UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

# Analysing protests through the prism of Constructive Patriotism: the EndSars and Black Lives Matter movements in Focus

**DANIEL CLEMENT EKUP-NSE**

**21594318**

**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree**

**Masters of Arts**

**(Political Sciences)**

**In the Faculty of Humanities**

**University of Pretoria**

**Supervisor: Prof. Christopher Isike**

**January 2024**

## Abstract

The rise of nationwide protests across many countries in the world has the potential to make or mar such countries. While research has greatly focused on the character, impact, common and unique factors that instigate such protests, what is evidently lacking is an explicit delineation of such protests within the prisms of constructive patriotism rooted in constitutional values. This gap in research does not allow for adequate analysis and understanding of specific protests by the public and the government, whose response to such protests can stimulate or condense the constructive patriotic verve of its citizens. Therefore, this study addresses the following questions: Is there a theoretical basis for constructive patriotism? What qualifies a protest to be categorised as constructive patriotism? And, what are the implications of categorising protest as a constructive patriotism? This study addresses the above by analysing, within the context of constructive patriotism, two spates of protests that took place in democratic countries: the EndSars in Nigeria and Black Lives Matter (BLM) in the United States. The qualitative case study methodology was adopted for this study. Data was obtained from primary and secondary sources. Constitutional patriotism, which advocates for citizens' loyalty to a liberal democratic constitution and/or the shared national values and beliefs, was applied as a theoretical base to justify constructive patriotism over expectations of blind patriotism.

**Keywords**: Protest, Constructive patriotism, EndSars, Black Lives Matter

© University of Pretoria

**Dedication**

To my late Mother, Ita-Yaweh, whom I owe all that I am and all that I will ever be.

## Declaration

I declare that **Analysing protests through the prism of Constructive Patriotism: the EndSars and Black Lives Matter movements in Focus** is my original work. All the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by way of complete references.

Signed:

 Date:    4 February 2024

Daniel Clement Ekup-Nse
Student Number: 2159431
Department of Political Sciences
University of Pretoria

# Acknowledgements

I am eternally indebted to my supervisor, Prof. Christopher Isike, for his guidance, mentorship, and constructive review of this study. I am equally grateful for the support that I received from staff and colleagues in the Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria, and the African Centre for the Study of the United States, University of Pretoria (ACSUS-UP).

I express my most profound gratitude to Prof. Jonathan Chimakonam, who enabled my postgraduate journey at the University of Pretoria. To Engr. Christopher Anom, words cannot describe what you mean to me. I acknowledge the immense support of my dear friends, Mr. Martins Ihembe, Lukman Quadri, Tony Oche, Onah Gideon, Patrick Benblag; Drs. Uchenna Ogbonnaya, Samuel Okunade, Samuel Igba, Sokfa John, and many others whom I cherish immensely.

In a very special way, I acknowledge the role of my funders, Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at the University of Pretoria, and its entire team. The empathy of my academic coordinator, Dr. Efe Isike, is a model for all.

Finally, my family has remained a great source of inspiration for my postgraduate journey. To my dear Imelda Abel, here is another fruit of your sacrifice for us.

## List Abbreviations

ACLED          Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project

BLM          Black Lives Matter

BLM GNF          Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation

BRT          Bus Rapid Transit

FEE          Foundation for Economic Education

GDELT          Global Database of Events, Language, and Tone

NPF          Nigerian Police Force

SCM          Structural-Cognitive Model

SWAT          Special Weapons and Tactics Unit

**Chapter One**
**Introduction**

## 1.1 Background to the Study and Problem Statement

The 21st century is replete with national-level protests across the globe, with no signal of decline in the near future. Protest has become a major instrument utilised by the governed to orchestrate major political changes. Though the frequency of nationwide protests has increased significantly in the last two decades, it has always been a recurring theme throughout history (Olonisakin 2020: vii; Melgaco & Monaghan 2018: 2). The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, through its Global Protest Tracker, states that since over 230 significant anti-government protests have occurred globally in more than 110 countries between 2017-2022.

