

Efforts of Different Regimes in Kenya toward National Cohesion and Integration, 1963–2022

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Abstract

Kenya like many states in the African continent is a multi-ethnic nation (Mulubale, 2017). This paper, therefore, revisits challenges facing Kenya as a multi-ethnic society. The subject of ethnicity has featured prominently in most studies on Kenya, and many of them have used ethnicity to discuss political trends and conflicts in the country. However, very few studies have focused on the efforts of different regimes in Kenya toward national cohesion and integration. Since her independence in 1963, Kenya has had challenges in putting together her ethnic communities. Conflict always arises as a result of the unequal distribution of resources (Simiyu, 2008). The author argues that challenges of ethnicity are exacerbated by failure in nation building and the creation of a national identity. To vividly explain the challenges facing Kenya's national cohesion and integration, the author will examine the efforts by successive regimes toward national cohesion and integration. Given the importance of national cohesion and integration, this study argues for a rethinking of socio-economic policies through political goodwill and instilling national ethos, otherwise, the initiatives for national cohesion and integration will be in vain, stillborn, and frustrated across the nation. The author will examine academic publications, media reports, government strategy documents, and the reports of The National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) reports. The study will contribute in informing the ongoing processes of national cohesion and integration in Kenya and also, the historical accounts of national cohesion and integration added on the existing knowledge of world historiography. The paper will conclude that, despite the efforts by the four successive regimes to enhance national cohesion and integration in Kenya, deep rooted ethnic cleavages continue to thwart these efforts and have created new avenues of ethnic animosities. The paper will therefore, provide some policy recommendations for national cohesion which include; the need for equitable distribution of resources, ability to tackle corruption and impunity, proper land reforms, and proper and innovative political reforms.

Keywords: Regimes, conflict, national cohesion and integration, ethnicity, resources, political interests.

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This article examines the efforts of different regimes (Jomo Kenyatta, 1963–1978, Danie Moi, 1978–2002, Mwai Kibaki, 2002–2013, and Uhuru Kenyatta, 2013–2022) in Kenya toward achieving national cohesion and integration. It argues for a rethinking of socio-economic policies through political goodwill and enhancing national values and ethos for national cohesion and integration. Otherwise, the efforts towards national cohesion and integration will be in vain, stillborn, and frustrated across the nation. It will also try to question the legacies of Kenya's successive presidents who are largely responsible for lack of social cohesion by examining the regime's reinforcing narratives which is illustrative of success of propaganda and disinformation machinery meant to obfuscate subjugation of the masses and justify crushing of dissent.

The president, constitutionally, is a symbol of national unity in Kenya. Kenya's successive presidents, however, were purveyors of ethnic politics, corruption, disregard for the rule of law and state sponsored violence. Consequently, Kenya is a broken body politic haunted by consistently inconclusive elections marred by fraud, protests and violence. It is deeply steeped in ethnic stereotypes, corruption, and unresponsive politics. Basically, the state is predatory not developmental and that is why the state straddles stability and collapse.

The challenge of national unity can be traced from the 1884/85 Berlin conference which provided a proper ground for the official demarcation of the African continent into distinct territories that would be put under the influence of various European powers (Rosenberg, 2004). For the first time, several pre-existing ethnic nations with diverse social, economic, political, and cultural spheres were put under the same territory. Europeans showed a high level of unity in occupying the African continent under the guidance of German Chancellor Otto Von Bismarck. They had agreed upon terms and references for the occupation of the continent among them the declaration of the sphere of influence, the policy of effective occupation, and free navigation of the River Niger and River Congo basin among others (McClintock, 2020).

The consequences of amalgamating different ethnic groups to form different countries did not pose an immediate negative impact, at least for the continent since ironically; it is these same ethnic groups that worked together to form a liberation front that ejected Europeans from the continent of Africa (Glaister, et al., 2020). Since independence in 1963, ethnic groups have emerged some were formed by colonialists while others were created by Kenya's postcolonial regimes. Ethnic groups or tribes as Kenyans call them are not homogenous either. The number of ethnic groups in Kenya is unknown. But for political reasons, Kenyans are made to believe in a number that keeps changing anyway. Daniel Moi and Uhuru Kenyatta created "tribes" and the number keeps rising. Moi created Abasuba, and Tharaka, Mbeere tribes, for instance, through distinct administrative units (districts). Kenyatta created Shona, and Makonde tribes through award of citizenship and Indian, William Ruto granted citizenship to the Pemba community through fiat yet these groups have lived in Kenya since before independence.

