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1 Towards Analyzing Violent Contestation for Power in Mali, 2012 2 -2021

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7 **Abstract**

8 This study aimed at analyzing the dynamics of Malian crisis between 2012 to 2021.
9 Descriptive research design that depended on the judgmental sampling technique was adopted.
10 The secondary source (books, journal articles, internet materials and monographs) were
11 sourced from Nigerian libraries and internet; subjected to content analysis, before qualitatively
12 analyzed for the study. Findings revealed that colonial legacy, political alienation and
13 economic marginalization triggered Malian crisis of 2012. The crisis had led to humanitarian
14 and economic crisis as well as human rights abuses. Economic Community of West African
15 States, African Union, France, United States, European Union including United Nations had
16 intervened. Though, findings have deepened frustration â?? aggression theory, regrettably,
17 the solution is still wanting. The study recommends restoration of democratic regime, practice
18 of good governance, inclusive dialogue as well as international cooperation as panacea for
19 Malian crisis.

21 **Index terms**— crisis, region, intervention, islamists, marginalization, contestation, violent, frustration,
22 aggression.

23 **1 Introduction**

24 geographically, Mali is located in West Africa, bordering Algeria on the north, Niger on the east, Burkina Faso and
25 Cote d'Ivoire on the south, Guinea on the south west, as well as Senegal and Mauritania on the west. In terms of
26 land mass, Mali is the 7 th largest country in African continent. It is a landlocked state, but rich in agriculture
27 (farming, fishing and pastoralism), due to the availability of water resources from Niger River. Her land is also
28 rich with mineral resources such as gold, uranium, including salt. Arief and Johnson (2012) further hinted that
29 Mali had a population of 14.5 million people, spread among 10 regions; Kayes, Koulikoro, Bamako, Sikasso,
30 Segou, Mopti, Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal and Menaka. According to 2011 estimate, the major ethnic groups in Mali
31 are Mande (50%), Peul/Fulbe (17%), Voltaic (12%), Tuareg and Moore (10%), Songhai (6%) including Bozo
32 (5%). Islam is the major religion in Mali with 90% of its entire population as worshippers while the remaining
33 10% are Christians. The official language in Mali is French, while Bambara is the local language among the
34 people (Chauzal, & Damme, 2015).

35 In 1969, Mali got independence from France, and had Modibo Keita as the first elected president of that
36 country. President Keita ruled the country until 1968, when he was removed from power through military coup,
37 led by General Moussa Traore. General Traore became a dictator who dominated the political space of Mali
38 for 23 years, until March 1991, when General Amadou Toumani Toure (also known as ATT) overthrew that
39 regime. General Toure did not delay the transition programme to democratic rule. Hence, in June 1992, a
40 general election was conducted and won by President Alpha Oumar Konare, who served two terms, and handed
41 over power to Amadou Toure in April 2002 as the next democratically elected president of Republic of Mali
42 (Boas, 2019). Between 2002 to 2007, Mali was seen as a beacon of democracy for other countries in Africa to
43 emulate. Regrettably, Chauzal and Damme (2015) lamented that:

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44 ...long standing distrust between different ethnic communities' economic frustration, political resentment and
45 strategic opportunity taking, all of them rooted in the fragmented nature of the country... As a result, any effort
46 to achieve sustainable peace now, needs to address not just the immediate run-up to the latest armed conflict in
47 the country, but also the conditions that account for the recurrence of crisis (p.10).

48 Though President Amadou Toure started well, but non implementation of Tamanrasset Accord (brokered
49 by Algeria) that permitted the northern regions (Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal) to attract massive development
50 projects and semi-autonomous statute led to massive exodus of Tuaregs to Libya. They were accommodated
51 by late Colonel Gaddafi until that regime collapsed in 2011. "Tuaregs who formerly fought alongside Gaddafi
52 had returned to their countries following his demise-precipitated a new rebellion that was fueled by underlying
53 resentment" (International Crisis Group, 2012, p.2). International Crisis Group (2012) further added that:

54 Stories of massacres, the poisoning of wells? forced exile from 1963, and the bloody settling of scores carried
55 out by pro-government militias against Tuareg civilians in the 1990s are passed down to each new generation of
56 fighters? shape the collective memory of history marked by violence and suffering (p.2).

57 The returnees did not hide their plan, but had meetings with community leaders in northern regions; Timbuktu,
58 Gao and Kidal. They informed them of the need for the creation of a separate state from the present Mali,
59 popularly known as Republic of Azawad. Ansar Dine (protector of the faith), Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
60 (AQIM), National Movement for the Liberalization of Azawad (MNLA), Movement for Unity and the Jihad in
61 West Africa (MUJOA) were present in the meeting. Their leaders, Ag Najim (MNLA), Ag Ghali (Ansar Dine)
62 and Mokthar Belmokhtar (AQIM) played significant roles in Malian regime change. On 17 th January 2012,
63 Ansar Dine, National Movement for Liberation of Azawad, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and Movement for
64 Unity and the Jihad in West Africa attacked and overwhelmed Malian military base at Menaka in Gao region.
65 International Crisis Group (2012) recalled that, "the soldiers had their throats cut after their hands had been
66 tied behind their backs" (p.14). The Malian Human Rights Association (AMDH) and the International Human
67 Rights Federation (FIDH) also confirmed this brutal murder of Malian soldiers by the rebel group.

