army posts, the Myanmar army embarked on a campaign which the US Ambassador to the UN described as 'brutal and sustained, intended to cleanse the country of an ethnic minority' (Albert, 2018; Reuters, 2018). About 6,700 Rohingya were killed, hundreds of Rohingya villages destroyed and hundreds of thousands of Rohingya forced to flee Myanmar through routes booby-trapped by the military which also opened fire on the fleeing civilians (Albert, 2018).

Glaring governance contradictions and failures exist on Suu Kyi's part with her denial of allegations of ethnic cleansing, dismissal of international criticisms over her lack of moral leadership on the issue of the crises and buck-passing by accusing critics of fueling resentments between the Buddhists and Muslims in the country (Barany, 2018). In response to calls for more socially-responsive and inclusive policies, she claimed that her government was defending the Rakhine people as best as possible (Albert, 2018) but barred Yanghee Lee, a UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur, from setting foot in Myanmar to assess the true state of affairs (Murdoch, 2017). The constitutional reforms and amendments promised during the

campaigns have not been embarked upon and the hopes of the Rohingya for a better future either as citizens or migrants benefiting from Myanmar's democratization process have fizzled (Evans, 2016).

Nigeria: Political Landscape and Buhari's Campaign Promises

Nigeria adopted federalism in 1954. Until recently with the inclusion of the Ijaw (PBS Newshour, 2007), the major ethnic groups in the country were the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba and the Ibo occupying the northern, western and eastern parts of the country respectively, with the north accounting for 79 percent or three-quarters of the geographical land mass of the country (Gofwen, 2004). Prior to Nigeria's independence, the Northern region had established indigenous systems of government under the regional emirs that originated in the Sokoto Caliphate and were easily adopted by the British colonial masters as a system of indirect rule for the rest of the country (Reynolds, 2001). The fact that since independence, the majority of Nigeria's leaders excepting Nnamdi Azikiwe, Aguiyi Ironsi, Ernest Shonekan, Olusegun Obasanjo and Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, have hailed from the northern part of the country has further strengthened the region's claim to hegemonic supremacy over all other majority and minority ethnic groups in the country (Osuntokun, 2014).

Buhari had unsuccessfully run for the post of president in 2003, 2007 and 2011 on different party platforms before his victory at the polls on the platform of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in 2015. This time, he defeated the incumbent, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, an Ijaw from Nigeria's South-South region whose occupation of the position of president followed the death of his principal, President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, also a northerner, in 2010 (TheGuardian, 2010). In 2011, Jonathan won the polls but his government subsequently failed to deliver on the promises of national defense and security of lives and property. The myriad of security issues spanned the escalating insurgency in the North-East, the ethno-religious crises and attacks by Fulani herdsmen in the Middle-Belt and other states, and militancy in the South-South.

Buhari's campaign strategy was revivalist, driven by a 'change mantra' in the run-up to the 2015 elections. Promises included revamping the ailing sectors of the economy, bringing permanent peace and a lasting solution to the insecurity beleaguering the North-East, Middle-Belt and Niger Delta regions of the nation, curbing inflation, stabilizing the Naira and making it exchange for one to a dollar, and so on. He also made commitments toward instituting anti-corruption measures and downplaying ethno-religious sentiments by initiating policies to replace phrases like 'State of Origin' and 'Tribe' with 'State of Residence'. Others were constitutional amendments to strengthen the lower governments and entrench true federalism, restructure the governance mechanisms and encourage effective private sector participation including through the recruitment of academics and professionals (Vanguard Newspaper, 2015).

The Wicked Problems (Majority-Minority Issues and the Complicity of Leadership).

Minority ethnic nationalism in Nigeria emerged prior to her independence in 1960 with separatist movements representing Calabar, Ogoja and Rivers in the Eastern Region, the Mid-West in the Western region and the Middle-Belt in the Northern region. The minority groups in Nigeria do not occupy clearly defined geographical territories. They are strewn over various states and local government areas (Okolo, 2014) with overlaps across areas in close proximity and are constantly in competition with the majority groups for power, development and scarce

resources. The emasculation of the minority groups by the majority groups on policy and related matters strain their relations, resulting in accusations and counteraccusations. These quests for identities and self-determination led to the formation of ethnic parties and associations and fueled ethnic clashes as evidenced by the litany of crises dotting Nigeria's political landscape from this period through the independence era and to the present day with several groups representing the majority and minority groups (Okolo, 2014; Abdullahi, n.d.).

