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MALIAN CONFLICT: INTERROGATING THE SECURITY IMPLICATIONS ON AFRICAN REGION (2012-2022)

Dada I. Owoeye[1], Onyebuchi J. Nduba[2], Kalu Peters[3], Ikedi O. Amaechina[4], & Ogonna E. Chukwuma[5]
[1]*Department of Political Science, Federal University of Oye, Ekiti State-Nigeria*
[2,4&5]*Department of Political Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra State-Nigeria*
[3]*Unizik Business School, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra State-Nigeria*
Emails: isaacowoeye20@gmail.com; jo.nduba@unizik.edu.ng; k.peters@unizik.edu.ng; io.amaechina@unizik.edu.ng; oe.chukwuma@unizik.edu.ng

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Abstract
It is a qualitative study on the security implications of the recurrent uprising cum conflict between the Northern-Malians (dominated by the Tuaregs) and Malian authority on Malian residents and African region at large. Specifically, study examined the security effects of the Malian conflicts on African region. It is documentary in typology and built on Structural Theory of Conflict. Based on data presented and analyzed, findings from the study revealed that various evidence of marginalization and exploitations have fuelled the prolonged uprising in Mali. The study also established that the menace of Malian conflict has posed serious security threats to Malian territory and African region at large. For this reason the study strongly recommended, the urgent need for the Malian central government and the African Union to address the root causes of marginalization and social exclusion by adopting social policies; encompassing eradication of poverty, provision of jobs as well as equal representation of all ethnic groups/regions in government; restructuring of Malian political system in a way that every region (particularly the marginalized Northern-Mali) would have fair and equitable allocation of resources. More so, the international bodies, particularly the United Nations should collaborate with the African Union and Malian authority to ensure that peace deals are properly implemented among parties to the conflict.

Key Words: *African Region; African Union; Malian Conflict; Marginalization; Regional Security.*

Introduction
The African region is characterized by persistent incidence of violence and protraction of conflicts which have continued gaining the attention of local and international bodies. As observed in Bereteteab (2015), violent conflicts in Africa is manifested in the struggle by political and economically disadvantaged ethnic groups and non-state actors agitating for recognition, inclusion and self-determination. Similarly, the menace of the Malian conflict has been in existence for decades and it is rooted in pre-colonial and post-colonial French colonial era, featured by consistent exploitation and social exclusions of the people of the Northern Mali (notably, the Tuareg). As pointed out by Chauzal and Damme (2015), the political leaders, usually from the Southern part of

Malian territory have for long ignored the North's aspirations for social inclusion, economic development and fair political representation; as they often marginalize the Northern area of the country to strengthen their political power. Viewed in Bruce (2021), the post-colonial Malian authority was exceedingly centralized as enshrined in Mali first constitution which was initiated by French constitution of 1958, preserving the cruel and undemocratic style of governance inherited during colonialism (Bruce, 2021).

After decades of continuous marginalization of the Northern Mali by the South, the situation resulted in the first Tuareg-rebellion in 1963. Tuareg, observed in Cline (2013), is a nomadic group that is dispersed around the borders of some Northern and West African countries and it constitutes not less than ten (10) percent Malian population. However, instead of addressing the perturbing exploitative issue and resolving the menace amicably to enhance peaceful co-existence among the two (2) regions, the Malian authority rather adopted heavy military tactics. The heavy military approach did not yield a long-lasting result and this resulted in the second wave of the conflict between 1990 and 1996, now constitutes the Tuareg and Arab exiles as the main agitators; clamouring for a better socio-economic/political conditions and recognition of the Northern-Malians in the Malian government. Moreover, the government of Mali, rather than addressing the needs of the Northern-Malian, stepped down on their needs and made the groups to become more radical. Attempts to resolve the conflict resulted in Tamanrasset peace agreement and Pact National by the Northern-Malian and the Southern political elites. The agreements encompass the principle of greater territorial autonomy for the North and the integration of Tuareg agitators in the Malian Army. Yet, these agreements did not meet the expectations of the Northern Malians and did not resolve the crisis and resulted in the second rebellion during a time the Malian government introduced reforms to decentralize authority in the Northern regions, as the policy reform could not resolve the socio-political and economic grievances by the Northern-Malians (Striegl, 2021).