68 Expectedly, wives and relatives of the soldiers protested at the Presidential Palace, urging President Amadou
69 Toure to withdraw the military from the northern regions. Aning, Okyere and Abdallah (2012) posited that,
70 "while the activities of the rebels continually undermined the security of the Malian state, a section of the national
71 army described the president as weak and incapable of sufficiently providing them with necessary resources to
72 fight the rebels." (p.4). On 22 Alassane Quattara, the President of Cote d'Ivoire, appointed Blaise Compaore, the
73 President of Burkina Faso, to mediate over the crisis in Mali. A threat of sanction was imposed on the military
74 junta and this forced them to relinquish power to ECOWAS appointee, Dioncounda Traore, the President of
75 National Assembly on 12 th April 2012 as Interim President of Mali, until the elected president was sworn in.
76 Regrettably, during this period of power struggle in which ECOWAS was contemplating of deploying "Standby
77 Force," "the coup d'état has...crippled the security agencies into disorder, allowing the MNLA to overran the
78 three northern regions of Gao, Kidal and Timbuktu, declaring independence from Mali..." ??Aning, Okyere &
79 Abdallah 2012, p.6). The declaration of the northern regions as Republic of Azawad, implementation of Sharia
80 Law and the human rights abuses associated with this incidence prompted the Interim President, Dioncounda
81 Traore, to appeal President Francois Holland of France for military support. Accepting this appeal, Alexander
82 (2013) recorded that, "as the former colonial power in Mali, and concerned over the safety of some 6,000 of its
83 citizens in the country, France immediately intervened militarily, which included launching airstrikes against the
84 jihadist forces occupying the north" (p.11). Ansar Dine, leader, Ag Ghali warned the Malian Interim President
85 against the invitation and declared that "...while Dioncunda asked for help from France, we ask for guidance from
86 Allah and from other Muslims in our sub-region, because this war has become a war against the crusader" (cited
87 in ??Alexander, 2013, p.11).

88 Despite series of hurdles, the Interim President, Dioncunda Traore was able to conduct a general election that
89 led to the swearing in of Ibrahim Boubacar Keita as the President of Mali on 13 th August 2013. Regrettably,
90 his second term in office which he won the election on 12 th August, 2018, had been truncated through military
91 coup, led by Colonel Assimi Goita on 28 th May, 2021. Questions that need answers are:

92 (i) Which theoretical framework can adequately explain violent contestation for power in Mali? (ii) What are
93 the remote causes of violent contestation for power in Mali? (iii) What are the impacts of violent contestation
94 for power in Mali? (iv) What are the international responses to violent contestation for power in Mali?

95 The first section of the study deals with introduction while the second section is concerned with theoretical
96 framework. The third section is the materials and methods of the study. The remote causes of violent contestation
97 for power is the fourth section while the impact of the violent contestation for power is the fifth section. The
98 international responses to violent contestation for power constitutes the sixth section, while the conclusion and
99 recommendations is the seventh section. References constitute the last part of the study.

100 2 II.

101 3 Frustration-Aggression Theory

102 Mowrer and Scars. According to these Yale scholars, "the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes
103 the existence of frustration and contrariwise always lead to some form of aggression" (1939, p.13). The term
104 frustration was defined as "an interference with the occurrence of an instigated goal response at its proper time

105 in the behavior sequence" ??Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer & Scars, 1939, p.7). Added to this, Newcome (1968)
106 argued that, "frustration always induces motivation of some kind of aggression which acts as a drive or motive
107 to react, combat or make attack" (cited in ??reuer & Elson, 2017, p.7) Contributing to this theory, Freud (1927)
108 cited in Gur ??1970) posited that aggression has instinct dimension. Instinct theory of aggression comes as a
109 result of genetical (biological) inheritance from the parent.

110 Furthermore, individual who is aggrieved can express his grievance overtly as well as covertly. The overt
111 entails outward expression while covert is an inward expression. Citing Freud (1927), Johan (2010) posited that,
112 "... aggression was a primordial reaction when the individual attempts to obtain pressure or avoid pain was
113 blocked" (p.7). Extending this explanation, Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer and Scars (1939) cited in ??ougherty
114 and Pfaltzgraft (1979) hinted that the occurrence of aggression depends on "(i) the strength of instigating to
115 the frustrated response (ii) the degree of interference with the frustrated response (iii) the number of frustrated
116 response to sequence" (p.283). In order words, thwarting, which is the gravity of deprivation, attempts toward
117 resolution, and the frequencies it occurs determine the rate of aggression. Thus, the response to frustration
118 can take the form of overt and covert. Overt aggression requires open (direct) attack, while covert aggression
119 entails secret (indirect) attack on the perpetrator of the frustration. Indirect aggression can also take the form of
120 self-castigation especially in an extreme case like suicide. The theory also postulates the concept of punishment.
121 Morlan (1949) explained that covert aggression occurs if the aggressor anticipates punishment. If punishment
122 does not exist, aggressor operate overtly. "Put precisely... anticipated punishment, which is a primary source
123 of frustration, affected the inhabitation of overt aggression..." ??Johan, 2010, p.2). "Act of aggression can be
124 inherited, especially when their commission would lead to punishment or other undesirable consequences. The
125 expectation of punishment reduces overt aggression, and the greater the certainty and amount of punishment
126 anticipated for an aggressive act, the less likely is that act to occur" ??Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer & Scars,
127 1939, p.54). Punishment as a concept was closely followed with the concept of displacement. ??ougherty and
128 Pfaltzgraft (1979) hinted that, "...there may occur a displacement of aggressions, in which case the individual
129 directs hostility towards someone or something not responsible for the original frustration" (p.25). If the aggrieved
130 individual hits at the source of frustration (instigator), it is the direct target while hitting at the agent of
131 frustration refers to the indirect target. Catharsis is the last concept in this theory and it refers to "...a release of
132 aggressive energy or tension and a reduction in the instigation to aggression" ??Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer
133 & Scars 1939, p. 58). Regrettably, Morler argued that the expression of an aggressive impulse does not end at
134 catharsis, but "set up a vicious cycle that lead to further aggression" (p.1).