Since independence in 1963, Kenya has faced challenges of ethnicity. "Ethnicity" is about belonging. It is about identity. It is an edifying concept. However, once ethnicity is instrumentalized, that is, becomes an axis of political mobilization, and disorganization, a factor in access to or denial of state resources, as is has happened throughout Kenya's postcolonial period, it turns into political tribalism – dangerously volatile. Kenya's enduring challenge is lack of a philosophy, a void that enables societal rupture, personality cults, tribal warlords, and institutional impunity. Thus politicians, bureaucrats, and citizens struggle to transcend personal ends, and insular politics which upend the national good.

One of the most insistently repetitive aspects of colonial legacy in Post-Colonial Africa was the ethnic division that emerged both as a group identity and as a mobilizing agent in the quest for social, economic, and political aggrandizement. The complex process of group and class configuration coupled with a colonialist attempt to handle traditional societies and their attempt to develop an intricate capitalist economy in various colonies cannot be gainsaid (Karari, 2018). Therefore, it cannot be possible to understand ethnic complexities in Kenya's political development without going down memory lane to examine the impacts of colonization on the organization of ethnic groups (Leys, 1975)

Competitive ethnic rivalry and ethnic consciousness in Kenya's political arena derives somewhat from how the colonialist established local administrations like local governments and administrative borders based on cultural and linguistic orientation. This was guided by

an erroneous colonialist understanding of Africans which was based on the idea that Africans organized themselves along tribal lines (Sandbrook, 1985)

Literature Review

There is no dearth of studies around ethnicity. Scholars have sought to investigate the nexus between, colonization and ethnic consciousness, ethnicity and politics, ethnicity and development, ethnicity and religion, ethnicity and identity etc. However, little efforts have been made to try and examine efforts towards national cohesion and integration especially in African countries. Yet, a deeper examination of the protracted conflicts and state fragility in the continent reveal the complex relationship between the absence of strong integration and cohesion ethnic.

Across the world, the desire to achieve national cohesion and integration has formed a common debate in political discourses. Most of the conflicts in many countries are politically instigated (Shahabuddin, 2019). The crisis in Syria is historical and politically instigated, the crisis in Afghanistan is notorious, Somalia is experiencing a political crisis, Violence in Myanmar which has left millions dead is politically instigated, the Democratic Republic of Congo is going through volatile conflict, Regional tension is emanating from conflict in South Sudan, there is growing insecurity in Nigeria, Yemen is going through protracted conflict, Ethiopia is facing challenges of conflict, Sudan is experiencing political tension currently and conflict and many more not mentioned but is currently happening across the world (Alam, 2019). National Cohesion and Integration in those countries are at bay and frustrated across the region.

Ethnicity and Politics

Ajulu (2002) worked on politicized ethnicity, competitive conflict, and conflict in Kenya from a historical perspective and he gave a clear nexus between ethnicity and politics. He unravels the nexus between competitive politics, ethnicity, and ethnic conflict in a multi-party system in Kenya. He argues that, the penetration of capitalist ideology and its effects in endangering ethnic inequalities and political contestations are usually aligned to manifest such inequalities (Ajulu, 2002). Ethnicity, therefore, provides a platform for political negotiation and mobilization. The period of the multi-party system in Kenya is characterized by ethnic clashes, and these conflicts cannot be described from a primordial perspective rather, they are politically modified violence aimed at achieving both short and long-term political motives and eventually social and economic benefits.

In their study of the election of then-president Jomo Kenyatta, Brown and Sriram (2012) made a clear observation on key political players who emerged immediately British government declared its intention for Kenya about KANU and Jomo Kenyatta playing a dominant role (Brown & Sriram, 2012) According to them, the merger of KANU and KADU after the general election of 1961 and KANU's relegation of leaders to the other side of the opposition ignited doubt among Kenyan communities about their future (Brown & Sriram, 2012). As they explained, Kenyatta to Africans was not only a paramount leader but also an embodiment of Kenya's nationalism. Therefore, Kenyatta was a perfect person to offer desired national cohesion and integration for the underlying actions towards the future of Kenya.

In his study on Kenyan political actors, 'Tom Mboya, The man Kenya Wanted to forget' David Goldsworthy emphasized Tom Mboya's role in orienting ideologies of key political players, Mboya being recognized as the leader of KANU moderates who raised questions on Kenya's economic policies. That which is important was his role as a jack of all trades to Kenyatta's regime (Lonsdale, 1983). Tom Mboya was the architect of Kenyatta's KANU regime. This is because, he participated

in the formulation of the ruling party's KANU manifestos and also, he was not only in charge of Kenya's constitution but also the architect of Kenya's development strategy.