The third rebellion began in 2006 and the attempts to resolve the conflict brought about Algiers Peace Agreement (Pezard & Michael, 2015). However, this agreement was rejected by Tuareg group as it lacked fair representation of Northern Mali population in the negotiation processes which was also the reason for the failure of the initial peace agreements. The failed attempts to resolve the tension between the Northern Malians and the Malian authority resulted in the fourth rebellion in 2012 which resulted in military coup against President Amadou Toumani Toure and consequently, the State lost vast territory to the Tuareg secessionist group among other militias such as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, the Movement for oneness and Jihad. In spite of the numerous efforts of the international bodies such as the African Union (AU), United Nations (UN) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to resolve the menace, the conflict has persisted and continued posing threats to African regional security since 2012.

Malian national security had continued to be threatened by the ongoing armed conflict between Northern and Southern Mali since 2012. The persistent from the menace has

continued to question the very existence not only Malian security but African regional security at large. Even, neither the Malian authority nor the international bodies has been able to quantify the number of casualties from the conflict. Reported by Hirsch (2012), Malian conflict resulted in gross violations of human rights characterized sexual molestations, extra-judicial executions, child abuse among others, by the Tuareg separatist group. Moreover, the conflict has led to the looting of about 2,350 tons of food donated by the United Nations' World Food Programme's warehouse in different areas of Malian territory as well as humanitarian crisis of about 200,000 Malian residents in the early stage of the conflict, thereby threatening human refugee security on Africa continent (France-Presse, 2012). Consequently, not less than 5million Malian residents had fled their homes between 2012 and December 2022 due to this menace while about 470,000 have been displaced as at December 2022, including refugees from Malian bordering countries. Also, about 198,000 Malians are currently refugees in other African countries thereby constituting human and security challenges to the African region. Report also had it that around 1,726 schools have been shut-down, leaving about 520,000 children and 10,000 teachers out of school, thereby constituting another dimension of security threats in Africa (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2023).

Several attempts have been made, not only by the Malian authority but International Community; majorly, the African Union (AU) that has the sole responsibility of African regional security as well as the Economic Community of West African States. Nevertheless, the Malian conflict persists. In spite of the combined efforts of the African Union Security Architecture which include both peaceful and non-pacific mode of conflict resolution, there has not been an effective security policy in curbing the uprising in Mali which has constituted a serious threat to her regional security (African Union, 2021).

It is against this backdrop that the paper tended to examine how the Malian conflict has contributed to the security threats in African region; the factors that were responsible for the uprising of the conflict as well as the factors impeding the efforts of the African Union in managing the crisis.

Literature Review

Regional Security

Any attempt to conceptualize regional security, demands first; the meaning of security itself. To Buzan and Hansel (2009), security denotes the measures taken by states or the international bodies towards ensuring stability and safety; such measures according to them may include military actions taken by individual state. In their view, security encompasses all efforts that promote national security as well as the protection of the citizens of a state from all forms of terror. In the view of Adedoyin (2013), security depicts ability to protect the vital core of all human lives in such a way that it enhances human freedoms and fulfilments. Furthermore, Adedoyin (2013) asserts that security entail protecting fundamental freedoms that are the essence of life; protecting people from serious persistent threats and situations as well as creating socio-political, economic, military, environment and cultural systems that together gives people the

building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity. Owoeye, Okafor and Chinonso (2021) considered security as the measures taken by individual states and international organizations towards ensuring mutual survival and safety. Cambridge Dictionary (Online) considered security as protection of a person, buiding, organization or country against threats such as crime or attacks by foreign countries. To Temitope (2019), security is considered a necessary prerequisite for the development of the people and the society. In the view of the scholar, security is very important for survival of the people and their entities. Observed in Brauch (2011), security is achieved once the perception and fear of security threats, challenges, vulnerabilities and risks are overcome.

