



## Research Article

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**Politics of Self-Succession and Tenure Elongation in Africa: Cause and Implication on Democratic Development**Ibrahim Baba\*<sup>1</sup>, Musa Adamu Mahdi<sup>1</sup>, Ibrahim Ghide Adamu<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Department of Public Administration, Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic Geidam, Yobe State, Nigeria<sup>2</sup>Department of Social Development, Mai Idris Aloomo Polytechnic Geidam, Yobe State, Nigeria**Article History**

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**Abstract:** In Africa, military regime seems to have ended. But it is obvious that autocracy was inherited into civil rule from the previous military regimes. In some cases, military rulers civilianized and in others, civilians were elected into government through elections. The controversies surrounding the end of military and rise of democratic regimes in Africa is first, leaders not willing to leave office even when tenure has ended or altering constitutional provision to extend tenure against popular wish and desire. And secondly, military heads of government who have succeeded themselves that is, civilianized into white or plain cloth leaders have in other instances thrown their countries into bloody civil wars due to unwillingness to relinquish power. The desire for self-succession and tenure elongation is personal than national interest as many believed. This study examined the causes of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa. It also examined the implications of self-succession and tenure elongation on democratic development on the continent. It was conducted with the use of secondary and primary methods of data collection. The study found out that fear of apprehension and trial for misconduct and abuse of political power while in office is one of the causes of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa. It was also discovered that the implication of self-succession and tenure elongation politics on democratic development in Africa include the fact that multi-party democracies are fast becoming one party states in operation. The study recommended that an incorruptible, vibrant and discipline legislative assembly capable of checkmating political leaders desire for constitutional amendment to extend tenure limit is necessary as a solution to the politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa.

**Keywords:** Democratic, Development, Elongation, Politics, Self-succession, Tenure.

**INTRODUCTION**

Man, in the modern world finds himself existing under the authority of government. The concentration of political power in the hands of few individuals appointed or elected does not actually mean that few owns power. Power belongs to the totality of people who make up the population of a given political entity for the few are just custodian of state power. Power resides in the people. And this they exhibit through franchise in a descent and matured political manner known as election. The choice of few in which political power should be vested with comes directly from the people in a popular democratic exercise. And sometimes, it comes indirectly through their elected representatives in the case of indirect or representative democracy (Laski, 1986; Denardo, 1985; Appadurai, 1974). Though power belongs to the people but in Africa, the transfer of political power after the departure of colonialists was celebrated with great jubilation and hitherto the required manpower to occupy vacancies created by this exit and how newly established independent government will be managed. Little or no thought was given to the possibility of military intervention and political instabilities that are

likely to accompany this development with interest on the part of leaders to consolidate grips on state power for life. And soon after colonialism ended, states in Africa became the global theater of conflict mostly promoted by one or more forms of political instabilities.

Democracy offers the best method of acquiring and transferring state power. And this method of gaining power fosters democratic development in a political entity (Przeworski, 2000). Elsewhere colonialists actually built a democratic foundation in Africa and transferred political power to their former colonies through popular elections. But proper structures necessary for the sustainability of this system of transferring and acquiring political power was improperly sustained. The democratic foundation laid in Africa was not actually designed to give people power but to make it a property of class. And thus, power sneaked into the hands of the elites popular known as the comprador bourgeoisie who were already before the end of colonialism allies and agents of the metropolitan bourgeoisie. The creation of class in Africa and the transfer of power to the formed class have continued to distance the people from power. Hence, members of the ruling class prefer to rotate power among

themselves than giving it to the people who are the actual owners. In some countries, though they belong to the same class, but still, the tussle for power is still tense among members of the ruling class. And in others, constitutional alternatives do not even exist for succession of power in the event of leaders' death. And this has continued to make power vulnerable to grabs in some African states.

The removal of possible alternatives to succession as often promoted in Africa by some leaders so as to make state leadership some family affairs is an act of dictatorship (Fullbrook, 1995). Absence of such alternatives not only breed autocracy on the continent but it has created avenue for self-succession and life leadership on the continent. The death of Felix Houphouët-Boigny on throne in Ivory Coast created a power vacuum that culminated in the accentuation of Laurent Gbagbo to the position of Ivorian president after a tense pressure with democrats who believe that power is not for grab but belongs to the people. Gbagbo after grabbing power disagreed that people decide who a leader should be and refused to step down even after suffering a defeat in presidential election until a bloody civil war engulfed leading to his forceful removal and apprehension with the aid of French forces. And in the West African state of Togo, Gnassingbe Eyadema ruled for 38 years and died in power and due to lack of outstanding constitutional alternatives for succession; the military installed his son as successor. This triggered civil disobedience in the country and global condemnation forcing regional and continental blocs like ECOWAS AND AU to intervene by conducting a democratic election in which the same son contested, declared as winner and sworn into office as Togo's president.

The prodemocracy protests and national conferences of the 1990s in Africa ensured that at the very least, the succession issue was positioned squarely where it belong, in the arena of debate so as to ameliorating the activities of leaders who often altered the constitution so as to extend their stay in power (Powell, 2000). Attempts to legally amend constitution to extend the term of outgoing president are not new, and not always successful in Africa (Watterberg, 2003). In some cases, it has not been successful while in others, it is a regular routine as soon as incumbent leader's tenure come closer to end. It failed in Nigeria in 2005 following a serious parliamentary debate and rejection of the need for amendment of presidential tenure. Thabo Mbeki's forceful and untimely resignation from power also indicated that it failed in South Africa. Lasana Conte and Dauda Jawara engineered constitutional amendments that made them life presidents in both Guinea Conakry and the Gambia signified the success of this act. And today, the list of ruling presidents in Africa who shows expertise in the area of engineering constitutional amendment to extend their tenure in power keeps growing.

### **Statement of problem**

In Africa, several leaders have championed the cause of constitutional amendment to make themselves life presidents dying on throne and living their countries in serious political thumb oil due to lack of outstanding alternative to power succession. Ghadaffy in Libya, Jawara in Gambia, Conte in Guinea and Eyadema in Togo are good examples. Repeated rebellions demanding for regime change in Chad has refused to end due to Deby's relentless effort to contest and keep winning in presidential election. States with multi-party system are fast becoming one party state and government becoming a one-man business because of thwart measures to opposition by leaders who do not want to leave power like Museveni in Uganda and Biya in Cameroun. And a stagnant democratic system is the other of the day in Africa's political development.