Tom Mboya himself could not stay for long after proving to be vibrant and articulate in the political scenes. At the age of 39, he was assassinated through a gunshot and died in the ambulance while on the way to the hospital. The killing of Tom Mboya gave the Kenyatta-Odinga cold war intrigues the ethnical dimensions (Otenyo, 2023). As the fate could tell, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga was a communist sympathizer, who becomes Jomo Kenyatta's great friend and later great political rival to Jomo Kenyatta who was a capitalist sympathizer.

Branch and Cheeseman (2006) in their attempt to distinguish between hope and despair highlights the frustrations which embedded Kenyans immediately after independence. They argued that then-President Kenyatta and opposition leader Oginga Odinga represented two antagonizing views each of which exhibited a different version of what development means (Branch & Cheeseman, 2006). This, therefore, exhibited different aspirations of Africans. They explain that, President Kenyatta held the view that development was an individual hard work and personal endeavors while Oginga Odinga on the other side perceived development through the lens of re-allocation of available resources for the interest of paupers in the society (Branch & Cheeseman, 2006). To Odinga, this meant the redistribution of European-owned land to peasants and landless.

According to Kisaka & Nyadera (2019), there was a clear division between majority and minority ethnic communities on the eve of independence. The Nation-State by then was characterized by race, multi-ethnic and religious identity. To respond to this, the government embarked on various activities of national cohesion and integration. President Jomo Kenyatta and later Daniel Moi for example, introduced measures to unite the country through 'Harambee and Nyayo' philosophies respectively (Kisaka & Nyadera, 2019). These measures were to chart the discourse of development as a step towards ethnic unification. Development and national unity were aspects which complimented each other.

The nexus between competitive politics, ethnicity, and ethnic conflict in a multi-party system in Kenya cannot be gainsaid (Ajulu, 2002). The penetration of capitalist ideology and its effects in endangering ethnic inequalities and political contestations are usually aligned to manifest such inequalities. Ethnicity, therefore, provides a platform for political negotiation and mobilization. The period of the multi-party system in Kenya was characterized by ethnic clashes, and these conflicts cannot be described from a primordial perspective rather, they are politically modified violence aimed at achieving both short and long-term political motives and eventually social and economic benefits.

A Systematic Review of the Research Methodology Approach

This study majored in systematic research methods which chronologically divided the study into three phases. Phase I and II focused on sources, reliability, and their validity plus arguments and claims which appeared in the existing number of literatures reviewed. Phase III was used to give further details on the conceptual and theoretical approaches of the existing studies and to point out some of the challenges and gaps with the current application of National Cohesion and Integration doctrine.

Phase I was important in giving ground to this study within the general view of existing studies. From this phase, it was possible for the author to explore various trends in conflict more so those that are occurring in Kenya. This involved having a keen interest in research questions and

objectives that characterized previous studies. From this perspective, my study could identify issues that have dominated conflict research as well as those that have been downplayed.

An in-depth analysis of available literature revealed existing debate around causes of conflict in Kenya from both policy and academic dimensions. From the findings of existing trends in conflict research, this paper was able to ground its objectives and goals on areas that have been ignored generally. In addition to the theoretical and conceptual aspects of conflict studies, Phase I also offered a deep understanding of the conflicts in Kenya and how academia from various disciplines and backgrounds has researched the country and its challenges.

From the findings, there is a clear indication of the inadequacy of using the National Cohesion and Integration approach in understanding the state of affairs and dynamics of Kenya, yet the country has the potential strength and weaknesses of National Cohesion and Integration as both strategy and doctrine of conflict prevention and resolutions. To adequately meet the research objectives in Phase I, the research was guided by the following questions; first, what is the historical dimension of the conflict in Kenya? Second, what have scholars looked at and concluded as the major issues in conflicts? What have been the efforts of various governments to address the challenges of conflict in Kenya since independence? What are some of the implications of overlooking National Cohesion and Integration in our broad understanding of intractable conflicts currently dotting many parts of the world?

Phase II focused keenly on finding relevant policy platforms and databases where relevant information to this research could be extracted. By use of these databases, the research was able to generate books, articles, reports, formal publications, and other valuable publications relevant to our study. Some of the major databases found and used in the study included University libraries, Web of Science, Scopus, JSTOR, Ebsco, and institutional and government digital libraries.

Keywords such as National Cohesion and Integration, Kenya, nation building, ethnic conflict, intractable conflicts/warfare, peace studies, international law of armed conflict, and Africa (see table 1) were used to search in the sources. A total of 53 sources were extracted from the search above before sources that were duplicates, ineligible, and published in languages that were not familiar to authors were expunged and did not surface in the analysis of the study. Ultimately, a total of 30 sources were adopted and used in the study (see figure)

Table 1: Some of the key search words used in the various databases to scrutinize through the literature.

