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African Leadership and Tenure Elongation: Implications for Democracy and Development in Africa

Prof. Abomaye-Nimenibo, Williams Aminadokiari Samuel [α] & Michael Jack Eyo, Mni [σ]

Abstract- This work examines the sit-tight syndrome of African leaders who have no respect for the national constitution, preferring to remain in power indefinitely despite tenure limitations by the constitution. The study adopted leadership theory as its theoretical framework and findings show that probe for wrongdoings, the misconception of democracy for the monarchy, strong authoritarian instinct, lack of accountability and transparency, cheap access to state resources and intolerance of opposition are some of the causes of tenure elongation in Africa which has spelt negative implications for democracy and development. The work recommends the building of a strong institution, independent of the judiciary, respect for the rule of law and, constitution establishment of constitutional courts in AU to regulate tenure common language and common market establishment.

I. Introduction

Africa had primarily been home to centralized organizations whose system of leadership was hereditary. Although there were pockets of republicanism, for instance in the Igbo and Ibibio societies, democracy introduced by the Western power, though on a limited scale, was indeed very strange to the people. Despite reluctantly imbibing the western democratic form of organization immediately before and after independence, monarchial instincts had been deeply entrenched in the typical African leader who believed once he was appointed, elected king or elected to political office, particularly at the apex of the polity, it behooved him to rule or hold such office for life, whether elections were conducted at interval or not. In effect, the general impression or mentality of the people was disposed towards perpetual rulership which would terminate only at the death of the incumbent. This is still being widely held today and informs leadership succession plans in Africa. This informs why many African leaders are gravitating towards absolute monarchical tendencies and the continent dominated by sitting tight leaders, demonstrating or parading some levels of democratic insignia.

As succinctly captured by Gauba (2007) some leaders assume office on a sober note but, in due course, assume that they are indispensable. They deploy their manipulative skills, including oratory power, persuasion and playing on the sentiments of the people to perpetuate themselves in power. In other words, they become so pronounced by their expertise and experience that it becomes very difficult to replace them at periodic elections. In exercising their powers, they set aside the original aims of the state by amending the constitutions.

Most African countries have misconstrued democracy for monarchy and this has given rise to leadership deficit in the continent. The recent history of Africa is replete with leaders who are obsessed with power, constantly engaging in the manipulation of democratic institutions (legislature, executive & judiciary) to suppress opposition and hang onto power. This has stunted socio-economic development in Africa and made our leaders laughing stock in the comity of nations.

The leadership of countries vary in terms of size, population, language and level of economic development. Britain and France were the dominant colonizers of Africa, followed by Spain and Portugal. Until 1951 the American Constitution did not restrict the eligibility of a president to seek re-election indefinitely. Theodore Roosevelt sought (but failed) to be elected in 1912 for a third term some years after his first two consecutive terms. The tradition was finally breached when Franklin Roosevelt was re-elected for a third consecutive term in 1940 and a fourth in 1944. But this was in a period of a grave emergency, that of the second world war. It is such emergencies that present the strongest argument in favour of indefinite eligibility, and when they occur the prestige and authority of the president's personality might be invaluable in saving the life of the nation. Roosevelt himself professed a desire to adhere to the tradition, and to relinquish office in 1941to a successor, if only they could do so with an assurance that they would keep the nation intact, a nation at peace, nation prosperous, and clear in its knowledge of what powers it has to serve its citizens, nation which has thus proved that the democratic form and methods of the national government can and will succeed, the nation that is in a position to use those powers to the full to move forward steadily to meet the modern needs of humanity.

The Americans, after the Roosevelt experience, had to amend their Constitution in 1951 to give the force of law to the tradition limiting the presidential office to two full elective terms or one full elective term plus more

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than half of another term inherited from a previous president for the president's tenure may be terminated sooner by death, resignation or removal from office following the provisions of the constitution.

Given this sit-tight leadership syndrome, what is the causative or driving factor that promotes this leadership style in Africa, and what are the effects of this on democracy, how can African leadership truly imbibe the tenets of democracy, what does this pretend to the people wellbeing of the.