Several works have been done on issues related with politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa like Ross (2006), Thomas (2001), Farrell (2001), and Songwe (2008) among others. Existing studies actually pointed at the fact that there is politics of self-succession in Africa with minimal attention to the causes. But none was able to point out the implication such politics has on democratic development in Africa. The possible solution to this type of politics or leadership attitude was not also pointed out by previous studies. Previous studies on the subject matter also adopted the qualitative method of inquiry without taking quantitative investigative method into consideration. Primary data obtained from views given by experts are necessary to be able to acquire an in depth understanding of the causes and implication of the matter on democratic development on the continent. These gaps created in knowledge provided the bases for further studies on the matter. And, it is in order to bridge these gaps identified in existing knowledge on the matter that this study was necessitated.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of this study are:

- To examine the causes of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa.
- Assess the implications of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa.
- And to find out the solutions to politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa.

### **Research Question**

This study raised and answered the following questions:

- What are the causes of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa?
- What are the implications of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa?
- And what are the solutions to politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa?

## Hypothesis

The hypotheses formulated to guide the study are:

- **H1:** Fear of apprehension and trial for misconduct while in office causes politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa.
- **H2:** Implication of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa includes the fact that multi-party democracies are becoming one party state in operation.
- **H3:** Incorruptible, vibrant, and discipline legislative assembly is a solution to self-succession and tenure elongation politics in Africa.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The activities of self-succession and tenure extension in Africa are sometimes promoted by political parties. Party do not want to lost out to oppositions in elections therefore, they encouraged incumbent leaders to rig election or alter the constitution so as to remain in power (Thomas, 2001). Chama Cha Mapinduzi Party (CCMP) in Tanzania and the island of Zanzibar had always dominate public positions since the demise of Julius Nyerere from power. The Communist Party of Mengistu Haile Meriam ruled Ethiopia since the demise of the Italian invaders until it was toppled by Meles Zenawi. Since the first revolution in Libya took place, the Socialist Party dominates the political atmosphere of the country making Ghadaffy a life president until he was killed in a second revolution with the help of NATO forces air strikes headed by the United States and France. And in Zimbabwe, Mugabe led the rebellion that liberated the country from colonial rule. But since 1982 that Zimbabwe gained independent, Mugabe's ZANU-PF Party led in all elections and heads all political position with him serving as the president until 2018 the military took over power from him and shortly, conducted a general election to install a new president for the country.

In the period from 1983 to 1999, politics in the African state of Nigeria took the form of succession of military regimes that constantly planned a return to democracy. Administrative and judicial proceedings continued as though a constitutional structure were in place. President Babangida in 1992 and 1994 postponed the return to civilian rule, his standing with the population, and even with the military, moved ever lower. Apprehension grew when he delayed announcement of the June 12, 1993 presidential election. Two days after the election, initial results released by the National Election Commission (NEC) showed that M. K. O Abiola had won in all of the 14 states. Later, a private human rights coalition, the Campaign for Democracy published election results indicating that Abiola had won in 19 of the 30 states. A few days later, the military government declared the election invalid. At the same time, Babangida promised new elections, and once again promised a return to

civilian rule (Mundt & Aborisade, 2006). Babangida's invalidation of June 12, 1993 presidential election in addition to his failed promises of transition to civil rule are indication of his intension to extend his tenure in power or probably civilianized into a plain cloth president (Diamond *et al.*, 1997).

After Babangida government voided the national presidential election of 1993 and Abacha came in by sacking the Interim National Government left by Babangida in 1993, banned party activities and suspended the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Five political parties were artificially created to contest for local and state elections as Abacha's transition to civil rule program. These parties were allowed to exist if they reframed from any criticism of the regime, and they stand so far in the other direction that all five named Abacha their presidential candidate. Abacha seemed to manipulate the system to remain president but his strategy was aborted by his death of a reported heart attack in May 1998 (Lewis *et al.*, 1998). Although, General Abdulsalam Abubakar handed over power to a democratically elected president but then, Olagunju *et al.* (1993) already stated that transition to civil rule in Nigeria is characterized by cases of leaders wanting to succeed themselves or extend the period of their staying in power by failing to fulfil their transition to civil rule promises.

The bill sponsored in the Nigerian National Assembly to allow President Obasanjo to serve a third term, however, provoked a backlash that has never before been witnessed in the checkered history of Nigeria's democracy. But Nigeria's Nationally Assembly made it clear, in no uncertain terms, that it backed democracy when its Senators responded with a thunderous "Nay" to the third term bill. This emboldened the House of Representatives which, for the first time ever, took a stand against the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) and government by also voting against it. The handwork of sycophants counts a lot in the call for the third term bid (Odufa, 2006). Sycophancy has been at the center piece of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa. Associates of leaders operating at the corridor of power and eating from crumbs falling down from their masters' plate do not want to lose this opportunity against national interest.

In Cameroun, President Paul Biya is still in power after all these years. Biya is among the continent worst dictators. Since taking over power from late President Ahmadou Ahidjo in 1982, and surviving a coup plot two years later, Biya has adopted three key strategies to keep a firm grip on power. He carefully selects mostly people from his Beti tribe to hold key positions in government, he rewards those who support his stay in power with ministerial positions and amenities and he keeps the military happy with good salary packages. There is no sign yet that Biya, now

aged above 80, is about to throw in the towel. In 2007, the CPMD won 159 seats in parliament enabling its members to crush any resistance from the opposition to a bill that make it possible for the president to stay in power for an unlimited number of terms. Biya has consistently won a majority in parliament since 1992 when the first multi-party elections were held in the country. And these leads, give him the leverage to get what he wants. Biya has not groomed a successor and has effectively marginalized, and even exiled, those who have challenged him in the past. Therefore, even if he is removed from power without a change in party, there is no indication at all who he would prefer to take over the reins of leadership in the country (Songwe, 2008). Biya may have interest of wanting to remain in power for life. But the activities of sycophants help in equipping him with the capability to actualize his ambition. As few complains of lack of change in leadership in a multi-party democracy loom, several others glorify his ability of consolidating his grip on state power for so long. In fact, they brand him as the "Lion Man" of Cameroun.