Database	Search titles/keywords/terms
Web of Science, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Scopus, University Libraries, JSTOR, EBSCO, Academic Databases, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Digital institutional libraries such as those that belong to governments and international agencies.	“Peace and conflict resolution” “NCI” “civil wars” “Kenya conflicts” “national unity” “asymmetric conflicts/warfare” “international law of armed conflict” “peace studies” “Africa” “post -colonial” “non-state violent actors” “protracted conflicts” “ethnic identity” “political settlement” “elections in Kenya” “armed conflict” “state building” “human security”

Discussion

Regimes and National Cohesion in Kenya: Jomo Kenyatta 1963–1978

Jomo Kenyatta came to power not as a fresher in politics but as an individual who went through various experiences with the colonial government; he was in touch with the political realities of

his time. The process of colonization and the brutal experience of the Mau Mau left the country wounded and in a sorry state. When the country attained independence in 1963, Jomo Kenyatta inherited a scarred nation (Kenyatta, 1964). Many Africans were in detention. According to the demographic study done by John Blackers, about 50,000 people died (Maloba & Maloba, 2018). David Anderson's work indicates that 10,000 Mau Mau soldiers died due to conflict (Klaus, 2020).

About 7.5 million acres of land were alienated during colonization and were held in the trust of white highlands. Most of these were in the Rift Valley and Central provinces. This was followed by the declaration of about 20 percent of the valuable land as crown land with no reciprocal compensation to Africans who had been dispossessed (Kenyatta, 1964). As a result, many Africans became landless in their territory. Africans had been forced to provide free labor and denied the right to grow cash crops.

Jomo Kenyatta took over a country already torn apart because of land issues. The country was divided politically, economically, and socially following the colonial experience (Kenyatta, 1966). During the decades of colonization, European powers had granted some favors to African collaborators. Some of these were considered landed African bourgeoisie, who received support for political interests (Kenyatta, 1966). This according to Europeans was a perfect deal to conclude the process of independence in favor of Europeans.

The terms of independence established during the negotiation stated that redistribution of land will not be for free. That meant squatters and landless Africans, those who had no right or means to acquire or recover land, those who had no land rights, or those who had no right to acquire plots of land through traditional inheritance, were detached from Kenya's agricultural economy (Kenyatta, 1965). This led to a surge in the number of squatters. By the year 1948, it was estimated that this number surged to about 220,000 and this number continued to surge during the emergency. On the eve of independence, 92 percent of the population of Kenya then was domiciled in rural areas. The land ownership system was still collective, communal, and familial.

President Jomo Kenyatta was quick to address African issues among them national cohesion and integration. President Kenyatta adopted Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 termed African Socialism. This paper was key in addressing issues of social, economic, and political inclusion across the country (Shem, 2016). Kenyatta adopted African Socialism and Conservative Nationalism. Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 entitled "African socialism" was beneficial in planning for the economic development of Kenya. This was a paper aimed at creating new societies different from colonial societies. It took into consideration political equity, social justice, freedom from poverty, exploitation, and diseases, upholding human dignity, provision of equal opportunities for all, and equal distribution of resources and services devoid of race, social injustice, and oppression.

From the political front, African Socialism according to Kenyatta was important as it was grounded on the development of state-run-mechanized farms and market control. Through African Socialism, Kenyatta borrowed from Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana's belief in a single-party state. The idea was, a multi-party system and class division were alien to Africans. Social differences among communities could be reconciled through a one-party system. Democratic and socialist values were part of the pre-colonial history of Africans (Emmanuel, 2012). This is because the production and distribution of wealth were contributed by all people in the society. Kenyatta was clear in thought that multiple political parties would yield ethnic alignments further exacerbating ethnic violence and disintegration.

Kenyatta adopted African Socialism for several reasons; he wanted to create a society that was distinct from the colonial societies, a society that was free from economic and social inequalities,

racism, and oppression, a united and free country where the rights and freedoms of individuals are upheld, he wanted to create a free, humane and just society characterized by equality before the law and the rule of law, and finally a society exhibiting growth of income per capita.

Kenyatta further adopted a national philosophy entitled “Harambee” a Kiswahili word meaning pulling together. This was a cordial call to all ethnic tribes and people to join hands together toward nation-building. It is an indigenous philosophy aimed at uplifting poor Kenya (Nge’the, 1983). The system encouraged all communities to work together and to an extent raise funds for start-ups, initiatives, and projects with the government promising financial support to such initiatives.

Harambee philosophy according to Kenyatta was a development strategy that aimed at mobilizing people at the local level to participate in economic and social development at their locale. The aim was to achieve a collective good instead of personal aggrandizement. Through collective good, local resources like labor and other materials could be successfully maximized. The majority need in society is guided by the choice of project or initiative to be undertaken. Harambee indeed was an idea whose time had come.

