STATE BEHAVIOUR AND REBELLION IN WEST AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF LA CÔTE D’IVOIRE

BY
RICHARD KWAME OPOKU-ADUSEI

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LEGON JUNE 2013
DECLARATION

I, Richard Kwame Opoku-Adusei, hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of an original research conducted by me under the supervision of Dr Vladimir Antwi-Danso and that, no part of it has been duplicated from other sources without proper acknowledgement. I also declare that this dissertation has not been presented either in part or whole for any other degree elsewhere.

.............................................. ..............................................

Dr Vladimir Antwi-Danso Richard Kwame Opoku-Adusei
(Supervisor) (Student)

Date: .............................................. Date: ..............................................
DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to my wife, Nana Ama Serwah Opoku-Adusei and our children, Kizita, Ewura-Adwoa, Naana, Doris and Esther.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge all those who assisted me in one way or the other to complete this dissertation successfully.

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To my family, I say a big thank you for your immeasurable prayers and support. Finally, I thank my dear wife, Nana and our children for bearing my long periods of absence and being engrossed in reading, writing and researching.

The responsibility for any misrepresentation in this work falls squarely on my shoulders.
ABSTRACT

This study appraised the impact of state behaviour on rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire. It was occasioned by the continued recurrence of rebellion in that country, despite efforts at ensuring peace. Rebellion undermines political and socio-economic development; hence the need to investigate the extent to which state behaviour has contributed to rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire. The research set out three objectives. First, it sought to examine the relationship between state behaviour and rebellion. Secondly, it was to identify the role of political leadership in the rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire. Finally, it was to propose sustainable strategies to control rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire. The scope of the study centered on La Côte d’Ivoire and focuses on rebellion as a consequence of dreadful state behaviour. The time frame was restricted to 1993 and 2011. The research adopted the content analysis method, using primary and secondary data from individuals, the internet, and libraries. Its major finding was that undemocratic behaviour of the political elites such as the introduction of “Ivoirite”, redrafting of the electoral code, election malpractices and bad governance led to the rebellion. The study looked at the peaceful and stable atmosphere the Houphouet-Boigny-led government sustained from independence to 1993. Of particular interest was his ability to maintain stability with the policy of “reconciliation” during the latter part of his reign, when the country encountered political turbulence occasioned by economic recession. The research held that the rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire was a direct consequence of the behaviour of succeeding political leaders towards their citizens. Accordingly, the work viewed state behaviour in La Côte d’Ivoire as those tendencies or traits that generated conflict between governments and their citizens, mainly engendered by incompetent leadership. It was also discovered that, states confronted with incidents of rebellion tackled them by adopting autocratic tendencies. The study concluded that rather than adopt coercive force against aggrieved citizens, the Ivorian Government should institute policies aimed at uniting the different ethnic, religious, political, and interest groups within the country by developing politics of multicultural integration. It should also adopt enhancement strategies like conflict prevention, peace promotion, the consolidation of good behaviour, and democratic practice aimed at eliminating conflicts to facilitate socio-political and economic development. The Government of La Côte d’Ivoire should also ensure that power and resources are equitably distributed to avoid perceived marginalisation of minority ethnic or interest groups. The ECOWAS Secretariat should ensure capacity-building for early warning and conflict management strategies of the sub-region in order to eliminate conflicts and promote development. Finally, the International Criminal Court (ICC) should indict key political figures who lead atrocities against civilians to serve as deterrent to others.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Declaration</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Abbreviations</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Research ............................... 1
1.2 Statement of the Research Problem ........................ 5
1.3 Objectives of the Research ............................... 5
1.4 Significance of the Research ............................. 5
1.5 Scope of the Research ................................... 6
1.6 Theoretical Framework ................................. 6
1.7 Literature Review ................................... 8
1.8 Sources of Data .................................... 12
1.9 Organisation of the Research ........................... 13
1.10 Conclusion .......................................... 13

Endnotes ................................................................ 14

### CHAPTERS 2 – PROFILE OF LA COTE D’IVOIRE AND PRESIDENTS

2.1 Introduction ........................................... 16
2.2 Historical Background ............................... 16
3.4.1 Good Governance........................................................................................................51

3.4.2 National Social Orientation and Reconciliation.................................................52

3.4.3 Patriotism..................................................................................................................54

3.4.4 Conflict Prevention Strategies..................................................................................55

3.4.5 Early Warning and Conflict Management.............................................................55

3.5 Conclusion..................................................................................................................56

Endnotes ..............................................................................................................................57

CHAPTER 4: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Summary....................................................................................................................58

4.2 Conclusion..................................................................................................................58

4.3 Recommendation.........................................................................................................59

Bibliography .........................................................................................................................61
### ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDR</td>
<td>Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOMOG</td>
<td>ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOMICICI</td>
<td>ECOWAS Mission in La Côte d’Ivoire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FANCI</td>
<td>Forces Armee Nationale de La Côte d’Ivoire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FN</td>
<td>Forces Nouvelles (New Forces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPI</td>
<td>Ivorian Popular Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAFCSC</td>
<td>Ghana Armed Forces Command and Staff College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDPs</td>
<td>Internally Displaced Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LICORNE</td>
<td>French Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPCI</td>
<td>Patriotic Movement for La Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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<td>MPIGO</td>
<td>Ivorian Popular Movement of the Great West</td>
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<tr>
<td>MJP</td>
<td>Movement for Justice and Peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for Africa’s Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organisation of African Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDCI</td>
<td>Partie Democratique de La Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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<td>PDCI-RDA</td>
<td>Democratic Party of Côte d’Ivoire-African Democratic Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIT</td>
<td>Ivorian Workers Party</td>
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<td>RDR</td>
<td>Rally of the Republicans</td>
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<tr>
<td>UDCI</td>
<td>Democratic Union of La Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
UDPCI --- Union for Democracy and Peace in Côte d’Ivoire

UN --- United Nations

UNOCI --- United Nations Operations in La Côte d’Ivoire

UNSG --- United Nations Secretary General
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Research

The political community within each state is normally organized under a central authority. The concept of domestic sovereignty grants the central government supremacy over every group within its domain. This concept was confirmed by Bluwey when he indicated that “the whole takes precedence over the parts”; a lot of power is thus vested in the state and exercised by the ruling regime at any point in time. In exercising this power the nation state is duty bound to ensure the security of the citizenry and their property. It is further enjoined to regulate a fair playing field for all segments of the population to contribute to and receive their fair quota of the common largesse according to law and without let or hindrance. This situation of exercising largely unfettered legitimate coercive power, vis-à-vis human frailties of bias and prejudice, could result in undemocratic state behaviours, particularly in a heterogeneous state with multi-layered cleavages. It is equally highly possible for political leadership to use its privileged position to manipulate the system to serve narrow and parochial interests.

Much as state behaviour is influenced by customs, traditions, values, military strength, and the leaders’ attitude towards a given situation as well as conventions, it is hardly independent of the selfish interests of the leadership. According to Kegley and Wittkopf, it is manifested in the state’s domestic and foreign policies as well as the use of its organs.² We are however, here concerned not with the state behaviour, where foreign policy is concerned. As indicated above, our concern here is with the use of the machinery and power of state to serve parochial interests. State behaviour, in this sense, refers to the leadership or elite policies that inure to
themselves and stifle state building. It also means the conduct, attitudes, worldview of leadership in directing state affairs either for progress or failure.

State behaviour could be appreciated from two points of view; first, the political system and second, the actions and attitude of political leaders during their governance and their reaction to group protest (non-violent rebellion) against such behaviour. Baum posits that policies that steadily ignored the interests of some sections of the state could lead to rebellion. It is obviously suggestive therefore, that there is a strong relationship between bad governance and rebellion, since, and as rightly put by Carmen, the situation that precludes certain groups from active participation in governance can lead to rebellion. Both Baum and Carmen believe that the relationship between state behaviour and rebellion should be appreciated from two points of view, as we have stated above. The first point of view is the system of government coupled with the actions and attitude of leaders during their governance. The second is government reaction to group-protest (especially, non-violent rebellion) against the particular system or behaviour. Davenport on the other hand looks at these two points as “state threats” and “state response to threats”. According to him, state threats refer to the systems of government and the behaviour thereof that may lead to rebellion. He further states that the behaviour of state has a bearing on whether a situation leads to rebellion or resolution of the problem. By implication, if a group is using non-violent means for protest and the state responds violently, the propensity for group violence increases.

At the root of rebellions therefore, are the repressive and political excesses of some political leaders. Rebellion, according to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, “is an open, armed and usually unsuccessful defiance of an established government”. Thus; “rebellion” refers to armed opposition to an established government or other authority by citizens subject to the state’s jurisdiction. It depicts a conflict situation and the use of violence.
The sense of insecurity, from which most states suffer, emanates mainly from within their boundaries rather than from outside. For example, most African governments are primarily pre-occupied with internal threats to their narrow interests and the survival and longevity of their regimes sometimes with unchecked ethnocentric tendencies.

Ethnocentrism is a major reason for divisions amongst members of different ethnicities, races, and religious groups in society. It is a belief in the superiority of one’s ethnic group but can also develop from religious differences occurring both at the local and national levels. Summer characterises it as often leading to pride, vanity and belief of one’s own group superiority and contempt of outsiders.⁷

According to Ahorsu, Western nations have, to a large extent, resolved the search for internal security of the state through nation building. He states contrarily that the search for enduring security systems of food, money, trade, and mass employment, poverty-alleviation, inadequacies and insufficiencies remain the greatest revolutionary pressure facing sub-Sahara Africa.⁸ These internal threats or insecurities frequently get transformed into intra-state conflicts or rebellions.

A UN Report of 2003 asserts that some of the world’s most atrocious civil wars have taken place in Africa. In 1996 alone, 14 of the 53 countries in Africa were afflicted by armed conflicts, which accounted for more than half of all war-related deaths worldwide, resulting in more than eight million refugees, returnees and displaced persons.⁹ Gordon Summers was more precise, stating that, by 2001 there were eighteen African countries facing armed rebellion, 11 facing severe political crisis and 19 enjoying various stages of political stability. A catalogue of African countries with longest-running internal conflicts includes Angola,
Mozambique, Uganda, and Sudan. Since the 1990s there have been internal conflicts in Somalia, Burundi, and Rwanda.\textsuperscript{10}

West Africa has also witnessed some of the bloodiest civil wars in Nigeria, Liberia, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone, and La Côte d’Ivoire. These rebellions have had tremendous impact on socio-economic and security developments in the sub-region. Consequently, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) raised the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to intervene and resolve conflicts in the sub-region. The efforts at conflict resolution have met a number of challenges including logistics support, troop mobilization, inter-operability and hostile posture of the warring factions. Indeed, rebellion has been a tormenting challenge in some West African countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d’Ivoire, and efforts at resolving it have achieved limited success.