135 Relating this theory to the study, it is not hard for one to identify the crux of the matter. The Malian
136 government (both colonial and postcolonial regimes) has failed its citizens, especially the northerners; Tuareg,
137 Arab and Fulbe. Politically, the northerners have no value. As Chauzal and Damme (2015) confirmed, "Arabs
138 have been deeply marginalized by the Malian central power. Before the 2012 crisis, no Arab succeeded in being
139 elected to the National Assembly or the High Council of Regional Authorities" (p.38). Economically, lack of
140 developmental projects in the north compared to the south constitutes source of frustration. As Lecocq and
141 Klute (2013), cited in Davis (2018) argued, "the rebellions expressed frustration with "the disproportionate
142 development of southern versus northern Mali..." (p.4). Agricultural production and tourism have been the
143 major source of revenue to the government of Mali. Regrettably, these sources of revenue which is the mainstay
144 of the northern economy have not been developed by the Malian government. As Davis (2018) posited.

145 The Malian government... by not investing in agricultural production in Mali, effectively stifles the economy
146 of the north, which is primarily Tuareg and Arab. Furthermore, the prohibition of tourism by the Malian
147 government also helped engineer an economic crisis in the north. Consequently, the financial situation in Mali
148 angers many Tuaregs and Arabs and further encourages them to join... the growing number of anti-state militant
149 groups... (p.4).

150 It is the response to the above stated political alienation and economic marginalization of the northerners that
151 gave birth to aggression. The Islamist groups that left Libya due to the NATO bombardments returned with arms
152 and overwhelmed Malian military in Timbuktu, Kao and Kidal and declared the northern regions as a Republic
153 of Azawad. In addition, The Malian military was disappointed over the manner their welfares were treated by
154 the government of Mali. They were not well paid nor promoted and the necessary equipments and ammunition
155 that could assist them in defeating the armed groups were not provided by the government. As International
156 Crisis Group (2012) stated, "among the reasons for this frustration was the way that Amadou Toure promoted
157 officers of his generation to the rank of general? and the perception... that close associates of the president were
158 indulging in an unprecedented degree of corruption..." (p.18).

159 The frustration Malian army experienced while battling armed groups in the northern Mali, led to mutiny
160 in Kati, a military camp near Bamako. According to Kimenyi, Adibe, Djire, Jirgi, Kergna, Deresse, Pugliese
161 and Westbury (2014), "their mutiny transformed into coup d'état when, on March 22, 2012, the military rebels
162 overthrew President Amadou Tormani Toure and instituted the National Committee for the Rectification of
163 Democracy and Restoration of the State" (p.5). The overt attacks that involved armed groups invading military
164 barracks and the subsequent coup d'état that led to the overthrow of former Malian President, Amadou Tourmani
165 Toure can be seen as a direct attack at the source of frustration. The covert attack at the source of frustration
166 include; raping, child soldiers, kidnapping and other crimes against humanity committed by the Islamist groups.
167 International Criminal Court (2013) recorded that on 17 th January, 2012, the armed groups executed between

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168 70 and 153 detainees at Aguelhok. Between March to April 2012, there were reported cases of rape, torture and
169 enforced disappearance committed by both the armed groups and Malian soldiers in northern Mali. Though the
170 reports were taken secretly, the Chief Prosecutor (Luis Moreno Ocampo) had record of all those that involved in
171 the covert activities. Similarly, there was also displacement in the aggression. The armed groups intentionally
172 attacked World Heritage site in Timbuktu. According to International Criminal Court (2013); "from 4 th May
173 2012 to 10 th July 2012 a series of attacks against at least 9 Mausoleums, 2 Mosques, and 2 historical monuments
174 in the city of Timbuktu were intentionally perpetrated by members of Ansar Dine and AQIM and possibly also
175 MUJOA. Information confirms that the attacks were intentional" (p.24).