President Kenyatta ensured that the culture of hard work was inculcated in all citizens devoid of race, culture, and origin. The funds mobilized from across the divides were used for both physical and infrastructural developments like roads, air, and waterways both of which enhanced national cohesion and integration (Nge’the, 1983). Agricultural and educational sectors also gained from Harambee’s philosophy since they formed the basis of development. The projects initiated through Harambee at the time attracted both local and international attention. Donors such as Non-Governmental Organizations stepped in to offer reinforcements.

Did Jomo Kenyatta mean well for the country at the time? Scholars have argued that Kenyatta epitomized avarice and that still haunts Kenya to date (Buijtenhuijs, 2016). Privatization of the state for personal aggrandizement is a colonial legacy that Kenyatta entrenched. It was meant to wrong foot and stigmatizes Mau Mau (freedom fighters) and ethnic groups whom Kenyatta and fellow avaricious elite dispossessed of their ancestral land that the British settlers had appropriated. Mau Mau continued to call for land restitution but was dismissed as lazy and more into “politics” than work. The disturbing inference was that they were architects of their poverty and landlessness.

Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi 1978–2022

Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi served as the third vice president before ascending to become the second president of Kenya in 1978. Moi managed to take up a top position despite several attempts from political factions to deter his ambitions. At some point, this deterrence turned to harassment from government officials and other politicians. At some point, he contemplated resignation but before he handed in the letter, he received conviction by close allies (Klaus, 2020). Otherwise, if he did, Kenyan history could have taken a different trajectory from the one in the records.

President Moi took over and promised continuity of Kenyatta’s presidency through a philosophy called “Nyayo” a Kiswahili word meaning footsteps. This, therefore, meant that President Moi followed in the footsteps of his predecessor Kenyatta and his government. This according to him meant three major things, properly defined traditional ties both in government and shared political and religious values, undoubted loyalty to the president and ruling party KANU and sound ethnic grounding and clout (Santiago, 2023). President Moi’s style of leadership was unprecedented and therefore was referred to as the professor of politics.

President Moi, like his predecessor, envisioned a nation that is prosperous with people from distinct ethnic communities peacefully co-existing. This is a vision he penned down in his book "Kenya African Nationalism: Nyayo Philosophy and Principle." In this book published in 1986, President Moi defined what a prosperous nation looked like. In the book, he also indicated the passion for good leadership of his predecessor Kenyatta. Notable things include how he described in his book major setbacks to nation-building including corruption and self-aggrandizement, negative ethnicity, threats of war in the continent pose threats to growth and development in African states. To some scholars (Nzau & Guyo, 2018) Nyayo was not a philosophy rather an ideology of subjugation like *Harambee*. This ideology was couched under love, peace, and unity yet he behaved oppositely. He was tribal, corrupt, tyrannical, and divisive.

President Moi clearly articulated the roles and responsibilities of every individual in nation-building. For the youth, he developed a clear plan with a clear sense that they are the leaders of tomorrow. He, therefore, passed a mandatory admission into the National Youth Service (NYS) before they transited to higher cadres of learning like colleges and universities. According to Moi, National Youth Service training was to impart a sense of national belonging and practical education for national development. The knowledge, skills, and attitude gained in training will be impactful to the country. Training laid the foundation for committed, responsive and responsible leaders for tomorrow. He gave intellectuals a responsibility to guide and show direction to the youths. To his dismay, the intellectuals used young people in colleges and universities to instigate conflict and strikes (Santiago, 2018). This according to him was a bad example that leadership can only be obtained through violence.

The year 1982 was indeed a sad moment in Kenyan history and President Moi's regime. There was a coup d'état which was an attempt to overthrow the KANU regime under Daniel Moi. On Sunday 1st August 1982, at 3.00 AM a faction from Kenya Airforce took charge of the Eastleigh Airbase outskirts of Nairobi and by 4.00 AM Embakasi Airbase which is in proximity had also been captured (Diang'a, 2002). By 6.00 AM Hezekiah Ochuka who led the faction of Kenya Airforce and aired on Voice of Kenya Radio station based at Nairobi C.B.D both in English and Kiswahili language that the military had taken over the government. This followed attempts to bomb Kenya's statehouse.

President Moi was able to quell the attempted coup and restored calm across the country. Historians will argue that this sad moment changed Moi's attitude. To some, the episode transformed President Moi into a dictator. To others, Moi became a firm leader. The nexus between the two is, both agree that both attitudes were aimed at reinforcing and strengthening his leadership and government. Political assassinations were experienced in the aftermath of an attempted coup which some argued was a process of elimination of rebels. President Moi managed to rule Kenya for a record 24 years. He retired in 2002 after completing constitutional two-term limits.