On the other hand, to Bailes and Cottey (2006), regional security is a collective security system that is based on conflict dialogue and collective management, aimed at establishing or maintaining peace within a certain/defined region. They further maintained that regional security is manifested through regional organization in a bid to intrinsically and expressively promote democratic standards in government and respect for human rights across a certain region of the world, as ways of bolstering peaceful and secure conditions as well as being ends in themselves. In the view of the scholars, regional security is manifested through regional cooperation and can promote security by advances in purely economic fields (improving both prosperity and interdependence) and by cooperative approaches to functional risks and challenges including those presented by the new threats of terrorism and proliferation. Amable (2012) defined it as a set of security arrangement for geographical proximate states whose salient security problems are interconnected and cannot be resolved in isolation, yet there exists no meaningful security interactions among them and may require regional power to initiate process of securitization. Further observed by the scholar, regional security is a security arrangement that emerged from a great power's interest from curtailing security threats within a proximate geographical setting/location. Moreover, the scholar asserted that that need for regional security can stimulate the emergence of regional cooperation and regional institutions in various ways; such as organizing a group of states for cooperation to advance peace and stability.

Soderbaum and Hettne (2009) considered regional security as the arrangement for group of state whose primary security concerns linked together sufficiently closely that their national security cannot realistically be considered apart from one another. The scholars also suggested an alternative definition of regional security and described it as the coming together of states affected by at least on trans-border but at least local security externality. In the view of the scholars, regional security is geared towards ensuring peace and stability of a specific or particular region through cooperation and collective actions. In the same line of thought, Buzan and Wever (2003) defined regional security as a group of states who have common concern on the security issues of their region because they realize that a nation's security cannot be separated from other nations.

Theoretical Framework

The study built on Structural Theory of Conflict. Structural theory of conflict serves as one of the notable theories in explicating the persistent and recurring conflicts on African continent. Viewed in Egnim (2018), the theory sees conflict as a product of the tension that results from groups' competition over scarce values/resources. The main idea of the theory is that conflict is built into the particular way societies are structured or organized. For this reason, the theory can be used to explain the condition of the society and how such condition can result in conflict situation. Proponents of the theory believe that, conditions such as economic exploitations, social exclusions, class inequalities, political marginalization, relative deprivation among related others can bring about conflict (Oakland cited in Egnim, 2018), Thus, there are close links between social exclusion and conflict/insecurity, both in term of causes and consequences. From this theoretical assertion, it can be deduced that some forms of social exclusion from the society can trigger certain conditions in which conflict arises. Such conditions in which conflict can arise, encompasses civil unrest, armed conflict and terrorism, as the severely less privileged/disadvantaged groups with shared characteristics may choose violent conflict in a bid to claim their rights and redress inequalities in the social/political structure (Khan, 2012).

To Raleigh (2010); Sidibe (2012); Nizeimana and Nhema (2015) among several other exponents of Structural Conflict Theory; the recurrent conflicts in some African countries are products of socio-political and economic marginalization and social exclusions of some groups/region in the existing socio-political structure of African countries. Raleigh (2010) sees political and economic marginalization as the most critical factors that lead to violent conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa; Douma (2016) argued that the partiality of some countries' policies regarding distribution of state/national resources promotes structural and social inequalities that can trigger conflict situations. Relating the Structural Theory of Conflict to the current situation in Mali, the Malian conflict situ is linked to the historical marginalization of the Northern Mali by the central government of Bamako, Mali as the Tuareg groups were perceived being marginalized and discriminated. Moreover, the claim of marginalization, social exclusion and discrimination of the Northern Mali by the central government led the Tuareg group to go into arms fighting for a separatist state (Nzeimana & Nhema, 2015). Taking into cognizance the foregoing theoretical formulations, to a degree the structural conflicts in some African states, particularly Malian conflict; are products of socio-economic and political marginalization of some groups/regions. Evidently, the theory grounded ones knowledge on the causes of conflict in Mali as a result of high levels of marginalization of the Northern-Mali and their socio-political exclusions by the central government of Mali. Thus, one can conjecture that the higher the level of marginalization and the social exclusion of Tuareg group/Northern-Mali, the tendency of rebellion and uprising of conflict.

Methodology

The paper adopted documentary research design and aligns with qualitative orientation. Data from various documented evidence (secondary data) which include various reportages on Malian conflicts, media publication, journal articles among other published materials were presented and content-analyzed thematically through logical reasoning and deductions.