La Côte d’Ivoire for instance, was plunged into a protracted power struggle, following the death of President Houphouet-Boigny on December 7\textsuperscript{th}, 1993, which generated intense political instability that culminated in a coup d’état in December 1999. The coup was led by General Robert Guei, who overthrew President Henri Konan Bedie. The post-Houphouet-Boigny power struggle was exacerbated by the controversies over nationality laws and eligibility conditions for national elections (especially the presidential elections) that resulted in the disqualification of some prominent political leaders, including Alassane Ouattara.\textsuperscript{11} Another heated dispute over election results, believed to have been manipulated by Gen Guei, resulted in violent clashes between supporters of the then two main contenders (Gen Guei and Laurant Gbagbo) claimed over 50 lives. The persistent behavioural pattern of some Ivoirian leaders that tends to encourage rebellion and the ad-hoc conflict management mechanisms in La Côte d’Ivoire aroused the researcher’s interest in investigating the subject.
1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Political transition has been a problem, especially in Africa. In most instances post-electoral violence has caused democracy to hiccup badly. Recent examples can be found in Kenya and Zimbabwe. The cause for such unfortunate phenomenon has most often been located in ‘greed’ of incumbents and/or opposition, with inevitable ‘grievance’ response from the governed.12

Most discourses on civil wars in Africa tend to place emphasis on political economy causes, by either stressing the ‘resource curse’ hypothesis or emphasizing the greed-grievance dichotomy, with very little attention paid to state structure and behaviour in analysing most of African wars. While not belittling the authenticity in the “Greed-Grievance” dichotomy in explaining wars, this work believes that questions about jolts in political transitions could be located in state behaviour.

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The broad objective of this research is to examine the effects of state behaviour on rebellion in West Africa. The specific objectives are:

i. To examine the relationship between state behaviour and rebellion;

ii. To identify the role of political leadership in the rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire; and

iii. To propose sustainable strategies to control rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire.

1.4 Significance of the Research

This research is significant in two respects. Firstly, it will serve as a source of information for both political and non-political actors to appreciate the causes of rebellion in West Africa.
Secondly, it will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the subject and will be useful to anyone interested in this field of study.

1.5 Scope of the Research

The research is limited to La Côte d’Ivoire and focuses on rebellion as a consequence of dreadful state behaviour. The time frame is restricted to 1993 to 2011. This period was characterised by violent internal conflicts in La Côte d’Ivoire.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This research is based on the greed versus grievance theory of Collier and Hoeffler. According to Collier and Hoeffler (2000), much of the debate on the economic causes of contemporary armed conflict can be traced to the ‘greed versus grievance’ dichotomy. It juxtaposes ‘loot-seeking’ with ‘justice-seeking’ or more generally, the significance of the economic versus socio-political drivers of civil wars.\(^\text{13}\) It is believed that some Africans start wars because they are either greedy or aggrieved.

Indeed, Paul Collier’s theory of ‘greed’ posits that social and political grievances are merely a front that is provided by rebel organisations to justify the economic motivations for warfare. The causes of political rivalries are therefore framed in this argument as being a form of ‘international public relations’ as they are formulated as a justification for predation.\(^\text{14}\) He intimates that, where there is greed, there is elite competition over valuable natural resource rents concealed in collective grievances.

According to Herfried Münkler, ‘new wars’ can be differentiated from ‘old wars’ by three factors: the privatisation of warfare; the asymmetry of military force and affiliated guerrilla
tactics; the atomisation of violence (decentralised conflicts). He deduces from this that ethnic and religious oppositions are not the causes of wars but rather they reinforce the underlying economic motivations of corruptible political elites. Economics therefore becomes the key motivator in ‘new wars’ as older forms of grievance become superseded by greed.\textsuperscript{15}

According to Murshed and Tadjoeddin (2007) grievance refers to relative deprivation and the consequent hurt it produces fuels conflict. It occasions resistance or remonstrance. In the context of rebellion, grievance is sometimes referred to as ‘justice-seeking’ motivation.\textsuperscript{16} Group formation and identity are central to grievance. An individual’s needs may also be related to his identity, more so, the relative position of the group he identifies within the social order (Akerlof and Kranton, 2000). The potential for collective violence varies with the intensity and scope of deprivation among members of a collectivist and this constitute a major cause for rebellion.

The connection to the economic argument is the fact that the northern half of La Côte d’Ivoire’s mainly Moslem (religious) groupings was mostly a source for labourers, who worked on the plantations in the south; they produced the bulk of the wealth of the country but lacked the due recognition as citizens. Though the economic factor might not be extremely serious, inequality between groups classified by ethnicity, religion, and linguistic differences, tribal affiliations, among others, can equally fit into this scenario.

This theory is quite relevant to this research, in the sense that the Ivoirian society is multi-ethnic in which politics and elitism are drawn along ethnic and cultural lines.
1.7 Literature Review

To establish the framework for this research it is pertinent to review related literature. Oquaye in his article “Politics, Society and Conflict in Africa – An Overview”, emphasizes that conflicts in Africa are tormenting phenomenon on the continent. He discusses the causes of conflict to include intolerance, injustice, fear, insecurity, abuse of political power, and feeling of deprivation, among others. He acknowledges that conflict threatens the socio-political, economic, cultural, emotional, and religious interests of a people and remains an affront to one’s honour and dignity. He also deals with the ethnic factor, citing self-acclaimed liberators or champions, as often being the sources of conflict.

Whilst acknowledging that all the political stakeholders are guilty by their actions and inactions, much of the blame lies squarely with the political leadership that exercises highly skewed coercive authority often to the disadvantage of perceived opponents. The injustices and abuse of power by incumbent regimes world-wide have resulted in rebellions as witnessed in Kosovo, apartheid South Africa, conflict-ridden Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Sudan. Other examples include coups and factional violence that plagued Nigeria as well as the infamous rebellions of Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Oquaye’s advocacy for the avoidance of zero sum game or a victor and loser phenomenon, after wars of liberation, as a tension-reducing mechanism is commendable. Since Ocquaye’s work concentrates on conflicts in general and does not critically look at the Ivoirian situation, most of the postulates may not be applicable to the latter. This notwithstanding, his work provides essential facts, required to explain the intricacies and myths surrounding West Africa’s conflicts.
Aning, writing on “The Dynamics of Contemporary Civil Wars”, particularly those in the West African sub-region, argues that “states in internal armed conflicts have lost their monopoly over violence”. He observes that insurgents have increasingly targeted civilians in most of Africa’s wars. He claims that in most cases, combatants deliberately target civilians, rather than armed opponents in prosecuting their goals and use atrocities as strategies aimed at publicizing political statements. He points out that, in countries with rich natural resources, the political goals of war are often resource appropriation, the looting of properties and vandalism. As a result, many commentators have portrayed “contemporary wars as basically anarchical”.

Aning’s general description of contemporary civil wars befits the Ivoirian situation in that it is the poor and weak, especially children and women, who suffered most. His work, however, concerns itself with insurgents and their exploitation of the civil populace in West Africa. Like Oquaye, he did not quite examine in-depth, the contemporary crisis in La Côte d’Ivoire. The fact, however, is that civilians on all sides in the crisis which resulted from the bellicose actions of the political leaders, bore the humiliating and insufferable outcomes of the rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire. Indeed, the Ivoirian rebellion was not a thunderbolt from hell but was occasioned by series of actions and inactions by, most crucially, the post Houphouet-Boigny successors.

Examining the Ivoirian Foreign Policy in the post Houphouet-Boigny era, Kohou notes that Felix Houphouet-Boigny’s 33 years post-independence foreign policy depicted a clear manifestation of the country’s colonial master’s influence and that led Ivoirian foreign policy to become a mere model of French foreign policy in francophone West Africa. He observes that the death of Houphouet-Boigny on December 7th, 1993 was followed by foreign policy experimentations. The three subsequent regimes influenced the Ivoirian foreign policy even
though its foundation remained the same. He concludes that the impact of these foreign policies on the Ivoirian domestic socio-economic setting as well as the international scene contributed significantly to the crisis in La Côte d’Ivoire.

Though Kohou took a broad look at foreign policy in the post Houphouet-Boigny era, his research is not all-encompassing and so does not bring out details of the crisis itself, its challenges and measures taken to address them. Whilst not faulting Kohou, it is worth noting that Houphouet-Boigny held together a united and stable Côte d’Ivoire that enjoyed favourable popular support until his demise. The crises, if remotely rooted in Houphouet-Boigny’s foreign policy, were disastrously exploited and fuelled by what one may argue as inadequate and desperate post-Houphouet-Boigny’s immediate successors.

Appiagyei-Atua, in his “Critical Look at the Ivoirian Post-Election Crisis”, delves into how President Gbagbo, the then incumbent, lost power through constitutionally-organised elections that were supervised by the international community and declared free and fair but decided not to give up power.22 He traces the history of the crisis to the 2002 armed rebellion which resulted in the Patriotic Movement of Côte d’Ivoire (MPCI) retaining control of Bouake and Korhogo, extending its authority over the northern half of the country.

In line with the Lomé Declaration of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 200023 that considered any forceful change in government as unconstitutional, Appiagyei-Atua concludes that Gbagbo’s actions amounted to an unconstitutional change in government.24 He, however, states that what happened in Côte d’Ivoire after the 2010 elections was not a coup d’état but a refusal of an incumbent to give up power after losing an election. He cites the scenarios in Kenya and Zimbabwe, and cautions against “ad hoc” solution of power-sharing as a stop-gap measure, which he simply describes as “an unconstitutional act and a slap in the face of the
right of a people to self-determination”. He posits that the scenario is likely to repeat itself in other countries, if the loophole is not plugged now by the African Union (AU) and ECOWAS. His study adopts a holistic approach to the issue of state behaviour and rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire but did not sufficiently discuss the issue of international intervention nor does his work focus on sustainable strategies to control rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire.

Jennifer A. Widner, in her article “States and Statelessness in Late Twentieth Century Africa”, talks about the problems of African states and primarily focuses on the ineffectiveness of African states in controlling and regulating the life of their citizens. Widner complains about the ineffectiveness of African states and governments and explains effectiveness of a state as having the qualities of efficiency and responsiveness. Widner tries to underline the difference between good and bad governments, singling out Botswana as an example of good governance and stressing poor leadership as one of the reasons of the low ‘stateness’ and strife in Africa, a situation that fits perfectly with the Ivoirian crisis under review.

In a related discussion, Richard Crook believes that the turmoil in La Côte d’Ivoire had much to do with the nature of coalitions and the employment of ethno-regional politics in elections. In his article, “Winning Coalitions and Ethno-Regional Politics: The Failure of the Opposition in the 1990 and 1995 Elections in La Côte d’Ivoire” he notes that, in spite of the democratic embrace, made possible by the end of the Cold War, African societies are still segmented by a multiplicity of cultural and religious divisions where political power is a zero-sum game. The logic of democratic representation means that no group can afford to be excluded. He notes further that in the 1990 and 1995 Ivoirian elections the opposition attacked the ethnic character of the government and deliberately mobilized ethnic minorities,
regional and religious (Islamic) sentiments. The government replied likewise and this formed the basis for polarization.