This work adopts Burns leadership topologies of transactional and transformational leadership. Leadership has been defined as the ability to influence people towards the accomplishment of goals, associated with the determination of the goal, the vision for the future and the process of change to reach the goals and the future, helping people to do things they would not normally do. Leadership entails one's ability to unite people in pursuits of common objective/goals through persuasion, influence and cooperation, rather than intimidation, power, dominance, social superiority, imposition or snobbery (Okafor, 2006). It has also been looked at as that which does not involve power, dominance, social superiority or anything suggestive of snobbery. Leadership is influence on people, not power over them (Dimock) for as noted by Denis the single defining quality of a leader is the ability to create and realize the vision. A leader is therefore a person who can be looked up to, whose personal judgment is trusted, who inspire and warm the hearts of those he leads, gaining their trust and confidence and explaining what is needed in the language they understand (Laximiknth, 2006).

The concept of transformational leadership according to J. M. Burns, assumes that a leader is a person who stimulates and inspires the followers to achieve an outcome that is beneficial to the generality of the people. He recognizes the needs of the followers and is ever ready to commit available resources to achieve or provide such needs, transforming the followers, developing human capital and making elaborate provisions for leadership recruitment through unmanipulated elections based on democratic principles. Transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale, and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. According to Warrilow transformational leadership can be identified with such qualities as: -

(i) *Charisma or Idealised Influences:* Under this style, the leader conducts himself in ways that endear him to his subject, is generally very firm, be a role model to others and believes in a clear set of values and actions. He is always attracted and loved by his followers.

(ii) *Inspirational Motivation:* The leader here motivates and inspire his followers, shows enduring direction and articulation in vision.

(iii) *Intellectual Stimulation:* A leader supports creativity and provides avenues for interactions with the people. Listens to views and acts objectively, being ready to entertain views, interact and resolve challenges.

(iv) *Personal and Individual Attention:* Response positively to the needs of the followers and ready to mentor his followers.

Transformational Leadership is proactive, works to change the organizational culture by implementing new ideas, employees achieve objectives through higher ideals and moral values, motivate followers by encouraging them to put group interest first, above individualised consideration: Each behaviour is directed to each individual to express consideration and support, intellectual stimulation: Promote creative and innovative ideas to solve problems.

The transformational leadership style has been criticized for making the whole population dependent on an individual for direction at all times. Generally, however, transformational leaders perform more optimally, are sensitive to the group's needs, interests and aspirations.

On the other hand, transactional leadership is an exchange leadership typology in which the leader seeks for benefit from the followers and once he gets that, he is done e.g votes in exchange for the provision of benefits such as jobs, money loyalty and support in exchange for the provision of amenities. No transactional leader is interested in service but in what he stands to gain in politics. He is usually erratic, rewards loyalty and punishes those who are against him.

Transactional leadership, also known as managerial leadership, focuses on the role of supervision, and performance, it's a style in which the leader promotes compliance of his followers through both rewards and punishments. Unlike transformational leadership, leaders using the transactional approach are not looking to change the future, they are looking to merely keep things the same way they get it, that is believe in maintaining the status quo. This type of leadership is effective in crises and emergencies, as well as when projects need to be carried out in a specific fashion.

Transactional leaders are concerned with processes rather than forward-thinking ideas. They accept goals, structure, and the culture of the existing organization, and tend to be directive and action-oriented, willing to work within existing systems and negotiate to attain goals of the organization, and tend to think inside the box when solving problems. This leadership style is primarily passive.

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These transactional leaderships are reminiscent of African leaders who assume the position and are initially friendly to the people, but suddenly because of the paraphernalia of the office plot against his people whenever they may draw his attention to rules governing leadership non-performance. Consequently, authoritarian instincts in most African leadership is unreservedly strong and since 1990 about 24 African leaders had initiated moves to stay in office beyond constitutionally defined terms. With this sit-tight impostor and messianic self-serving leaders intact, democracy in Africa faces a serious threat.

Besides Burns transformational and transactional leadership typologies, there are three other schools of thought viz Trait Theory, Behavioural Theory and Situation Theory. The Trait school believes leaders possess special qualities which make them successful, that these qualities are inborn. Such qualities, according to Chiselli (1971), include supervisory ability, desire for occupational achievements and decisiveness. Stogdil (1974) went on to include capacity for self-management, strong inner achievement drive, high sense of responsibility and ability for group work and personal charm.

Behavioural theory, on the other hand, was proposed by Kurt Lewin, E A Fleishman, Rensis Likert, Robert Blake, who emphasize leadership styles, whether such styles are democratic, authoritarian or laissez-faire. They believe that leadership consists of what leaders do or say and the way they behave that besides traits, leadership may be acquired through qualifications and experience.