Result and Discussion

Marginalization and uprising of the Malian conflict

Commenting on the impact of marginalization on the uprising of the Malian conflict, Thomas (1995) had earlier projected four (4) factors which are evidence of marginalization of the Tuareg group that led to the persistent conflict in Mali since 2012. These include; the disturbance of Tuareg people's pastoral lifestyle and the loss of access to livelihood resources due to state intervention and development projects; the negation of the existence of the Tuareg ethnic community; the increasing refugee migration from the Northern Mali as well as the exclusion of the Tuareg people from political participation in the postcolonial Malian state. In essence, these factors outlined depict relative deprivation cum marginalization that led to the prolonged conflict in Mali due to social exclusion of the Northern Malians/ Tuareg group.

Erameh, Ojakorotu and Obor (2021) considered claims of the social exclusion and political marginalization of the Tuaregs as instigation for the armed conflict. Affirmed by the scholars "the narrow understanding and the reductionist interpretation of both concepts, the lack of consensus on determining the threshold of what constitutes the theme of exclusion and marginalization as the sole causes of the Malian crisis have further deepened the security situation in Mali". They further argued that the conflict in Mali is made worse by the nature of the exploitative relationships existing among the Tuaregs group and other ethnic groups; the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, elite manipulation of primordial cleavages, state corruption among others. Thurston (2013) argued that despite the historical position of the Tuareg group in the creation of Malian state, the Tuaregs have continued to suffer various forms of marginalization, social exclusions, state-sponsored violence and serious repression by Malian authority amidst drought and famine unleashed by adverse climatic effect condition. These, consequently resulted in the persistent rebellion despite numerous peace accords between the Tuareg group, other minority groups and the Malian authority in different administrations. In line with the above, marginalization of the Tuareg groups and other minority groups by the Malian government underlines the group's sustained struggle for separatism and the clamour for the independent state of Azawad.

Peerin (2014) affirmed that the reasons for the unending conflict in Mali rests on the fact that the Tuareg and other Arab populations who dominate the Northern-Mali have been systematically excluded from mainstream politics, generating a range of concerns dating back since Mali's independence among the myriads clans that identified as Tuareg. Accordingly, the major challenge that fuelled the conflict is that Mali's Tuareg and Arab population have never been fully assimilated into the mainstream politics, manifests in their marginalization and lack of representation in politics. Bar (2014)

claimed that deprivation and marginalization of the Northern-Mali has been a historical epicenter for sustained agitations, governments in Mali have tended to uphold the status quo. From this assertion, contributing to the persistent conflict in Mali is the presence of marginalization and exploitative relationships that exits between the Tuaregs and the Malian authority.

Reported by Chauzal and Damme (2015, March), the Malian conflict is evident in the desire to marginalize the north after Mali's independence which is manifested in the will of the Mali's central government to affirm its territorial integrity all over the country, added to the historical bias between the Southern and Northern-Mali. According to the report, the Southern populations of Mali have a strong negative perception of the Northern Mali; the Tuaregs/Northern-Malians are historically associated with insecurity because of their exploitative experience. A part of the same report reads "Since 1960, the Tuareg and the Arab populations have never succeeded in fitting within the new Malian state model and have been regularly marginalized from positions of power and the central national cake". By implication, the Northern populations of Mali have not directly benefited from the wealth of their country, (unlike the Southern region which benefit largely from it) due to political exclusion and very limited representation in parliament and government of Mali; thus, the unequal access to state resources in Mali can be seen as one of the major contributions to the recurrent conflict in Mali. Oddih and Emesibe (2021) revealed marginalization via governance issue as one of the major causes of the persistent conflict Mali. Six (6) themes were reportedly the cause of the Malian conflict. While marginalization via governance issues constitutes the dominant factor with 55.88%, others include; Tuareg ethnic grievances, Libyan crisis and migration, violent extremist groups, French neo-colonial interests and the quest for economic resources. According to Oddih and Emesibe (2021), governance issues depict the government marginalization of the Northern populations/region of Mali. By implication, the long historic neglect and exclusion of the Northern-Mali from socio-political and economic development by the Malian central government have contributed largely to the uprising in Mali.