176 Despite the fact that Malian government had collapsed, international community cannot allow the armed
177 groups to commit crimes with impunity. International responses became imperative, and it came in a form
178 of punishment against the armed groups. France responded rapidly through the establishment of Operation
179 Several that involved the deployment of 4,500 soldiers. President Holland of France, "assisted the Malian Armed
180 Forces (FAM) to stop the advance of terrorist groups and repelled them while ensuring the safety of civilian
181 populations" (Davis, 2018, p.5). The United States government also decided to implement harsh measures on
182 the military junta in order to deter them from prolonging their stay in power. Arief (2013) recorded that:
183 Regrettably, this punishment that would have served as deterrent (catharsis), eventually led to further aggressive
184 activities, committed by the armed groups. The AQIM had abducted French tourist in November 2012, at Malian
185 border close to Mauritania (Koepf, 2013). Lacher (2012) further hinted that, "by April 2012, 42 foreign nationals
186 had been targeted; of these, 24 were released 5 were killed.... and 13 were still being held hostage as of the end
187 of August 2012... in northern Mali by AQIM" (p.9). Even Movement for Unity and the Jihad in West Africa
188 (MUJOA) had reiterated its commitment to continue the fight. The Islamist group warned that "France has
189 opened the gates of hell. It has fallen into trap much more dangerous than Iraq, Afghanistan, and Somalia,"
190 (cited in Alexander, 2013, p.19).

191 4 III.

192 5 Materials and Methods

193 This study has descriptive design that depended on secondary source (books, journal articles, monographs,
194 conference papers, internet materials) of data collection. The data were sourced from libraries in Nigeria and
195 internet. They were subjected to content validity before analyzing qualitatively into the study. The researcher
196 used qualitative method, in order to embark on an in-depth study of Malian crisis and further expand the frontier
197 of knowledge for future research.

198 Furthermore, the population of this study was drawn from Tuareq, Fulbe, Mende, voltaic, Songhai, Arab
199 among other ethnic groups. The sample of the study focused on Tuareq, Arab and Fulbe who are the natives
200 of northern Mali. The choice of northern Mali, despite the fact that other regions (central and southern) also
201 exist is judgmental. The northern region is the most marginalized region and its people are alienated from the
202 state, since colonial era. Regrettably, dearth of materials on Malian crisis has created opportunity for unfounded
203 argument and generate gap in extant literature. It is hoped that this study would correct it and bridge the gap
204 accordingly.

205 IV.

206 6 Remote Causes of Violent Contestation for Power in Mali

207 Undeniably, the present Mali is a forced union between people of different ethnic groups. The northern Mali, that
208 is dominated by the Tuaregs and the Arabs did not want to be part of the state, regrettably, they were forced
209 into that union through intimidation and manipulation by French colonial master. Immediately the state got
210 independence in 1959, crisis erupted in 1963, Mali had another crisis in 1990 before 2006 crisis that ended in 2008.
211 Therefore, the 2012 crisis that ended the regime of President Amadou Toure is a continuation of unsettled issues
212 that occurred in the past. According to Volume XXII Issue VII Version I 24 () International Crisis Group (2012),
213 "the rebellions that took place in these years reflected the profound historical misunderstanding between the elites
214 in the north and south at the time of independence in 1960, later entrenched by the south's marginalization of
215 the north" (p.2). The colonial master did not unite the entire state, rather concentrated in divide and rule
216 policy. Western education was provided for those in the south (who is now the ruling elites) and above all, the
217 north was not provided with the basic infrastructure such as road, hospital, water, schools among others. As
218 Chauzal and Damme (2015) stated, "by ignoring northern aspiration for economic development (especially social
219 and economic infrastructure) or political representation (lack of governmental seats for instance), the Malian
220 authorities have paved the way for violent contestation and separatist action" (p.30). The northern agitation for
221 inclusiveness started during the colonial period, unfortunately, the Tuaregs and the Arabs were seen as violent
222 people that worth nothing. They were not given good attention, but marginalization. Their children were not
223 given western education, rather depended on Islamic education, thereby creating the present gap in education
224 the north and the south. Chauzal and Damme (2015) further added that:

225 ...relationship between north and south populations have always been distrustful. The French occupation even
226 exacerbated these resentments. This is due to the attitude of the French during the colonial period when they
227 decided to educate a ruling class almost exclusively composed of majorly black southerners... and used strategies

228 to do so; that ranged from favouritism and patronage to economic marginalization, divided and rule and military
229 control. This was far from helpful in strengthening the country's unity and popular adherence to the construction
230 of a nation (p.17).

231 Unfortunately, this historical fault line created by the colonial master continued unabated by the postcolonial
232 elites who were mainly southerners. There was ethnic imbalance in the political appointment, military and
233 civil service recruitments. It should be recalled that before the 2012 crisis, out of 147 Deputies in Mali, only
234 12 Tuaregs were elected into the National Assembly, regrettably, none was elected from Arab's ethnic group,
235 as a parliamentarian, or a member of High Council of Regional Authorities. Humphreys and Ag Mohammed
236 (2005) confirmed that, "whilst Moussa Traore's various governments included a "toke" Tuareg minister, northern
237 Mali had little influence over politics during his reign... Consequently, there was a gross underrepresentation
238 of Tuaregs and Arabs in postindependence cabinets, the army and in senior civil service positions..." (cited in
239 Bakrania, 2013, p.10). The ruling elites from the south come from the same ethnic group (Mande) that had
240 western education as the basic criteria for political ascension. Majority of the staff in the state bureaucracy are
241 from the south. Their services are mainly rendered in the south. Few who are posted to the northern regions,
242 Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal are there for punishment. Since they hate the northern regions, their services to the
243 people are full of distrust, sometimes violence. "This policy greatly contributed to a deep discontent among Arab
244 and Tuareg populations who interpreted it as a second colonialization and never accepted this..." ??Chauzal &
245 Damme, 2015, p.21).