Crook’s work is of importance as it explains the basis for invoking the nationality ‘card’ in subsequent elections, a phenomenon that exacerbated the situation and caused the post-electoral instability in La Côte d’Ivoire.

Jeanne Maddox Toungrara in an article titled “Ethnicity and Political Crisis in La Côte d'Ivoire”, describes the use of exclusionary tactics and judicial manipulations by political leaders in La Côte d'Ivoire as a great source of instability. She notes that the ethnic balancing, perfectly employed by Houphet Boigny, was completely missing and that since La Côte d'Ivoire's transition to multiparty democracy in 1990, the electoral process opened a Pandora's box of rampant fear and greed among powerful Ivoirian politicos. This fear and greed perfectly fits the choice of ‘greed and grievance’ as the conceptual framework for the dissertation. It is clear that elite political behaviour is intrinsically linked with the direction of state stability.

Against the backdrop of the literature on the subject, this research seeks to unearth the relationship between the behaviour of political leaders and the rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire.

1.8 Sources of Data

Data for the research were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included unstructured interviews with eyewitnesses and participants in conflict management in West Africa including the ECOMOG and UN troops, and officials of the ECOWAS Secretariat. The secondary sources included books, lectures and materials on individual, group and state behaviour, intra-state conflict, rebellion and conflict management in West Africa. Articles and reports from international research institutions, peacekeeping
training centres and ECOWAS Secretariat were also consulted. Again, country-specific information was accessed from the internet.

1.9 Organisation of the Research

Chapter One sets the scene by providing the background of the research, literature review and outlining the basic procedures to be followed in the course of the research. Chapter Two outlines the country’s background and chronicles La Côte d’Ivoire’s Presidents. It identifies the major policy around “Ivoirité” as championed by the post Houphouet-Boigny successors and electoral gambles which set the ground for the political violence and subsequent rebellions that engulfed the country. Chapter Three makes analyses of how the “Ivoirité” concept and electoral gambles of the post Houphouet-Boigny Presidents plunged La Côte d’Ivoire into the abyss of unpleasant rebellion. Chapter Four spells out the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

1.10 Conclusion

The chapter looked at the background to the research, the statement of the research problem, objectives of the research, research question, and significance of the research and scope of the research. Other areas the chapter considered include theoretical framework of the research, literature review, sources of data and organisation of the research.
END NOTES


15. Ibid.


19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.


24. Appiagyei-Atua K; op cit

25. Ibid.


CHAPTER TWO

PROFILE OF LA CÔTE D’IVOIRE AND PRESIDENTS

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter focuses on La Côte d’Ivoire and highlights the behavioural patterns of the political leaders in the conduct of their politics. In spite of the economic challenges at the latter part of his reign, Houphouet-Boigny is assessed as a crafty politician who rallied the country around a vision of shared commonalities in the creation and appropriation of the common wealth as a people. This idea of a vision of shared commonalities is believed to have ensured a stable country.

The chapter also chronicles the post Houphouet-Boigny political successors and their major policies and actions, which the researcher argues, were highly parochial and aimed at satisfying their narrow interests at the expense of the state. The issue of “Ivoirite” in particular and electoral malfeasance are pivotal in this regard.

2.2 Historical Background

La Côte d’Ivoire, a French colony since 1893, gained independence on August 7th, 1960. At independence, Felix Houphouet-Boigny, who served for 13 years in the French National Assembly and also as Prime Minister of La Côte d’Ivoire Ivory Coast in 1959, was elected the country’s first President.

In a region noted for its political instability, Côte d’Ivoire showed remarkable exception until the current crisis erupted. Its economic capital, Abidjan, was modelled on Paris and the serenity it provided attracted the Headquarters of agencies like the African Development Bank and United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF). It stood out as a country where politics was separated from military adventurism.
Additionally, Houphouet-Boigny built a replica of St. Peters Basilica in Yamoussoukro, the political capital and this edifice served as a monument of peace, hope, and stability as well as attracting visitors from all over the world. Until his death in 1993 the country transformed with little dislocation as a single-party state beginning in 1960. Between 1993 and 2010 there was, however, power struggle that culminated in the current crisis. A first multi-party election was held in 2010 but that could not help to resolve the political crisis. The second multi-party election in 2010 was a further attempt to resolve the political crisis but this produced a short but violent conflict involving Gbagbo loyalist and Forces Nouvelles. This conflict which drew the involvement of UNOCI and LICORNE to protect life and installations led to the arrest of Laurent Gbagbo.

The population of Côte d’Ivoire as of December 2000 was estimated at 15 million with annual growth rate of 3.8% including immigrants. The country has more than 60 ethnic groups comprising five principal divisions. These are the Akan, found in the East and Centre, the Lagoon people of the South-East, the Krou found in the South-West, the Mande in the West and North-West, and the Senoufo/Lobi in the North centre and North-East.

There were approximately five million African migrants living in La Côte d’Ivoire prior to the conflict. One-third of that population was from Burkina Faso, the rest were believed to be from Ghana, Mali, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal, Benin, Mauritania, and Liberia. The non-African expatriate community prior to the conflict included roughly 20,000 French and about 100,000 Lebanese. About 25% of the Ivoirian population are Moslems who live in the North, while 12% are believed to be Christians in the South with 63% being predominantly indigenous. Prior to the crisis, there had been petty rivalry between people of the Islamic and the Christian faiths. The multiplicity of tribes, a dichotomy of religion associated with
regional, tribal, and political rivalries had often put strain on the country’s political system albeit, latent.

La Côte d’Ivoire’s first President, Felix Houphouet-Boigny ruled the country for 33 years, during which period the country was stable but largely undemocratic. For much of his 33 years rule, Houphouet-Boigny maintained a one-party state. He tenaciously held on to power and got re-elected at five year intervals between 1965 and 1990. According to Kwesi Aning, Houphouet-Boigny’s moderate policies fostered prosperity and stability, as he discouraged political opposition and encouraged non-nationals to participate in the country’s economy.\(^4\) He made sure all ethnic groups had representatives in his government. He maintained a weak army relying on French troops to meet his military needs.\(^5\) Houphouet-Boigny refused to appoint a deputy or successor. Instead, he resorted to playing his most prominent lieutenants against each other.

Political dissent was outlawed and members of opposition groups were frequently arrested and imprisoned. Aristide Zolberg posits that President Houphouet-Boigny, alongside his party, Partie Democratique de La Côte d’Ivoire (PDCI), was the principal architect of every major policy orientation and decision over the last half century prior to his death.\(^6\)

Furthermore, his adopted foreign policy led to influx of migrants. He is known to have pursued pro-western, capitalist strategy and foreign policy that were believed to have fuelled the crisis after his death. Even though the country experienced an extraordinary rapid economic growth and political stability throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the policy was branded ‘foreign invasion’ on Ivoirian socio-economic order because non-indigenes wielded a lot of the economic power. Nationalist tendencies were, however, suppressed by the government led by Houphouet-Boigny.
The much touted “Ivoirian Economic Miracle” experienced a severe downturn with stern political and economic consequences. Ivoirians thus began to resent such a large and significant foreign presence. This gave rise to more pressing demands for radical changes in the macro-economic orientation and distributive politics. The emboldened political opposition vociferously demanded the end of the PDCI’s monopoly of power.\(^7\)

In 1990, Houphouet-Boigny invited Alassane Ouattara from abroad to help revive the economy.\(^8\) He placed Ouattara in charge of coordinating the policies of the different ministries and a few weeks later, appointed him Prime Minister. Ouattara thus became the second highest personality after the President and two years later, he made public his intention to do politics.\(^9\) This created disquiet among the followers of Henri Konan Bedie, the then President of the National Assembly and who was expected to become President on the demise of President Houphouet-Boigny in accordance with the Ivoirian Constitution.\(^\) 

Consequently, a succession war ensued between Ouattara and Bedie especially because Ouattara’s appointment made the latter the de facto head of state in his capacity as Prime Minister due to ill-health of Houphouet-Boigny. Both Alasane Dramane Ouattara and Mr Henri Konan Bedie claimed the right to the presidency on the death of Houphouet-Boigny. Mr Ouattara had been in the political limelight during Houphouet-Boigny’s era but he was denied the opportunity to contest the presidency after he was side-lined by a court ruling in 1995, which declared him ineligible for election on the grounds of his “foreign” parentage. At the start of the November 1995 insurrection, he was viewed by some Ivoirians as having instigated his supporters, who were mostly from the Muslim North, to topple the government that had prevented him from contesting in the elections. This was an interesting development because the Ivoirian Constitution provided that on the death of a sitting President, the
Speaker of the National Assembly takes over the presidency until a new election was held. Against this backdrop the mantle fell on Konan Bedie.

2.3 Political Leaders and Rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire

2.3.1 Bedie and Ethno-Nationalism.

Though Mr Henri Konan Bedie became President after Houphouet-Boigny, a seed of bad blood had been sown in Ivoirian politics. Sanda observes that immediately after succeeding Houphouet-Boigny, with the tacit but firm support of France, President Konan Bedie displayed unmistakable authoritarian tendencies. In order to disqualify Ouattara from contesting; Bedie introduced ethnicity and religion into politics. He engineered the adoption of new electoral laws requiring candidates for public office to be of direct Ivoirian descent. Thus, he introduced the concept of "Ivoirité", or Ivoirianness. In essence, the candidate and both of his or her parents should have been born in La Côte d’Ivoire.

This underscored a growing national schism between the mostly Christian south and the largely Muslim north. Bedie increasingly exploited anti-Muslim sentiments in the south for political advantage, often referring to northerners as “foreigners”. The opposition parties boycotted the 1995 elections to protest against the new electoral restrictions. Bedie was believed to have won that election largely due to the non-participation of the opposition in the election. The clashes that ensued literally paralyzed the country and also awakened the demons of xenophobia and ethno-religious conflict leading to despotism and ultimately rebellion. It can be deduced that the crisis that ended Bedie’s era was attributable to his leadership style and narrow-minded policies.
2.3.2 General Robert Guei’s Era

In December 1999, General Robert Guei staged a coup d’état, which overthrew Konan Bedie. He promised to “clean up the mess” that politicians had created and return to the barracks. General Guei reversed his self-declared plan to return La Côte d’Ivoire quickly to civilian rule and tried to hold onto power. He used the same rhetoric that Bedie exemplified in the following ultra-nationalism formula: “La Côte d’Ivoire for Ivoirians and the president of the country should be an Ivoirian of multi-century origin; his parents should be Ivoirians themselves”.