In agreement Scholars Cline (2013) and Bruce (2021) affirms that long history of marginalization in Mali has contributed to the persistent conflict in the country. Observed in Bruce (2021), the political elites from the Southern-Mali have for long ignored the North's aspirations for socio-economic development and political representation and often exploited the Northern division to strengthen their power. The post-colonial state's authority was highly centralized as enshrined in Mali first constitution which was initiated by France's constitution of 1958, preserving the brutal, secular and authoritarian style of governance inherited during the French colonial era. Viewed in Cline (2013), many years of endurance and long suffering by the South, the situation of the continuous marginalization resulted in the first Tuareg rebellion in the year 1963. Khan, Combaz and Frazer (2015) claimed that there are close links between social exclusion/marginalization and violent conflict, both in term of causes and consequences. According to them, some form of social exclusion and marginalization can generate the condition; as disadvantaged group may resort to violent conflict in a bid to claim their rights and redress some forms of inequalities. In essence,

marginalization and social exclusion of the disadvantaged Northern-mali/Tuaregs in the socio-political and economic affairs of Mali has largely contributed to the uprising. Moreover, this corresponds with the assertion of Denny and Walter (2014), who pointed that the tendency for ethnic groups to rebel is determined by the extent their interests are accommodated or excluded within the socio-political and economic spaces in their country. From this assertion and in agreement with the Structural Theory of Conflict, it is obvious that ethnic grievances over claims of marginalization, most of the time, result in conflict situation and this can be said of the case of Malian conflict since 2012.

Malian Conflict and African Regional Security

There have been several reports on the ongoing Malian conflicts and its implications for African regional security. The indicator of security in this subsection includes all facet of human security such as security of lives and properties, food and economic security, shelter and humanitarian security among others. A report by Amnesty International cited in Hirsch (2012) stated that Malian conflict has created Mali's worst human rights situations since her independence. According to the report, there have been instances of gang rape, unlawful killings and several child abuses through the use of child soldiers by the Tuareg and Islamist groups. Observed in the report of Agence France-Presse (2012, April 3), the conflict in Mali resulted in the looting of 2,354 tons of food from the United Nations' World Food Programme's warehouses in Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu; the conflict also led to the looting of hospitals, government offices, Oxfam offices, hospitals among others as well as refugee crisis resulting in forced migration of hundreds of thousands of Malian residents, thereby endangering human security in African region.

Some parts of the report on the security consequences of Malian conflict in less than a month of the recurrence reads;

> *…….Some 200,000 people have fled fighting in Mali, where widespread looting in key Northern towns has also forced the UN food agency to suspend its activities….This 200,000 figures may rise. Malian refugees have been crossing into Burkina Faso and Mauritania at average of 400 people per day in the past week…..About 107,000 people have also been displaced within Mali, where so much of the North has fallen to Tuareg rebels since military rulers seized power in Bamako in a coup on March 22 (Agence France-Presse, 2012, April 3).*

A report by Aljazeera (March 17, 2021) revealed that 33 Malian soldiers were killed while 14 others sustained several injuries. Some part of the report reads "Some 100 assailants on pick-up trucks launched the attack on Monday at about 13:00 GMT in the town of Tessit, located 60km (37 miles) Southeast of Ansongo, near Mali's border with Burkina Faso and Nigeria. In essence, the conflict in Mali has spread into Burkina Faso and Niger, with fighters linked to ISIS and al-Qaeda exploiting the poverty of the marginalized regions and the flaming tensions between ethnic groups. Reported by Peltier (2023, September 7), the Islamist militants attacked passengers and military

camp in Northern Mali and this resulted in the killing of many civilians and soldiers in a region of the West African nation. Evident in the report, statistically stated in the report, 49 civilians and 15 soldiers were killed while the army killed 50 assailants.

Table 9A : **Have been personally affected in one of the following ways by region**
| Percentage |

	Kayes	Koulikoro	Sikasso	Segu	Mopti	Timbuktu	Gao	Kidal	Bamako	Total
Destruction or closure of your business	0	8	8	4	18	34	44	55	7	10
Loss of employment	0	3	0	3	11	35	23	42	5	6
Housing displaced persons in your house	5	4	2	4	11	13	8	18	10	6
Change of occupation due to the conflict	0	2	0	4	6	21	33	64	4	5
Witness of beatings or killings	0	2	0	2	4	18	56	54	6	5
Intimidation or threats	0	2	0	2	5	24	55	45	5	6
Abandonment of house for other places in the rest of Mali	0	4	0	5	3	23	13	9	7	4
Damage to your property	0	2	0	2	3	13	8	9	5	3
Destruction of your house	0	1	0	2	1	11	6	18	2	2
Abandonment of house for other places in the North	0	0	0	0	1	11	8	25	1	1
Explosion of your house	0	0	0	1	1	7	6	9	2	1
Physical aggression	0	1	0	1	0	6	7	9	1	1
Charia punishment	0	0	0	1	2	4	18	0	1	1
Abandonment of house for other places outside Mali	0	0	0	0	1	6	5	0	1	1
Torture	0	0	0	1	0	4	3	8	1	1
Imprisonment	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
Sexual harassment/rape	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0