When Museveni came to power in Uganda in 1986, he cited leaders who stayed too long in power as one of Africa's major problems. And now, he has consistently been seen thanking party delegates for selecting him as presidential flag bearer when election is due. He also thanked members of parliament for voting to scrap term limit that would have since ended its regime (Ross, 2006). Museveni like Biya in Cameroun drew the conclusion that without him, Uganda will fall. Museveni found his way into state power after a rebellion he staged against the government of Milton Obote. Since 1986 till date, Museveni remains the president of Uganda. He would not have been noticed thanking the parliament for scrapping term limit if his interest is not to spend the rest of his life in power.

The list of African leaders with interest in self-succession and tenure elongation is inexhaustible. Laurent Kabila in the Democratic Republic Congo (DRC) led a rebellion that forcefully threw out an age long government of Mobutu Sese Sekou from power. And shortly after gaining power, he was assassinated and his son Joseph Kabila was made the president by the Congolese armed forces. In Libya, even with emerging rebellion targeting regime change at Tripoli, Ghadaffy refused to step down and was later apprehended on the run and killed. Hosni Mubarak in Egypt was forced to quit power by popular uprising in the country. Umar Bongo did not only stay long but died in power and his son was made to succeed him. Yahaya Jemmeh in the republic of Gambia conceded defeat in the country's presidential election and later disagreed with results he had accepted earlier. Jammeh's refusal to hand over power to the winner of the election amounted to global pressure that forced regional bloc (ECOWAS) forces to came up with

military strategy to flush him out of power by force. He fled to exile from power on discovering his military unwillingness to confront the ECOWAS forces in order to make him remained in power. Taylor in Liberia came in after a civil war he participated to end the age long government of autocratic regime of Samuel Doe. Taylor himself never wanted to quit power until he was forced into exile in Nigeria where he was arrested and put to trial in the International Criminal Court (ICC). In Sudan, Albashir seems to has over stayed his welcome in power. Despite the calls for referendum in South Sudan and secession in the country's Darfur region, Albashir led his country into a referendum pressured by the International community leading to the breakup of South Sudan from Sudan. And still Albashir refused to quit and remains the president of Sudan. Mainasari Bari's intention to extend his tenure in Niger was greeted with his assassination in a military coup that ended his regime and life by force. Tanja Mammadu not learning from the lesson of Bari also championed a national conference (Conference du Nationale) that altered Niger's constitution to enable him extend his stay in power. But history recorded that, Tanja was ousted from power forcefully by the Nigerien military. Thomas Sankara stepped into power as military head of government in Burkina Faso, stayed more than expected on throne and later civilianized into a civilian president. Faso's refusal to quit by constantly fixing and shifting election date was treated with a bloody coup that brought in Blaise Camporee who himself seems to have over stayed in power. Idris Deby's romance with France on exploitation of Chad's oil reserve has won him some foreign loyalties and support to extend his stay in power but then, his continue stay as Chadian president has continue to attract repeated rebellion targeting regime change at N'djamena. Leaders love for power and desire for primitive accumulation of public wealth in Africa is high. And under these circumstances, self-succession and tenure elongation politics in Africa will hardly come to end.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted with the used of secondary and primary methods of data collection. Secondary data for the study were sourced through text-book, journal articles, magazines, newspapers, lecture notes and other write ups downloaded from the internet. Primary data were obtained through the administration of closed ended questionnaire administered on one hundred and ten respondents selected from eleven countries in Africa using the systematic sampling technique. Ten respondents each were chosen from the African states of Nigeria, Togo, Cameroun, Chad, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Sudan and Libya. The instrument of data collection was administered personally by the researcher at separate time and date. Respondents were chosen from universities and research institutes in these countries and all are experts in African government and politics. The frequency, percentage, mean and standard

deviation statistical tool of analysis was adapted to analyzed data collected and test the hypotheses formulated to guide the study.

**Data presentation and analysis**

Below is the presentation and analysis of data collected.

