

# The Motive of Civil War in Africa: Case Study Comparing South Sudan and the Central Africa Republic

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**Abstract:-** The quest for self-determination resulting from bad governance, ethnic problems, greed and other opportunities for rebellion continues to worry many nation states. As a result of colonialism, many post-colonial countries, working hard to emerge and also struggling with their past and the tags imposed on them. While some are succeeding by going through the painful sacrificial discipline of good public service, developments, and regional integration, others are masters of autocracy, dictatorship, and repression. Consequently, governmental policies that sometimes do not favour the masses have turned violent and at extremes, bloody when the masses woke up to demand their rights. This study thinks that it's very important to discuss the concepts of a strong state, weak states and collapsed states in order to get a hold of the reason why some countries are prone to civil wars. Two countries shall be critically reviewed here so that much understanding shall be gotten and they South Sudan and the Central African Republic. The data gotten from them elucidates that the mismanagement of the independent variables as a result of bad governance and ethnocentric politics matches directly to nursed grievances which lead to opportunities and greed most of which are exploited rebel forces.

**Keywords:-** Governance, Strong States, Weak States, Collapsed States, Civil War.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### ➤ Governance

Fuseh (2019 cited Sheng, 2016) notes that “the literature on governance has developed dichotomies over time which have had in them added words such as ‘good governance’ which is believed to be a positive form of governance and ‘bad governance’ which is assertively the root of all evil and political malpractice”. He is supported by Ysa et.al. (2014) who adds that governance is such a difficult word to define because there might be many active actors involved. However, according some of them the word governance comes from the Greek word *Kybernan* which means to steer or pilot a sheep. Following this etymology, they define governance as “nowadays, governance can be broadly understood as the interaction between governments, business stakeholders and non-profit organizations by which

and policy decisions implementation are undertaken” Fuseh (2019 cited Ysa et.al., 2014).

### ➤ Strong States

All states practice governance regardless of the strength of a state. However, all do not achieve the same results and over time, some go up to become very successful while others lag behind. Making an argument on strong and weak state is a difficult controversy among academician in which they used different approach to tackle the matter in different angles. Muslu, (2012) argues that “state strength can be measured by its democratic institutions and its ability to democratize”. To deepen his argument he prefers to use the Middle East as his case study by which he studies its political, economic, cultural and historical assets. Persson (2010) seems to agree with him on the political and economic aspects but goes further to explain that state strength could also be measured by “its fiscal strength and its wiliness to have a strong system especially on the legal part”. Following this argument, it can be said that “strong states, therefore, are those that can provide political goods such as good health, respect for human rights, good governance, inclusive and broad-based policies and reforms that favor all and sundry, modern infrastructure and security” (Fuseh, 2019).

### ➤ Weak States

The security parameters of the international community continue to stretch because “weak and failed states are always full of problems that can affect the neighboring countries and the world, this is because weak state is also known for internal problems that cause the huge migration problem and humanitarian aid. The attempt to measure state weakness might not be the same between scholars. In other words, weak state is a lesser ranking to strong state seen supra because even though they have a little capacity to deliver political goods, they are nonetheless lacking in many things of national growth. Domestic problems such as riots, protests, and conflicts always threaten to divert their investments to and other resources meant for development to solving sociopolitical problems. For Grdesic and Koska (2009) is of the opinion that for a country weak state is when that country is not able to set up a stable tax system and fight corruption in their nations, and also set up and good legal system that will be able to brings any person to justice despite his position”. From this point, it's seen that all the scholars stress on taxes, economy and the power of the law to

qualify a state as weak meaning states that fall under this category cannot easily provide political goods.