Lastly, the situational theory believes leadership is situational, that one could be a good leader in environment A but may not be good in environment B. they opined that leadership is multi-dimensional, differing from one community or situation to another. The proponents of this theory include F. E. Fiedier, Victor Vroom and Philip Yetton, Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard. While we subscribe to those leadership attributes, leadership should be visionary, responsive and guided by the rules

The study adopted the descriptive/historical analysis and the materials for the work were generated from secondary sources such as books, magazines, newspapers which contents were critically scrutinized to discern some missing gaps and fill same. The study will be of immense benefit and serve as a guide to policymakers, national leaders and politicians in Africa as well as to scholars in academic and research institutions.

The study is premised on the presumption that despite the prescriptions of the constitution and electoral and extant law, power transition in Africa is still predicated upon or greatly influenced by hereditary.

II. Tenure Elongation in Africa

African history is replete with leaders who are or were obsessed with power constantly engaging in manipulating democratic institutions, (legislative, Executive and Judiciary), to suppress opposition and hang onto power in perpetuity. The continent parade the highest number of presidential monarchies. Of the 10 longest-ruling non-monarchs in the World as of 2020, 6 are from Africa, and the topmost spot on that roll is held by Cameroonian President Paul Biya who has been in office for 44 years and is not prepared to leave office. Others are Teodoro Obiang Ngwema of Equatorial Guinea 40 years, Dennis Sassan Nguesso of Congo 35 years, Yoweri Museveni of Ilganga 34 years, Idris Derby of Chad 29 years, Isaias Afweki of Eritrea 26 years. Beyond the top 10, there are Paul Kagame of Rwanda 25 years, Hage Geinob of Namibia 19 years, Faure Gnassingbe of Togo 14 years, Pierre Nkurunziza of Burundi 14 years, Ibrahim Bouba Car keita of Mali 12 years. In 2001 president Lansana Conte of Guinea organized a referendum that scrapped the term limit. In 2005 President Idris Derby of Chad held a referendum to delete Article 61 (2) of the constitution which restricted the president to two terms Mamadou Tandja of Niger abolished term limits through a referendum even though Article 49 of the Nation's constitution expressly forbade it. In Burkina Faso, President Blaise compare who had already served two terms argued in 2005 that the term limit restriction in Article 37 of the Constitution could not apply retroactively to limit him. He won tenure elongation for another 2 terms and in 2014, tried to abolish the term limit but this led to riot and street protest/upheaval which forced him out of the office to exile. Meanwhile, some military adventured led by Gen. Gilbert Diendere tried to cash in on the situation by toppling the country's interim government but the coup was resisted by the people and ECOWAS, African Union.

In Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade in 2012 argued that the term limit in his country's constitution could not apply retroactively to his first term in office.

Nguesso, 71 has ruled Congo for 25 years, called a national referendum to discuss the extension and scraping two-term limit, announced a referendum to change the constitution to allow him to run for 3rd term.

The uprising that hit the Arab world and North Africa led to the deposition of sit-tight president Sine Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia (20 years on the thrones, Hosni Mubarak spent about 31 years on the saddle before being forced out.

In Togo Gnassingbe Eyedema who ruled for 38 years run Togo as a personal estate. Edwardo do Santos of Angola ruled for 38 years (1979) and has changed Constitution to rule till 2022 and Alassane Ouattara of Ivory Coast 12 years. In 2010, at least 3,000 persons were killed in Cote d' Voire before Ouattara was

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able to assume office because Laurent Gbagbo, then the incumbent, refused to vacate office after an electoral defeat. Now after two full terms as prescribed by the constitution.

President Alassane Quttara has manipulated the country constitution and its institutions, for the third term of office, amid public protests for himself. At least six people have been killed. He is using the death of his chosen successor, Prime Minister Amadou Gon Coulibaly, in July, as a crutch and citing provisions of a 2016 Constitution. Such a decision is against democracy and invitation to another round of violence, and political uncertainties which undermine peace and development.