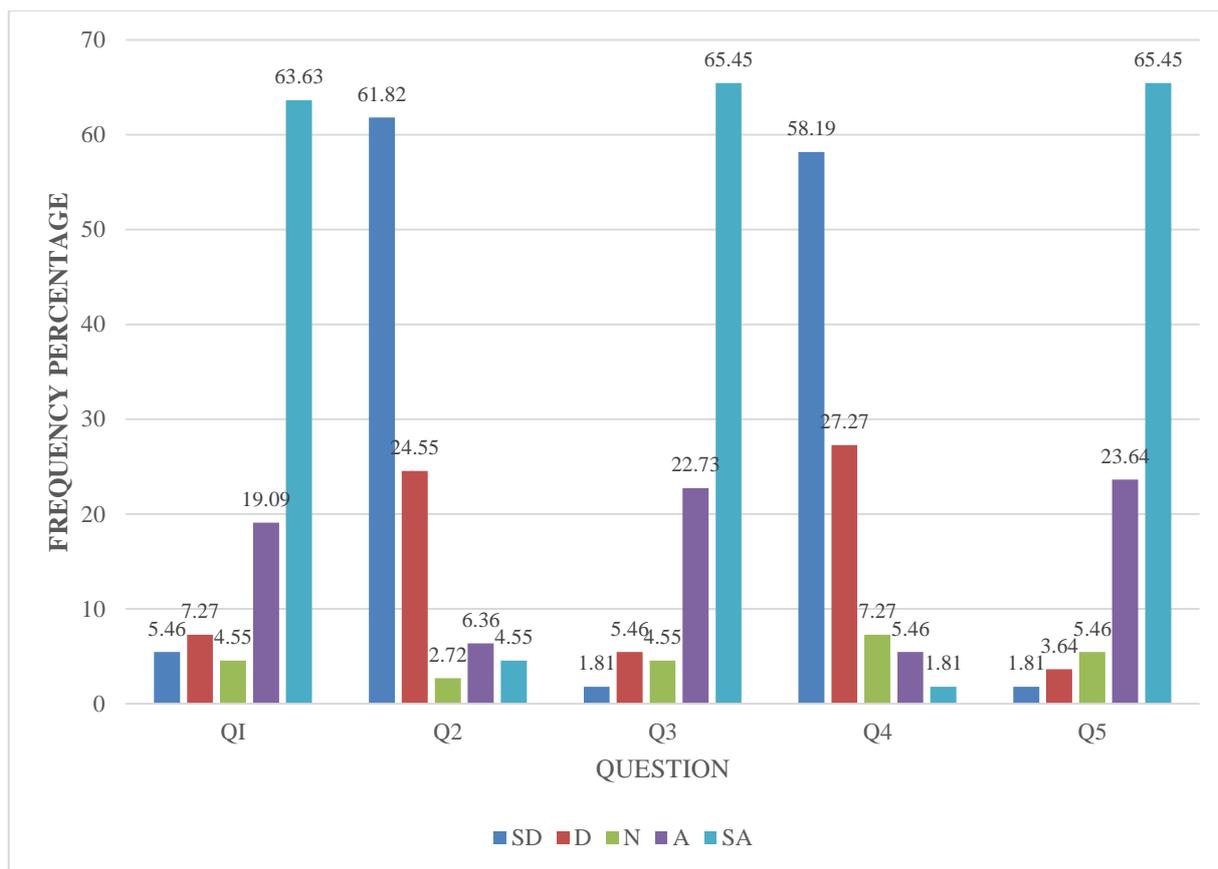
**Table 1:** Causes of the politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa

| Q  | Variables  | FP           |              |            |              |              |
|----|--|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
|    |  | SD           | D            | N          | A            | SA           |
| Q1 | Fear of apprehension and trial for misconduct and abuse of power exhibited while in office is one of the causes of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa.  | 6<br>5.46%   | 8<br>7.27%   | 5<br>4.55% | 21<br>19.09% | 70<br>63.63% |
| Q2 | Desire for primitive accumulation of public fund is not part of the causes of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa.                                       | 68<br>61.82% | 27<br>24.55% | 3<br>2.72% | 7<br>6.36%   | 5<br>4.55%   |
| Q3 | Love for political power among leaders also causes the politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa.  | 2<br>1.81%   | 6<br>5.46%   | 5<br>4.55% | 25<br>22.73% | 72<br>65.45% |
| Q4 | In Africa, sycophancy by cabal in the corridor of power does not cause the politics of self-succession and tenure elongation.  | 64<br>58.19% | 30<br>27.27% | 8<br>7.27% | 6<br>5.46%   | 2<br>1.81%   |
| Q5 | In Africa, ruling parties fear of losing out to opposition parties in election is also part of the causes of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation on the continent. | 2<br>1.81%   | 4<br>3.64%   | 6<br>5.46% | 26<br>23.64% | 72<br>65.45% |

Q-Question, FP-Frequency Percentage, SD-Strongly Disagreed, D-Disagreed, N-Neutral, A-Agreed, SA-Strongly Agreed  
Source: Author's field survey (2020)

Table 1 shows that 5.46% of the respondents strongly disagreed (SD) with question 1 (Q1), 7.27% disagreed (D) with it, 4.55% were neutral (N), 19.09% agreed (A) and 63.63% of them strongly agreed (SA) with it. It is also clear that 61.82% of them strongly disagreed (SD) with question 2 (Q2), 24.55% disagreed (D) with it, 2.72% were neutral (N), 6.36% agreed (A) and 4.55% strongly agreed (SA) with question 2 (Q2). Among the respondents, 1.81% strongly disagreed (SD) with question 3 (Q3), 5.46% disagreed (D), 4.55% were

neutral (N), 22.73% agreed (A) and 65.45% strongly agreed (SA) with it. Table 1 also shows that 58.18% of the respondents strongly disagreed (SD) on question 4 (Q4), 27.27% disagreed (D), 7.27% were neutral (N), 5.46% agreed (A) and 1.81% of them strongly agreed (SA) on it. On question 5 (Q5), table 1 shows that 1.81% of the respondents strongly disagreed (SD), 3.64% of them disagreed (D), 5.46% were neutral (N), 23.64% agreed (A) while 65.45% of them strongly agreed (SA) on question 5 (Q5).



**Figure 1.** Causes of the politics of self-succesion and tenure elongation in Africa  
 Q-Question, SD-Strongly Disagreed, D-Disagreed, N-Neutral, A-Agreed, SA-Strongly Agreed  
 Source: Author’s field survey (2020)

**Table 2:** Implications of politics of self-succesion and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa

| Q  | Variables  | FP           |              |            |              |              |
|----|--|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
|    |  | SD           | D            | N          | A            | SA           |
| Q1 | States fast becoming one party system amidst multi-party democracy is not an implication of politics of self-succesion and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa.                              | 75<br>68.19% | 25<br>22.73% | 3<br>2.72% | 4<br>3.64%   | 3<br>2.72%   |
| Q2 | One of the implication of politics of self-succesion and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa is the fact that state governance has become a one-man business.                                | 8<br>7.27%   | 5<br>4.55%   | 3<br>2.72% | 30<br>27.27% | 64<br>58.19% |
| Q3 | Silencing opposition and the emergence of autocracy in state-governance among leaders are not part of the implication of politics of self-succesion and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa. | 70<br>63.63% | 28<br>25.46% | 2<br>1.81% | 4<br>3.64%   | 6<br>5.46%   |
| Q4 | Implication of politics of self-succesion and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa include reduction in popular participation in election.  | 4<br>3.64%   | 8<br>7.27%   | 4<br>3.64% | 20<br>18.18% | 74<br>67.27% |
| Q5 | Increase of political instability is not an implication of politics of self-succesion and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa.   | 75<br>68.19% | 27<br>24.55% | 2<br>1.81% | 4<br>3.64%   | 2<br>1.81%   |