A new constitution adopted in July 2000 retained the electoral restrictions regarding Ivoirian descent. Consequently, Ouattara and his perceived associates allegedly of non-Ivoirian descent were again barred from contesting in the October 2000 presidential elections. In the events leading to the elections Islamic leaders urged the nation’s Muslims to desist from voting. International electoral monitoring groups also questioned the legitimacy of the election and refused to send observers. When early voting results showed that General Guei was trailing Laurent Gbagbo, the former dissolved the electoral commission and declared himself winner. His direct involvement in the electoral machinations resulted in a popular uprising that swept him from power.

2.3.3 Laurent Gbagbo as Political Leader

Laurent Gbagbo commenced his political career whilst he was a university lecturer. In 1971, he was jailed for two years for propagating “subversive” ideas. He became active in trade union activities and organised several protests against Houphouet-Boigny's regime in the 1980s. In 1982, he went into exile in Paris, France and returned six years later to participate in the founding congress of Ivoirian Popular Front (FPI). Gbagbo contested for the
presidential elections in 1990 and won 11% of the votes cast, thus establishing himself as a credible opposition leader. In 1992, he served a six-month term in jail after leading protests against the army’s intervention to crush student riots.¹⁷

Laurant Gbagbo was associated with the “Left” and had taken a stronger nationalist stance. He shared Mr Bedie’s enthusiasm for Ivoirité; the concept of pure Ivoirian parentage. Gbagbo, who was widely touted to have won the elections organized by General Guei, took over power when the mass uprising by the civil society overthrew Guei from office in October 2000. Gbagbo exploited the Ivoirité concept to his political advantage and discriminated seriously against those perceived not to be true Ivoirians, especially Alasane Ouattara.

Elections in October 2006, however, generated political violence between southern Ivoirians, mainly Christian supporters of President Gbagbo and supporters of Alasane Ouattara, a Muslim from north of the country. Mr Ouattara was excluded from standing in the election after it was declared that he had not been born a citizen of Côte d’Ivoire. In effect, the popular support for the end of the military rule did not necessarily end the political violence and growing insecurity.

In January 2001 there was an attempted coup d’état by opposition sympathizers within the military. Consequently, 32 people were arrested and at least eight killed. In May 2002, six people were sentenced to more than 20 years imprisonment for their roles in the coup attempt of 2001. The Ouattara faction capitalised on the ensuing political tension to accuse the government for using ethnic and religious tensions to strengthen its own position and harass opponents.¹⁸ They also accused the security forces of extra judicial killings of northern opponents. This notwithstanding, the Ivoirian courts acquitted and discharged eight
gendarmes who were accused of killing people from the north. These developments might have helped to sustain instability in the country and in June 2002 there were violent clashes in the central town of Daloa between supporters of FPI and Rally of Republicans (RDR).

President Gbagbo organised a forum for national reconciliation probably to address the issues that had polarized the Ivoirian people, including the questions of nationality, land ownership, the disputed legitimacy of his government and the condition of service of the security forces. The forum was attended by President Gbagbo, Bedie, General Guei, and Ouattara on January 22\textsuperscript{nd} and 23\textsuperscript{rd}, 2002 to settle their differences and consider the recommendations of the forum.\textsuperscript{19} The four leaders issued a communiqué after the forum purported to denounce undemocratic avenues to power, to make the security forces more professional and to improve their conditions of service. They further agreed to create a broad-based national electoral commission and a national body to address the questions of land ownership. The leaders also agreed to form a new government of national unity.

These encouraging steps towards national reconciliation and reducing tension in Côte d’Ivoire were disrupted by a mutiny on September 19\textsuperscript{th}, 2002. The rebellion started with simultaneous attacks on military installations in Abidjan, Bouake and Korhogo by approximately 800 soldiers who were recruited during the military regime of General Robert Guei. This action was allegedly in protest of their intended demobilization in 2003.

Security forces loyal to the ruling government launched series of military operations to dislodge the rebels from the seized towns without success. By the end of September 2002, the rebel forces had consolidated their hold on the northern half of the country and were operating under the auspices of a political movement calling itself the Patriotic Movement for Côte d’Ivoire (MPCI). In a BBC interview on September 20\textsuperscript{th}, 2002, one of the rebels who
identified himself as Corporal Kwesi, claimed the security forces had been treated as “Slaves” by the government and were rebelling against “dictatorship under the guise of democracy”. Through its spokesman, Guillaume Soro, a former student leader, the movement demanded the resignation of President Gbagbo, the holding of all-inclusive national elections, a review of the Constitution and an end to the domination of southerners in the affairs of the country.

Following this call, a round-table conference of Ivoirian political groups was held at Linas-Marcoussis, France, from January 15th to 23rd, 2003. The groups that participated in the conference were the FPI, the MPCI, the Ivoirian Popular Movement of the Great West (MPIGO) and the Democratic Party of Côte d’Ivoire-African Democratic Party (PDCI-RDA). Others were the Ivoirian Workers Party (PTI), Rally of the Republicans (RDR), the Democratic Union of Côte d’Ivoire (UDCI) and the Union for Democracy and Peace in Côte d’Ivoire (UDPCI). The round table conference led to the signing of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement on January 23rd, 2003 by all Ivoirian political fronts.

Both the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement and the conclusions adopted by the Heads of State in Paris on January 26th, 2003, envisaged United Nations’ role in the implementation of the Agreement, including presiding over the Follow-Up Committee. The Agreement predetermined that the new Ivoirian Government of National Reconciliation would seek assistance from ECOWAS Mission in Côte d’Ivoire (ECOMICI), France and the United Nations in guaranteeing the reforms and restructuring of the defence and security forces. International development partners were requested to cooperate with the new programme for reintegration of all armed elements.
The Linas-Marcoussis Accord provided the basic framework for political and military settlement of the Ivoirian Crisis. The Accord, supported by UN Resolution 1464 of February 4th, 2003, provided political and military state of affairs favourable for the deployment of ECOMICI. Since then, lots of developments have occurred among the various stakeholders, including PDCI-RDA, PIT, RDR, UDCI and the UDPCI.

The Linas-Marcoussis Accord also defined the main tasks of the new Government of National Reconciliation, which included preparing a timetable for credible and transparent national elections, restructuring the defence and security forces and, regrouping and disarmament of all armed elements. The membership of the transitional government representatives were as follows:

i. Ten from FPI led by President Laurent Gbagbo;

ii. Seven from PDCI led by Konan Bedie;

iii. Five from MPCI; led by Guillaume;

iv. Two from PTI led by Francis Wodie;

v. One from Future Force Movement (MFA) led by Anaki Kobenan;

vi. One from Citizens Democratic Union (UDCI) led by Theodore Mel;

vii. Seven from RDR led by Alasane D. Ouattara;

viii. Four from UDPCI led by Guei;

ix. One from Movement for Justice and Peace (MJP) led by Youssouf Sounmahoro; and

x. One from MPIGO led by Roger Branchi.

The power-sharing transitional government spelt out in the January 2003 Peace Agreement brokered by France never lived up to its name. The New Forces and Mr Ouattara's RDR withdrew in March 2004 in protest against the killing of 120 people during a banned
opposition march in Abidjan. A UN report indicated that the security forces had singled out suspected opposition supporters, mostly Muslims and foreigners, to be killed.

The opposing factions, however, re-joined the government following a new peace agreement reached in July 2004 with West African leaders. This agreement introduced new laws making it easier for opposition political leaders, allegedly of foreign origin to get Ivorian citizenship and run for the presidency. In the same agreement, disarmament was to be conducted after an election. These laws were eventually passed but the rebels observed that the laws had been watered down so much that they made no difference, and so refused to disarm. However, after a South African-brokered deal, Mr. Gbagbo agreed to overrule the Constitution and let Mr. Ouattara contest in the elections. This was a key rebel demand and seemed to move things on.

On October 30th, 2005, President Gbagbo got a scheduled presidential polls postponed. Consequently, UN Resolution allowed Gbagbo to remain in power for another year, while a new Prime Minister, Charles Konan Banny, then Governor of West Africa's Central Bank, was appointed after Premier Diarra resigned. There was a row over parliament reconvening, resulting in Gbagbo’s supporters staging anti-UN protests that led to 11 people killed. Consequently, the UN Security Council voted unanimously to shift power from the president to the prime minister and extended transitional government for a second year, until October 31st, 2007.

On March 26th, 2007, President Blaise Campaore of Burkina Faso brokered a peace agreement between Gbagbo and Guillaume Soro. This paved way for the latter to serve as Prime Minister under a plan to re-unite the country. Gbagbo named a new government led by Soro on April 7th, 2007. This was followed by the UN and French peacekeepers beginning to
pullback from the military buffer zone. President Gbagbo then visited the rebel headquarters at Bouake for the first time since the rebellion. He met Soro to symbolically burn weapons in what was designated as the "Flame of Peace" ceremony. They also set a timetable for disarmament and agreed to establish a joint army command. The buffer zone between the two sides, known as the confidence zone, was to be removed. As part of this agreement, elections were also to be conducted within ten months.

On April 14th, 2008, Mr. Gbagbo announced that presidential elections would be organised on November 29th, 2008 under the Peace Plan. Fears over the possible postponement of the presidential elections occasioned a declaration by Prime Minister Soro to the effect that the presidential election would take place on November 29th, 2008 at all cost. He therefore encouraged the rebels controlling the north to officially hand over the northern territories to the civilian administrators on May 26th, 2008 in his bid to restore government authority across the whole country.

The election officials, however, intimated that the provisional voter list would not be ready for another month, making the November 29th, 2008 elections impossible. This is probably an attempt to frustrate the electoral process. An electronic list was handed over to the Electoral Commission on October 1st, 2008 by the UN; however, the EC insisted the election could not be held on November 29th, 2008. As a result, the UN unanimously renewed sanctions and diamond trade ban until October 31st, 2010. Mediators in Burkina Faso announced end of February or early March 2010 poll deadline. However, President Gbagbo accused the Electoral Commissioner, Robert Mambe of fraudulently trying to add names to the voters’ register, thus casting doubt on when the election could take place, resulting in Prime Minister Soro’s de-facto suspension of the voter registration indefinitely on February 11th, 2010 after days of violent protests against government’s handling of the process.
National elections were thus postponed several times allowing Gbagbo to hold on to power for ten years before elections were finally organised in 2010. This election turned controversial as the electoral commission was prevented by Gbabgo’s agents from declaring the results which showed the incumbent trailing Ouattara by a wide margin. Gbagbo proclaimed himself president, though he got less than 15% of the votes. Ouattara refused to acknowledge Gbagbo as the president and also declared himself president in line with the internationally endorsed and certified Ivoirian Electoral Commission’s results that proclaimed him the winner in the elections.