Protest has become an unconventional yet effective political activity (Dalton & Van 2005). It has been described as "a nearly ubiquitous part of contemporary politics" (Norris, 2002 *cited in* Dalton & Van 2005: 1). Since the year 2010, major nationwide protests have occurred in countries such as Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt (The Arab Spring, 2011), Iran (2013), Pakistan (2014), Argentina (2016), Afghanistan (2018), Zimbabwe (2018), Sudan (2019), Iraq (2019), The United Kingdom (2019), Nicaragua (2019), USA (2020), Nigeria (2020), South Africa (2021), Iran (2022), and so on. Using the Global Database of Events, Language, and Tone (GDELT) to calculate the intensity of protests, it has been ascertained that "the list of countries hit by major protests since 2010 is remarkably long and diverse" (Carothers & Youngs 2015 :3).

Protests do not simply erupt as an unavoidable natural phenomenon. There are unique and common factors that propel their occurrence across the globe. Dalton and Van (2005) have abridgedthe common factors into three broad theoretical frameworks: Grievances/Resources, Political Opportunity Structures, and Cultural Explanations. The first theory views protest as a reaction to societal issues - consequent upon the government's neglect of citizens' demands. The second theory views the nature of political institutions as instigators of protests. The third theory holds that the prevailing political ideology in the state informs the protest consciousness of its citizens. Each of these theories is explicated in detail by these researchers. Another interesting model for protest analysis is the Structural-Cognitive Model (SCM) designed by Karl-Dieter Opp (2009). This researcher describes

SCM as the nexus to the micro and macro levels of propositions in all protest theories (Karl-Dieter Opp 2009: 327), given that no single theory can explain all kinds of protests.

Interestingly, the effect of most nationwide protests on the overall governance of the countries they erupt in cannot be overemphasised. A plethora of literature analyses such impacts from economic, policy, security, and administrative, contexts. Conversely, there is a dearth of research on the analysis of these protests through the prism of constructive patriotism. The concept of constructive patriotism is employed here to distinguish the kind of patriotism that this research is concerned with. Research has shown that the concept of patriotism in political discourse is easily susceptible to invidious undertones.

To illuminate the conundrum associated with the concept of patriotism, Fainos Mangena (2010) distinguishes between Constructive and Blind patriotism, in what he calls *bona fide and mala fide patriotism*. The former refers to a critical patriotism that objectively evaluates and critiques the governance of the state for the well-being of all citizens and residents. In this sense, constructive patriotism amounts to loving one's country enough to question and critique its policies and practices to create positive change. Studies associate this productive kind of patriotism with increased political involvement and civic participation (Schatz 2018; Staub 2003; Schatz et al. 1999). The latter, on the other hand, refers to an uncritical patriotism that blindly supports a country and follows its government without questioning, just as it does not tolerate any criticism of the government.

Fainos Mangena categorises the two forms of patriotism above to lie outside the domain of moral deliberation (Mangena 2010: 35). On the contrary, moral deliberation has been the cardinal theme in Alasdair MacIntyre's 1984 Lindley Lecture at the University of Kansas, where he posed the question - by way of a title to his presentation: *Is Patriotism a Virtue?* While there are points of convergence and otherwise in the analysis of patriotism by both scholars, what remains unclear is how to engage critically with the state and what the critical patriots can do to keep the government in check (Ekup-Nse 2021: 11). This is the case despite their shared stance that a critical patriot must consistently engage the government towards good governance. Contributing to this discourse, Ekup-Nse (2021) encourages the use of political protest as an essential tool to improve governance. He further argues that "the failure to explicitly categorise protest aimed at improving governance as an invaluable feature of patriotism renders its existing conceptualisations incomplete" (Ekup-

Nse 2021: 5). Importantly, how protest is generally perceived has immense implications for both the government and citizens.