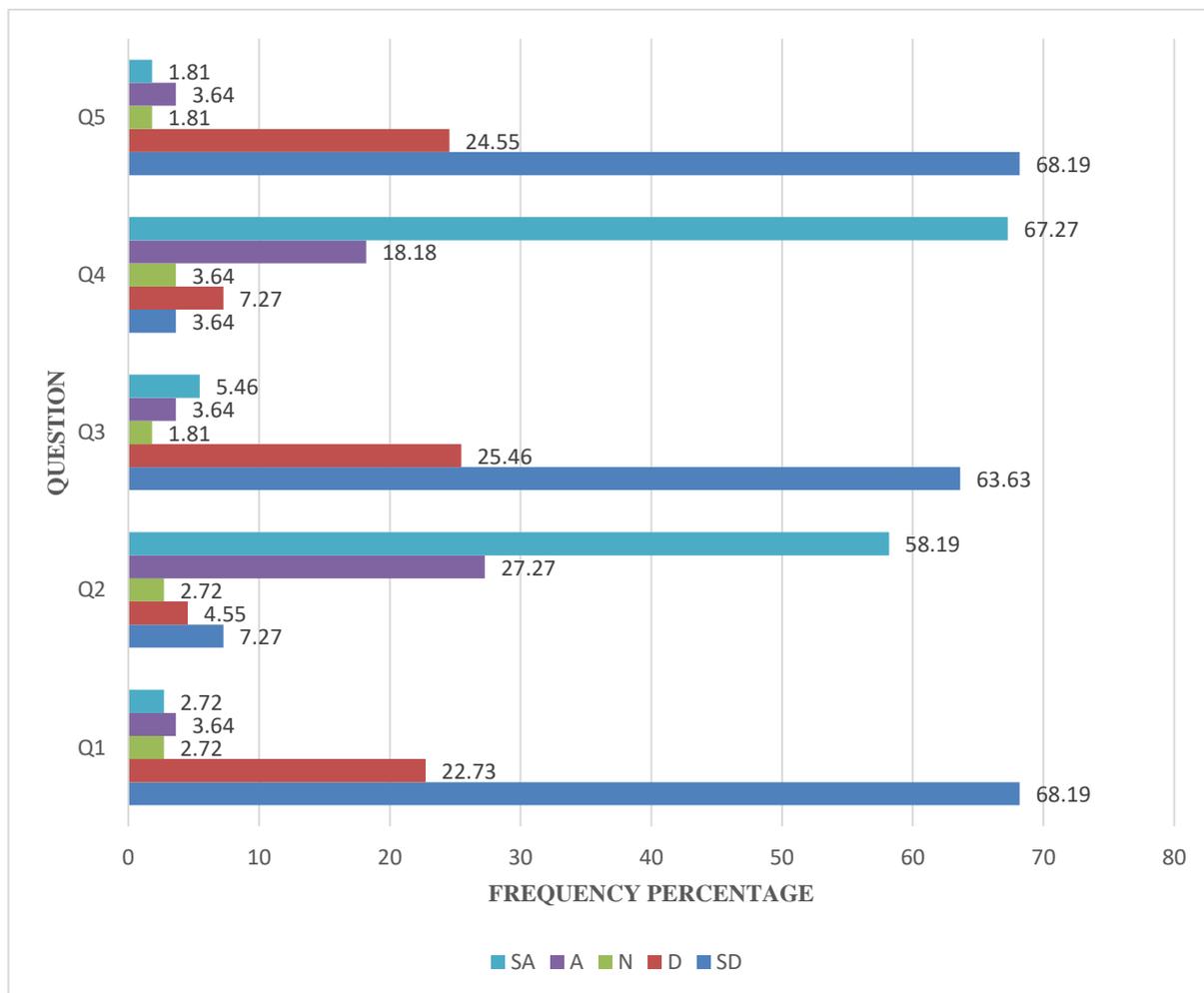
Q-Question, FP-Frequency Percentage, SD-Strongly Disagreed, D-Disagreed, N-Neutral, A-Agreed, SA-Strongly Agreed  
 Source: Author’s field survey (2020)

Table 2 shows that on the implication of politics of self-succesion and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa, 68.19% of the

respondents strongly disagreed (SD) with question 1 (Q1), 22.73% disagreed (D) with it, 2.72% were neutral (N), 3.64% agreed (A) and 2.72% strongly agreed (SA)

with it. Among the respondents, 7.27% strongly disagreed (SD) on question 2 (Q2), 4.55% disagreed (D), 2.72% were neutral (N), 27.27% agreed (A) and 58.19% of them strongly agreed (SA) on it. Table 2 also shows that, 63.63% of the respondents strongly disagreed (SD) with question 3 (Q3), 25.46% disagreed (D), 1.81% were neutral (N), 3.64% agreed (A) and 5.46% of them strongly agreed (SA) with question 3 (Q3). Furthermore, 3.64% of the respondents strongly

disagreed (SD) about question 4 (Q4), 7.27% disagreed (D), 3.64% were neutral (N) about it and 18.18% of them agreed (A) while 67.27% of them strongly agreed (SA) about question 4 (Q4). It is also stated in table 2 that 68.19% of the respondents strongly disagreed (SD) with question 5 (Q5), 24.55% disagreed (D), 1.81% were neutral (N), 3.64% agreed (A) and 1.81% of them strongly agreed (SA) with question 5 (Q5).



