

Research Report

African Youth's 'Whirl-wind' Allegiance to Leadership

Obediah Dodo^{1*}, Jesca Majaha²

1 Department of Peace and Governance, Bindura University of Science Education, P. B. 1020 Bindura, Zimbabwe;

2 Great Zimbabwe University (Independent Researcher);

**Corresponding author: Obediah Dodo, E.mail: obediahdodo@gmail.com*

(Received 14 January 2018; Accepted 20 Mars 2018; Published 5 May 2018)

Abstract - Realising that most youth militias in African politics get to a point where they dump their erstwhile leaders for change and new political dispensation, this study sought to explore the dynamics behind and the main factors driving youth abandonment of their political ideologies for new pursuits. The study conducted through desk analysis followed a qualitative path in order to produce descriptive results. It specifically focused on Africa. Manifest Content Analysis was employed to process data. The study established that most leaders create political environments that do not allow independent intellectuals and youth empowerment resulting in youth getting tied to the leaders' ideology for hope and survival. Along the way, they are used to protect the leaders' continued stay in office. It also established that over time, most youth realise the level of abuse and what any other alternative might offer for their development before they suddenly and permanently switch sides. Often times, the abandonment of these leaders mark their demise politically.

Key words: Political Youth, Development, Allegiance, Leadership, Youth militia, Ideology

Introduction

Youth in politics have since time immemorial followed ideologies and practices of their political parties. They have also respected, followed and at some point hero-worshipped their leaders so much so that they end up sacrificing morality, humanity, dignity and reason for the life and sustenance of the leaders' continued stay in office (Sherlock 2011). However, studies have observed that most of the leaders who would have abused the youth end up leaving office disgracefully (Sherlock 2011; Janson 2016). Interestingly, the same abused youth dramatically transfer their allegiance and support to another power block as if everything is normal.

The abandonment of loyalty by the youth for a new leader has been recorded in Zaire now Democratic Republic of Congo where the youth group rallied behind Mobutu sese Seko from 1965 defending him in all respects (Amnesty International 1980) and in Malawi where Kamuzu Banda had almost turned the youth into 'semi-zombies' (Banda 2006). In South Africa, African National Congress (ANC) youth almost boot-licked Thabo Mbeki before they dumped him for Jacob Zuma in 2008 while in Zambia, Kenneth Kaunda had almost become an idol for the youth before they turned against him in 1990 (Bandow 2013). Muammar Gaddafi who had pacified his youth for decades was surprised in 2011 when they turned against him (Sherlock 2011) while Yahya Jammeh in Gambia was dumped by his long-time loyal youth in 2016 (Janson 2016). Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe had also managed to re-create his own mound of the youth group that hero-worshipped him, supported him and sacrificed their lives for his unending lavish life-style. They had also almost accepted to defend his attempt at turning Zimbabwe into a dynasty, crushing any known and perceived dissenting voices (Sachikonye 2011). It was only after a coup-d'état that was described as a 'strategic military intervention' by the military on the 14th of November 2017 that the same youth suddenly shifted their allegiance to the new power block. However, studies have not adequately explained the reasons for the youth behaviour, where they show unreserved loyalty and support before they suddenly refocus on a new leader. It has not been explained whether they youth will be following an individual, an ideology, material resources, do it out of ignorance or that there will be some aspect of coercion.

Therefore, this study sought to explore an explanation for the 'whirl-wind' type of youth political support and allegiance that has in most instances left the former leaders shocked and exposed to all forms of threats. The same youth often times become the main threats to their erstwhile god-fathers as they will be demanding explanations for all their abuses, accountability for resource usage and the return of all allegedly stolen resources. It also sought to explain the motivation for youth availing themselves as willing tools for human rights abuses and their sudden defection against their erstwhile bosses. While the study presented an African perspective to the question at hand, it derived its data from selected cases in Africa.

Background

Since the 1960s when Africa began to attain political independence in various states, people expected total and unfettered independence only to realise that there was a new breed of African leaders who were equally competent in exercising repression and abusing human rights. Such experiences were recorded in such countries as Ghana, Nigeria, Zaire, Senegal, Libya, Togo, Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Congo, and others (Murunga & Wasong'o. 2007; Bah, 2010; Bandow, 2013; Chitukutuku, 2014; Janson, 2016). While Africans' expectations were high, some leaders decided to cling on to power thus dampening the hopes and dreams of the majority. Cases in point included Angola's José Eduardo dos Santos (37 years in power), Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe (37 years), Cameroon's Paul Biya (34 years), and Libya's Muammar Gaddafi (42 years), Theodore Nguema of Equatorial Guinea (38 years), Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda (27 years). Others included Uganda's Yoweri Museveni (31 years), Rwanda's Paul Kagame (23 years), Yahya Jammeh (22 years), Daniel arap Moi (24 years), Kamuzu Banda of Malawi (30 years), Sassou Ngueso of Congo (25 years), Bongo of Togo (40 years) and others.