On the other hand, constructive patriotism is quintessential for the peaceful coexistence, harmony, and development of plural societies. Most post-colonial African states - such as Nigeria, with multiple nationalities and other forms of identities – are still on the quest for nation-building. This is a similar case in a multiracial state such as the USA, where fractious race relations persist. In such states, beyond the popular brand of patriotism which emphasises that citizens defend the sovereignty of their state, constructive patriotism is less emphasised, yet decipherable through protests aimed at improving governance. Hence, there is an urgent need to make constructive patriotism an essential element of protest research and consciousness.

Also, citizens can engage in a protest without a proper and popularly understood essence and implications of their protest. This makes certain protests prone to civil disorder and violence. On the other hand, the government's response to protest can wane patriotic consciousness in its citizens. The two situations noted here can be addressed once the principles of constructive patriotism are entrenched and popularised within the state. Cardinal of them all is that the constructive patriot does not protest to destroy the state. Rather, such protests are aimed at improving the governance of the state. A critical analysis of the EndSars and BLM protests in Nigeria and the USA, through the prism of constructive patriotism, shall further elucidate this discourse.

## 1.2 Research Objectives

1. Determine if constitutional patriotism can be used as a theoretical basis for explaining constructive patriotism.
2. Analyse two nationwide protests - EndSars and BLM - within the context of constructive patriotism - to determine what qualifies a protest to be categorised as constructive patriotism.
3. Examine the possible implications of categorising EndSars and BLM as constructive patriotism.

## 1.3 Research Questions

1. Can constitutional patriotism be used as a theoretical basis for explaining constructive patriotism?

2. What qualifies protest to be categorised as constructive patriotism?

3. What are the possible implications of categorising EndSars and BLM as constructive patriotism?

## 1.4 Justification of the Study

There exists no indication of a decline in the fast-growing eruption of nationwide protests across the globe. This is because protest has become a significant political activity (Dalton & Van 2005) across all political contexts (Carothers & Youngs 2015:1). This has positioned protest as a critical research area in contemporary social science scholarship. Nevertheless, both theoretical and empirical analyses of protests have focused more on their triggers and outcomes. A literature review on this subject clearly shows the gap in the nexus between protest and patriotism.

There are two main reasons for this research gap: First, the popular delineation of the concept of patriotism in political studies does not categorise protest as its constructive component (Ekup-Nse 2021:5). Secondly, due to the basic exterior semblance of protests, researchers are more inclined to offer "simplistic analogies" with 'generalised conclusions' over varied contexts of protests (Carothers & Youngs 2015:3). This situation informed the expert recommendation by Carothers and Youngs that "[a]s a corrective, it is necessary to step back to view the overall landscape of protests and probe it many diversities and complexities" (2015:3).

By adhering to the above recommendation, this research seeks to analyse the EndSars and BLM protests through the prism of constructive patriotism. This study recognises that not all protests can be categorised as patriotic activities. Hence, this analytic focus is considered quintessential to governments' assessment and response to protests, as well as to protesters' motivation and framing of protests. Most protests, such as the EndSars and BLM, are often met with brutal repression by the government. This has the potential of triggering violent resistance by erstwhile peaceful protesters and negatively affects the patriotic consciousness of protesting citizens. This study, therefore, adds to the extant research on protests and patriotism across the globe.

## 1.5 Research Methodology
### 1.5.1    Research design

A qualitative case study design was adopted for this study. This design allows for an in-depth exploration of events through myriad sources, and a critical analysis of contemporary intricate phenomena within a well-defined real-life context (Rashid et al. 2019). The exemplifying case approach (also known as the representative or typical case) was the specific strategy that undergirds this literature-based research process. Here, the two cases sufficiently studied in literature - EndSars and BLM – are inferred, based on their established values, to provide categories for analysing constructive patriotism This strategy allowed for an analysis of the broader phenomenon of protest within the specific context of constructive patriotism. It offers an analytical pathway to answering the three research questions that inform this study (Bryman 2016: 60-72).