**Figure 2.** Implications of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa  
 Q-Question, SD-Strongly Disagreed, D-Disagreed, N-Neutral, A-Agreed, SA-Strongly Agreed  
 Source: Author’s field survey (2020)

**Table 3:** Solution to politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa

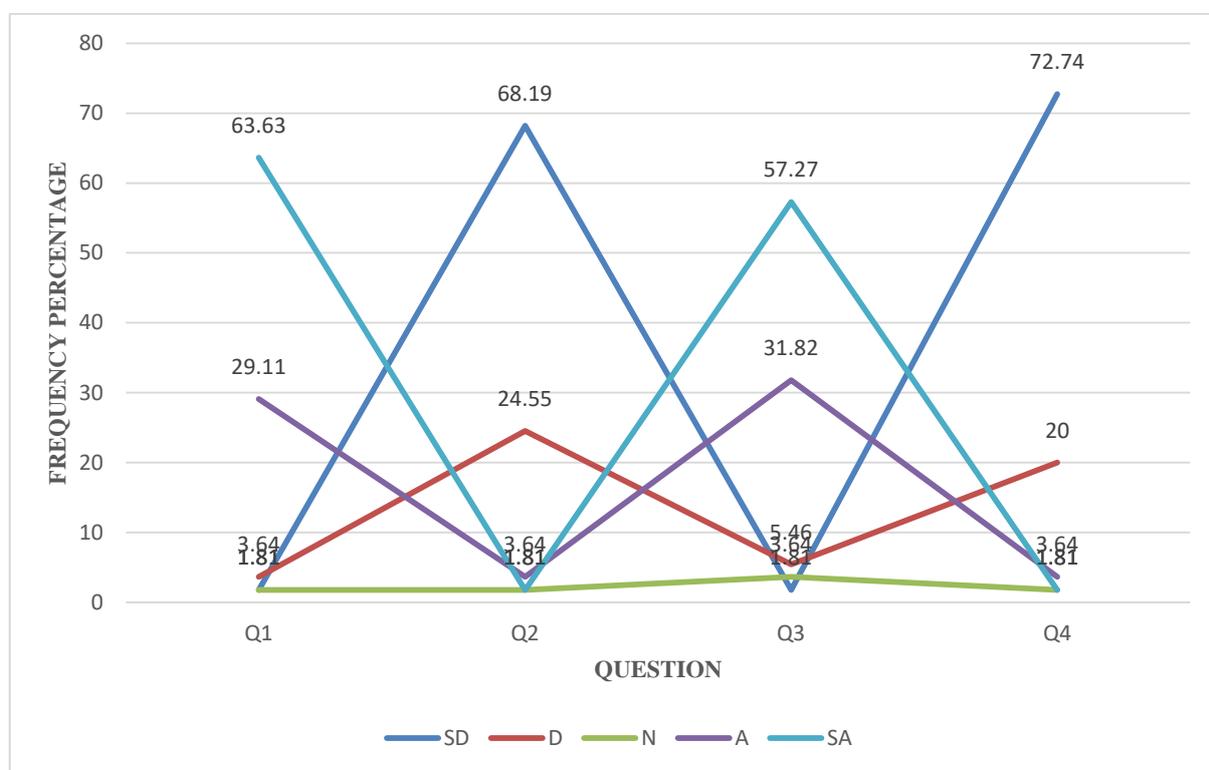
| Q  | Variables   | FP           |              |            |              |              |
|----|---|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
|    |   | SD           | D            | N          | A            | SA           |
| Q1 | Incorruptible, vibrant and discipline legislative assembly is a solution to the politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa.                              | 2<br>1.81%   | 4<br>3.64%   | 2<br>1.81% | 32<br>29.11% | 70<br>63.63% |
| Q2 | Durable and independent judicial system is not a solution to the politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa.   | 75<br>68.19% | 27<br>24.55% | 2<br>1.81% | 4<br>3.64%   | 2<br>1.81%   |
| Q3 | Political party’s commitment to upholding and respecting constitutional provisions is also a solution to the politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa. | 2<br>1.81%   | 6<br>5.46%   | 4<br>3.64% | 35<br>31.82% | 63<br>57.27% |

|    |   |        |     |       |       |       |
|----|---|--------|-----|-------|-------|-------|
| Q4 | Public willingness and readiness to rise against self-succession and extension of tenure by leaders is not a solution to the politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa. | 80     | 22  | 2     | 4     | 2     |
|    |   | 72.74% | 20% | 1.81% | 3.64% | 1.81% |

Q-Question, FP-Frequency Percentage, SD-Strongly Disagreed, D-Disagreed, N-Neutral, A-Agreed, SA-Strongly Agreed  
Source: Author’s field survey (2020)

Table 3 shows that on the solution to politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa, 1.81% of the respondents strongly disagreed (SD) with question 1 (Q1), 3.64% disagreed (D) with it, 1.81% were neutral (N), 29.11% agreed (A) and 63.63% strongly agreed (SA) with it. Among the respondents, 68.19% strongly disagreed (SD) on question 2 (Q2), 24.55% disagreed (D), 1.81% were neutral (N), 3.64% agreed (A) and 1.81% of them strongly agreed (SA) on

it. Table 3 also shows that, 1.81% of the respondents strongly disagreed (SD) with question 3 (Q3), 5.46% disagreed (D), 3.64% were neutral (N), 31.82% agreed (A) and 57.27% of them strongly agreed (SA) with question 3 (Q3). Furthermore, 72.74% of the respondents strongly disagreed (SD) about question 4 (Q4), 20% disagreed (D), 1.81% were neutral (N) about it and 3.64% of them agreed (A) while 1.81% of them strongly agreed (SA) about question 4 (Q4).



**Figure 3.** Solution to politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa  
Q-Question, SD-Strongly Disagreed, D-Disagreed, N-Neutral, A-Agreed, SA-Strongly Agreed  
Source: Author’s field survey (2020)

**Table 4:** Testing the hypotheses

| H   | FP    |       |       |        |        | M  | SD    |
|---|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|----|-------|
|   | SD    | D     | N     | A      | SA     |    |       |
| H1: Fear of apprehension and trial for Misconduct while in office causes politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa.   | 2     | 4     | 2     | 22     | 80     | 22 | 897.6 |
|   | 1.81% | 3.64% | 1.81% | 20%    | 72.74% |    |       |
| H2: Implication of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa include the fact that multi-party democracies are fast becoming one party states in operation. | 4     | 6     | 2     | 28     | 70     | 22 | 664   |
|   | 3.64% | 5.46% | 1.81% | 25.46% | 63.63% |    |       |
| H3: Incorruptible, vibrant and discipline legislative assembly is a solution to self-succession and tenure  | 2     | 4     | 2     | 22     | 80     | 22 | 897.6 |
|   | 1.81% | 3.64% | 1.81% | 20%    | 72.74% |    |       |

elongation politics in Africa.