Mwai Emilio Kibaki 2002-2012

Mwai Emilio Kibaki was the fourth Vice President of Kenya before he became the third president. Before 2002, Mwai Kibaki had tried two times both in 1992 and 1997 to be the president. During the 27 December 2002 polls, the opposition alliance named National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) won the election. Mwai Kibaki became the president and has been the party's flag bearer. The 2002 polls marked a great turn-around in the politics of Kenya ever. Formation of political alliances behind it and after the election led to the ousting of the ruling party KANU which had enjoyed an atmosphere of authority and dominance since independence. The Kenya African National Union conceded defeat in a historical proclamation. It marked the first-time political alliances were

formed unanimously to challenge the dominant political party devoid of tribe or clan. Both Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga, who were on the opposition front united to defeat KANU.

The historic post-election violence of 2007/08 tested Kenyan political stability. The experience almost plunged the country into civil strife, which reached its full-blown. It exposed the country's rotten system (Klaus, 2020) It ruptured wounds of irregularities and inequalities on various issues, including land allocation, a pervasive culture of impunity, the overbearing presidency and ethnic-based power, dishonesty of the largest scale among the political elites, malfeasance, and rabble, which pushed the country over the precipice (Securing justice, 2013)

The election pitted the incumbent Mwai Kibaki and the opposition Raila Amolo Odinga. The elections were marred with irregularities and illegalities. It was not clear even to the electoral commission then who won the election. The results were protested by then-opposition leader Raila Odinga leading to mass violence. Scholars have argued that the election only provided a platform to express historical injustices of land and inclusivity which had piled up. The experience called the attention of international communities and the United Nations. Kofi Annan, former secretary general of the United Nations was sent to find a truce between worrying parties. This led to the signing of an agreement leading to the formation of a coalition government. The coalition government had both incumbent Mwai Kibaki as the president and Raila Odinga as the Prime Minister. This was one of the first processes of achieving national cohesion and integration.

To ensure continuous national cohesion and integration, the Coalition government came up with reform agenda also known as the implementation of reform agenda 4. The reform agenda was agreed upon between President Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga in the presence of arbiter Kofi Annan. The reform agenda was read all together in form of a press release. Key issues discussed in the reform agenda are as follows.

The first one was a constitution review process. The parliament of Kenya was given the mandate to constitute a constitutional review commission to look at gaps in the present constitution to ensure national cohesion and integration. The committee was constituted and in April-May 2009, the committee invited the public to submit their memoranda. The committee analyzed issues submitted and come up with three key issues; transitional provisions, a system of government, and a level of devolution of power. The committee ended up publishing a draft for discussion by the public. This led to the amendment of the constitution leading to the promulgation of the new constitution of Kenya in 2010. The constitution provided a shift in the paradigm of leadership and government to enhance inclusivity.

Other issues discussed within the reform agenda include instituting Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) to do inquiries into the nature and causes of continuous conflict in the country. Others included reforms in the judiciary, electoral commission, police reforms, issues of youths and unemployment, and land reforms (Norris et al. 2018). Putting in place all the circumstances surrounding the events at the time, the coalition government made efforts to ensure all the reform agendas were achieved.

Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta 2013-2022

Uhuru Muigai Kenya became the president in 2013 via Jubilee Alliance Ticket. This was a conglomeration of the majority tribes of Kalenjin and the Kikuyu. Uhuru Kenyatta and his running mate William Ruto under the jubilee ticket faced it off with Raila Odinga and his running mate Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka.

Kenyan democracy was tested for the first time after the promulgation of the 2010 constitution during the lead-up to the 2013 election and after (Kenia, 2013). This was a tense but relatively peaceful general election that occurred on 9th March of the same year. The Independence Electoral and Boundary Commission (IEBC) announced Uhuru Kenyatta as the president-elect under the Jubilee coalition after having garnered 50.07 percent of the total votes cast. He was elected on a joint ticket with William Samoei Ruto as his running mate who became a de-jure deputy president. His greatest competitor, then Prime Minister Raila Amolo Odinga went to court in a bid to challenge his win court. Irrespective of all the allegations of technical failures, electoral malpractice, and irregularities, the Supreme Court of Kenya validated the election of Uhuru Kenyatta.