Figure 1: Statistical report of victims personally affected by Malian conflict, by region
Source: Afro Barometer Policy Paper (2023)

Data presented in figure 1 demonstrated seventeen (17) security consequences of Malian conflict on residents across various regions in Mali while most frequent six (6) indicators for persons directly affected by the ongoing conflict include closure of businesses, loss of employment, housing displaced persons, change in occupation, witnessing killings/beatings and intimidation. Looking at the table, Gao region obviously had highest rate of Sharia punishment which is 18%; sexual harassment/rape of 2% while Kida region experienced the most prevalent incidence of torture with 8%. In essence, the Malian conflict has posed severe multi-security effects on the occupants of Malian territory and this range from security of lives to economy.

A report by International Rescue Committee (IRC) cited in Relief Web (2023, September 12) claimed that Malian conflict has resulted in grave humanitarian

consequences as it has led to deteriorating hunger and humanitarian crises in various part of the Malian territory, particularly in Menaka and Timbuktu regions. According to the report, the persistent violence in Mali has resulted in economic shocks and a significant increase in malnutrition as well as displacement across African countries. Further observed on the Relief Web, over 2,500 people are living in famine-like conditions meaning people are starving to death everyday due to an extreme lack of food. Moreover, the report claimed that between January and March 2023, about 375,000 people were internally displaced in Mali. Some of the report reads;

> *……8.8 million people, approximately 40% of Mali's total population is in need of humanitarian assistance across the country….Over 2,500 people facing famine like conditions in Menaka…..76,000 people experiencing emergency levels of hunger in Menaka……30,000 people fled their homes in August (2023) alone from Timbuktu and Toudeni both within Mali and towards Mauritania….200,000 children at risk of starvation in Mali (Relief Web, 2023, September 12).*