Table 1: Tenure Elongation in Africa 2020

S/N	Country	President/ Head of State	Date Birth	Assumption of Office	Year of Exit	No. of Yrs. Spent	Means of Exit
1	Equatorial Guinea	Teodore Obiang Nguema Mbasogo	5/6/42	1979	In power	41	
2	Cameroon	Paul Biya	13/2/33	1982	In power	39	
3	Zimbabwe	Robert Mugabe	21/2/24	1980	forced out in 2018	39	
4	Uganda	Yoweri Museveni	16/9/44	1986	In power	34	
5	Sudan	Omar Al-Bashir	1/1/44	1989	Forced out in 2019	31	
6	Chad	Idris Deby	18/6/52	1990	In power	30	
7	Burundi	Pierre Nkuruziza	18/12/64	1994	June 2020 by death	26	
8	Eritrea	Isaias Afewerki	2/2/46	1993	In power	27	
9	Rep of Congo	Denis Sassou Agueso	27/11/43	1997	In power	24	
10	Rwanda	Paul Kagami	23/10/57	2000	In power	20	
11	DRC	Joseph Kabila	4/6/71	2001	In power	19	
12	Togo	Faure Gnassingbe	6/6/06	2005	Still in power	15	
13	Burkina Faso	Blaise Campalore	31/5/45	1957	Forced out in 2014	28	
14	The Gambia	Yahaya Jammeh	25/5/65	1994	Forced out 2017	23	
15	Jose Edeando dos Sambo	M. Angola	28/8/42	1979	Forced out of office 2017	38	

Below are selected African countries with perpetual eligibility to office:

a) Equatorial Guinea

Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo became president of Equatorial Guinea in 1979 after unseating his uncle in a military coup. He has ruled Equatorial Guinea for more than 41 years, the longest-serving president in the world. He held a referendum in November 2011 that gave him 2 more terms of 7 years each, this will take him 2025. He would be succeeded by his son and has imposed no term limit.

b) Cameroon

President Paul Biya became president of Cameroon in November 1982 when former president Ahmadu Alijo left office. Before then he was the Prime Minister who served as such from 1975 to 1982. Biya won the presidential election in 1992 with 40% of total votes and was re-elected President in 1997 with (92.6%) votes, 2001 (70.92%), 2011 (77.9%) 6th term and (71.3%) 2018. He has ruled Cameroon for almost 40 years connecting the country to France for all its needs. Biya was barred from running for the presidency in 2011 under the 1996 Constitution. He manipulated the legislature and abolished the term limit in the constitution through a referendum that he pooled 157 against 15 votes by his opposition in the Anglophone regions. Election in Cameroon is often marred by manifest irregularities. Every few years, Biya held an election to justify his continued stay in office. He has been described as a creative innovator in the world of the phoney election. Cameroon is still under the clinching fist of Biya who is about 87 years, killing and maiming opposition politicians of the English speaking people of Cameroon, thousand of whom are seeking refuge in South-South Nigeria.

c) Zimbabwe

President Robert Mugabe became President of Zimbabwe in 1980 after guerrilla warfare he led which weakened the authority of the whole supremacists in Rhodesia finally forcing the colonialists to grant independence to the country now known as Zimbabwe. He assumed the leadership of the country at independence through the democratic process and

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under a constitutional government. However, after repeated elections in the country, he developed autocratic tendencies and initiated a self-succession plan that entranced him in power. He criminalized dissent, and views that did not align with his parochial views as the fundamental principle of state policy and turned the conduct of sham election into an art initiated violent land distribution which precipitated harsh international sanction, trickle-down pyramidal corruption and shrinking of government to a personality cult.

In November 2017 Mugabe sacked his Vice President, Emmerson Mnangagwa, who was very likely to succeed him. The development angered the Zimbabwe people and heightened the fear of Mugabe's wife, Grace Mugabe, succeeding him. This attracted the military which stepped in and forced him to resign. Mugabe had planned for running for the 8th term in office in 2018 when he was forced out of office at the age of 94 years after ruling the country for 37 years.

d) The Gambia

Yahaya Jammeh became President of Gambia in 1996 after ruling the country as a military head of state from 1994 Jammeh lost presidential re-election for the 5th term to an opposition candidate Adama Barrow who polled 363, 515 votes as against 212,099 by Jammeh. He initially conceded defeat but later changed his mind and refused to leave office citing serious and unacceptable abnormalities in the electoral process. But the electoral stood by the result if announced. ECOWAS, AU and the UN insisted that Jammeh must quit.