#### ➤ *Failed States*

If being a weak state is bad then becoming a failed state is worse. Failed states come to be if the problem in weak state are not handle and with time the problem are more than them as a result of their policies and choices to handle pressing issues. Rotberg (2011) defines a failed state as “a polity that is no longer able or willing to perform the fundamental job of a nation-state in the modern world”. Some under developed state discover their nation is in this bad place following many years of violence and civil wars. It’s also possible to notice that, failed states suffer long years of sometimes painful political delegitimation whereby they must negotiate the form of the state with virulent rebel groups who motivated by one factor or another, engage the government violently. Ungaro (2012) studying the political predicaments of Afghanistan reveals that most times it is not the power or the fighting intensity of the warring factions that qualify a state as a failed state. Rather, it is how long the fighting lasted and a good example of this is Afghanistan, Syria, and Sudan before the independence of South Sudan in 2011. Centralization and the lack of good governance is a founding problem with many failed states noting that most are adamant to change. In addition, Rotberg (2011) is of the opinion that “failed states are mostly covered by lack of effective public service whereby most of the state’s power is concentrated to some particular region of the country especially the area that are in support of the ruling like the capital cities and other related cities.

#### ➤ *Civil Wars*

According to Collier and Hoeffler (2004), civil wars are “an internal conflict with at least 1.000 combat-related deaths per year. In the conflict, the government is expected to lose at least 5% of its soldiers regardless of its heavy artillery. In the other hand, the proportion of rebel forces that die is mostly higher as a result of the lack of military resources and the necessary experience to coordinate their attacks properly. The economic theory of civil wars asserts that natural resources, Lootable resources, low GDP per capita growth and other items such as population dispersion and not forgetting the diaspora, are determining factors that can incite and prolong civil war (Collier, Hoeffler and Rohner, 2009).

## II. MOTIVES OF CIVIL UNREST IN AFRICA

Africa’s heterogeneous nature is one of the fundamental hotspots for conflict. A country such as Cameroon, for example, has over 276 ethnic groups with distinct dialects, cultures, rites, and customs that differ from the other. Political practice in Cameroon is difficult because no tribe is ever satisfied with governmental policies. Both the internal and the external causes of civil wars in Africa shall be discussed because it seems there have been foreign

interventions that have stirred violent conflicts within the nation.

#### A. *Internal Causes*

It is worth noting that a total of 79 civil wars have been recorded between 1960 and 1999 (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004). It’s also better to mention that the 21<sup>st</sup> century has not been devoid of civil wars because agitations in South Sudan, The Central African Republic and presently Cameroon are good examples. With much appreciation to Collier and Hoeffler, pioneer scholars in civil war studies, they provide a huge literature on the genesis of civil war, their duration, and their ends. From Collier and Hoeffler (2004) it’s deduced that most of the civil war in African was from 1956 to 1999. In addition, not all countries have had the same proportion because some like Cameroon have had up to 2, Sudan 2, Uganda 3, and The Democratic Republic of Congo 3 (Nichols, 2008 cited Collier and Hoeffler, 2004). Some of the reasons are that these wars might have been nourished by rebellious opportunities, grievances, and greed.

#### ➤ *Opportunity*

In order to present a good analogy of how rebellious opportunities could provoke civil wars this has already been seen above. Opportunities do not suffice because rebellions mostly rely on what could be regarded as “real grievances” and “real opportunities” which might involve stealing. Simply, poorly managed grievances can start a civil war in conjunction with the opportunity to gain control over certain resources. These can excite moderates to violence and who might suddenly result in warlords. Hirshleifer (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004, cited Hirshleifer, 1995, 2001) adds that other internal causes of civil wars could be linked to preferences, chance, and way of behavior. According to his study perceptions are what the masses see about something or what they make of something at an appointed time and this also depends on the circumstance at that time. In cases where the government is far from the people, these perceptions could fuel civil war machinery. GDP and male secondary school education is another pressing factor a high proportion of poor and uneducated males in a given country is strong to determine the availability to recruit soldiers to rebel causes. Secondly, low income, as well as income inequalities in a country, favours young men to join rebel organizations. In countries where there are Lootable resources such as gold, diamonds, black gold, timber, coltan such as in The Democratic Republic of Congo, fighting may easily be stirred as well (Collier, Hoeffler, and Rohner, 2009).