246 The economic disparity between the north and south is another area of discontent. Despite abundant mineral
247 resources in the north, the region is the poorest in the entire country. Studer (2013) cited in Chauzal and
248 Damme (2015) maintained that, "the subsoil of Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu could contain around 850,000km²
249 of oil and gas" (p.27). The region is good for farming and animal husbandry, in view of its nearness to Niger
250 River. It is also here in the north that gold, uranium and salt that are the main export commodities of Mali are
251 situated. Regrettably, the Malian government has not been able to annex these resources for the benefit of all.
252 As Humphreys and Ag Mohammed (2005) stated.

253 Since independence in 1960, northerners have suffered proportionately more than the rest of Mali from economic
254 neglect and marginalization... Economic marginalization has continued into recent times, manifesting in a lack
255 of investment in the north and a perception of unequal access to health and education. Socioeconomic data
256 (measuring school attendance, malnutrition and vulnerability to food security) for the period 1995-1997 suggests
257 that in the north these conditions were exceptionally poor compared to other regions of the country (p.46).

258 The economic marginalization of northern Mali is compounded with environmental degradation (drought, soil
259 erosion, etc) unemployment and above all poverty. Abdalla (2009) posited that, "the Tuareg rebellion have
260 strong roots in access to land rights which have been affected by environmental change, thereby threatening
261 livelihoods and enforcing the economic marginalization of the Tuaregs" (p.3). Unarguably, the northern Mali can
262 be described as barren land due to drought, desertification, deforestation, soil erosion and insufficient supply of
263 portable water, caused by climate change. Caparini (2015) added that, "...climate change has rendered the north
264 an even more inhospitable and conflict prone environment... a reduction of Mali's average rainfall by 30% since
265 1998 and the more frequent occurrence of droughts have resulted in high rate of chronic hunger" (p.5). Expectedly,
266 poverty that associated with these environmental challenges are indisputable. Boas (2019) recalled that Mali,
267 "ranked 179 th of 187 countries on the UNDP Human Development Index 2017. Mali is one of the world's
268 poorest countries, where most of the people scrape a living from agriculture and animal husbandrytraditional
269 livelihoods that are threatened both by violence and conflict and by demographic trends" (p.14). Unemployment
270 becomes the nightmare of the northern youths. Some of them that have attempted to acquire western education
271 are still roaming streets, as a result of divide and rule strategies of the southern political elites. As Chauzal and
272 Damme (2015) stated, "young people have become frustrated by the difficulties of improving their social status
273 as they see their chances of finding a job or getting married fade away. This situation has fostered a generation
274 of disillusioned young people" (p.26). Since the energy is in them, they cannot wait for empty promises any
275 longer, hence have to take law into their hands by confronting the system that put them in a perpetual state of
276 hopelessness.

277 Consequently, most of the unemployed youths had to leave Mali to Libya and were well received by regime.
278 Some of them were recruited into Libyan National Army, while some were given permanent residential status
279 that permitted them to work anywhere in the country. The Pan-Arab Initiative of Qaddafi assisted the late
280 Libyan leader in fighting Chad and sending mercenary to Lebanon, Sudan, Syria, including Turkey. Immediately,
281 Gaddafi's regime collapsed in 2011, following the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bombardments,
282 they were forced to return home. The returnees came back to Mali with large number of arms and ammunition.
283 International Crisis Group (2012) hinted that, "Gaddafi overthrew not only deprived the region of one of its main
284 political brokers and patrons, it also put on the market quantities of heavy arms that were redistributed in the
285 region according to local demands and aspirations" (p.9).

286 The availability of small arms and light weapons in northern Mali complicated the fragile security network
287 that existed during the regime of President Amadou Toure. Sidibe (2012) equally argued that, "the availability
288 of arms increased insecurity in northern Mali to the point where "almost every inhabitant carries a small arm,
289 because they are cheap in the region" (p.27). There would have been no way for President Amadou Toure's

290 regime to survive the rebellious onslaught from the militant groups in view of the weak and corrupt government,
291 which he operated. As Ibrahim and Zapata (2018) stated:

292 The Malian state has been incapable of establishing effective security throughout the country. Numbering
293 around 15,800 -about 8,000 military and 7,800 paramilitary -Malian security forces are undersized for securing a
294 4478,841 -square-mile territory... Malian security forces have historically been ill equipped, lacking basic military
295 equipment such as vehicles, fuel and bullets... The state's ineffectiveness, neglect and abuse have left a vacuum
296 of authority that local communities and other non-state actors compete to fill (p.9).

297 7 V. Impacts of Violent Contestation for Power on Mali

298 The crisis that erupted in 2011 had forced nearly half of the entire Malian population into refugee and Internally
299 Displaced Persons' (IDPs) camps.