Some of the leaders were not yet prepared to leave office by the time they were pushed out. The removal from office of Thabo Mbeki by his party in 2008 (The Gaurdian, 2008) was a clear testimony of the impatience of the masses to poor leadership. In Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza's insistence on a third term in defiance of the

constitution also brought violence while in Rwanda, Paul Kagame's manipulation of the constitution to remain in power since 1994 (Tisdall 2016) also attracted international condemnation. Robert Mugabe, Nguema, Museveni, Kagame, Nguesso and Kurunziza among others' refusal to leave office despite having failed to deliver have seen violence at the hands of the youth militia on one side against the majority masses on the other. Most of these African leaders have survived at the mercy of the youth that they exploit, undermining the rights and freedoms of the citizens and other dissenting voices (AI 1980; Sachikonye 2011; Kawamara-Mishambi 2014; Janson 2016). This practice has been across Africa. Interestingly, after a lengthy exploitation, the same youth suddenly abandon their erstwhile leaders and begin to employ the same immoral and terrorist strategies against them (Kawamara-Mishambi 2014; Janson 2016).

In such countries like Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, and others, there were prominent youth militias that were exploited to sustain the leaders' stay in office by persecuting opposition political parties, dissenting voices and killing and torturing any perceived enemies and rivals. However, as soon as there was a window for leadership change, the same youth militias took advantage to effectively push through their agenda and in some cases redirecting the same persecution towards their original leaders. Aply, this was the experience post-Banda in Malawi, post-Kaunda in Zambia, post-Jammeh in Gambia, post-Moi in Kenya (Maina 2010; Bandow 2013; Janson 2016) and during the removal of Robert Mugabe from office on the 15th of November 2017 when the same youth militia supported the military morally to force the former out of office.

Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative approach seeking descriptive results. In that regard, it explored the youth and political cultures and systems that were abused by political leaders through desk analysis. Data was obtained from both literature review and media stories that closely followed the activities on the ground before Manifest Content Analysis was employed to process it. Most of the secondary data was derived from selected cases in Africa.

Conceptual Framework

The study was motivated by a noted increase in the number of political youth turning against their erstwhile long time leaders. The factors for the youth dumping their leaders may be varied. However, the most common underlining aspect lies around governance matters where most of the youth decide to look for alternative political areas that promise to address their economic and social challenges. Therefore, the study is guided by a governance concept where it is argued from two planes; that politicians generally take the youth for granted as an illiterate and naïve group and that youth are rarely prioritised in development and empowerment programmes. The two assumptions point to a situation where youth are easily manipulated and *abusable* without any effect. Governance as a concept notes that youth as a valuable constituency need to be recognised in all societal programmes and leadership development. Contextually, the study is situated in Africa and therefore adopted an afro-centric approach, which sought to argue from an African youth perspective by reviewing African voices and actions. The study deliberately avoided a comparative study with any other continental situations owing to socio-economic and political differences

Analysis

Youth Abuses

Most African leaders have had youth groups that are originally created to mobilize political membership and carry out political indoctrination. However, over time, their roles evolved adding a security role to their list of tasks, and progressively becoming competitors in this regard vis-à-vis the recognised security apparatus of state in the form of the police and the army. To the sitting leaders, the existence of these militias is a welcome development given that they guarantee their continued stay in office despite an array of failures and abuse of human rights (Sachikonye 2011; Kawamara-Mishambi 2014; Janson 2016; Dodo et al. 2016). This they achieve through killing, persecuting and infringing the rights of their perceived and known rivals and supporters. In the majority of cases, the youth responsible for keeping leaders in office have very little

benefits in terms of development and empowerment. They derive satisfaction from being associated with the leadership, by getting identity politically and ideologically, getting free alcohol and drugs, enjoying perennial impunity and getting preference in social and political activities among others. They are clouded in ignorance that they fail to realise the form and depth of abuse that they are subjected. In Africa alone, their cases are recorded in several countries but operating in almost the same trend and impacting in the same way.