This chapter has so far demonstrated that the toils and sweats of a multiplicity of people of diverse background, local, sub-regional and international as harnessed by Houphouet-Boigny helped build a buoyant and vibrant political economy. Though the country’s economic fortunes had dwindled during the latter part of Houphouet-Boigny’s reign, Côte d’Ivoire remained the leading cocoa producer in the world. He left a stable country even though there were initial succession challenges. The concept of “Ivoirité” and the subsequent electoral gambles by the post-Houphouet-Boigny successors, Konan Bedie, Guei and Gbagbo resulted in the rebellions and the consequent dire effects.

2.4 Effects of the Crisis

The effects of the Ivoirian rebellion could be described as multi-dimensional just like what pertains in several other West African countries. The crisis brought myriad of suffering and disruption in the country. The effects of the Ivoirian rebellion cut across domestic, sub-regional, continental and global levels.
2.4.1 Domestic Effects

Rebellion is inimical to human race in terms of its disastrous consequences before, during and after its occurrence. It causes untold hardships on both the belligerents and the innocent as well as feeble and peace-loving citizens especially women and children. It also causes damage to individual and communal property. In La Côte d’Ivoire, the family, community and the social fabric of the people were destroyed. Houses, businesses and factories were burnt down. These sowed seeds of discord, enmity and indifference among the citizenry. During the September 2002 uprising for example, about 270 people were reported to have lost their lives either in combat, cross-fire or extra-judicial killings. Thus, the hitherto stable Côte d’Ivoire was left in ruins and disintegrated.

Displacement of citizens is another dreaded consequence of rebellion. To escape from the savagery of the war, some of the victims, particularly the vulnerable including women and children were compelled to relocate to other more secure but unfamiliar environments outside the country as either internally displaced persons (IDPs) or as refugees. According to UNHCR, some 46,000 Ivoirians who were internally displaced lived with host families, while those who have returned home were struggling to rebuild their lives. It states further that though many Ivoirian refugees who fled to neighbouring countries had returned, there was a need to ensure their reintegration.\textsuperscript{20} As of September 2011, 247,000 remained internally displaced in Côte d’Ivoire.\textsuperscript{21} This unleashed untold physical drains and psychological torture on these victims. The socio-economic activities of the people and education of the children/youth were disrupted.

Refugees are generally forced to move from their places of abode owing to intolerable conditions to seek asylum or refuge in another country.\textsuperscript{22} The destruction of homes,
properties and lives during the Ivoirian crisis was reported to have forced about 350,000 refugees out of Côte d'Ivoire into neighbouring countries like, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Guinea, Togo and Nigeria. In such a situation, professional and skilled manpower including the youth who could contribute effectively to the socio-economic and political development of the country are bound to flee the country to seek shelter elsewhere. Additionally, resources meant for investment in other sectors might have been diverted into acquiring military hardware, recruitment of mercenaries and training of fighters. Human Rights abuses were rampant.

It was feared that the rebellion in La Côte d'Ivoire could produce thousands of local pogroms and if there should be secession of northern Côte d'Ivoire, it would come at a price of mass forced displacements of the population as a dire consequence. The rule of force that would follow could only lead La Côte d'Ivoire into a situation like Sierra Leone or Liberia with all the predictable effects on the stability of the sub-region, of which La Côte d'Ivoire is an economic heart.

2.4.2 Sub-Regional Effects

The crisis in Côte d'Ivoire had some destabilising effect on the sub-region. Ivoirian economic activities that supported neighbouring countries were severely affected with consequent repercussion on sub-regional trade. The crisis also affected use of its ports by several land-locked countries in the sub-region especially by Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger as international business transit point. Other areas that were affected include the country’s agricultural produce like cocoa, coffee, lumber as well as its small industries. Security, law, and order also eluded the country. It therefore became imperative to stop the war in order to protect life and properties on both sides.
The biggest concern was the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and ammunition within the sub-region. It is worthy of note that war creates a lucrative business incentive for arms dealers. The purchase and use of these arms influence such crisis resulting in chaos and destruction. Again, battlegrounds create ready markets for weapon trade. The porous nature of international boundaries in the sub-region could also facilitate smuggling of small arms and light weapons across borders to fuel potential conflicts in some flashpoints. The prolongation of the Ivoirian rebellion could thus render the sub-region insecure for economic activities and developments.

As part of a blame-game the Ivoirian government accused Liberia and Burkina Faso for alleged involvement in its domestic crisis. This development soured relations between these countries and was believed to have influenced incidents in some parts of the country. For example, reports in October 2002 indicated that Malians, Burkinabe and Northern Ivoirians or Muslims were sought after and killed after the recapture of Daloa.\footnote{This increased tension between the accused countries and Côte d'Ivoire.}

Similarly, the Liberian government demanded an explanation from the Ivoirian government for cross border attacks which led to the death of 29 Liberians in early 2004. These developments had serious implications not only for the countries involved but also for the entire sub-region and could have worsened the problem of finding a lasting solution to the crisis. The Ivoirian crisis exposed West African countries’ weakness in resolving their own problems. This is because six months into the conflict, ECOWAS was still undecided with regard to the deployment of peace-keeping troops to Côte d’Ivoire. The crisis had the potential of spreading across borders to Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali and others. This is because these countries shared common heritage and tradition along the border towns. Thus any activities along or close to the border could have serious repercussions and could draw
the countries into the crisis. This is against the backdrop of suspicions involving some of the countries and Côte d’Ivoire.

La Côte d’Ivoire had an immigrant population of about four million as at the outbreak of the crisis. Most of them have since returned to their countries whilst some have become refugees in the neighbouring countries like Ghana, Liberia and Burkina Faso. The danger with this refugee issue was that some rebels mingled with the refugees and crossed into neighbouring countries. This situation had the propensity to create turbulence in the sub-region.

2.4.3 Continental Effects

President Olusegun Obasanjo was reported to have remarked that “A threat to Ivory Coast is a threat to all of us” because it is believed that Côte d’Ivoire is home to approximately 5 million foreigners.\(^{25}\) It lies at the “economic and political crossroads” of West Africa. The Ivoirian government had accused Liberia, Burkina Faso and Mali for backing the rebels.

The crisis therefore has the potential to plunge the entire continent into chaos. It is important to consider such linkages because similar intra-state conflicts that erupted in Somalia, Mozambique, Sudan, Chad, Ethiopia-Eritrea, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Angola and Burundi posed dire economic, political and security consequences to neighbouring countries and the continent at large. They also gave negative publicity to the continent. The Ivoirian crisis is believed to have contributed negatively to the image of the African continent.

David Cowan, a Senior Economist at the Economist Intelligence Unit referred to La Côte d’Ivoire as the “powerful hub that stands head and shoulders above the rest of the region”.\(^{26}\) Indeed, La Côte d’Ivoire’s $10 billion economy was more than four times the size of those of Mali and Burkina Faso combined.
Additionally, records suggest that 60% of the goods imported by Francophone West Africa passed through the port of Abidjan. Investment flowed into the region, creating the world’s largest cocoa producer, vibrant coffee, timber and oil refining industries. This led to the development of services, industry and regional hub for banking, insurance and advertising. Again, Abidjan was the financial capital of Francophone West Africa. Some important institutions that have economic benefit to Africa were located in La Côte d’Ivoire. Some of these institutions include the African Development Bank, West African Stock Exchange and Headquarters of Nestle Africa.

While investors were likely to be scared away from Côte d’Ivoire, no other West African country was likely to benefit from the fallout. This was because no other country has a diversified economy, infrastructure and skills required to act as such. Côte d’Ivoire, “an oasis of stability and prosperity in a blood soaked impoverished region, has shot at its own foot”. David Cowan, an expert in Economist Intelligence Unit in United Kingdom states, he will “emphasise to anyone considering doing business in Africa that the place is full of unexpected coups”. This statement alone is damaging to the continent and its forward match to political and economic emancipation.

2.5 Conclusion

The chapter discussed the historical background of Côte d’Ivoire, the political leaders and the role played in the rebellion in Côte d’Ivoire and the effects at the domestic, sub-regional and continental effects of the crisis. Having chronicled the Ivoirian political leadership and their politics in broad terms, the next chapter makes critical analysis of how Côte d’Ivoire’s political leaders’ behaviour divided the country, created tension among the populace and eventually resulted in a rebellion in 2002.
ENDNOTES


10. Ibid.


14. Ibid.

15. BBC Report West Africa aired at 1000 GMT on Thursday, September 26\textsuperscript{th}, 2011.


17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.


26. Ibid.


29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.
CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS OF IVOIRIAN STATE BEHAVIOUR AND REBELLION

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter seeks to analyse the behavioural patterns of the political leaders in the conduct of politics. State behaviour is the employment of the institutions of state and the manipulation of the constitution in order to maintain a grip on power. In such a setting opposition behaviour is ascribed as treachery, making it possible for the state, using both the constitution and the institutions of state to isolate the opposition.

This was the case in the Ivoirian situation. The Ivoirian Constitution and the institutions of state were effectively employed by elite politicians to perpetuate an agenda to disqualify Alasane Ouattara from contesting the presidential elections, whilst seeking to justify their hanging on to power against all odds. The political elites’ obsession with this aim resulted in the evoking of the Ivoirite question, the manipulations of the electoral code and disruptions of the electoral process in attempts to undo each other. These actions ultimately did not go down with some Ivoirians and this subsequently led Côte d’Ivoire into a state of rebellion.

In this chapter the researcher looks at Houphouet-Boigny as a crafty politician, who rallied the country around a vision of shared commonalities in the creation and appropriation of the common wealth as a people. This vision ensured a stable country. It thereafter looks into the post Houphouet-Boigny political leaders and their major policies which landed the country in political turmoil and finally led to rebellion from 2002.

3.2 Felix Houphouet-Boigny

President Felix Houphouet-Boigny was perceived as politically moderate and strategic thinker. He was generally moderate in his views, advocating neither extreme left nor right
wing politics. Described as a centrist astute politician, Houphouet-Boigny promoted policies that ensured economic and social liberalism. La Côte d’Ivoire was widely touted for its religious and ethnic harmony and a well-developed economy under Houphouet-Boigny.

On attainment of independence, Houphouet-Boigny encouraged French technicians to stay behind in order to help develop La Côte d’Ivoire. About 50,000 did so.¹ This was in contrast to the Africanization programmes carried out in other African countries like Ghana, which made those countries to lose the trained and experienced technical personnel badly needed after independence.