300 According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee (2013), "over 350,000 are internally displaced in
301 central and southern Mali, mostly staying with host families, and around 175,000 are refugees in camps in border
302 areas and dispersed in urban areas (with little access to assistance) in Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger" (cited
303 in United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2012, p.4). States accommodating Malian
304 refugees were having challenges of meeting their needs. Human Rights Watch (2012) reported that refugees in
305 Nigerien camps were malnourished and children faced malnutrition on daily bases. In Burkina Faso, refugees
306 who were not registered received no assistance from the government. This policy led to serious hardship among
307 the refugees. Those Malians who were internally displaced also faced serious challenges. Women and children
308 suffered more than men. Islamic Relief (2013) added that:

309 Violence has also disrupted an already weak system of education and social services; 58 percent of schools
310 have been forced to shut, and the health care system is in a desperate condition. Many health workers fled the
311 northern regions, medical facilities have been destroyed and looted, and lack of funds may soon reduce the already
312 scarce government resources allocated to healthcare. These could have devastating consequences (p.1) Like other
313 Sahelian states (Niger, Chad, Senegal, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mauritania etc), Mali is a drought prone state.
314 The state is facing challenges of desertification that characterized by water shortage. World Bank and UNICEF
315 supplied water to local population in central and northern Mali. The 2012 Malian crisis disrupted the activities
316 of these donor agencies thereby resulted in cholera outbreak. As Islamic Relief (2013) reported.

317 ...access to water is limited in areas across the north, including Debere, where there is only one functional water
318 point for 6 villages (nearly 6,300 people). In a number of areas, 86 percent of schools... lack of functional water
319 service, while 14 percent of community health centres were also deprived. This lack of water and sanitation is
320 already causing health problems, in more than 44 percent of households... there was at least one case of diarrhea
321 in each family over a 14 days' period (p.4).

322 Food insecurity that associated with Malian crisis should not be undermined. The crisis that started in 2012
323 led to forced migration of farmers from villages to Internally Displaced Persons' (IDPs) camp as well as foreign
324 states. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2012) reported that in Timbuktu,
325 almost a quarter of the entire population fled the city. Farmers who were living in that city could not harvest
326 their crops nor had access to farms for further planting.

327 Gao the centre of rice production in northern Mali was devastated. According to Haysom (2014), "In Gao, rice
328 was not planted during the conflict, animals were not taken out to pasture and the maintenance of infrastructure
329 such as dykes, which prevent the Niger River from flooding, did not take place" (p.11). Those with little reserve
330 consumed all, rather depended on foreign donors for survival. The supply of food from the southern Mali to
331 the central and northern region was disrupted due to the crisis. Kimenyi, Adibe, Djire, Jirgi, Kergna, Deresse,
332 Pugliese and Westbury (2014) lamented that:

333 Traders were limited in their market participation due to fear of attacks, lack of transportation, and low
334 or unreliable supplies of crops to market. Some traders also abandoned their businesses altogether due to the
335 conflict... Consumers did not have enough cash to buy sufficient quantities of product. Moreover, most of the
336 buyers from government projects or NGOs, left due to the conflict, further diminishing demand for food crops.

337 Similarly, Malian crisis of 2012 had resulted in human rights abuses. International Crisis Group (2012)
338 documented atrocities committed by Islamist groups (AQIM, Ansar Dine, MUJOA) MNLA as well as Malian
339 armed forces. Malian Commission of Inquiry (2013) gathered evidence and witness statements from soldiers
340 and civilians who escaped massacre in northern Mali that "... unnamed Malian soldiers arrested and their
341 hands tied behind their backs before being killed in cold blood" (cited in International Crisis Group, 2012, P.
342 15). International Criminal Court (2013) also hinted that in January 2012, between 70 and 153 detainees at
343 Ajuelhok were executed without trial. Between March and April 2012, incidents of looting and rape committed
344 by armed groups were reported in northern Mali. In the same vein, "separately incidents of torture and enforced
345 disappearance were reported in the context of the military coup around 21-22 March 2012 and a countercoups
346 attempt on 30 May 2012" (International Criminal Court 2013, P. 13). Human Rights watch (2012) also reported
347 that on 2 nd April 2012, Malian soldiers fighting in Sevare arrested, detained and executed 4 Tuaregs who are
348 members of Malian security services. Added to this, FIDH (2013) and Amnesty International (2012) posited
349 that on 18 th April 2012 Malian Soldiers allegedly killed 3 unarmed persons whom they accused of spying for
350 the MNLA in Sevare. International Criminal Court (2013) equally documented that; "during the night of 8-9
351 September 2012, 16 unarmed Muslim preachers were reportedly shot dead by the Malian army at the army

checkpoint while they were on their way to Bamako. There is reasonable basis to believe that the war crime of murder under Article 8(2) (C) (i) was committed by these forces" (P. 22) Malian crisis did not respect women dignity. Women were violated severally. International Federation for Human Rights (2012) decided that following the takeover of the northern Mali, especially GAO and Timbuktu, more than 50 women were reported raped by the armed groups and Malian security forces. "Cases of rape were reported in Gao, Timbuktu, Niafounke villages around Dire and in the Menaka region" (International Criminal Court, 2013, P. 25). Child Soldier was also common among the armed groups. Boys below the age of 18 years were forcefully conscripted and enlisted into the armed groups. United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (2012) reported that in July 2012, "at least 175 boys aged 12-18 were recruited into "armed groups" in Mali (p.4). Furthermore, 2012 Malian crisis had disrupted economic activities in that country. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) cited in Arief and Johnson (2012) had maintained that, "... 2012 economic growth projections have dropped from previous estimates of 6% to negative 1%. It is also estimated that government revenues are 1/4 th the level they were just one year ago... accordingly, government provision of basic social services has sharply fallen" (p.13). Even Hillary Clinton, (the former United States' Secretary of State) during her official visit to Africa in 2012 hinted that by some estimates (the current crisis) could set back Mali's economic progress by nearly a decade" (cited in Arief & Johnson, 2012, p.13). Tourism has been the major economic hub of the people of Mali. Regrettably, the crisis in the northern Mali as well as the abduction of tourists for ransom by the armed groups have dissuaded foreigners from travelling to Mali. This affected the revenue normally generated from tourism. As Arief and Johnson (2012) posited, "tourism in various areas of the country (including the north) previously provided significant revenue and employment, but security concerns have devastated the industry over the past decade" (p.12). In the same vein, the agricultural sector, especially livestock business has been affected by the crisis. According to Kimenyi, Adibe, Djire, Jirgi, Kergna, Deresse, Pugliese and Westbury (2014):