Primary and secondary data were obtained from two protest events – EndSars and BLM – and a critical literature review on constructive and constitutional patriotism. These events were not selected in this study for comparative purposes. Rather, they were selected based on their shared themes to enable data corroboration to enhance the validity, replicability, and reliability of the research findings. Some shared themes in these events are as follows: First, both events were intensive protests triggered by police brutality. Secondly, both protests were non-violent. Third, the key demands of both protests were justice and governance through constitutional means. Finally, the countries where both protests erupted are the biggest democracies in their respective region.

### 1.5.2    Research paradigm

This research anchor on the transformative paradigm which serves as a canopy for research theories and approaches that prioritise social justice and human rights (Mertens 2010:473). Creswell (2014) states that this research paradigm blossomed in the 1980s and 1990s by researchers who identified structural laws and theories within the postpositivist assumptions that did not fit marginalised individuals or address social justice, oppression, and discrimination issues. Hence, the transformative worldview seeks to intertwine research with politics and political change agenda to address injustice at all levels (Mertens 2010). It aspires to "become a united voice for reform and change" (Creswell 2014: 38).

The transformative paradigm is further considered a framework of belief systems that members of culturally diverse groups, with a view of increasing social justice (Mertens 2010: 470). The ontological assumption of this worldview is that there is one reality upon which there are diverse opinions (Mertens 2010). It is evident that social justice and human

rights have become universal ideals. Opinions may vary regarding what constitutes human rights and social justice, but there cannot be a denying of their essence. Hence, the transformative paradigm can potentially raise issues of social injustice and human rights in all contexts of social inquiry (Mertens 2010: 4).

This research is best situated within this philosophical worldview as it seeks to transform the complexities of protests that are informed by social injustices and human right issues, into a constructive patriotic agenda. Clearly, analysing protests within the purview of constructive patriotism in culturally and/or racially diverse nations such as Nigeria and the USA, with multiple layers of inequalities, is to assume that constructive patriotism is the singular reality that citizens of all countries should uphold, irrespective of the multiple opinions that they might hold as to what activities/actions of constructive patriotism best fit their context.

### 1.5.3   Sources of data and methods of data collection

The data for the study was collected through primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data were derived from official reports of local and international governments and agencies and personal observation.[1] The secondary data were derived from a thorough and rigorous engagement with literature on the subject matter – books, journal articles, newspapers, internet sources, theses, and working papers.

### 1.5.4   Method of Data Analysis

The data derived from primary and secondary sources were examined thematically for a deeper understanding of the context, trends, and submissions the research questions set to establish. Data from both secondary and primary sources were cross-examined to decipher areas for corroboration. This method allowed the researcher to draw data from both spates of protests – EndSars and BLM – and analyse them thematically in line with the stated objectives of the study.

### 1.6 Scope and limitations of the study

This study was designed to analyse protests within the context of constructive patriotism. It further examined the implications of categorising such protests as constructive patriotic activities. The focus was on the EndSars and BLM Protests in Nigeria and the USA. The

---

[1] The researcher was part of the EndSars protesters in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria.

study analysed the causes, demands, character, and government's response to these protests in line with the stipulations of the democratic constitutions that govern these countries. The study drew from extant research on protest and patriotism.

However, given the nature of this research focus, in-depth interviews with key informants would have further enriched the research data. Also, a comparative study of the EndSars and BLM protests and the governance systems in Nigeria and the US would have provided more analytic breadth to the study. Nevertheless, neither the absence of in-depth interviews nor a comparative analysis of both protests reduces the degree of validity and reliability of the research findings. In view of research depth, the study does not seek to generate new data but to analyse existing data on both protests to decipher their constructive patriotic elements. Finally, while both EndSars and BLM are protracted and far-reaching social movements,[2] the research focuses on their protest activities that erupted in 2020 in Nigeria and the US, respectively. The study engages in a critical analysis of the broad concept of patriotism to illustrate the basic principles of constructive patriotism, upon which this study answers its research questions and extrapolates its research objectives.