Central to the Ivoirian prosperity was Houphouet-Boigny's singular decision to give industrial development a low priority. He believed it was wiser to develop the country's agricultural resources first and later concentrate on providing efficient ports, good roads, power and communications. He also encouraged foreign investment by passing laws that imposed few restrictions on the transfer of profits and capital, a policy that was scorned on by his more nationalist neighbours. The first 20 years after independence bore out his strategy well.²

Additionally, in contrast to most other newly independent nations Côte d’Ivoire did not pursue ostentatious industrialization programme. Instead, Houphouet-Boigny promoted a private economy which took advantage of Côte d’Ivoire’s comparative advantage in agricultural products and developed prosperous export industries in produce such as coffee, citrus and cocoa. He also encouraged small technical developments in areas such as plastic cones production to cover plants during their early growth when they would be vulnerable to intense sunlight. This is believed to have helped to improve on productivity.
Coffee production increased significantly, catapulting Côte d’Ivoire into third place behind Brazil and Colombia in total production. By early 1980's the country became the world's leading cocoa producer. It also became Africa's leading exporter of pineapples and palm oil. The Ivoirian rapid economic progress became a showcase for successful capitalist development in an African setting. The President presided over a tenfold increase in per capita income to approximately $900 in 1993, second only to South Africa’s in Africa.

Taxes were kept relatively low and government regulations were controlled. Consequently, economic activity moved to Côte d’Ivoire from other countries in West Africa. Sometimes, this took the form of migration. La Côte d’Ivoire's population thus grew from three million in 1960 to nine million in 1984 and 14 million in 1993. Produce, particularly cocoa, from high tax countries like Ghana was thus smuggled into the Ivoirian market. As a consequence of its successful policies Côte d’Ivoire grew rich and stable. La Côte d’Ivoire's neighbours like Ghana, Guinea and Liberia, which were richer in 1960, stagnated and suffered from tyrannical regime.

La Côte d’Ivoire’s economic prosperity under Houphouet-Boigny’s moderate leadership was not common in the poverty-ridden West African sub-region. It was thus quickly referred to as “Ivoirian miracle”. The development of the agricultural sector, especially coffee and cocoa, however, resulted in economic difficulties in late 1970s and early 1980s after a sharp drop in the world market prices of coffee and cocoa.

Kusi, a former Deputy Force Commander (DFC) of United Nations Mission in la Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), posits that, Houphouet-Boigny achieved this feat through a good blend of sound planning, maintenance of strong ties with the West (particularly France) and the expansion of the country’s agro-based industries. Houphouet-Boigny maintained close
relations with France under a policy known as “Francafrique”. This policy enabled him to use official and underground networks to maintain very close ties with France while acceding to independence. In France, he was a member of the National Assembly and a cabinet minister and in La Côte d’Ivoire he was President of the Territorial Assembly and also the mayor of Abidjan. When French West Africa was offered independence, either as separate nations or as members of a federation, Houphouet-Boigny campaigned for self-government of Côte d’Ivoire within the French Community. As President, he ran an autocratic, one-party state but he brought his opposition members into the party rather than persecuting them, a process he called “reconciliation”.

In the researcher’s considered opinion the close cooperation with France contributed immensely to the “Ivoirian miracle” of economic development and industrial progress. Though the benefits of the economic prosperity were not equally distributed (benefiting mostly bourgeoisies and wealthy politicians), President Houphouet-Boigny successfully prevented significant pockets of resistance to his government through a combination of co-option and repression. So successful was he in this art that those whose rights were abused nonetheless, recognised that they were materially better off than their neighbours in the sub-region.

Kusi points out that the greatest source of Houphouet-Boigny’s popular appeal was the “strength of his charismatic personality”. Through political acumen, eloquence and a calm and authoritative manner he was able to avoid most of the fierce confrontations and political turmoil that tormented post-independence Africa. It is believed that even his worst critics agreed that he inculcated a strong sense of nationhood in the country's distinct ethnic groups. Consequently, he managed to hold the nation together.
In 1989, for example UNESCO established the “Felix Houphouet-Boigny Peace Prize” for safeguarding, maintaining, and seeking peace. Yet, after his death, conditions in Côte d’Ivoire quickly deteriorated. There were a number of coups d’état, currency devaluation, economic recession and civil wars beginning from 2002.

3.3 The Post Houphouet-Boigny Politics

After the demise of Houphouet-Boigny, La Côte d’Ivoire experienced serious socio-political turbulence owing largely to the policies adopted by his successors. These policies resulted in a series of coups d’état, civil wars and increasing tensions.

3.3.1 Crisis of the Political Elite

Firstly, there was a battle among the four political leaders namely Bedie, Guei, Gbagbo and Ouattara. The struggle for power amongst these leaders rocked the political life of La Côte d’Ivoire for almost 10 years. Each leader often adopted petty tactical manoeuvres to either gain or preserve power in all probability at the expense of long-term development and progress.

In the writer’s considered opinion, Ouattara was perceived as a formidable competitor immediately he was appointed Prime Minister by Houphouet Boigny. Thus, all sorts of shrewd methods were employed to sabotage his political ambition. Bedie’s introduction of ethnicity and religion into the Ivoirian politics was therefore not a surprise because it was believed that Ouattara was a target. Bedie orchestrated the adoption of new electoral laws requiring candidates for public office to be of direct Ivoirian descents and managed to get Ouattara out of office. Ouattara was subsequently barred from contesting presidential and
legislative elections in October and December 2000 respectively on the grounds of the constitutional clause limiting eligibility to Ivoirians of Ivoirian parentage.

Gen Guei also made capital out of the belief that Ouattara was a Burkinabe resulting in the latter’s continued disqualification that subsequently ended up in the boycott of the elections by his party (RDR). Having prohibited Ouattara from participating in the elections, Guei contested Gbagbo, convinced of sound victory against the latter. However, when faced with electoral defeat, Guei quickly declared himself as president on October 24th, 2000. Supporters of Ouattara and Gbagbo reacted by protesting on October 25th – 26th, 2000. The protestors called for Gen Guei to vacate power and for the polls to be re-run. Kusi again observes that Gen Guei did everything possible to hang on to power but was prevented by a rebellion of the people from doing so. He was forced to flee Abidjan and Gbagbo was subsequently declared winner of the polls. Meanwhile, the protest by the RDR against the exclusion of Ouattara from the polls were badly subdued as approximately 300 people were killed by the security forces.13

It is worthy of note that, in the 2010 presidential run-off, Konan Bedie, who first pronounced Ouattara an “alien” surprisingly endorsed Ouattara against Gbagbo and formed a coalition with the former. This was after he came third in the October 31st, 2010 elections. The coalition earned Konan Bedie’s party “86 seats” in the current Ivoirian legislature.14 Kusi agrees that obviously Ouattara was the most formidable, well-qualified and internationally-respected contestant whom most of the political elites dreaded.

Secondly, while the leadership of Côte d’Ivoire’s major political parties is generally multi-ethnic, each of them is seen to be linked to a given region. Many see the FPI as a party that has most of its supporters from the Western and South-western stock. Majority of the RDR
supporters are from the Muslim north while PDCI has most of its supporters from the centre and east, who are mainly Christians. Kusi again opines that, unfortunately the political leaders “identify with and make capital of such divide in their bid to win or maintain power”. That invariably leads to political miscalculations. He points out that it is important for La Côte d’Ivoire to develop holistic policies on multicultural integration.

3.3.2 Politics of Ivoirité (Ivoirianness)

The history of the socio-cultural dimensions and the ethnic make-up of La Côte d’Ivoire especially from the French-colonised era to the independence reign of Houphouet-Boigny tell of a diverse people inhabiting and working together to help build a prosperous country. As noted earlier, the toils, sweats and expertise of the different people were well-harnessed by Houphouet-Boigny to produce the ‘Ivoirian miracle’.

The definition or better still the differentiation regarding natives and strangers, even if present, was not a daily discourse issue up to the death of Houphouet-Boigny. Bedie’s pronouncements and pursuit of Ivoirité stoked the ethnic and religious differences in Côte d’Ivoire beyond the tolerance zone. This did not only sharply divide the country but pitted the citizens against themselves in dangerous ways that eventually resulted in sectional violence and armed revolution in the country.

Henri Konan Bedie, who succeeded Houphouet-Boigny, was not able to solve the challenges confronting the country. He failed to arrest the economic down-turn of the country and this severely affected his popularity. According to Kirwin, under Bedie the Ivoirian economy struggled and opposition to his government increased. In reaction to the problems Bedie played the ethnic card and began a series of policy changes that alienated people of
“étrangères” descent and empowered those who were considered to be of Ivoirian background. Bedie’s increasingly xenophobic ways became unpopular with a large segment of the Ivoirian population.16

Konan Bedie became the first highly placed public figure, indeed an incumbent president, to openly make declarations and policies drawing distinctions between strangers and natives. He actively pursued an agenda to get rid of persons considered to be of immigrant African parentage within the government. The raison d’être for these destructive actions rested in his fear of electoral defeat during elections if the former Prime Minister of La Côte d’Ivoire, Alasane Ouattara contested. Bedie played a self-seeking ethnic political card probably because he was weakened by economic malaise under his regime, troubled by ever-growing opposition to his tactics, lacking sound and convincing messages yet confronted by a popularly formidable likely opponent in Ouattarra.

Bedie confirmed his true fears with the redrafting of the electoral code that provided that a presidential candidate as well as his parents must be Ivoirians by birth. Under this law, Ouattara would have conveniently been excluded. It is this mean-spirited, self-seeking obsession of Bedie that threw La Côte d’Ivoire into turmoil, beginning with Gen Guei’s coup d’état.

Gen Guei claimed his coup was to clean Bedie’s mess and return the country to its rightful place. However, he and Gbagbo adopted Bedie’s Ivoirité concept. This infection was, most probably, because of the lurking presence of a formidable and competent Ouattarra as an opponent. GeirSkogseth states that on the instructions of Gen Guei, Ouattarra was disqualified from running in the 2000 general elections by the Ivoirian High Court on
grounds that he submitted questionable documents to prove that both of his parents were Ivoirians.\textsuperscript{17}

The focus group members as well as answers and views from the random interviews largely confirmed the assertion that Bedie, Gbagbo and Guei evoked the Ivoirité concept to get rid of Ouattara because the latter was far more competent, highly regarded and thought of as deserving of the post of president than them. Indeed, Ouattara defeated Gbagbo in the general elections of 2010. Ouattara was thus a sure bet to beat any of the three once he was allowed to contest in a general election. Punamane opines that Ouattara’s curriculum vitae (CV) were enough to intimidate the combined CVs of the three elite politicians put together.\textsuperscript{18} The overall objective, intent and essence of the Ivoirité as it were, were not going to be realised. It was intended to disqualify Ouattara from contesting the presidential elections. This informed Bedie’s move to have the electoral code redrafted.