Livestock traders faced enormous security challenges in bringing their products to market. The rebels often attacked their flocks and plundered their cash and animals. Thus, many of them were either forced to limit their activities or quit livestock marketing altogether. Also, the absence of a well-functioning banking system exacerbated the insecurity of the traders, who had no secure way of storing the cash that they earned (p.10).

Buyers were not having enough money to buy livestock due to increase in price. In Timbuktu, for instance, the price of meat per kilogram that was sold in 2011 at 1,250 CFA (Malian currency) rose to 2,500 CFA in 2013. In Gao, the price of meat with bones rose from 1,800 CFA per kilogram to 2,250 CFA per kilogram (Kimenyi, Adibe, Djire, Jirgi, Kergna, Deresse, Pugliese and Westbury (2014)). The crisis also triggers unemployment in Mali. Industries had collapsed, foreign investors have deserted, and government ministries, department and agencies had crippled following the crisis. The overall impact of all these, is high rate of unemployment. "Finding a job is extremely difficult due to lack of connections... even qualified teachers struggle to find jobs despite the overcrowded schools..." (Islamic Relief, 2013, p.8).

8 VI. International Responses to Violent Contestation for Power in Mali

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was the first foreign body to intervene in Malian crisis. The military mutiny that erupted in Aguelhok between 21 st and 22 nd March 2012 following the massacre of Malian security forces and civilians by the Islamist groups resulted in coup d'état. On 27 th March, 2012, President Quattara of Cote d'Ivoire, the then President of ECOWAS convened a meeting of ECOWAS Head of States in Abijan. The sub regional body denounced the coup and urged the junta to relinquish power and returned Mali to constitutional rule. The immediate response from ECOWAS was as a result of fear that the gains of democratic government in West Africa could be reverse through spiral spread of military coups. Haysom (2014) hinted that, "ECOWAS motive for intervening in Mali stemmed from the threat to West African stability that the conflict was thought to pose with the potential to spill over into Niger and the possibility of stronger relations developing between Islamist extremist groups in Mali and Nigeria." (p. 14) President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso was appointed as the mediator in the Malian crisis. ECOWAS went further to impose sanction on Mali. The sanctions included; the suspension of Mali's membership from ECOWAS, immediate recall of member states' Ambassadors from Mali, travel ban on members of military junta and their associates, including the closure of borders of member states with Mali.

Aning, Okyere and Abdallah (2012) alerted that, "perhaps, sensing the possible harsh effect of the sanction, the military junta agreed to hand over power to a transitional government" (p.4). On 6 th April, 2012, ECOWAS lifted sanction on Mali and appointed Dioncounda Traore (the President of National Assembly) Interim President. He was sworn in on 12 th April, 2012. Modibo Diarra was also appointed Acting Prime Minister while Captain Sanogo, the coup leader was legally recognized as the former Head of State (International Crisis Group, 2012). Despite the temporary political solution in the south brokered by ECOWAS, the armed groups were not ready to surrender to the legitimate government in Bamako. ECOWAS was faced with challenges of restoring sovereignty in the entire state. The only option left was the deployment of ECOWAS Standby Force in Mali. This military option was rejected by Malian military and the political class. The Malian military preferred to be assisted in terms of logistics instead of intervention. The political class was not also happy with ECOWAS over the appointment of members of interim government. According to Bakrania (2013), the political class argued that:

9 VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

413 The approach to mediation, which treated Sanogo as an almost exclusive interlocutor and provided Campaore
414 with free hand, has been chaotic and unilateral in nature... There was minimal consultation with Malian political
415 circles over the choice of Modibo Diarra as Acting Prime Minister... Critics within Mali have presented arguments
416 about national sovereignty, emphasizing that leaders should not be imposed on Mali from the outside... (p.14).

417 Malian immediate neighbours, Algeria and Mauritania who are not members of ECOWAS did not support
418 the deployment of standby force, "due to concerns about the effect, such an intervention would have in sending
419 militant back, over their borders" ??Caparini, 2015, p.7). In view of these difficulties, ECOWAS mission in Mali
420 (MICEMA) did not achieve a remarkable success. As Haysom (2014) captured it, "this idea did not come to
421 fruition; the organization did not have the political clout or financial resources to go ahead without international
422 assistance..." (p.4).