Although Mr. Odinga accepted the court's decision on the electoral petition, civil society and Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) continued to raise questions concerning shortcomings in electoral processes and their impacts on Kenyan democracy. It was upon the elected president Uhuru Kenyatta and his running mate William Ruto to restore people's confidence in the electoral process and show total commitment to the implementation of the 2010 constitution more so on matters of devolution, land reforms, national reconciliation, and total fight against corruption. Failure to do so the country was going to be polarized and alienated from the international community

In as much as there were clashes preceding the elections of 2013, and following the verdict of the Supreme Court, the country tried as much as possible to abstain from a repeat of the 2007/08 post-election violence. Several factors contributed to this peaceful election. Some of them include, a consensus reached by political elites and entire citizens not to turn the entire country back to the brink of war. Pressure from the international community more so the International Criminal Court (ICC) cases, restriction of freedom to assemble, media self-censorship as well as the imposition of security personnel on hot spots helped in averting unrest

However, there are vital issues that are yet to be addressed (Wato, 2011). A plethora of reforms focusing on systematic and structural conflict drivers, unemployment rate, resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs), land reforms, regional and socio-economic inequalities, weak institutional framework, ethnic tensions, and culture of impunity are factors that are yet to be implemented. Up to now, accountability for 2007/08 post-election violence is yet to be solved. Cases are still resting with the International Criminal Court. Cases of witness tempering still going on to date

March 2018 Historic Uhuru-Raila Handshake

In August 2017, Kenya went to polls and the incumbent Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta was passionate to retain his seat for the second term. The opposition led by Raila Odinga was also passionate about breathing fresh air into government by outdoing the incumbent government. The independent electoral and boundaries commission announced Uhuru Kenyatta as the president after garnering 54.17% of the total votes cast against Raila Odinga who finished second with 44.94% of the vote (Carter report, 2018). The results were disputed by the opposition. The opposition took to the Supreme Court to petition the electoral results. The Supreme Court upon hearing the petition made a historic ruling ever in Kenya by nullifying the presidential election. The Supreme Court ordered a fresh presidential election within 60 days.

Kenya went on a repeat election in October 2017. The opposition boycotted the repeat election with the claim of an un-revamped electoral system. The opposition claimed that they could not participate in an election with the electoral body which bungled the election. According to the

opposition, it was until the electoral body is reformed that they will participate in the election. All the same, elections went on with only one presidential candidate participating. The electoral body went ahead and again declared Uhuru Kenyatta as the winner.

Kenya entered into a session of confusion (Onguny, 2020). The opposition refused to recognize the presidency of Uhuru Kenyatta and his government. They pronounced a resistance movement that boycotted paying taxes and the purchase of goods from government-owned companies. The country was at standstill for months. On 30th January 2018, the opposition leader Raila Odinga was sworn in as the people's president. The situation ushered in a country with two presidents i.e. the president of Kenya Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga the people's president.

The situation was dire and this called the attention of both the continent and the world. The international community called for a truce between the two rivals. The succession movements had been planned and discussions around it were ongoing. Kenya was about to be divided into two (Oxford Analytica, 2018). The idea was to solve electoral injustices which have provided a breeding ground for political betrayals and persecutions. Issues of political exclusion also formed part of the discussion since the presidency had been emanating from only two tribes the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin.

Just like then vice president George Saitoti once said, 'there comes a time when a nation is more important than an individual' the two opposing leaders decided to end their prolonged political differences because the end was unpredictable and the country needed to move on. This led to the famous "Handshake" where the two leaders shook hands after a long period of deliberation in Harambee house offices. The handshake took place outside the Harambee offices in the presence of the media. The two leaders agreed to work together to enhance unity between Kenyan communities. Through a handshake, a sigh of relief was breathed into the Kenyan political environment. The situation which had scared investors was restored. Peace reigned.

Conclusion

Whereas the spirit and changes in the country's development agenda aim at achieving national cohesion and integration, the attempts remain sound and committed mainly because it displays tendencies and strategies toward national unity in Kenya (Klaus, 2020). Various commissions of inquiries into national unity have laid down major steps which need to be implemented. Some of them include the Kriegler report on 2007 election malpractices and Waki report of 2007 on Post-Election Violence (PEV) and Ndungu's report on land questions.

Kenyan leaders need to take these reports and initiatives by revisiting and converting these recommendations into actionable plans. In as much as most of these recommendations focused on land, there are some which involved constitutional reforms such as the Building Bridges Initiatives which came about after the historic handshake in March 2018 (Boone, et al., 2019) other constitutional reforms led to the promulgation of the 2010 constitution which has served the country very well.

However, there are vital issues that are yet to be addressed (Wato, 2011). A plethora of reforms focusing on systematic and structural conflict drivers, unemployment rate, resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs), land reforms, regional and socio-economic inequalities, weak institutional framework, ethnic tensions, and culture of impunity are factors that are yet to be implemented. Up to now, accountability for 2007/08 post-election violence is yet to be solved. Cases are still resting with the International Criminal Court.