Nigeria and ECOWAS mobilized troops into the Gambia and Jammeh fled the country after ruling for 22yrs. The president-elect, Barrow, who fled to Senegal for safety was then sworn in at the Gambia Embassy in Dakar, Senegal before returning triumphantly to the Gambia as president

e) Uganda

President Museveni ruled Uganda for more than 30 years before being re-elected in 2016 after scrapping the term limit in 2005. This pitched him against his former Minister Amama Mbabazi who criticized him for the country's inability to check endemic corruption. Stifling opposition, using state apparatus to suppress popular will and grooming his son, kainerugaba Muhoozi to succeed him anytime his elongated tenure would expire are some of the grounds.

f) Burundi

Pierre Nukunzize ruled Burundi from 2005 until his death in June 2020 making him the longest-serving president in the country.

In 2015, he went in for another re-election against the constitution which led to a large-scale protest and won in July 2015. He was crowned supreme Guide of the country in 2018 but he died in June 2020. In 2020 Nkuruziza was reelected president polling more than 90% of the votes.

g) Rwanda

The incumbent President, Paul Kagame, became Vice President of Rwanda in 1994 after leading a rebel force that ended the genocidal war which claimed about 800,000 lives in the country. He became President in 2000 hoping to lead the country for 40 years. He initiated a referendum on a constitutional amendment in December 2015 which allowed him to stand for re-election for another seven (7) years single term. This will take him to 2024 with additional two terms of five (5) years each, making that will extend his tenure to 2034. President Kagame polled 98% of the vote in the 2015 referendum in the country.

III. Causes of Tenure Elongation

1. Fear of probe for wrongdoings
2. The misconception of democracy for the monarchy was the prevalent mode of leadership recruitment in the pre-colonial and even the first few years of the post-colonial era when kings wielded absolute powers over their subjects.
3. Strong authoritarian self-serving leaders with messianic instincts for self-succession,
4. Fear of margination and suppression
5. Weak political institutions but strong personalities
6. Resentment against opposition
7. Lack of accountability and transparency and fear of prosecution
8. Ethnic cleansing
9. Emergency. civil war/strife, disease or conflict or national calamities or emergencies.

The methods adopted by most African sitting presidents to prolong their stay in power vary from one country to the other. However, the commonest ways of tenure elongation include but are not limited to; Tinkering with the constitution, use of the crude method of intimidating opposition, free use of state funds and security apparatus, manipulation of the legislature and the judiciary, frequent use of referendum, inciting ethnic tension and conflict to divert attention and disrespect for rule of law and court orders.

a) Tenure Elongation and the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria

That the president can contemplate perpetual eligibility is dependent on the legislature. This is because the constitution, in most cases, does provide that no action of the president is exercisable without the approval of the legislature which may be either a condition precedent or condition subsequent. A condition president is a such action in the appointment and a condition subsequent if it involves an emergency. Certain actions of the president require the

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acquiescence of both chambers of the legislature where it is bicameral.

In Nigeria, President Obasanjo plotted for tenure elongation towards the expiration of the second term in office in 2007 but failed. This is because, in Nigeria, the constitution limits the presidential terms of office to four years although this may be extended from time to time for a period not exceeding six months at a time by a resolution of the National Assembly if the federation is at war involving its territory and the President considers that it is not practicable to hold elections. The four years is calculated from the date of swearing-in, but an incumbent president does not vacate office until his successor is sworn in. The Senate and the House of Representatives shall each stand dissolved at the expiration of a period of four years commencing from the date of the first sitting of the House. If the Federation is at war in which the territory of Nigeria is physically involved and the president considers that it is not practicable to hold elections, the National Assembly may by resolution extend the period of four years mentioned in subsection (1) of this section from time to time but not beyond a period of six months at any one time. Subject to these provisions of this Constitutions, the person elected as the president shall have the power to proclaim the holding of the first session of the National Assembly immediately after his being sworn in, or for its dissolutions, as provided in this section.

Furthermore, in Nigeria, section 64(1)(2)(3), a person shall hold the office of President until when his successor in the office takes the oath of that office, he dies whilst holding such office; or the date when his resignation from the office takes effect; or he otherwise ceases to hold office following the provisions of this constitution. Section 135 (1) 1-d)

(1) and the president shall vacate his office at the expiration of a period of four years commencing from the date, when –

(a) in the case of a person first elected as President under this Constitution, he took the Oath of Allegiance and the oath of office; and

(b) in any other case, the person last elected to that office under this Constitution took the Oath of Allegiance and oath of office or would, but for his death, have taken such oaths.