423 In April 2012, the regional body, African Union (AU) intervened in Malian crisis. "AU imposed sanctions, asset
424 freezes and travel bans against the junta and others deemed to be involved in contributing to the destabilization of
425 Mali" (CNN 2013, cited in Hyasom, 2014, p.4). ECOWAS mission in Mali (MICEMA) was formally transformed
426 into the Africa-Led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) in June, 2012. This transformation made it
427 African not West African initiative. On 14 th July 2012, the AU's Peace and Security Council strategized on the
428 use of force. The ECOWAS also sent a Technical Assessment Mission that included members of African Union and
429 United Nations to Bamako, preparing for the deployment of military force (AFISMA) in Mali. Caparini (2015)
430 posited that, "the concepts proposed that the main Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) Nigeria, Burkina Faso
431 and Niger would train, set up bases in the south, and then support the Malian army in its lead role of conducting
432 combat operations to retake the north" (p.8). The original proposal envisages the deployment of 3,300 troops
433 which would later increase to 7,700 troops by the end of January 2013. Regrettably, financial challenges and
434 the unwillingness of the member states of Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) to fulfill promises prompted the
435 Islamist groups to wage war in northern and central Mali. Even Bakrania (2013) confirmed that, "the African
436 Union itself accepts that its response to the conflict has been too slow" (p.15). The inability of the troops to
437 fight in desert terrain as well as commitment to human rights were issues of concern. On 10 th January 2013,
438 the Islamist groups (AQIM, MUJOA, Ansar Dine and MNLA) took over Konna, a strategic town in central
439 Mali, and headed towards south. Caparini (2015) hinted that, "given the degraded state of the Malian army,
440 and the lack of readiness of AFISMA to respond, the Malian interim government requested France assistance
441 and the French-led military intervention "Several" was launched on 11 th January 2013" (p.21). Narrating the
442 major reason for Franch quick intervention in Malian crisis, Koepf (2013) (Ibrahim & Zapata, 2018). Regrettably,
443 Cserkits (2020) decried that, "since its implementation in 2013, it ranked at 4 th place regarding the death toll
444 of the UN mission... and is likely to gain the sad 1 st place in the foreseeable future" (p.2).

445 9 VII. Conclusion and Recommendations

446 Findings have revealed that colonial legacy, political alienation and economic marginalization are the major
447 factors that triggered Malian crisis in 2012. The conflict had led to humanitarian crisis, economic hardship, as
448 well as human rights abuses among Malians. International community; ECOWAS, AU, UN, EU, US, France
449 among others have responded to the crisis, but the permanent solution is still wanting.

450 The study, therefore, recommends immediate restoration of democratic regime. This is imperative, in view of
451 the fact that, the present military rule, headed by Colonel Assimi Goita who overthrew, the elected President of
452 Mali on 28 th May 2021 is illegal and currently under stiff sanctions by international community. Speedy conduct
453 of general elections and further transition to civilian rule would bring back confidence in the system, and endear
454 foreign partners. Citing Afrobarometer (2012), Coulibaly and Bratton (2013) restated that, "December 2012
455 survey results, showed that more than 80percent of Malians committed to elections, despite increasing skepticism
456 about democracy as practiced in Mali" (p.4).

457 Similarly, the newly elected officials should prioritize good governance as the only political antidote that can
458 bring unity in Mali. Politics of exclusion, economic marginalization and above all, corruption should have no
459 place in new Mali. The elected political leaders should ensure even development throughout the entire state, open
460 political pace for democracy to flourish and guarantee transparency and accountability in the management of
461 state resource. As Bleek, Dembele and Guindo (2016) argued, "good governance is not an elixir for state weakness
462 or the increasing insurgent threats to the Sahel, but it is a necessary condition for creating the foundation for a
463 sustainable peace" (p.18).

464 Furthermore, Malian government should expedite action towards inclusive dialogue. This dialogue should
465 entail all segments of Malian society; especially the ethnic groups such as Arab, Fulbe, Mande, Tuareg, Moore
466 among others. The religious organizations; Muslim and Christians should not be excluded in the negotiation.
467 Even the terrorist group, AQIM, MUJOA, MNLA and Ansar Dine should be part of the negotiation. The role of
468 Islam which is the major religion in Mali should be part of the new Malian constitution. The people would admire
469 Sharia if entrenched in the constitution and contribute their quota towards nation building. Even International
470 Crisis Group (2021) corroborated this opinion that, "the Malian government should... facilitate a public debate
471 on the role of Islam in determining the state's institutional and political principles, the provision of justice and
472 public moral codes" (p.29).

473 In addition, International Community should collaborate with elected Malian officials and bring lasting peace
474 to Mali. African Union should open talks with major international actors in Malian crisis, especially France,

475 United States, United Kingdom, European Union and United Nations. Africa cannot afford stateless society in
476 Mali, hence there is need for foreign cooperation. Presently, Mali has been isolated from international community
477 following the coup d'état that brought Colonel Assimi Goita into power since 28 th May 2021. The common
478 people are suffering as a result of sanctions, and the northern Mali is still a safe haven for the Islamist groups.
479 As International Crisis Group (2012) opined that, "the international community should now deploy the threat
480 of individual sanctions against both terrorist actors in the north and opponents of political normalization in the
481 south..." (p.33). Time to act is now.

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Figure 1:

482

¹Towards Analyzing Violent Contestation for Power in Mali, 2012 -2021

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483 Year 2022 A

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