Policy Recommendations

Shift from the colonial administrative system

Post-colonial scholars often refer to the role and impact of colonialism on African countries including Kenya, yet they seem muted on the failure by post-colonial African societies to immediately shift away from the colonial style of administration. Now this issue has impacted Kenya much deeper than many can imagine. For one, Kenya only transformed its colonial provincial administration system in 2013 after the amalgamation of the 2010 constitution. The provincial administration system was not only exploitative but was never structured in a manner that it could enhance service delivery to the people. The lost decades between 1963 and 2010 when Kenya was governed using the same system as the one left by the British colonial administrators needs to be reexamined more so on the reason why successive governments maintained this inefficient system. But an even more crucial component about retaining the colonial administration system is the people who worked in this system may not have changed their work ethic, culture and mentality. With some of them still in the public service and high political offices, their approach to governance may remain not only exploitative but also divisive thus affecting national cohesion and unity.

Equitable distribution of public goods

After every five years, Kenyans have been heading to the polls since the return of multiparty in 1992 to elect their leaders. Central to their campaigns has been the issue of economic development and transforming the lives of Kenyans. Recent decades have seen the country benefit from increased number of highly trained economists; planners and policy experts who can help design sustainable development plans that can propel the country into the next level as it was with the case of Kenya's vision 2030 blueprint. But the elephant in the room has been the question of equity and fairness in the distribution of resources. Basic economics and development programs explain that national development needs to cover the broader nation and not specific regions of the country. Just as the colonial government did by favoring white settlements over the rest of the country, successive governments have focused more on developing their so called 'strong holds' investing money in projects that have very little returns. What is even ironical is that money meant to finance these projects are often borrowed as loans which today seem to burden the Kenyan taxpayers with repayment. Unequal distribution of resources will not put Kenya among the competitive nations because underdevelopment in one part of the country will be reflected in the aggregate GDP. But the trend of unjust distribution of public goods seems to persist. This is a challenge that needs to be addressed with urgency if Kenyan is to go far.

Inadequate land reforms

The question of land is integral not just because land is a factor of production but also because land is at the core of historical injustices and grievances in Kenya. The problem of land has been an issue from the colonial period when land was forcefully annexed or heavily taxed to the post-colonial period where successful governments either maintained status quo or introduced reforms that did not adequately address the issue. Land remains an emotional topic in Kenya with evidence from the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation report as well as the 1998 Akiwumi Commission of Inquiry revealing the depth of land problems in Kenya especially how it impacts on tribal clashes. If the issue of land is not well addressed in Kenya, then national cohesion and unity is likely to fail.

Tackling corruption and impunity

Perhaps the impact of corruption and impunity is not always given enough attention, especially on the extent to which these two continue to divide the country. Most studies focus on the impact of corruption and impunity on the economic spheres of the country, but at the same time they highly impact on the nation's sense of unity. In Kenya, corruption is entrenched into institutions and organizations that are supposed to ensure fairness and justice. Lack of justice, be it legal, economic and political makes various segments of society feel isolated and marginalized. Many can attest to lack of justice within the legal systems, mistreatment from security agencies, denial of opportunities despite merit, misinformation and spreading of fake news by people in authority as well as extrajudicial killings are other examples of how much corruption and impunity affects the country. Successive governments have not been able to address the issue of corruption and impunity which has seen some of the least competent individuals continue to serve in high positions within the public service. Dealing with corruption and impunity will certainly be a game changer for Kenya and its citizens. The idea that the country and policies being made should only focus on development and not address corruption and impunity only worsen economic and social divisions within the country

Introduction of innovative political reforms in Kenya

There are many discussions over the need for political reforms in Kenya and how such changes are likely to impact on the country. In fact, since 1964, Kenyans have been preoccupied with the discussions about political reforms with numerous efforts starting with the abolition of the Westminster model of government just a year after independence to the introduction of the devolved system of government in 2013. Yet, despite the many political reforms in the country, they seem to be inadequate when it comes to national cohesion and unity. Perhaps we can lay the blame on lack of innovative political reforms that will take into account not only the unique structural and demographic features of Kenya, but also the aspect of human nature which is often ignored. The complexities of Kenya's ethnic composition and decades old stereotypes need to be dismantled in the new political dispensation and a new understanding of who is a Kenyan, what obligations do they have towards the republic as well as the roles they have to play in ensuring the caliber of leaders governing the country constitutes the best the Kenya can offer will contribute immensely towards the rebirth of a new nation, one where its citizens are united and there is cohesion.

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