(2) If the Federation is at war in which the territory of Nigeria is physically involved and the President considers that is not practicable to hold elections, the National Assembly may by resolution extend the period of four years mentioned in subsection (2) of this section from time to time; but no such extension shall exceed a period of six months at any one time.

Once a person has been elected to the office of the president at any two consecutive elections, he is forever barred from holding the office again. This limitation constitutes perhaps one of the most remarkable characteristics of the presidency under the 1999 Constitution. It is a recognition of the dangerous tendency of indefinite eligibility to personalize government, to elevate the president into a cult and an institution, and the office into an inheritance. A holder of the office of president for more than two terms as president by the Constitution is bound to become an institution himself, attracting loyalties of a personal nature. His authority will tend to be all-pervading. A cult of personality is built up around him, generating belief in his infallibility and indispensability (Nwabueze 1984).

IV. Implications of Tenure Elongation for Democracy & Development

This propensity to personalize rule and to perpetuate it indefinitely is a disastrous factor in the politics of African countries. It has undermined the quality of democracy on the continent, and exposed government to disaffection and acts of subversion, often culminating in its forcible overthrow by the military, with all the attendant instability, and the disruption in the country's normal democratic evolution. It also deprives the country of the benefit of change in leadership, for change may prevent or check sterility and complacency by enabling a fresh vitality and a fresh approach to be brought to bear upon the problems of government (Nwanbueze 1984).

Consequently, tenure elongation is; threat to democracy, leadership and leads to ineptitude, weak institutions, apathy by the citizens, poor governance, corruption, poverty and disease (endemic), dwindling economic fortunes, instability and absence of national cohesion.

African leaders have often criticized the limiting of the president to two terms of four years each on the following grounds;

(i) that such would stifle zeal and make the president indifferent to his duty;

(ii) that a president, knowing he would be barred from the office forever after, might be tempted to exploit for personal advantage the opportunities of the office while they lasted;

(iii) that an ambitious president might be tempted to try to prolong his term by perverse means;

(iv) that it would deprive the country of the advantage of the president's previous experience in the office,

that it would lead to a lack of continuity in policy, and consequently to instability in administration. But indefinite eligibility is beset or wrought with several oddities already discussed above.

It has been accepted that tenure elongation could bring violence in societies that rely on coercion to maintain order instead of providing adequate patterns or value satisfying action – (Gur T 1970).

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Respect for the rule of law ensures stability in any nation because without the security they can be no development, for as noted by McNamara (1968) development means economic, social and political progress. It means the reasonable standard of living and reasonable in this context requires continual redemption; which is reasonable in an earlier stage of development will become unreasonable at a later stage. Most African leaders came to power to execute the constitution of the country and to be limited to a specific period but would want to remain perpetually in power without effecting meaningful development to enhance the living standard of the people. In today's world, development has taken a new dimension, according to Rodney for development involves increased skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and natural wellbeing increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relations (Rodney 1986). For Africa to witness growth and development, the leaders should always apply self-restraint and place the interest of their people at heart.

Development does not consist of perpetual eligibility but with better health care delivery, long-life span, expectancy, better nutrition, abundant supply of food and energy, good shelter, more and better schools, improve political participation by the people in the political process, poverty reduction, employment generation. If all these have declined from high levels then beyond doubt there is no development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central issues have been growing worse especially if all these are involved it will be strange to call the resulting development even if per capita income is double (Seers, 1963). This informs why most African countries under perpetual leaders suffer from civil war, political instability and incessant violence in the system.

The World Bank has noted that this negative development retard development which gives rise to virtuous and vicious circles. Where development succeeds, countries become progressively safer from violent conflict, making subsequent development easier. Where development fails, countries are at high risk of being caught in a conflict trap in which war wrecks the economy and increases the risk of further war. (World Bank, 2003)

Generally, tenure elongation in Africa has engendered bitterness, corruption, ethnic tension and rivalry, marginalization, acrimony, oppression, religious intolerance, open confrontation, poverty, disease, civil strife and war, and plunder of the commonwealth by a few elite. These are common features today in the African political landscape. There is usually a frequent forceful change of government through a coup, poverty is on the increase and the gap between the rich and the poor becomes wider on daily basis, leaders are ethnically based, drawing support mainly from their ethnic groups, larger ethnic groups dominate and oppress the minority ethnic groups, loyalty is not to the nation, but powerful individuals and their ethnic groups. The governing elite believes in divide and rule tactics and lives ostentatiously spending and embezzling public funds at will. African countries lack both internal and external unity. The francophone nations prefer France to fellow Anglophone African countries. All these give way to bad governance, unemployment insurgency, violence, kidnapping, armed robbery, drug & human trafficking and proliferation of small arms and light weapons circulating in all parts of Africa today and retard economic development. Thus democracy which strives on tolerance of opposing views, justice, freedom of association and participation in the political process is seriously bastardized in Africa. Instead of free, fair and credible elections, Africa is noted for all manners of election malfeasance, ranging from rigging, impersonation of candidates, impunity, the ballot box and paper snatching, falsification of results and announcement of discredited and corrupt politicians as leaders.