## 1.7 Significance of Study

1. This research provides a framework for analysing protests within the context of constructive patriotism.
2. It will help governments adopt protest responses that sustain the constructive patriotic consciousness of their citizens.
3. It will help citizens utilise the instrument of protest in a transformative manner. Hence, protest would be consciously designed and implemented to improve constitutional governance without recourse to the breakdown of social order.

## 1.8 Chapter Outline

The dissertation is arranged into five chapters. Chapter One provides a background and statement of the problem. It further contains the research objectives, research questions, justification of the study, and the methodology. Chapter Two provides an extensive literature review on the concepts of patriotism and protest. Chapter Three assesses the theoretical basis

---

[2] Both EndSars and BLM movement predated their major protests that erupted in 2020. Also, though BLM erupted in the US, its impact was global.

for constructive patriotism. Chapter Four presents the data analysis and results. Chapter Five contains the summary, conclusion, and recommendations.

**Chapter Two**

**Literature Review**

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviewed scholarly works on protest and patriotism. It also highlights the dominant themes in research about the EndSars and BLM protests in Nigeria and the US. This review is structured in three themes. The first examines the concepts of protest and patriotism. The second analyses the dominant themes in the literature about EndSars and BLM, while the last part discusses the missing link in the literature. This review was conducted through the integrative literature review approach. This design is a distinct form of research that analyses existing literature to create new knowledge (Torraco 2016: 62). It further enables the discovery of research gaps, infers generalisations of a phenomenon, and synthesises connections between related areas of specialisation (Christmals & Gross 2017: 13). This design, therefore, allows for the establishment of a nexus between protest and constructive patriotism.

## 2.2 Protest and the basis for its analysis

It is imperative to begin by providing conceptual clarifications about protest and social movement, which are used interchangeably by most researchers. According to Opp (2009: 38-40), "protest is defined as joint (i.e. collective) action of individuals aimed at achieving their goal or goals by influencing decisions of a target" and defines social movement as "a collectivity of actors who want to achieve their goal or goals by influencing the decision of a target" (2009: 38-40). The obvious distinction in this conceptual delineation is in the type of participants. While protests feature a group of demonstrating individuals, social movements basically feature multiple groups of actors, such as organisations, who engage their target through diverse means of persuasion, such as campaigns, demonstrations, and boycotts. Going by this delineation, it becomes obvious that social movements are wider than protests and often encompass it within its engagement strategy. However, the ongoing study keenly focuses on the protest element of two social movements: The EndSars and BLM. This focus is narrowed for the following reasons:

1.  Protest is the riskiest component of social movements.

2. Not all members of a social movement take the risk to protest.
3. Constructive patriotism can best be observed in protests.

Let us now turn to note how researchers have analysed protest.

In their empirical study of "The Resource, Structural, and Cultural Bases of Protest", Dalton and Van Sickle (2005) utilised public reports and data from the 1995-98 and 1999-2002 waves of the World Values Survey to provide a large-scale cross-national study of protest activities in more than 70 countries. Their study provided three perspectives on the sources of protest: Grievances/Resources, Political Opportunity Structures, and Cultural Explanations. Their study concluded that despite these theoretical explanations, protest arises from self-expressive values and a firm belief in democratic processes. As they phrase it, "people protest because they can" (Dalton & Van Sickle 2005: 15).

While the finding above does not invalidate the role of other factors in the emergence of protest, it simply emphasises the crux of protest manifestations – *will*. It is evident that the causes of protest often blur the centrality of will in protest analyses. The complexities in the conceptualisation of protest inform this situation. Protest is often considered a reactive or proactive response activity that engages politics outside of its main channels. As a working definition for their research, Dalton and Van Sickle (2005: 3) view protest "as a continuum of unconventional political action, which seeks to influence the course of social and political change from outside traditional institutions". Like most protest researchers, they identify protest as a form of political participation, though prevalent in highly industrialised and democratic societies.