Despite these age-old odds associated with majority-minority group relations in Nigeria, the incumbent, Buhari has come across as nepotic, having an ethnic predilection and gross disregard for ethnic fairness and social justice in government (Corruptionreporter, 2016). The leaning of the Buhari administration towards ethnic supremacy unsettles the predominantly Christian Middle-Belt, South-West, South-South and South-East regions of the country (Akaraiwe, 2018). These realities downplay his declaration of 'belonging to nobody and belonging to everybody' during his inauguration as president (Lawal, 2016) and authenticate his 'commitment' to favour those who voted 97 percent for him against those who voted 5 percent for him (Fabiye, Soriwei & Nnodim, 2017; Akaraiwe, 2018).

Other fails in his administration's policies include the lack of regard for federal character reflective in the appointment of mainly Hausa-Fulani Muslims from the North into 80 percent of the key positions in his security architecture and as his service chiefs, leaving 20 percent to the South in a breach of Sections 14(3) and 15(4) of the Nigerian constitution (Akaraiwe, 2018). What is worse is that efforts have been made to contain Boko Haram within the North-Eastern region but the same cannot be said about the ethno-religious crises and the incessant attacks by marauding Fulani herdsmen engulfing several parts of the country and especially the Middle-Belt region. The escalation of these terrorist acts reinforces allegations of an agenda to islamize the Middle-Belt region and buttress Buhari's declaration in 2001 that 'God's willing, we will not stop the agitation for the total implementation of the Shari'a law in Nigeria' (Akaraiwe, 2018). Analysts also stress President Buhari's 'cultural affinity' with the Fulani herdsmen that weighs heavily on his non-adoption of measures like the shoot-at-sight order issued by a regional police chief in Ghana to deal with Fulani herdsmen destroying farmlands in Ghana's Konongo area (Ladepo, 2018).

Implications for the Future Trends of Minority Group Voting Behaviour:

Voting and voting behavior are integral parts of any electoral process. The classical liberal and rational-choice models uphold that voting behavior is ideally influenced by the freedom to choose from among the competing programmes of several candidates. This must be based on the voters' political values, economic self-interests, available policy options, perceptions of what should rationally constitute national interest and cognitive best of judgment unaffected by the voters' social contexts and cultural considerations (Ball, 1981; Himmelweit, Humphreys and Jaeger, 1985; Heywood, 2003).

Contrarily, the incumbency of the leaders epitomizing the racial and ethno-religious majority groups in the case studies reflects a determination by the voting patterns of their electorates, describable by the sociological model. The model ignores the capacities of individual choice and personal self-interest to constitute determinants of voting behavior but identifies voters on the basis of several factors including social class, working class, gender, religion, ethnicity, race, region, etc. These leanings result from environmental factors and the role of socialization in the development of psychological affinities (Heywood, 2003). It emphasizes group membership and indices relating to social strata and differentiation as preconditions that

underlie political dissent, electoral cleavage and the processes through which political choices are transmitted from generation to generation (Antunes, 2010).

To evaluate the implications of these indices for the future trends of minority group voting behavior, three five-member focus group discussions (FGDs) were organized in Jos, Nigeria. Participants (8 females and 7 males) were drawn from minority ethnic groups in Nigeria with each group comprised of semi-literate (1 each with a minimum of a high school certificate, 1 each with a diploma) and literate individuals (3 each with a minimum of a first degree) currently aged between 24 and 63 to ensure maturity and voting eligibility in the last 4 years and presently, as well as the ability to understand the underlying factors within the countries' political landscapes. As a prelude to the discussions, they were asked to familiarize themselves with the characteristics and socio-political climates of the other 2 countries (the US and Myanmar) over a 7-day period. Subsequently, they assessed the impact of the socially-exclusive actions by the leaderships and the feelings of deprivation on the part of the racial and ethnic minorities in the American, Myanmarese and Nigerian societies on the future trends of minority group voting behavior.