3.3.3 Redrafting of the Electoral Code

After the death of Houphouet-Boigny, Konan Bedie identified Ouattara as a political opponent and an arch enemy who stood between his desire of maintaining his newly acquired political power and defeat. The best option then could have been an effort to get Ouattara out of the way in order to attain the political goal. Bedie’s self-nurtered and hatched Ivoirité concept was a desperate after-thought, which was not rooted in the original constitution bequeathed by Houphouet-Boigny; it consequentially meant that it could not have been in tune with the then electoral laws of the country. Out of desperation, Bedie empanelled some of his loyalists to redraft the electoral code at his behest. This was probably as a result of the failure of all efforts to get rid of Ouattarra from the electoral process, especially when the then electoral code in vogue did not debar Ouattarra,
Kirwin states that the redrafting of the electoral code made it obligatory that a presidential candidate should be Ivoirian by birth and that his/her parents should be Ivoirians by birth as well. In para-phrasing Kamissoko, Kirwin intimates that the redesigned electoral code also stated that a presidential candidate could never hold another nationality and he/she must have resided in Côte d’Ivoire for five years preceding an election.¹⁹

The redrafted electoral code sought to specifically prevent Ouattara from running in the elections. The five year time bar was very instructive to the extent that Ouattara, following the death of Houphouet-Boigny, served with the International Monetary Fund as Deputy Managing Director from 1994 to 1999. He could thus not meet the mandatory five year time bar as by his appointment he was then residing outside Côte d’Ivoire.

Egoistic Bedie could be described as one who clearly demonstrated an unrelenting penchant to eliminate Ouattara even if it meant sacrificing the stability of the country to enable him hang on to power. Instead of concentrating on policies that could turn the economy around, Bedie rather concentrated on measures to disqualify Ouattara. His concern with the personality of Ouattara meant Bedie might have seen the former as a larger character against whom he did not have the slightest chance of winning power. Indeed, all the interviewees agreed that the redrafting of the electoral code was intended to eliminate Ouattara from contesting as president. They further concurred that such action was a recognition that Ouattara was thought of as an “impossible-to-defeat” candidate by Konan Bedie. Others suggested that Bedie and Gbagbo were too well-aware of their inadequacies against Ouattara. The probable option available that could help them to canvass support was to dream up an “us versus them” divide.
Bedie was, however, overthrown by Gen Guei’s generally welcomed coup of December 1999. As it were, Guei seemed to have been infected by the same contagious disease as did Gbagbo too which their immediate predecessor suffered from at the seat of power. The post Houphouet-Boigny Côte d’Ivoire was plunged into recurrent violent under the weight of the politics of the three leaders.

All in all, every conceivable desperate means to justify the exclusion of Ouattara from the electoral process was probably employed. Bedie seemed possessed by his vulgar lust for power such that he reduced the political discourse to the personality of Ouattara. The sure consequence was that violence was bound to escalate out of the electoral gymnastics that ensued, should Ouattara be eliminated from the political process. The effect of Ouattara’s exclusion from the electoral process on the crisis that ensued in Côte d’Ivoire could thus not be ruled out.

3.3.4 Interfering in the Electoral Process by Political Leadership

It was never the case that elections under Houphouet-Boigny were terribly rigged in Côte d’Ivoire so as to attract a popular unyielding anger of the electorate and the disdain of the international community. The direct and overt interference by an incumbent president or his cabal of supporters seemed to have appeared on the political landscape of Côte d’Ivoire with the death of Houphouet-Boigny. Gen Guei had decided to ran for president but was denied by the PDCI to run on its ticket. Guei founded his own UDPCI party and succeeded in manipulating the judiciary and electoral process to have the most formidable candidates among them, Ouattara and Bedie, disqualified from running in the elections. Guei probably miscalculated that he could defeat Gbagbo of the FPI, an astute veteran opposition politician.
The Guei-supervised presidential elections were conducted on October 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2000 but on being awakened to the shocked reality of electoral defeat by Gbagbo, Guei declared himself as president on October 24\textsuperscript{th}, 2000. Gbagbo made a clarion call and the people responded to make the country ungovernable leading to the ousting of Guei. Consequently Gbagbo declared himself as president.

The infamous action of Gen Guei declaring himself president without allowing the public declaration of the results obviously suggested he might have lost the elections. The general perception was that Gbagbo had won the elections. Thus, Gen Guei’s declaration of himself as president midway through the election process was perceived as an introduction of an alien and distasteful phenomenon into the already volatile political discourse. The citizens rose to the occasion and ensured he exited from the political scene.

Unfortunately, on assumption of power, Gbagbo resorted to the infamous and distasteful behaviour of his predecessor by declaring himself president after his cronies violently prevented the electoral commission from declaring the final results of the 2010 general elections. By their actions, Konan Bedie, Gen Guei and Gbagbo sought through mediocre and narrow conduct to best Ouattara.

3.3.5 Ouattara: The Common Enemy

The personality and politics of Ouattara who came to symbolise the make or break of Côte d'Ivoire deserves study. What is it about Ouattara that Bedie, Guei and Gbagbo were so uncomfortable with. Whereas Bedie and Gbagbo can be described as veteran politicians, Ouattara comparatively was a political new-comer whilst Guei was a retired Military General.
By 1972, Ouattara had obtained his Doctorate (PhD) degree in Economics and worked with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in diverse capacities, becoming the Head of the African Department in 1987. He also worked with the Central Bank of West African States (Francophone - BCEAO) and rose to the position of Governor in 1993.

It is with this enviably appetizing resume among other things that Ouattara was introduced into Ivoirian politics. Suffice it to say that this came at the not-so-happy period, as the economy at the time faced a downturn. Though others like Bedie were not comfortable with this new-comer, he was the most competent and qualified to help remedy the economic downturn during Houphouet-Boigny’s political regime. Ouattara concentrated on the core job for which he was brought in for every intent and purpose and his political master, Houphouet-Boigny rewarded him, so it seems, on merit by appointing him as Prime Minister.

Ouattara’s arrival on the political scene of Côte d’Ivoire could have thus influenced the creation of the post of Prime Minister when Houphouet-Boigny felt the need to reward him for his role in salvaging the economy of the country. He, however, left after Houphouet-Boigny’s death to work with the IMF. It can be argued that his record in government, impressive resume and working/human relations endeared him to many. Indeed, he had earned himself international experience, respect and recognition unmatched by any of the politicians then in Côte d’Ivoire.

Ouattara was seen as the only person who could possibly torpedo the political aspirations of the special interest groups and persons within the ruling party who had a realistic shot at the president on grounds of political longevity and standing in the government. His impressive resume and record in government were testimony to this. In this research it was observed that
most candidates who have less appetising résumés, achievements to point to and a message to
convince the electorate, normally have no issues to discuss except to personalise the politics.

In this sense, Ouattara became a common enemy to a particular like-minded political interest
group. These Ouattara-obsessed politicians therefore had every reason to want to boost their
self-esteem in the eyes of the electorate. The most plausible means was to divert attention
from their weaknesses and “Ivoirité” came in handy. If it were near impossible for any of
Bedie, Guei and Gbagbo to defeat Ouattara through competitive democratic elections, it was
better to prevent him from contesting the polls. Ouattara equally became a villain to the
politicians who knew they had no chance of actualising their dreams as presidents because of
his introduction into the Ivoirian body politic.

With hindsight, it is obvious that the issues of Ivoirité and the redrafted electoral code would
have remained non-issues but for the behaviour of Bedie, Guei and Gbagbo. An entire nation
was plunged into rebellion as a result of the narrow and destructive policies of these political
leaders. What was actually a crisis of impotent political elite was clothed in emotional
identity term of ‘fake’ and ‘true’ Ivoirians through well-planned propaganda. This diverted
the country’s attention from legitimate issues of development and left in its wake the violence
of shared destruction, loss of lives and property and a divided mutually suspicious nation.

It is not far-fetched to argue that Konan Bedie, Gen Robert Guei and Laurent Gbagbo were
genuine victims of an extreme disease of inferiority complex compared to Alasane Ouattara.
The fact that Konan Bedie and his party eventually supported Ouattara against Gbagbo in the
2010 presidential run-off and did form a coalition with Ouattara is testimony to this
conclusion. If Bedie’s initial claim that Ouattara is a Burkinabe was genuine, one finds it
difficult to fathom this turn around. Moreso, Bedie’s readiness to support and work with
Ouattara, someone he whole-heartedly considered a foreigner and unworthy of the office of president of Côte d’Ivoire, raises questions about his earlier actions.

The miscalculations of the self-seeking political leaders who prioritised their lust for power above the larger interests of their nations, as typified by the actions of Bedie, Guei and Gbagbo, have often led to violent conflicts. It becomes more dangerous when the violence is ethnic-oriented as exemplified by the rebellion in Côte d’Ivoire.

3.3.6 Bad Governance

Governance in Côte d’Ivoire in the post-Houphouet-Boigny era was generally perceived to be the cause of the ensuing rebellion in that country. The introduction of the concept of “Ivoirité” created a “divide and rule” arrangement which brought about suspicion and mistrust that fuelled the north-south divide. The new constitution drafted by Gen Guei’s regime also did not help matters. It retained clauses that entrenched national divisions between the north and south as well as Christians and Muslims.

Again, general elections have mostly not been transparent, free and fair. As observed in the research, there were strict eligibility requirements for would-be contestants that prevented some political elites from participating in some elections. On two occasions, election processes were stopped by Guei and Gbagbo, claiming poll fraud. On those occasions they disbanded the electoral commission and declared themselves winners of the polls. Consequently, these actions occasioned mass rioting against both regimes leading to violent conflict. Additionally, corruption in government and mismanagement led to deep reductions in foreign aid in 1998-99 and eventually influenced the country’s first coup. Several human right abuses including rape, arbitrary arrests and detentions as well as mass killings were recorded.
The pursuit of narrow interests by successive political leaders also occasioned the rebellion in Côte d’Ivoire. Disenchanted sections of the populace who felt short-changed by these political leaders rebelled against the political establishment in search for fair means to addressing their expectations and grievances. The analysis thus clearly establishes that improper state behaviour exhibited by the leadership of La Côte d’Ivoire had been responsible for the rebellion that occurred in that country. It is therefore pertinent to find strategies that point to the way forward.

3.4 The Way Forward

3.4.1 Good Governance

For democracy to thrive, the quality of governance should be improved through the institution of a pluralist political system with state institutions that are non-partisan. This could be instituted as a prerequisite for membership of the ECOWAS. The nature of human behaviour and power dictates that individuals who wield state power cannot be trusted on their own to justly and fairly govern all the time.

La Côte d’Ivoire is still an emerging democracy and as such, may find it difficult to sustain good democratic practices and therefore, relapse into autocratic behaviours. This assertion holds good for most West African states. Hence, ECOWAS Parliament could be empowered to receive complaints from aggrieved individuals, citizens and groups about perceived state injustices. This could help to empower the citizens and forestall rebellion.

The role of the media in good governance is also vital in holding political leadership, public officials and governance institutions accountable. The media should avoid the peddling of falsehood and propaganda which could cause distrust and divide the people. Consequently, the role of the media in a democratic society and in Côte d’Ivoire could be redefined to
emphasize the promotion of national cohesion. Part of the problems in Côte d’Ivoire was perhaps the failure of the media to effectively play its role in the country.