There are two points worth engaging from the above: First, the view of protest as an unconventional form of political participation. This demonstrates that protest requires more than its causal factors to manifest. As an unconventional political activity and one that has the capacity to disrupt mainstream politics, protest remains susceptible to the wrath of the government. Though protest is not tolerated in undemocratic political spaces, ironically, insurmountable evidence abounds to the repressive responses to protest by acclaimed democratic governments. What is noteworthy is that despite the brutal repressions, protest activities have continued to rise globally. The persistence of its occurrence validates the centrality of *will*. Though citizens can protest, they would not do so without a strong *will*.

The second point that protest is mostly prevalent in highly industrialised and democratic societies (Dalton & Van Sickle 2005: 16) has been challenged by the growing

scales of nationwide protests across all kinds of societies. The Arab Spring in 2011 provides ample evidence of the permeating capacity of protest across all societies[3] - as facilitated through the forces of globalisation - with digital technology as the new normative tool for participatory democracy (Rajhans 2017: 73; Shishkina 2017: 161; Carothers & Youngs 2015: 1; Wanca 2017).

In their edited collection titled *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, Arbatli and Rosenberg (2017: vii) contend that rather than narrowing the focus of protest to the acclaimed advanced democracies, it is most useful to view it from its global dynamics. As against the popular view that protests and social movements develop when democratic opportunities open up, these authors shows that both protest and social movement are possible in authoritarian and illiberal democracies. Their study further shows that a protest activity in one state has the capacity to trigger a protest in another state, irrespective of proximity.

Their research was framed on two central arguments: First, they challenge the popular view that the key objective of contemporary protests is to establish or reinforce democracy. Secondly, they argue that viewing protest from an outcome-based approach can lead to a 'context-blind' analysis (Arbatli & Rosenberg 2017: 2). With specific reference to countries in the global south, they hold that socioeconomic situations and political conditions make protest very unlikely to achieve tangible policy results. Instead of focusing on expected outcomes, they propose that protest studies should focus on their 'transformative potential' and their gains in promoting increased political participation as a worthy alternative. They emphasise the importance of understanding "how protesters frame their demands" and identified "real participation, social justice, and dignity" as the common demands in contemporary non-Western movements (Arbatli & Rosenberg 2017: 3). Hence, the oversimplification of protest analysis can no longer escape the charge of sophistry given the rising demand for context-based inquiry (Carothers & Youngs 2015:3; Arbatli & Rosenberg 2017: 6).

Between 2011 and 2013, protests were generally analysed through the lens of the Arab Spring, with regime change as the denominator that informed the key theoretical framework. Studying the Russian protest events that occurred between 2011-2013, Dina

---

[3] A study by Goran Therborn (2014) reveals that between 2011 and 2013, protests occurred in both recession-struck and booming economic countries.

Rosenberg (2017: 27) concluded that no single theoretical framework could best describe the protest. While this study offers critical insights into the complexities of the protest events, it nevertheless provides fundamental themes that are decipherable across multiple protests.

A critical point worth noting is the collaboration of protesters despite their ideological leanings. According to the author, both nationals and liberals "started to embrace each other's ideas" as their demands shifted from socio-economic issues "to a political and civic agenda: anti-corruption and human rights, civil development planning, and environmental preservation (Rosenberg 2017: 18). The quest for a "grand political transformation" unites all Russian protesters and enables the transformation of such political agenda into civic actions (Rosenberg 2017: 22). This study further reveals the adoption of the internet as a soft power instrument to cope with the Russian government's repressive response to protest activities – a response that infringed upon civil rights and provides a fertile ground for a violent resistant. The study emphasised the increasing rise of youth demography in protest activities – a situation enabled by the emergence and utilisation of new media technologies (Rosenberg 2017: 17; Rajhans 2017).