In 1956, Kwame Nkrumah had his youth called Young Pioneers in Ghana who were modelled along the Korean style. In Zaire, Mobutu Sese Seko, who took power in 1965 had his youth militias who saw thousands of people getting arrested, tortured and killed for political reasons (AI 1980). Similarly in Malawi, Hastings Kamuzu Banda established the Young Pioneers also known as *chiswes* (termites) for their reddish uniform, the youth wing of Malawi Congress Party (MCP) in 1963, the year the country gained independence. The youth militia was initially established as a way of mobilising the youth in national development cause. Banda transformed the Young Pioneers, into a paramilitary group that persecuted pro-democracy groups (Roessler 2005). The power and existence of the Young Pioneers was only cut in 1993 by the military following a Young Pioneer/military shootout which resulted in the latter dismantling the former. This subsequently saw the defeat of Banda in 1994. The new President, Bakili Muluzi transformed the same Young Pioneers that had dumped Banda into his Young Democrats, a youth wing that also continued with the evil and immoral terrorist activities they had learnt during Banda's era (Banda 2006). In 2004 when Bingu wa Mutharika took over power, the same youth were transformed into what he termed young Cadets, continuing with their terrorist activities (Gunya & Mthawanji 2015). The trend was almost similar with Gaddafi's youth ideology. He also used them to suppress civil freedoms (Sherlock 2011).

Botswana had its Boy Brigades under the leadership of Seretse Khama. However, these youths were not notorious for terror and were quickly dismantled. Kenneth Kaunda in Zambia had his National Youth Service that also protected his tenure while Daniel Arap Moi used the Mungiki 'criminal' group composed of urban youth to sustain his office. It was the same militia that supported Uhuru Kenyatta during the 2002 elections where innocent citizens were persecuted. (Murunga & Wasong'o 2007). It was also the same militia that unleashed violence killing and displacing hundreds of people during the 2007 general elections. However, the same youth militias

were inherited by Mwai Kibaki who also exploited them to terrorise opposition supporters in the 2007/8 election (Murunga & Wasong'o 2007; Maina 2010).

In the same spirit of using youth militias to seal continued stay in office, Cote d'Ivoire President Laurent Gbagbo relied on the Young Patriots to take up a malicious dialogue around citizenship and national belonging as a way of mobilising support against the opposition (Marshall-Fratani, 2006). Similarly in South Africa, there have been extremist youth militias protecting leadership. According to an Afro-barometer published by Lekalake (2016), though more than half of the youth in South Africa are politically inactive, the few who are involved have often taken extremist paths. ANC youth league president Julius Malema vowed to kill if necessary in order to get Jacob Zuma elected in 2009 (Mattes & Richmond 2015). Apparently, it was the same Malema-led militia that had protected Thabo Mbeki in office before dumping him for Zuma. According to Bah (2010), Ghana is not an exception regarding *god-fatherism* as defined by Okafor (2017). There are also some militias who are employed to instil fear in the generality of the people as a way of ensuring continued stay of the incumbent leadership.

In Zimbabwe, Mugabe had created a youth militia that protected his rule for 37 years. The Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) youth wing have been involved in consolidating Mugabe's stay in power through the use of violence and threats methods during the elections of 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008 (Sachikonye 2011; Dodo & Musorowegomo 2012). The establishment of National Youth Service institutions in Zimbabwe in year 2000 further worsened the political situation as more indoctrinated youth were churned out to perpetuate violence. All these youth militias ensured that all the meaningful opposition elements and dissenting voices were either suppressed or eliminated permanently.

This practice of having the militia defining political trends was finally brought to a halt in 2017 following an attack by a youth leader on the national military command. This attack saw the military launch a coup d'état which they dubbed a strategic military intervention code named 'Operation Restore Legacy'. The coup led to the removal of Mugabe from office and the arrest of several close allies of his allegedly for some criminal charges. Interestingly, when the tide changed direction, most of the youth who had supported Mugabe were now opposed to his tenure and calling for his arrest for exploiting them to kill, persecute, plunder resources and rig elections for 37

years. In the six-day coup d'état period, the entire Parliament and his youth militia were on the fore-front pushing for an immediate impeachment in Parliament.