It is doubtful if the perpetuity of many of these leaders in power has resulted in meaningful developmental strides for their countries. Worse is that some have had to brutally muscle through the rewriting of their respective country's constitutions to accommodate their regular hold on power. Sit-tight leaders have turned Africa into a wasteland and brought mockery to the continent. The world ridicules Africa and its leaders in their obsession with staying in power for life.

It was due to this ugly trend in democracy in Africa that President Muhammadu Buhari (2020) advised the leaders of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to spare their countries political upheavals by keeping to constitutionally prescribed tenure, that African leaders should not only respect constitutional limits of tenure but also respect the law and ensure free and fair elections in their countries.

President Buhari pointed out that the attempts to elongate tenure tend to generate crises and political tension in the region, that the challenges facing the sub-region are enormous and these range from socio-economic matters to security issues, which are in themselves difficult enough. When, therefore, another political turmoil is added in the form of tenure elongation, he went on, the result is always a brew of violence and economic disruption which often turns to economic and political disaster.

V. Conclusion/ Recommendations

This work examines the sit-tight syndrome of African leaders who have no respect for the national constitution, preferring to remain in power indefinitely despite tenure limitations by the constitution. The study adopted leadership theory as its theoretical framework

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and findings show that probe for wrongdoings, the misconception of democracy for the monarchy, strong authoritarian instinct, lack of accountability and transparency, cheap access to state resources and intolerance of opposition are some of the causes of tenure elongation in Africa which has spelt negative implications for democracy and development. The work recommends the building of a strong institution, independent of the judiciary, respect for the rule of law and, constitution establishment of constitutional courts in AU to regulate tenure common language and common market establishment.

At independence in the early 1960s, leadership recruitment in emergent independent states of Africa was through, except a few states such as Nigeria, a one-party authoritarian model. The new states believe that it was through a single party system that the country would be able to mobilize and integrate the various internal ethnic diversities into the national ethos. Due to inherent weakness coupled with systemic corruption and nepotism, and the inability to inculcate a sense of national unity and bring about development, most civil one-party democracies in Africa were swept away by the military who made an incursion into politics in Africa. The military leadership recruitment was through coup'd etat that enthroned power-seekers or autocratic life president or head of state who did not only rule with impunity but also plundered the wealth of these nations and further under-developed their countries and people.

Today, however, a military coup is no longer fashionable and most African countries are democratizing their political institutions, providing a limit to power and tenure, even though, most leaders are not bothered by these constitutional restraints as they use the resource of the state to bribe their ascension and continued to stay in power and manipulate the legislature to have their way.

This has given rise to instability, corruption, poverty and disease, gross disrespect for the constitution and rule of law, human rights abuse, impoverishing the people and further under-developing African countries.

This work, therefore, recommends the following as a panacea for indefinite eligibility to political office at the apex of the nation in Africa.

1. African countries are noted for strong leaders but very weak political institutions. There is the need then to build strong institutions that would drive the democratic process.
2. The justice system should be overhauled and the judiciary should enjoy substantial independence to enable the dispensation of justice without fear or favour
3. African leaders should do more like the cries or partnership and peer review to evolve a common practice code for leaders.
4. There should be aggressive determination and commitment on the part of African leaders to be amended to the rule of law and respect for court decisions.
5. African countries should establish constitutional courts to adjudicate on matters bordering on exercising power beyond prescribed limits, deal with all forms of constitutional infringement and litigations concerning elections.
6. African leaders should be made to always keep in mind that African problems can only be settled by Africans. Some African countries should particularly the French-speaking should realize that their destiny is not in France but Africa and take concrete steps from being continually used by Paris to destabilize Africa economically and politically.
7. Africa should consider, besides the common market that is in the offing, the adoption of a language for Africa to assist in the integration process.

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