H-Hypothesis, FP-Frequency Percentage, M-Mean, SD-Standard Deviation, SD-Strongly Disagreed, D-Disagreed, N-Neutral, A-Agreed, SA-Strongly Agreed  
Source; Author's field survey (2020).

Table 4 shows that hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 (H1, H2 and H3) recorded equal mean score of M=22 while hypotheses 1 and 3 (H1 and H3) recorded the highest standard deviation score of SD=897.6 and hypothesis 2 (H2) has the lowest standard deviation score of SD=664. And, on a general average, table 4 shows that 21.82% of the respondents agreed (A) with the hypotheses (H) formulated to guide the study while 69.70% of them strongly agreed (SA) with them. This implies that the hypotheses (H), tested positive on 91.52% of the respondents (21.82% + 69.70% or A=21.82+ SA=69.70 which is = 91.52%) and also on the study (causes, implications and solutions to politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa).

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The politics of self-succession and tenure elongation as frequently witnessed in African states is caused by a number of factors. State leadership in Africa is commonly viewed as one of the easiest way of acquiring wealth. Accumulation of wealth rather than accountable stewardship characterized state leadership in Africa. As poverty, starvation, unemployment, diseases and acute shortage of basic amenities dominate the lives of the governed, leaders live flamboyant lives, display illegally acquired fortunes and seem not to be disturbed with the pathetic living condition of their people. Most leaders in Africa became extremely rich after gaining political power and the believe that state power is an alternative to ameliorating personal poverty has made state leadership position competitive or a "do or die" affair with politics becoming the highest profit generating business on the continent. Acquisition of leadership position has become a project in Africa. One that bourgeois invest in with a view to making quick profit. Those who have acquired state power for such selfish desire of making quick fortune do not want to quit office anymore. Strategies adopted by such leaders to remain in power include transforming into civilian president in cases where they are soldiers and championing the cause for constitutional amendment to scrap term limit in cases where they are civilians. Some leaders using these methods have over stayed in power and even became richer than the government of the countries they head.

Power as Lord Acton rightly observed, corrupt and absolute power corrupt absolutely. Political leaders in Africa placed themselves higher in status than the citizens they governed. This has made political institutions on the continent weaker and their occupants stronger than the positions they hold. Those who acquired power unconstitutionally became autocratic due to fear of rebellion and revolt against their regimes. Dictatorship or autocracy is perceived as possible

alternative to containing revolt. And, in the absent of civil disobedience, excessive power acquired are used in molesting and intimidating innocent citizens. Opposition is swiftly thwarted with repressive measures and lives of citizens not loyal to regime are threatened with assassination plot. Several prominent African citizens have fled to exile from their countries due to this caliber of attack and many have also died there. Some leaders in Africa with intolerance attitudes to criticism overstayed in power and some even died there throwing their countries into political instability due to lack of outstanding alternative to succession of state power and leadership.

Successive regimes in Africa are expected and pressured by the people in some instances to investigate the conducts and expenditure of their predecessors. The fear of apprehension and trail for possible misconduct and misappropriation in office has made corrupt leaders on the continent addicted to remaining in power for life. Some military leaders have civilianized and other both civilianized and real civilians have headed the amendment of their countries constitution to extend or scrap term limit. This fear has led to the politics of Godfatherism in Africa where incumbent leaders groomed successor to take over power from them in the invent of uncontrollable pressure for regime change in their countries.

Sycophancy in some cases is responsible for the politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa. Even in cases where public pressures are directed toward regime change, Sycophants have embarked on counter pressure protest and demonstration calling on leaders to succeed themselves or extend their tenures. And amending tenure limit provided by law becomes the easiest and alternative measure to achieving this aim. Sycophants surround leaders and tell them things they really want to hear but not public opinions on their leadership. They deceived leaders into believing they are the most capable and suitable occupants of state power. Sycophants are not far from leaders. They operate on the corridor of power and better their lots from rewards getting to them from leaders. Sycophancy has been part of leadership in Africa since colonialism ended till date. Sycophants operate in secret and times in the open. They have deceived some leaders in Africa into over staying in power against constitutional provision. With their advice, others have become autocratic, some have died in power and others have been forcefully removed from power through popular uprising, movement and rebellion.

In addition to the fact that leaders in Africa have special love and taste for power which has always misled them into wanting to remain in power for life, ruling political party has also forced leaders in other cases not to relinquish power. Ruling parties in Africa fear failing out to opposition in election. Thus, they have been in the core call for rigging and manipulation of election results to extend their parties stay in power. And selfish leaders overwhelmed with the love for power quickly take advantage of party interest and remain clinging to power against popular wish and desire. In South Africa, the ANC has dominated the country's political sphere since the fall of apartheid regime till date. PDP ruled Nigeria since returned to civil rule in 1999 only to concede power in 2015. KANU-PF in Kenya has been heading government since the time of Arap Moi till date. Chama Cha Mapinduzi Party (CCMP) has been ruling Tanzania since the reign of Julius Nyerere. The Communist Party in Ethiopia has been in power since the time of Meles Zenawi. The same goes for other African countries like Chad, Cameroun and others.

The implication of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa is multi-folded. Democratic development among others entails the provision of adequate basic amenities necessary to improve the living standard of people and bridge to a reasonable extent, the gap between the have and have not so as to promote active participation in political process among the citizens. Democratic development also involved the creation of enabling environment needed for the people to discover their potentials and how best to utilize them for the development of self and society. It also promotes a conducive atmosphere rid of insecurity to create a peaceful atmosphere for political activities to thrive. Respect for the rule of law and a functional constitution with independent judicial system and sound legislative assembly are also part of democratic development. Furthermore, democratic development entails an active competition to acquiring state power especially amidst multi-party system. Popular participation and openness in state governance as well as inclusive politics which respect both the governed and leaders are part of democratic development.