Motivation to Support Leadership

It has been shown above that part of the continued stay in office by some African leaders has been courtesy of the meticulously created youth militias that instilled fear in the people so much so that all the opposition voices died naturally. As the leadership was kept in office, the youth militia leadership correspondingly benefitted materially thus giving them energy to intensify their infringement of human rights and tweaking of the constitution (Sachikonye 2011; Gunya & Mthawanji 2015). In other words, there were various incentives for the youth militias to take the route that they adopted in all the cases recorded in Africa.

History and recorded trends show that youth are targeted as the instrument of perpetuating violence as they are susceptible to money and other gifts which can make them take part despite the risks involved in carrying out such assignments (Roessler 2005; Sachikonye 2011; Gunya & Mthawanji 2015). It requires different forms of incentives and motivation to lure the youth into political violence either as mercenaries or mere party supporters. The incentives may be availed as donations to the youth league of a political party from the desperate politicians; it may be given in the form of direct contract from the politicians to the youth group competent enough to cause violence and carry out certain tasks. This becomes an inspiration to the youth during election, to do anything possible to protect the interest of the donor. Cash or some material favours for votes make up a more instantaneous and concrete incentive than promises to deliver goods or reform policy. In Zambia, opposition leader Michael Sata resourcefully adopted '*Don't Kubeba*' (Don't tell) as his campaign catchphrase for the 2011 presidential election, urging people to take gifts from politicians (Mbavaren 2013).

There are some politicians who take advantage of desperate youth to abuse them politically. Because of the levels of poverty in most African societies, conflicts and violence have also become part of their lives. Therefore, in most political campaigns, politicians create an impression that upon election into office, there will be some unending source of funding for the development of their constituencies. They promise to up bring all the unemployed youth by creating jobs and availing food. Unfortunately, those promises never come as they are mere utopia. It is against all the poverty,

joblessness, hunger and lack of development that politicians decide to manipulate the youth for their political mileage. Some scholars have described this form of youth involvement into politics as strategic coercion (Dodo et al., 2016). In some cases, selected youth are exposed to livelihood means as a way of sending a message to others so that they also see hope in the politicians. Eventually, more youth join political groups.

It is argued that in most developing states, wherever political violence is recorded, it is the youth who lead while security services covertly participate. Equally, impartial involvement of the youth in mainstream politics also contributes towards political violence (Okafor 2017). This is what was experienced in Zimbabwe during the 2008 election violence (Dodo & Musorowegomo 2012). With regards to the developments in some African countries like Tunisia, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Egypt, Libya, Mali and Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic (Heinz 2009) and Zimbabwe among others, the power of the youth and its effect on the political system can be appreciated. The youth have shown their capabilities in bringing about change politically.

Most African societies are patriarchal in nature, believing that men lead and that elders direct young ones on how, what and where to go. This attitude on the part of some Africans has seen most youth growing up in political societies assuming some of the tendencies including becoming political and supporting the status quo. Some of the youth are made to believe that their livelihoods are sustained by the prevailing political systems so much so that they begin to protect the same political system (Janson, 2016). However, some youth are forced to believe and protect prevailing political systems by their elders. This form of coercion comes in different forms; security, food provision, access to social services, blackmail and the need to clear oneself (Dodo et al. 2016).

There are however some youth who get into politics who are very narcissistic and arrogant (Okafor 2017). In most cases, they believe that they are right, refuse to take advice, and never learn from their mistakes. Such youth are often overzealous trying to prove their strength and courage in public thereby ending up hurting others in society. It is such type of youth who are usually assigned to take up immoral and evil tasks like murdering opponents. In the long run, such youth make it part of their habits to kill and persecute people in society before avenging spirits and other demonic spirits finally take over their faculties.

Sudden Disloyalty by the Youth

Like it has been explained by Roessler (2005); Marshall-Fratani (2006); Murunga & Wasong'o (2007); Maina (2010); Sachikonye (2011); Gunya & Mthawanji (2015) and Dodo et al (2016), after the youth have been used for lengthy periods to sustain political systems and yet benefitting nothing, there comes a time when they begin to see differently. Factors that drive them to see differently vary such as; religious, education, ill-health, change of friends, change of settlements, form of counselling and advice, shift in income, and the degree of hope for the future among others. Once these take effect, it is not surprising to see some youth suddenly changing their focus and political priorities. This is against an understanding that youth are not passive political actors pushed by politicians for their own selfish ends. The changing nature of the political background and the party systems in Africa means that the youth have to reposition themselves and take stock of how to accomplish what they want (Chitukutuku, 2014). This is what most politicians in Africa fail or forget to realise before they relax on their laurels that slide them in political troubles.