An analysis of the responses showed perspectives with emphasis on:

- The dearth of ethics and morality in leadership. 93% opined that where ethics and morality form the basis of governance, leaders will be conscientious, responsible, and can be held liable for the rise in hunger and poverty, suicide rates and other vices as are prevalent in Nigeria, the racist attacks in the US and the ethnic cleansing in Myanmar. 87% noted that upholding the norms of society and concerns for humanity is a function of generational socialization to ensure that individuals very clearly decipher 'right' from 'wrong'. They held that individuals epitomize what characteristics to which they have been exposed over time and these leaders are simply putting forth all that they have been exposed to.
- All of the respondents agreed that as Nigerians, they had backtracked on their positions on the credibility and commitment of the Buhari administration to good governance and social inclusivity. They averred that their new position was reactionary and based on confrontations with glaring realities of ethnic segregation, social exclusion and other forms of marginalization as perpetrated by the Buhari administration. The process involved introspections through thought processes that can be described as Bayesian updating. Bayesian updating in its simplest form describes a position where new information is accurately evaluated and used to make necessary, predictable and sensible adjustments to prior evaluations. In such instances, rational and liberal cognitive processes as determinants of voting behaviour are fully replaced by the outcomes of affective evaluations (Redlawsk, 2004). Coincidentally, 54% of the respondents had voted for Buhari in 2015.

Events within the political landscapes of each of the case studies have been subject to series of analyses by experts drawn from the media, social, political, legal and other fields and the general consensus show that the popularity ratings of each of these leaders dropped in comparison with the periods preceding the elections which brought them to power. These drops are in reaction to the policies and actions of the leaders which do not in any way represent the desires of the contending minority groups. Though Suu Kyi still enjoys the support of the majority of Buddhist Myanmarese (Heijman, 2017), to the international community, she epitomizes leadership failure

(Evans, 2016; Albert, 2018; Barany, 2018). In Nigeria, Buhari's rating dropped to 41% in May 2018 from 80% in October, 2015 (Chima, 2018) and in the US, Trump's from 46% in 2016 to 36% in September, 2018 (Enten, 2018);

- 67% of the respondents noted that in Nigeria, there was a corresponding rise in commitment to the development of stronger more viable coalitions representing combined minority group efforts. The sole focus of the coalitions is on voting out the incumbent majority groups since the federal system in all three case studies forecloses the fragmentation of the countries and secession of dissatisfied groups. All the respondents doubted the workability of this strategy for the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar with its overwhelming Buddhist majority. They held further that there must be tangible efforts to sensitize the eligible voters in the minority groups to ensure the formidability of the coalitions; and
- 80% of the respondents noted that the minority groups may be inclined to vote for the incumbent leaders again where the perceptions that the rewards associated with voting them back in, far outweigh the risks of the reverse. In the Nigerian instance, experiences of seemingly incessant ethno-religious conflagrations and the volatility and propensity for violence exhibited by the northern youth egged on by their elite political class (Binniyat, 2012; allafrica.com, 2014) were factors contributory to the concession of defeat and relinquishment of power by former President Goodluck Jonathan to the incumbent, President Muhammadu Buhari, in 2015 (Hart, 2015). In an analysis of the US scenario, 60% of the respondents posited that the blacks and other marginalized groups were more likely to vote for Trump again if his incumbency will continue to ensure that for instance, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights will not be granted. These analyses reflect the 'renormalization' influence which Taleb (2017) describes in his book, '*Skin in the Game*', in which he explains that individuals may reassess and maintain an existent abnormal or discomfiting *status quo* if they perceive that a change will likely cause more discomfort.
- All of the respondents opined that there is a high probability of a corresponding rise in voter apathy on the part of the minority groups who have received little or no tangible dividends of good governance particularly in Nigeria and Myanmar which are developing nations;
- 66.7% of the respondents posited that the entrenchment and the functionality of the rule of law and of the judiciary, particularly in Myanmar and Nigeria, will engender a corresponding trust in the commitment of the government and its institutions to protecting and ensuring the rights and privileges of the minority groups;

Moral Leadership - A Way Out?