#### ➤ *Grievances*

There are four ways by which Collier and Hoeffler (2004) discuss the concept of grievances. They begin with ethnic or religious hatred, political repressions, political exclusions, and economic inequalities.

Political view of civil unrest can be traced from the old greed or the grievances that were not properly managed (Collier, Hoeffler and Rohner, 2009). These mismanaged troubles affecting a state can add up to cause a civil unrest. Especially if the state in question is having many ethnic groups, which are always fighting with each other, which over a short period led to civil war. This study is of the opinion that the violations of the right of the people by failing to give them what they need like good health care, good educational system and good infrastructure is unconstitutional. This is because all the citizens of any country in the whole world be it developed or developing has equal rights across the nations mindful of the regions of origin, also freedom of speech, the right to represent your constituency as leader, the right to select someone to lead them within their own regions and the right to be able to connect with government institutions and the state without the fear of being persecuted for that (Fuseh, 2019). Political rights must be respected because “everybody has the right to be the same in front of justice and should also have same protection from the law” (South African Commission for Human Rights, 2016/2017).

In fact, the marginalization of political rights is dangerous for nation building and state unity and a wrong policy for governance. Alas, it remains the preferred organ of some governments who continuously marginalize or look down on some area of their own people for political, religious, economic and ethnic reasons. In Southern Africa populist regimes that overtly practice political repression and exclusion are said to have a strong rhetoric. For instance, Sam Nujoma the former president of Namibia and former chairman of The South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) had on many occasions, used the same populist rhetoric that “his party, SWAPO, will remain in power for the next 1000 years” (Melber, 2015). He was followed by Mugabe who had equivocally denied the late Morgan Tsvangirai his victory to the presidency and claimed: “only God who appointed me will remove me, not the MDC, not the British” (The Telegraph, 2008). These two examples show decades of political repression and exclusion whereby the ruling parties denied members of other political parties their constitutional rights and most times, physically abused or manhandled them.

#### ➤ *Religious Factors*

This study believes that Africa has so many religions, but Christianity and Islam have proven to be the two major religions in Africa that can cause civil war even though some scholars say Animists on a smaller minority some time can lead to civil war. However, divergent religiosity have generated serious problems to a point of shedding blood. Collier and Hoeffler (2004) reveal that religious differences

which are always better when the country is in peace, always changes in wartime, but the situation gets worst when the civil war breaks out. From their data, it can be seen that during peace time's religious differences could be 35.98% and changes to 37.70% when the war breaks out. Meaning social polarization in the country is always on the rise.

Kasfelt (2005) separated a number of African countries whereby religious fragmentation had resulted to civil wars into four parts; “southern Sudan; Rwanda/Burundi/Congo; Zimbabwe/South Africa; and Sierra Leone/Liberia/Guinea”. Despite the ethnic diversity in these countries differences between Christians, Muslims and other indigenous ethnic beliefs such as Animists had equally led to bloodshed.

#### ➤ *Ethnic Factors*

Rebellions cannot succeed if they are tribalistic or ethnically biased. Easterly and Levine, Alesina et al., and Collier (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004, cited Easterly and Levine, 1997, Alesina et al., 1999, and Collier, 2001) think that “ethnic and religious diversity within organizations tends to reduce their ability to function”. A good reason could be that tribalism within a rebel group will make the most of their recruits. More so, any support that might have been given by other sympathizing tribes may be withheld in retaliation.

In order to stop the war, governments might have to make some concessions with rebel forces to preserve peace and national unity. Walter (2014) reported that following the secessionist calls of Quebecois, the Canadian government gave them some level of autonomy and made many concessions. Similarly, she mentions Nicaragua, Ecuador who also provided a measure of autonomy to agitating regions that cried foul to victimization or marginalization.