The study of the "Palestinian Youth Movements and "the Arab Spring"" by Natil (2017) further demonstrates the central role of youths in contemporary protests. As the author notes, youths' quest for 'participatory democracy' as an elixir to the shortcomings of representative democracy serves as the motivating factor for youth involvement in protests. While the conditions for the general outbreak of the protests may vary, youth involvement often seeks to open up closed political spaces. Interestingly, youth-dominant protests take digital approaches that make them leaderless (Arbatli & Rosenberg 2017: 21).

The drive towards participatory democracy has created a new and vibrant actor of political change. Dmitry Zaystev (2017: 43) categorises this new actor as the "protest publics". Analysing protests in Brazil, this author notes that protesters desired an increase in the 'quality of democracy by transitioning from 'liberal' to 'participatory' democracy. The author views the political changes in Brazil since 2013 – orchestrated through protests – as significant and identifies these protesters as "watchdogs" who influence the government's decisions "and are ready to take to the streets again if something goes wrong" (Zaystev 2017: 44).

Protesters' demand for participatory democracy is clearly a quest for inclusive governance. The ultimate conviction in equal citizenship informs this quest. The very manifestation of this demand testifies to the institutionalised inequalities in most countries. In contemporary governance systems across the globe, equal citizenship is predominantly a constitutional provision. A common preamble of most constitutions begins with the words "we the people". Unfortunately, despite the constitutional stipulations of equal citizenship, exclusive governance has dominated all political spaces. Hence, protesters in closed political spaces leverage such constitutional provisions to demand inclusive governance that reflects equal citizenship. Rajhans (2017) studies protest activities in India between 2011 and 2013 through this prism.

Protests inspired by constitutional provisions for equal citizenship or that advocate for participatory governance should have been viewed as citizens' activism for positive political change (Rajhans 2017: 73). In this context of the Indian protests, Rajhans (2017: 74) describes the protesters as "diverse people, who came from the most varied socio-cultural background with different capacity of their wallets, with different hues of their linguistic and communicative skills, huddled together for weeks and months, longing for a better India". The author further describes:

> It is 'India' against corruption […] The focus in this domain of politics is an individual 'citizen' – who is stepping out into the streets, protesting, making placards in S/he home (sic) on the back of used calendars or notebooks. S/he is not affiliated with any specific plan or identity (other than *Indians*, or *Mumbaikar*, or *daughters* of India). They have been speaking in different voices with amorphous demands for 'justice' to end corruption or for different versions of the LokPal Bill. The ideological affiliations of the protesters have ranged the spectrum from Left to Right but the predominant trend has been of 'no ideology'. The 'bonding' has been loose, often ephemeral – forged through cyber 'groups' on social media. The appeal here is to an individual sense of morality, of what is felt to be right, rather than to ideology (Rajhans 2017: 82).

Despite the multiple forms of identities and underlying tensions in a highly multicultural society such as India, protesters' determination to wrestle with the injustice of

political exclusions manifested an 'Indian identity' that is the requisite emblem for equal citizenship. Rajhans (2017) notes that this protest liberated the caged spirit of citizenship in a country with over 1000 years of institutionalised social discrimination and hierarchy. The author identifies two key outcomes of the protest: First, it consolidated the participatory spirit of democracy. Secondly, it launched the gradual transformation of governance from a top-down project implementation to a participatory bottom-up policy implementation. Protest activities against social injustices in Bosnia between 2013 and 2014 have equally been analysed as a propelling force to the emergence of a unified national identity and one that started functioning as institutions of direct participatory democracy (Belayaeva 2017: 116).

A common feature of contemporary nationwide protests, which can be argued to be their greatest achievement, is the unity of people across diverse shades of identities. The consolidation of protesters around a common national identity[4] – with transnational linkages - and a firm establishment of equal citizenship demonstrates the global demand for social justice and dignity in both democratic and non-democratic governments. As to whether the realisation of justice and dignity can serve as the necessary social capital for democratisation is a separate question that requires a context-based inquiry (Arbatli & Rosenberg 2017: 189).