According to Mattes & Richmond (2015), the youth have indicated that there are no incentives in most of the over-stayed leadership. It has been revealed that while the youth would have been promised development and employment at the inception of a political regime, after a lengthy waiting, nothing goes their way. Naturally, this erodes patience in the youth such that they end up believing that a change in leadership also changes their fate. Subsequently, this breeds room for defection and disloyalty on the part of the youth. Closely related to the above is political parties' failure to put forward any solution to change the youth's personal situations especially with regards to joblessness and poverty in their communities. Most youth have hopes for better lives especially after graduating from tertiary institutions or completing high school (ILO, 2010; Mbaveren 2013). Having failed to secure jobs or see their lives improved, most youth seek immediate alternatives, which unfortunately work against their immediate past regimes.

As the political environment changes youth also prepare for the changes making themselves relevant to calls for change (Kawamara-Mishambi, 2014). Whenever there are landmark political developments in a nation, massive changes are expected in most sectors. As such, youth also try to place themselves strategically so that they remain relevant in any new system. Even when they used to be cruel and dirty in their

operations, they seek to cleanse themselves so that they are acceptable in a new political dispensation. Often times, this is done through public renunciation of their past and sometimes accepting responsibility for all the crimes and immorality. In Zimbabwe in 2017, a ZANU PF youth leader who had led massive persecution and criminal escapades in the name of politics had to go on national media apologizing for his acts. His entire youth team surprisingly turned against him and the national leadership even choosing to condemn them in public.

The dictatorial nature of most African governments allows a situation that is prohibitive of political involvement of the youth. Some governments' policies are meant to domestic both people and the political forces in their countries. This is achieved by enacting authoritarian laws that hold back freedoms and stifle civil society and labour unions' efforts (Chitukutuku 2014). It is after some time as a Shona proverb says; *Mbwanana dzinosvinura pakasiyana* (puppies gain eye-sight at different stages of growth), that some youth begin to realise the repressive nature of governments that they would have supported for ages. Similarly, the leadership's failure to pay attention to or take their youth wings seriously (Schlee 2011) has also contributed to the loss of loyalty by most youth who then redirect their effort elsewhere.

Early removal of the youth from education affects their interest in politics and governance processes (Schlee 2011). Studies have established that low levels of education impact on reasoning and appreciation of issues. There are two perspectives to this argument; either youth receive little and inferior education or are denied the most relevant education that they need for their development and growth (Chitukutuku 2014). Therefore, this generally affects the youths' opportunities for jobs and empowerment. Similarly, youth's failure to get opportunities in the job market can demoralise them and result in frustration and idleness (ILO 2010).

In the case of the youth who had an opportunity to attain education, their understanding of politics and poverty are different (Bah 2010). Some of these educated youth are highly intelligent that they do not allow their integrity tarnished by associating with sit-tight leadership and authoritarian regimes. Some of the youth attain education as they serve as political vigilante thus taking the leaders by surprise whenever they express their minds and concerns. Some of the youth especially the educated are mature and wise enough to understand their responsibilities within political and social settings (Chitukutuku 2014). With the advent of contemporary studies on peace, governance and democracy, some youth now have a deep appreciation of aspects around human rights,

rule of law, democracy and political freedoms so much so that they no longer want to be associated with authoritarianism (Bratton 1999; Bah 2010; Mattes & Richmond 2015). The coming of international criminal justice systems has also put fear on the youth as they realise that they can be arrested and asked to account for their participation in political crimes and abuses of human rights. This realisation is only made possible by the acquisition of education and political knowledge by the youth.

Discussion

The existence of the youth who worked illegally and immorally to sustain the continued occupation of leadership office in some African countries was recorded in several countries as explained in the study. However, what is of interest in the fact that all these youth groups operated in the same modus and impacting in the same way. Also of interest is that all the groups followed some systematic path; experiencing challenges; inception; informalisation through official systems; impunity; out of control and abrupt defiance. As explained in the study, all the six stages were experienced in all the cases with the leaders firstly creating and subjecting the people to some challenges which they find no immediate solution except from the same leaders. It is out of that realisation that the youth are forced into groups that give them some hope of survival and these groups are officially given some informal powers and authority over their communities. As the youth exercise their informal powers, they commit crimes both to protect their leaders and find livelihoods. On the other hand, because the leaders find crimes committed as serving their interests, they subsequently protect the youth from prosecution and social and political accountability before they get out of control becoming thugs, criminals and murderers. In the long run, they create defiant structures that, once they realise another window of opportunity either for personal gains or further protection from prosecution, they can suddenly turn against their erstwhile leaders. As soon as they defect, they begin to mete out the same persecution that they inflicted on their opponents on the dumped leaders as explained by Roessler (2005); Marshall-Fratani (2006); Murunga & Wasong'o (2007); Maina (2010); Sachikonye (2011); Gunya & Mthawanji (2015).