#### B. *External Factors*

Collier and Hoeffler (2004), Collier, Hoeffler and Rohner (2009) believe that external governments are powerful to fund rebellions in a particular country. A good example they provide is the funding that Zimbabwe gave to the Renamo rebels in Mozambique. Foreign nations with interests in other countries for political reasons or otherwise have funded rebellions which have either persecuted the governments in power or established their dominance and power to match their own domestic goals.

Sambanis et al. (2017) wrote some guidelines which they see fit to incite civil unrest in a country. They believe that promises made by foreign governments to rebels might brainwash them to continue following their agenda. Secondly, they believe that this can result in social polarization whose results might be difficult to resolve.

### III. MOTIVES OF INTERNAL WAR IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

#### A. Internal Causes

As previously discussed above, “mountainous terrain, GDP primary commodity export and GDP growth per capita, male secondary school education, Lootable (such as gold, diamond, and other precious jewels) and natural resources are important ingredients that can cause civil wars” (Fuseh, 2019). The Central African Republic (henceforth, C.A.R.) is known for three particular things, “coups”, armed groups and military mutiny and political instability. Central Africa Republic has had more than six coups that were successful and some attempted ones in the last fifty years.

From 1960 to 2013 the fundamental problem with the C.A.R. has been tribalism, bad governance and the lack of political professionalism of the ruling elite. These beginning from David Dacko the first president who came to power in 1960 to Bozize who was ousted in 2013 in a coup have all practiced the political culture of political exclusion and religious repression. The political exclusion and repression can be explained from the fact that all power and meaningful public service is limited to the capital, Bangui, while the Muslims in the north have suffered systematic repression and exclusion for more than 50 decades. This political culture is responsible for the many coups that the country has suffered since 1964 and is to be blamed for the current blood bath in the country as Christians and Muslims battled each other to show their dominance.

#### B. External Factors

“The C.A.R has barely functioning state institutions, an economy in shambles, an impoverished population and a security apparatus in complete disarray (Kah, 2014 cited N’diaye, 2007:1) According to Kah due to the above mention reason the government of C.A.R has been unable to govern the country which has push the country to be liable to many internal differences that lead to civil war.

Many countries that have been accused of fueling the war in the C.A.R. by giving intelligence to the Seleka and Anti-Balaka groups. While these groups continue their war these nations are said to use the opportunity to extract their diamond, uranium and timber exploitations.

Kah (2014) writes that Sudan has been a very active actor in inciting the war in the C.A.R. The reason remains unknown and a next neighbor, Chad, has its fair share from this apathetic foreign policy of Sudan (Bissakonou, 2015). Furthermore, South Africa as BBC (2013) reported following agreements between the South Africa and Central African administrations at that time helped to destabilize the country the more. Chad, on the other hand, has also been an actively exporting mercenary who have helped coup plotters (Dagne, 2007). So, C.A.R. finds itself in a very unfriendly

neighborhood with hostile neighbors who seem to take pleasure in its demise. Seeing that the country is unthinkable rich in minerals, Hauchard (2018) reveals that China and Russia have significantly penetrated the war-torn country regardless of the insecurities present there. These powers operate by financing the rebel groups in order to gain access to the resources. BBC (2013) has been pointing fingers on France, China and Lebanon to have been financing the rebel groups with over \$4 million in exchange for the natural resources like diamond gold, etc.