The politics of self-succession and tenure elongation seems to be retarding the development of democracy in Africa. States are fast becoming one party even if they are multi-party in system. The fear of opposition or criticism has forced leaders into adopting a repressive measure toward opposition. And this has weakened the spirit of opposition in some states. Opposition is one of the taxonomies of party politics. But its silent nature in Africa's democracy which has made state one party in system also resulted in unpopular participation in general elections across Africa. Exclusive politics is taken over from inclusive principle as government is becoming a one-man

business. Leaders overlapped legislative and judicial outcomes on national interest without respect for the rule of law. Single man (leader) decisions take precedent against popular wish without adherence to the due process of state law. And citizens are losing interest in voting in election. Inequality gap between leaders and citizens broadened instead of narrowing due to primitive accumulation of state wealth by leaders. Reaction from aggrieved groups and repressive measures adopted by government to contain it has forced several countries in Africa into a state of political instability connotated with religion, ethnic and right to land. And instead of achieving democratic dividends, democracy polluted by leaders' greed for self-succession and tenure elongation has turn states in Africa into failing ones and theater for new conflicts.

## FINDINGS

Major findings of this study are:

The causes of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa include:

- Fear of apprehension and trial for misconduct and abuse of power while in office.
- Desire for primitive accumulation of public fund.
- Love for political power.
- Sycophancy
- And ruling parties fear of losing out to opposition in election.

It was also found out by the study that the implication of politics of self-succession and tenure elongation on democratic development in Africa are:

- States are fast becoming one party system amidst multi-party democracy.
- State governance has become a one-man business.
- Silencing opposition and the emergence of autocracy in state governance among leaders.
- Reduction in popular participation in election.
- And increase of political instability.

The solution to politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa as the study discovered are:

- Incorruptible, vibrant and discipline legislative assembly.
- Durable and independent judicial system.
- Political party's commitment to upholding and respecting constitutional provision.
- As well as public readiness to rise against self-succession and tenure elongation.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusion of this study is that politics of self-succession and tenure elongation exist in Africa. And it has negative implication on democratic development on the continent. Self-succession and

tenure elongation by leaders in African states is caused by leaders love for political power. The implication of this type of politics on democratic development on the continent is increase of political instability. And, a formidable, incorrupt, discipline and vibrant legislative assemble is a solution to politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa.

**Based on the findings made and conclusion reached, this study recommended that:**

- A formidable, incorruptible, vibrant and discipline legislative assembly is necessary to checkmate leaders attitude of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa. Legislative assembly with representatives who are not only courageous but willing to protect the interest of the people they represent is a solution to self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa. Parliament with members who are not corrupt and cannot be bribed with money or contracts to vote in favor of scraping term limit or constitutional amendment to allow leaders continue to stay in power are needed. Members with principles and commitment to democratic development with pure democratic ideologies are required if self-succession and tenure elongation politics is to be avoided in Africa. Members must be willing to speak with one single voice and against such move by leaders without putting party interest ahead of national interest. The parliament with power conferred on it by the constitution can call for the removal of leaders who instigate the sponsor of bill directed towards self-succession and tenure extension through impeachment. In Nigeria and South Africa, the legislature has proved itself worthy of admiration and reliance for delivering representative government. In these countries, bills for amendment of president term in office were out rightly voted against. And since then, democratic transition has been orderly in these countries.
- Judicial independent is required to checkmate the politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa. The judiciary interprets state law and constitution and should thus be responsible for educating leaders on the implication of unconstitutional cling to power or alteration of constitutional provision on tenure limit against popular wish. Judiciary in some African states are subject to political influence by the executive or leaders. Leaders appoint judges and can also remove them if their loyalty is no longer trusted. Judicial appointments are ratified by parliament but legislature cannot stop leaders from removing judges. Durable judicial system is one in which Judges tenure is protected and cannot be altered during good behavior unless in the invent of

death. A durable and independent judicial system will be sound enough to call leaders to order or ask them to step down for violating the provision of the constitution of the country which they sworn to protect. Judicial system working in connection with the legislature to ensure that executive abuse of power is prevented as stated by law is required as a precaution against self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa. Leaders that violated state laws because they are covered by immunity given by the law itself is a very pronouncement of tyranny. Judiciary is the last hope of the ordinary citizens and must as such be courageous to call such leaders to order in order to ensure that democratic governance and leadership is delivered to the people as stated by law.

- Committed, discipline and descent political parties are needed if politics of self-succession and tenure elongation is to end in Africa. Party ideology in theory is good and built upon the principle of decency and good governance. But in practice, reverse is the case. Parties in Africa act contrary to the ideologies on which they are formed. Political parties are organizations and do not move themselves. The members do. Therefore, been democrats, party members must be willing and ready to operate in line with democratic principles. Their political behaviors must reflect the fact that they are committed to democratic development of their countries. Parties must adhere to the common principle of the rule of law. Politics is a game of wisdom and democracy is a popular will. Political parties in Africa must learn to joyfully concede defeat if they lost in elections rather than manipulating results in favor of their parties. Ruling parties must desist from altering election figures so as to continue in power. Until and unless parties in Africa adopt the attitude of conceding defeat and congratulating winner, the politics of self-succession and tenure elongation on the continent will not end.
- Citizens in Africa are at the receiving end of self-succession and tenure elongation politics. Self-enforcement in power and extension of tenure to remain life president can be checkmated by the people. Public readiness to rise against such politics is an alternative to ameliorating this problem. There is actually power in number. The few do not own power for they are it custodians. Power belongs to the people. People rising against unconstitutional regime is not a crime but their rights. Government that lacks legitimacy cannot lead to democratic development because it has no recognition among the people. Autocratic and

tyrannical leaders who planned to remain in power for life have been forced out in some countries by the people through popular rise up. Unending mass protest demanding for regime change has forced out others and rebellion has flushed out some of those leaders. Mass and social media with the ageing nature of technological advancement also offer a good method of correcting politics of self-succession and tenure elongation in Africa. Although, in some countries, leaders in other to carry on with autocracy have strictly regulated the use of social media. This too can be corrected through loud cry by the people and supported by the legislature to weaken leaders' autocratic tendencies and desire for self-succession and tenure elongation.

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