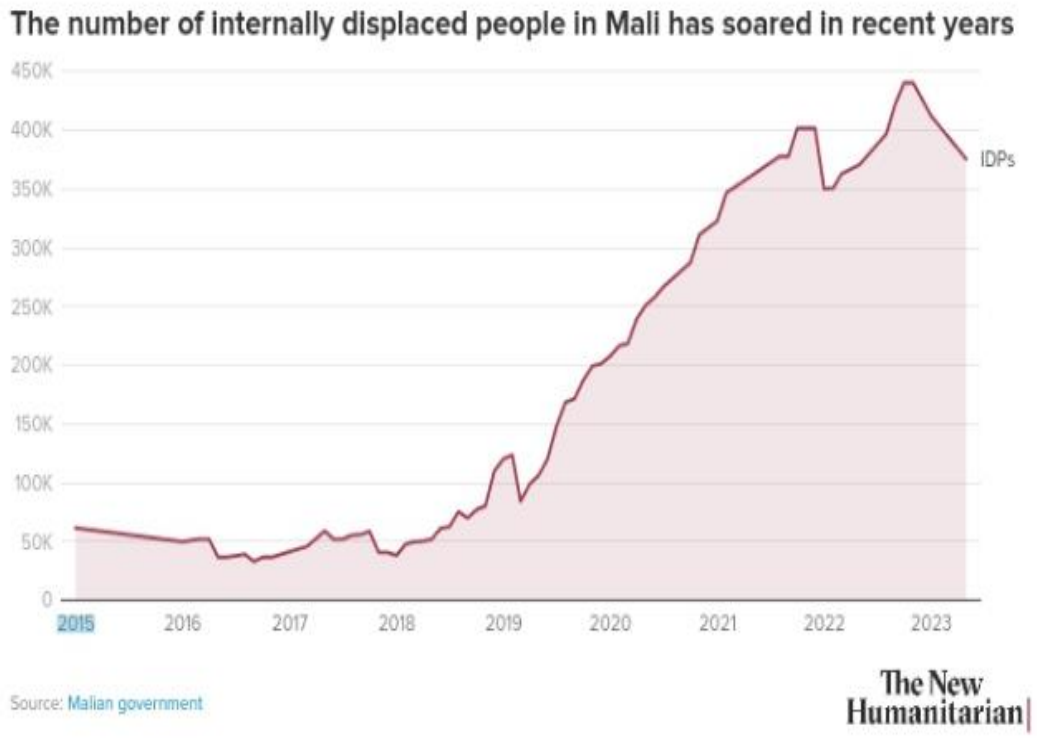


Figure 2: The trends of the annual number of Internally Displaced People (IDP) from Malian Conflict
Source: Operation Data Portal (2023, October 31)

Figure 2 demonstrated the increased security effects of Malian conflict on the Malian populace in the area of Internally Displaced Persons. Evident in the image presented, there was continuous increase in the numbers of internally displaced persons in the

country annually, particularly from the year 2016, which is less than 50,000, compared to 450,000 in-between 2022 and 2023. By implication, the security threats/dangers posed by the Malian conflicts has made hundreds of thousands of Malian residents fled their residence to Internally Displaced Persons camp.



Figure 3: A camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDC camp) from Mali/victims of the Malian conflict
Source: adapted from the New Humanitarian Webpage (2022, March 21)

The pictures presented in Figure 3 depict a camp for internally displaced people in the central Mali's Bandiagara region. Reported by the New Humanitarian Webpage (2022, March 21), some of the over 350,000 people who were internally displaced by the persistent conflict in Mali are demonstrated in the pictures. In essence, the security threats arising from the perturbing Malian conflict has made Malian resident to leave their homes for a safer environment, thereby constituting another dimension of threat to human security on the African continent.

A report by United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2016) reads;

> *……insecurity and attacks by jihadi groups targeted and destroyed these cultural assets, in addition to kidnapping of tourists, often ransom. Moreover, the support infrastructure for the tourism sector in Djenne, Mopti and Timbuktu were destroyed, many hotels closed and tour operators displaced. Furthermore, travel roots became more unsafe and government tourists' establishments collapsed. All this resulted in a 30,000 decline in the number of tourist in Mali (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2016).*

Moreover, the report revealed that the uprising in Mali has resulted in new form of violence against women and girls. Cited in the report, the survey of 120 women and girls in Mopti region of Mali revealed that 28percent were victims of forced early marriages while 53percent had experienced rape/female genital mutilation as well as displacement and loss of economic assests and livelihoods. Moreover, the same report claimed that led to the destruction of UNESCO cultural heritage and tourist sites in the Northern Mali.

Observations made

The paper was able to interrogate how Malian conflict has contributed to the security threats in African region between 2012 and 2023. The researchers embarked on the study based on proposed thoughts on the phenomenon (African regional security). Having presented and established the links between marginalization and the Malian conflict, the researchers were able to find out that various evidence of marginalization in the Malian political structure such as lack of equal representation, inequitable distribution of resources, social exclusion, deprivation among others; have contributed to development of the uprising in Mali. Moreso, the researchers were able to examine how conflict in Mali has affected African regional security in multi-dimensional ways such as, internal displacement of Malian residents across African countries, loss of jobs, killings, destruction of properties, sexual harassments, kidnappings among others between 2012 and 2023. Virtually, all the data presented such as validated this claim.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The main thrust of this paper is to examine how Malian conflict has affected African regional security between 2012 and 2023. From the presentation and analysis of data, it is evident that the uprising in Mali has seriously posed security threats on the African continent. On this basis of the foregoing; an urgent solution is needed.

Based on findings of the study, the following recommendations are made;

1. There is urgent need for the Malian central government and the African Union to address the root causes of marginalization and social exclusion. Hence, the Malian government should adopt social policies encompassing eradication of poverty,

provision of jobs as well as equal representation of all ethnic groups/regions in government.

2. There is the need for restructuring of Malian political system in a way that every region (particularly the marginalized Northern-Mali) would have fair and equitable allocation of resources.
3. The international bodies, particularly the United Nations should collaborate with the African Union and Malian authority to ensure that peace deals are properly implemented among parties to the conflict.

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