Leadership demands a reflection of impeccable conduct since leaders are always in public gaze (Barrajon, 2013). To be authentic, it must be moral (Sean, Paul & Gretchen, 2003) possessing catalytic qualities for espousing its visions and values with the origins and resolutions of its community of followers of whom it is a part, and wishes to serve (Gini, 2004). It must transcend the basic postulations of morality that simply entail what should or should not be done. In reality and practice, moral leadership should be truthful, open, selfless, qualitative, effective, and dissociated from desires and passions, exemplifying a high-degree of self-acceptance, emotional maturity and committed to the preservation of the posterity of the people at all costs

(Toulassi, 2013). Sean, et al. (2003) noted that morality in leadership brings about authenticity in leadership and on this basis the leader must activate and combine components of virtuosity and self-concept with altruism to carry people along and provide quality leadership. To deliver more inclusive governance therefore, leaders should serve in honesty, integrity and transparency of character, having a spirit of self-sacrifice (Barrajon, 2013).

Modernity exerts pressure on democratic leadership and governance. This pressure envisages societies that are just and inclusive above any other values that challenge stability in society. Modernity also gives room for the presence and pressure of mundane things (Toulassi, 2013) such as conflicts which Ayoub (2014) asserted may not be resolved by moral leadership since it is not applicable to every circumstance. However, these mundane things are checked by justice and good governance that are not only specific to the obedience of social rules but are about the fairness of the rules in contributing burdens and benefits to sets of claimants in indigenous political systems (Nwosu, 2002).

Sylla (2013) asserted that cultural values and norms of society are the bases on which behavior is adjudged good or bad. The leader's personal moral values and social ethics should therefore match since social ethics possess divine character and dissociating morality from divinity endangers personal ethics (Adadevoh, 2010 in Toulassi, 2013). Morality in leadership entails an evaluative process that enables the leader discern the right values from the mundane and assess the effects of actions on the self and others (Hickman, 2010; Toulassi, 2013). By implication, the international standards for democratic practice and the norms of human existence suffice as benchmarks for the achievement of good governance and the assessment of the actions of the leaders.

Socialization and shared experiences of individuals determine individuals' adoption and adaptation to group identities. This standpoint explains the influences of the processes into which the leaders were socialized and the psychosocial affinities they developed as a result, on the propriety or otherwise of their behavior. As the antecedents of the leaders show, gaps exist in their leadership qualities since their actions remain influenced by a lack of consciousness or a non-acknowledgement of the extent of their responsibilities, the demands of the positions they occupy and the ripple effects of their actions. Education and upbringing as core components of the socialization process, transform individuals from one position of being to the next. Though their influence on leaders is neglected by studies on moral leadership, they may cause defective states of character (Aristotle's '*hexeis*') in leaders that lead to inappropriate feelings and behavior (Toulassi, 2013).

Ascertaining the impact of education on the individual's morality, demands the proper assessment of the quality, content and the context of the education. Deutsch (1953) and Ibodje and Dode (2007) emphasize the influences of shared experiences on the development of a sense of common nationality and community and that political actions in practice may be shaped by the concrete experiences of each country. Antunes (2010) described it from the perspective of the psychosocial model which forms the basis for the acquisition of partisanship and related behaviour through socialization processes whereby individuals decide to pattern their political lives after reference groups. The evaluations of the Trump, Suu Kyi and Buhari administrations show deviations from the promises of social justice and inclusivity which endeared them to the voters. These inclinations cast aspersions on the context of socialization processes at various formative stages of their lives in presenting their choices and actions as 'right'.

CONCLUSION

The levels of democratic political development of the three nations almost preclude any comparison particularly with the United States as one of the world's most socio-economically developed nations at one extreme, and Myanmar and Nigeria as two of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) at the other. However, the three leaders possess certain similar characteristics that justify an attempt. They were all regarded as the 'messiahs' of their nations' socio-economic and political malaises. They also hail from the largest racial or ethno-religious groups in their respective countries with distrust and heightening suspicions between the majority and minority groups pervading the three nations in reaction to the socially-exclusive governance policies (Lawal, 2016; Fabiyi et al, 2017; Albert, 2018; Darby, 2018).

The leaders' conflicts of interest fuel the tensions and divisions among groups when despite the resources they control, ethnic, religious and racial polarities simmer, pitching hitherto 'harmonious' groups apparently effectively managed by previous administrations, against each other and risking implosions capable of engulfing the societies. This dissatisfaction arising from being submerged in murky political waters by the larger, more dominant groups propels the commitment of the affected racial and ethnic minority groups to engage processes deemed relevant to the achievement of self-expression and democratic representation.