### IV. THE MOTIVE OF INTERNAL WAR IN SOUTH SUDAN

#### A. Internal Factors

##### ➤ Ethnic Divergence and Polarization

The Republic of South Sudan is a country with so many ethnic sovereign entities; the country has a total of 10 regions with different ethnic background and cultural background (Shulika and Okeke-Uzodike, 2016). Shulika and Okeke-Uzodike (2016) define ethnicity as a social process that describes “the condition of belonging to an ethnic group, the sense of ethnic identity felt by members of an ethnic community”. They add that the term prevails in literature especially when discussing the causes of civil wars in Africa. The historical origin of inter-ethnic clashes in South Sudan arises from their life style which is mostly “grazing land, cattle raiding and access to natural resources-predominantly in the Jonglei State of Greater Upper Nile Province”. For many scholars, such a rich and diverse ethnic country should be able to bring more development and gain to the state not the other way round (Zevallos, 2017). However, the reverse is true and instead, it has been an element of repugnance and polarization. The ethnic issues are so tense that they mostly characterize the war in the country. Hutton (2018) says that the South Sudan problems can be divided in to two the issue concerning the ethnic fragmentation and the state unable to disarm the arm militant that were fighting during the war of independence with the North. These have caused a lot of problem to the government and have brought the government where it is today. Hutton (2018) makes it clear that ethnicity and feudalism orchestrated by the military are helping to divide the country.

#### B. External Factors

South Sudan remains trapped in its own traps set by the un-readiness and unprofessionalism of its ruling class. How and when this country will be delivered from its present turmoil remains a staggering worry among academics that battle each other on the sources of the conflict. The Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, and Sudan remain notoriously accused of helping the two warring parties in South Sudan the reason no possible agreement has been made and a meaningful truce reached.

## V. SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC AND SOUTH SUDAN

### ➤ *Administrative Capacity and Governance*

Despite the C.A.R.'s socio religious problems, the country deserves the credit to have had more than one administration since 1964. As aforementioned, a series of political problems orchestrated by the different administrations brought the country to its current failure. However, the alternation of power shows that the country has the potential to be democratic if the leaders decide to do so.

Furthermore, South Sudan as seen in the previous sections has a negative past. Let it be added that South Sudan failed to collect arms from the arm groups that were engaged in fight for independence from the North. These undisciplined and armed militias, who presently receive orders from warlords turned statesmen, poses a serious problem to the government and the entire populations of the country.

In terms of administrative strength, the leading difference between South Sudan and the C.A.R. is that the C.A.R. has had a series of governments and regimes through coups. More so, the different administrations lack the capacity to fully control their state. On the contrary, South Sudan has a level of state control despite the war. What it needs to do is that the politicians must trust each other, their ethnicities, and ratify all cease-fire agreements and negotiations made. De Vries and Justin (2016) add that one of the important changes needed in South Sudan comes from the successful implementation of the discourses of a Transitional Government of National Unity (TGNU) that could deliver the political goods that the nation and its citizens deserve. Added to this, the nation of South Sudan must work hard on its way to enforce viable capacity building as well as a credible state building mechanism that will be broad-based and inclusive, independent of bias and ethnic affiliation.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study tried to examine the different types of states which it identified as strong, weak and collapsed states. Secondly, it reviewed the elements that make up each of the states mentioned thereby highlighting the fundamental differences that surround each. In addition, it studied the causes of civil wars. Thanks to the expert works of Collier and Hoeffler (2004), Collier and Hoeffler and Rohner (2009) so much about civil wars and their causes in Africa have been explored. Taking particular examples into account, the study struggled to prove why Saudi Arabia for example, could not suffer a civil war because the country has passed the 6000USD GDP mark and its current economy can't afford to allow an insurrection whose lasting effects will be badly felt for ages to come. The study also showed that grievances resulting from tribalism, unemployment or any other factors that might be responsible for rebel actions. And when this

happens it brings us to the two countries in the case study, C.A.R, and South Sudan.

That said the presiding sections discussed the two countries independently and as the discussion progressed C.A.R. was seen to be plagued by a political culture of coups initiated in 1964. Democracy remained a scarce luxury for this country whose leadership issues go ahead it.

As for South Sudan it was seen to suffer from routine ethnic issues that have destroyed their nation. Governance remains a serious problem following the differences between the main ethnic groups which is the Dinka and Nuer's. The ethnic problems have helped top-ranking government officials to enrich themselves while controlling some parts of the military for their personal gains.

Lastly, this work has align that is has agree with Collier and Hoeffler (2004) that indeed, greed, opportunity, and routine governance are great factors that can over throne peace and can incite problem in all directions that might lead to violence and armed conflict which if it is not properly handle it might lead to civil war.

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