On factors that motivated the youth to protect the interests of the leaders, the study established various issues. According to Sachikonye (2011); Gunya & Mthawanji (2015), youth are targeted as the instrument of perpetuating violence as they are susceptible to manipulation. It was established that because of the levels of poverty,

hunger and unemployment in most African countries vis-à-vis levels of literacy, most youth are desperate so much so that they are prepared to do anything to protect their political leaders who support them with some of the basic needs like food, beer and drugs. Realising the desperation on the part of the youth, some politicians take advantage for their political gains. Because of the above cited desperation, politicians have also used different forms of incentives and motivation to lure the youth for immoral and evil acts that guarantee the leaders' stay in office.

Some cases of youth abuse have been noted to emanate from ignorance and illiteracy where youth members fail to appreciate the importance of education, human rights, democracy and lawlessness. This seems to formulate the bulk of the youth who partake in some of the acts that protect the interests of the leaders in office. Patriarchy is also another noted factor in this study where the youth find it difficult to ignore advice and instructions from their community elders. This is common in the rural areas that are still ardent believers of traditionalism.

With regards to some of the reasons for the youth's sudden change of political support, the study has established mixed positions. As argued by Chitukutuku (2014), some of the youth have shifted their political allegiance largely citing lack of fulfilment of the promised services especially at the inception of the youth groups. Some youth have also changed sides after they had flexed their minds to sieve the good from bad, immoral and evil from unacceptable and the proper and socially permissible from the chargeable legally and condemnable culturally. All these decisions have been necessitated by education and literacy on the part of the concerned youth. Besides, literacy has also exposed them to the consequences of some of the international legal trends where participants in human rights abuses, atrocities and abetting any of these, may result in having one taken through international prosecution. Literacy and to some extent a realisation of the bad by the leadership has also pushed some of the youth to be able to define authoritarianism and how it can be ended.

Generally youth are noted to be a very fluid constituency that responds to movement and pressure slowly largely on account of their desperation. They are strategically calculative considering their immediate benefits rather than lifetime benefits of the leaders. In the long term, most youth under such conditions end up losing patience and getting susceptible to recruitment into any other political group that may be offering a better and sustainable deal. They also realise that the treatment and abuses

that their opponents may be experiencing, may sooner or later befall them once they are seen as potential enemies. Therefore, on the part of the youth, it is not about serving the interests of the leaders forever, but seeking where their stomachs are best fed. Typical cases include the dumping of Mugabe by his long time youth who had committed political crimes for years with impunity all for the protection of his regime.

Recommendations

In view of the increasing cases of youth dumping their erstwhile political leaders, the study recommends that there be deliberate constitution aligned education programs for the youth participating in politics so that they appreciate their roles and parameters. The programs should emphasise the development of democratic thoughts and ability to act to help the youth acquire the capacity for taking part in politics. This comes against a background where some of the youth participate in immoral and illegal acts out of ignorance rather than to genuinely protect the interests of the leaders.

The study also recommends that governments deliberately create political and economic environments that ensure empowerment of the youth. This empowerment will then ensure that youth make rational decisions that equally benefit both parties and never subject themselves to exploitation. This could be achieved by accessing youth to political, intellectual and economic empowerment. Constitutional and policy provisions are not enough without applied political will.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

Amnesty International, 1980, Human Rights Violations in Zaire, AI Publications, London

Bah A. B. 2010, Democracy and civil war: citizenship and peacemaking in Cote d'Ivoire. *African affairs*, 109: 597-615.