The effects of globalization include the existence of pluralist societies comprising ethnic, socio-cultural, economic, language or political diversities. The potential of these to encourage the establishment of harmonious territorial nationalities requires a conscious propagation of processes that incorporate moral leadership into tangible efforts for uniting disparate groups. Accordingly, common and communally advantageous values that transcend primordial loyalties and deemphasize areas of difference must be promoted (Ibodje and Dode, 2007).

Leadership for development demands political correctness entailing legitimate and authoritative political strategies for mobilizing human and material resources into active formidable processes. These processes enable the design, administration and management of target-specific policies geared towards maintaining the sustainability and posterity of any nation. They pull society together by weaving cords of social inclusion and justice, the rule of law and socio-economic development efforts and policies together without recourse to the differences between competing groups and interests. They should encompass:

- Holistic socio-political education of all stakeholders including the candidates and the voters by the relevant institutions. Emphases must lie on the overhaul of entire governance mechanisms to reflect and support moral, ethical and socially-inclusive measures for correcting the inherent anomalies and smoothing over issues that increase the risk of society disintegrating. The strategies must encourage the accommodation of the minority groups by the majority groups, empower the minority groups and increase their participation in decision-making and national development.
- Strengthening the politico-legal frameworks including the constitutions and other institutions of nation-building that are the basic mechanisms for the practice of democracy. The frameworks must be such that deemphasize party or ethnic politics, remove clauses in the constitutions that back 'illegalities', ensure equal and adequate opportunities for the representation of the constituent majority and minority groups and make the leadership more accountable;

- Punitive measures for errant leaders whose actions or inactions contradict their constitutionally defined responsibilities. They should answer for crimes against humanity where grave consequences attend the neglect of their duties and poor policy making and implementation as in the instances with the Rohingya and Fulani herdsmen crises in Myanmar and Nigeria respectively.

These strategies are relative and may not be readily applicable to a country like the United States that is advanced politically with well-established democratic structures. However, another workable strategy adoptable by all three countries will entail the dispersion of power and equal opportunities among stakeholders through authoritative, competitive or collaborative measures (Australian Government, 2007). One such measure is the institution of constitutional provisions backing the rotation of the presidential slot among the racial and ethno-religious majority and minority groups to give equal opportunities for inclusivity, equal representation and participation in leadership as is the practice in Switzerland. With this, even the relegated native American nations in the US will have an opportunity to participate and contribute to governance in ways that directly reflect their desires.

Contributions to Knowledge:

The paper highlights the patterns and peculiarities of majority-minority relations in the three countries which served as case studies and the consequences of allowing these differences to remain unresolved despite the contemporariness of leadership and good governance strategies the world over. The study findings therefore strongly:

- Uphold the role of ethics and morality in leadership to achieving social inclusivity, stability and equilibrium in society;
- Expose the need for revolutionary leadership studies and sound democratic practices that downplay the influence of parochial political socialization and acculturation and inadequate political education or sensitization on experiences and events within the political arena, biased by the effects of primordial sentiments that have dogged the political landscapes of the three case studies. These democratic development leadership strategies should entail processes and procedures imperative to harmonizing competing, dissenting groups. They must encompass leadership practices that prioritize concerns for humanity and exhibit commitment to the preservation of posterity by instituting constitutionally-backed measures for effectively managing majority-minority relations and other inherent threats to harmony within their societies;
- Emphasize that voter apathy among ‘politically-disadvantaged groups’ is not only influenced by illiteracy and inadequate sensitization but can also be the effect of cognitive and affective evaluations of situations to which voters are exposed including experiences with marginalization, balkanization and tensions from fear of racial and ethno-religious oppression and suppression.

Suggestions for Further Research:

These may include studies to assess the:

- Factors underlying the dwindling capacity, handicap or laxity of world governing bodies like the United Nations to effectively ensure the protection of the rights and privileges of citizens in countries like Myanmar and Nigeria;

- Measures for strengthening minority group coalitions to enhance their visibility in the political arena and their formidability as opposition groups;
- Measures for entrenching governance processes that give place to equity, fairness and natural justice over the identities of individuals, groups or regions as racial or ethnic majority or minority groups in a constantly evolving, globalized world characterized by the collapse of real and perceived barriers and the efficacy of the social media and technology in the determination of the quality of governance.

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