Furthermore, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) work in communities and tend to enjoy the confidence of the citizens. La Côte d’Ivoire could establish an institution tasked with the responsibility of liaising with the CSOs to encourage them to receive cases of perceived injustices from individuals and groups. This institution could be given the mandate to report the complaints directly to the organisation involved for settlement or refer the issue to the court.

3.4.2 National Social Orientation and Reconciliation

La Côte d’Ivoire needs to embark on a national social orientation to develop policies of multicultural integration and reconciliation. Analysis shows that the behaviour of the main actors in intra-state conflicts in West Africa reflects unethical traits as greed, corruption, and electoral malpractices and human rights abuses. Côte d’Ivoire is not an exception. The research showed that La Côte d’Ivoire has been more or less, one party state headed by oligarchies that were corrupt and incompetent, and were essentially driven by personal vendetta or greed.

It is important therefore that while addressing the issues of human rights abuse, corruption, ethnic and religious intolerance, bad governance and other negative behaviours, there is the need to consider the influence of moral decadence on the variables. The strategy to counter this is to institutionalize a policy of integration and reconciliation. The objective could be to develop a leadership behaviour that portrays love of country and respect for the laws of the land. This could be done by waging a concerted war against corruption as well as include all ethnic groups in executive functions.
Besides, to prevent rebellion, the government could ensure that power and resources are equitably distributed. This could help to avoid perceived marginalisation of minority ethnic and interest groups. All Ivoirians, including political, media and CSO leaders, would do well to abstain from any act that could bring about ethnically influenced crisis. This often results from indirect yet damaging speeches. For instance, when Alassane Ouattara reportedly stated that “the police who came to assassinate me spoke the Bété language”, his words could be perceived as he suspecting the ethnic group of his rival, President Gbagbo to have carried out the alleged act. Again, Gbagbo’s call on television for the “cleansing of the neighbourhoods” and his party loyal press’ explicit citing of Burkina Faso as an invader of Côte d’Ivoire could appear as encouraging ethnic cleansing of Burkinabe living in the country. Probably, the police were motivated by those words to burn many shanty towns in Abidjan where the majority of the foreigners lived. Individual acts and utterances could thus lead to collective action. The leaders and individuals need to be held responsible for action and utterances that could plunge countries/communities into violence.

The xenophobic Ivoirian press was believed to have fanned the flames, causing headlong collision with the Western media, neighbouring African countries, opposition parties, and foreigners on Ivoirian soil accusing them of wanting to destroy the country. They thus put in place all the conditions necessary for a large-scale conflagration. That notwithstanding, the international community could come out with an integrated plan for the support of La Côte d’Ivoire in order to create conditions for long-term reconciliation.

Again, it is important to ensure that the criteria for good governance and formal democracy are well-suited to socio-cultural conditions in the Ivoirian context. Without this intervention, the country may relapse into worst conflicts if the stakeholders in Ivoirian politics feel
frustrated in pursuit of their political agenda. There is the need for members of different groups in Côte d’Ivoire to have opportunity to participate freely in political activities of the country.

Massive emigration of a major part of the three million Burkinabe living in Côte d'Ivoire to their country of origin may occur if calls for xenophobic and ethnic hatred as well as politicians’ continuous exploitation of ethnicity do not cease. The economy of Côte d'Ivoire would probably be heavily affected by the departure of such a large number of labourers essential to the survival and vitality of its economy. The consequences for the Ivoirian society could be frightening: for example virulent ethnic hate speech, growing rancor, search for economic scapegoats and a social catastrophe could occur and lead straight to civil war.

Contrary to what is sometimes prophesied, this might not be a simple war of secession between North and South. Many religious and ethnic groups of La Côte d'Ivoire are present in each city, village, and neighbourhoods of the country. They are intricately inter-related as are the Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda.

3.4.3 Patriotism

Patriotism is important to the cohesion of a state. The more cohesive a state is, the less the possibility of conflict, thus enabling the state to exercise power, which is essential for democratic behaviour of state. The greater the coherence within a political community, the more likely it is that power will be exercised through institutionalised authority. La Côte d'Ivoire is not based on any natural social cohesion. Rather, it is a cluster of ethnic groups and nationalities who feel greater loyalty to their groups rather than to the nation at large. Therefore, for any strategy to work, it should first aim at bringing the different ethnic,
religious and political groups within the country into a unified whole. A strong national sentiment could be developed as basis for consensus.

Democracy should involve and empower every member or group of the society. The key to this is the concept of citizenship with new norms and standards that discourage attitudes that tend to portray certain ethnic groups in bad light. Individuals could be eligible to elect to be citizens of their country of birth or adopt where they have contributed to develop for a given number of years. Aggressive propaganda could be employed to sensitize the Ivoirians of the culture of patriotism, hospitality and good neighbourliness. In addition, government agencies could be challenged to work on projects that would emphasis patriotism and national unity.

3.4.4 Conflict Prevention Strategies
These strategies are enhancement strategies aimed at eliminating conflict areas to facilitate social, political and economic development. These include conflict prevention, peace promotion, consolidation of good behaviour and democratic practice. They are based on the assumption that rebellion could be avoided in cohesive community where democratic tenets are upheld.

3.4.5 Early Warning and Conflict Management
Some African leaders have learnt from experience that peace, security, democracy, good governance, respect for human rights and sound economic management are the conditions that could ensure sustainable development on the continent. NEPAD is the strategy with which they hope to attain this goal. It is an African Regional Initiative for peace and security which aims at capacity building for early warning and conflict management.
NEPAD also aims at accelerating the pace of development of priority sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, information technology and mining. This is to be achieved by creating an enabling environment for economic activities to thrive through a common approach to security by regional groups within the continent. In line with this strategy, AU member states are to realign their political security and defence policies based on Regional Alliance to create a conducive environment for continental economic activities. In addition, the African Peer Review Mechanism was established to check undemocratic behaviours among African leaders. This strategy assumes that solving socio-economic problems could solve the problem of intrastate conflicts. It also assumes the sincerity of member states when they sign international agreements. However, some leaders have been known to sign accords, agreements and pledges as well as make other kinds of commitments without honouring them especially when driven by greed and hunger for power.

3.5 Conclusion

The chapter looked at the political behaviour of Felix Houphouet-Boigny and the post Houphouet-Boigny politics that raised issues like crisis among the political elite and politics of ‘Ivoirite’, redrafting of the electoral code by political leaders after the death of Houphouet-Boigny and interference in the electoral process by political leadership. Others discussed include the perception of Ouattara as the common enemy, bad governance and the way forward. Under this, the discussion looked at greed, bad governance, national social orientation and reconciliation, patriotism, conflict prevention strategies, and early warning and conflict management.
END NOTES


3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.


6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Kusi BF; Interview of the Deputy Force Commander of UNOCI on March 18\textsuperscript{th}, 2012.


14. BBC world News aired at 0700 GMT on March 13\textsuperscript{th}, 2012.

15. IRIN, Indepth: Op Cit.


18. Interview with Punamane JM, former Military Observer in UNOCI on March 11\textsuperscript{th}, 2012.


20. Random Focus Group Discussions with UNOCI Ghanaian Troops on December 12\textsuperscript{th} – 13\textsuperscript{th}, 2011.

4.1 Summary

The dilemma of rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire is the consequence of behaviours of political leaders in their relationship with their citizens. The analysis identified some critical issues that led to the rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire as the redrafting of the electoral code, electoral gymnastics and malpractices. Others include crisis among the political elites, identity crisis and bad governance as well as the struggle for power after the demise of Houphouet-Boigny. The leadership manipulated and mobilized state policies, agencies, religion and ethnicity for their selfish ends.

The research revealed that the rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire was a direct consequence of state behaviours. The state behaviours that caused the rebellion were amply manifested in the conduct of the political leaders. It also became clear from the research that the rebellion in the country affected the socio-economic development of some neighbouring countries in the West African sub-region as well.

4.2 Conclusion

This research appraised state behaviour and its impact on rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire. It looked at the peaceful and stable atmosphere the Houphouet-Boigny-led government sustained from independence to 1993. Of particular interest was his ability to maintain stability with the policy of “reconciliation” during the latter part of his reign when the country encountered political turbulence occasioned by economic recession.
Unfortunately, a wide range of post-Houphouet-Boigny politicking ranging from crisis of the political elites, introduction of “Ivoirite”, redrafting of the electoral code, election malpractices and bad governance, was introduced by his successors. The research held that the rebellion in La Côte d’Ivoire was a direct consequence of the behaviour of succeeding political leaders towards their citizens. Accordingly, the work viewed state behaviour in La Côte d’Ivoire as those tendencies and traits that generated conflict between governments and their citizens, engendered by incompetent leadership.

The research therefore proposes enhancement strategies to address this shortcoming. This could be achieved by strengthening social orientation, cohesion and structures that would ensure good governance and democratic behaviour of the state. That could include provision of those structures and institutions that could enable political leaders in La Côte d’Ivoire to meet their obligations towards their citizens. These also include sustainable economic development that could help in eradicating poverty and ensure industrialization and food security. Additionally, the state needs to adopt enhancement strategies like conflict prevention, peace promotion, consolidation of good behaviour and democratic practice aimed at eliminating conflict areas to facilitate social, political and economic development.

Finally, ECOWAS may have to ensure that the capacity building for early warning and conflict management strategy for the sub-region is religiously enforced to eliminate conflicts, and facilitate social, political and economic development. These could help to prevent rebellion wherever it may surface in the sub-region.

4.3 Recommendations

The following are recommended:
i. The Ivorian media should redefine its role in a democratic system to emphasize the promotion of national cohesion;

ii. The International Criminal Court should indict key political figures who lead atrocities against civilians to serve as deterrent to others; and

iii. The UN should hold fighters of both Gbagbo and Ouattara accountable for the crimes they committed.

It is recommended that the Government of La Côte d’Ivoire should adopt the following measures:

i. Institute policies aimed at uniting the different ethnic, religious, political and interest groups within the country by developing politics of multicultural integration;

ii. Adopt enhancement strategies like conflict prevention, peace promotion, the consolidation of good behaviour and democratic practice aimed at eliminating conflicts to facilitate socio-political and economic development;

iii. Ensure that power and resources are equitably distributed to avoid perceived marginalisation of minority ethnic and interest groups in order to prevent rebellion; and

iv. Establish an institution to liaise with the CSOs to receive cases of perceived injustices from individuals and groups for lasting settlement.

It is also recommended that ECOWAS Secretariat should:
i. Ensure capacity-building for early warning and conflict management strategy of the sub-region in order to eliminate conflicts and promote development; and

ii. Institute policies that would ensure respect for citizens’ rights and the adoption of dialogue as the official method of conflict resolution.
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