Banda P. 2006, Zimbabwe Independent, 'In placid Malawi, shades of Mugabe's Zim' <http://www.theindependent.co.zw/2006/09/29/in-placid-malawi-shades-of-mugabes-zim/> 16/12/17

Bandow D, 2013, 'Democracy Is under Challenge in Zambia', <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dougbandow/2013/02/11/democracy-is-under-challenge-in-zambia/#4f14579a7956> 16/12/17

Bratton, M, 1999, Political Participation in a New Democracy: Institutional Considerations in Zambia. *Comparative Political Studies*, 32, 5: 549-88

Chitukutuku E. 2014, Things Youth in Africa consider important or valuable and how they inform youth participation in Electoral and Governance Processes. Discussion paper for the 2014 Mandela Institute for Development Studies (MINDS) Annual Youth Dialogue in Elections and Governance, Mandela Institute for Development Studies.

Dodo O, Nsenduluka E, & Kasanda S. M. 2016. Political Bases as the Epicentre of Violence: Cases of Mazowe and Shamva, Zimbabwe. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, 11, 2: 208-219

Dodo O. & Musorowegomo C. 2012. Political Intolerance, Diversity and Democracy: Youth Violence in Bindura Urban, Zimbabwe. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research* 2, 6: 134-143

Gunya F. & D. Mthawanji, 2015, The Nation, 'Making Youth Political involvement Work', dated 19/08/15, <http://mwnation.com/making-youth-political-involvement-work/> 16/12/17.

Heinz J, Kohnert D, & Nugent P. 2009. The successful Ghana election of 2008: a Convenient myth? *Journal of modern African Studies* 48: 95-115.

Janson M. 2016, Enough is enough: Gambians put faith in democracy as Yahya Jammeh ousted at ballot box, <http://theconversation.com/enough-is-enough-gambians-put-faith-in-democracy-as-yahya-jammeh-ousted-at-ballot-box-69825> 16/12/17

Kawamara-Mishambi S. 2014, The Observer, 'Stop this political abuse of the youth', dated 30/03/14. http://observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=30956%3A-stop-this-political-abuse-of-the-youth&Itemid=96 16/12/17.

Lekalake R. 2016, Youth political engagement in South Africa: Beyond student protests, Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 101, <http://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Working%20paper> 16/12/17

Maina P. M. 2010, Pambazuka News, 'Political participation, politicians and the youth in Kenya' dated 21/01/10, <https://www.pambazuka.org/governance/political-participation-politicians-and-youth-kenya> 16/12/17

Marshall-Fratani, R. 2006. The War of "Who is Who": Autochthony, Nationalism, and Citizenship in Ivorian Crisis. *African Studies Review* 49, 2: 9-43.

Mattes, R., & Richmond, S. 2015. Are South Africa's youth really a 'ticking time bomb'? Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 152. <http://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Working%20paper/AfropaperNo152.pdf>. 16/12/17

Mbaveren D.G. 2013. Political violence and socio economic development, *Nigeria Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 4: 41-45

Murunga G. R. & S. W. Wasong'o. 2007. Kenya the Struggle for Democracy, London, Zed Books

Roessler, P. 2005. Donor-Induced Democratisation and the Privatization of State Violence in Kenya and Rwanda. *Comparative Politics* 37, 2: 207-227.

Sachikonye, L. 2011. When the state turns against its citizens: Institutionalised Violence and Political Culture. Johannesburg: Jacana

Okafor S, 2017. Youth Involvement in Political Violence/Thuggery: A Counter Weight to Democratic Development, *Africa Journal of Political Science and Public Affairs*, 5: 280

Schlee, B. 2011. 'Economic Crisis and Political Apathy in Zimbabwe: The impotent Society.' Paper presented on the Panel on Autocratic Stability: Trends and Causes: ISPAECPR 2011, Sao Paulo, Brasil

Sherlock R, 2011, Child soldiers sent by Gaddafi to fight Libyan rebels, <https://www.channel4.com/news/child-soldiers-sent-by-gaddafi-to-fight-libyan-rebels> 16/12/17.

The Gaurdian, 2008, Thabo Mbeki to step down as South African president after ANC request <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/sep/20/southafrica1> 16/12/17

Tisdall S, 2016, The Guardian, 'Uganda's president epitomises Africa's perceived democratic deficit', <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/12/uganda-president-yoweri-museveni-epitomises-africas-democratic-deficit> 16/12/17

To cite this article:

Obediah Dodo, Jesca Majaha . 2018. African Youth's 'Whirl-wind' Allegiance to Leadership
International Journal of Modern Anthropology. 2 (11): 108 – 124

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ijma.v2i11.5>



This article, as all articles published in this journal, is under The Creative Commons Attribution:
Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>