The analysis of protest outcomes through the lens of representative democracy not only fails to see protest outcomes within their proper contexts but further subjects the orthodox claims of representative democracy as the best form of government to scrutiny. For instance, in the recently published *World Protests: A Study of Key Protest Issues in the 21st Century*, Isabel Ortiz et al. (2022) reviewed almost three thousand protests to provide a background to the demands, methods, achievements, and repression of protests across the globe between the years 2006-2020. The key contribution of their work is that it expands the mapping of protests beyond the popular non-violent ones and provides more information on these protests beyond what earlier research captured. However, one of their key arguments is that the most upstanding demand of protesters worldwide is "real democracy" (Ortiz et al. 2022: 3). Their description of real democracy falls within the domain of participatory democracy.

---

[4] Arbatli and Rosenberg contend that a new form of protest has emerged where the protesters' collective identity is simply 'protesters' (2017: 191).

In a recent study of protests in developed and developing democracies, Aluko (2023) argues that protest is not a negative corollary on democratic systems but has a positive impact on them. Going by the submission of Ortiz et al. (2022) that the global demand of protesters is "real democracy", one is apt to conclude that real democracy is tied to governance that promotes equal citizenship. In this sense, protest becomes an essential right that States have an obligation to respect (Aluko 2023: 41). Protest, as a larger civil or nonviolent resistance/campaign aimed at achieving specific objectives by use of pressure and persuasion, situates itself within the domains of real or participatory democracy.

Though protest signals the failure of the state to perform on specific issues, it has been considered a critical instrument for ensuring democratic accountability, even in countries where governance accountability is not part of the political culture (Ogundare, 2023). A study of governance and public protest as a means of exercising democratic accountability in Lebanon further reveals that "[t]he frustration and aggression of the people through public protest were the result of inequality between the elite class and Common citizens (Ogundare 2023: 70). Though Lebanon is considered a model of plural and stable democracy in the Middle East, such neglect of the basic principles of a democratic society validates the research findings that protesters seek equal citizenship or participatory/real democracy. However, such protesters are viewed to coordinate their protest with no destructive mentality that can stall development (Ogundare 2023: 77-78).

In their study of *The Complexities of Global Protests,* Carothers and Youngs (2015: 15) contend that protests are not just an end in themselves or simply arenas of political symbolism but coordinated actions aimed at producing positive changes on the part of power holders. These authors view contemporary protests as activities that demystify all kinds of power holders, even in societies with protest repression. They illustrated their position with the 2011-2012 protest in Russia, where President Vladimir Putin squashed the protesters easily while the protesters' demonstrations cracked the façade of status as an unquestionable leader (Carothers & Youngs 2015: 18).

One of the uniqueness of the study of the complexities of global protests is the recognition of the diversity of protest outcomes. They refute the generalised claim that protesters can mostly demolish old structures without raising sustainable political institutions or promoting effective political participation. They argue that although some protests may fail to realise sustainable institutions or massive political changes, others have

resulted in significant policy reforms. In their own words, "[t]he common view that today's protesters are destructive and not constructive fits at best some but certainly not most cases" (Carothers & Youngs 2015: 20).

To buttress the above, *From Protest to Parties: Party-Building and Democratization in Africa* by Andrienne Lebas (2011) provides a detailed analysis of the synergy between protest and political contestations through political parties. The book draws from comparing opposition political parties in Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Kenya to demonstrate how political parties are constructed to serve both as electoral challengers and popular movements for reforms. Hence, opposition political parties in these countries mobilised protests for political change. While there are no obvious changes that suggest the realisation of real democracy in these countries through protests, this author considers the very manifestations of these protests as a necessary signal for possible reform. As the author notes:

> […] the building blocks of democracy can be put in place during periods of political closure, but progress in one area of institution-building need not have immediate effects on the overall political system. Thus, rather than offering a deterministic model that links party development and successful (or failed) democratization, I suggest instead a set of mechanisms that together produce more cohesive and socially rooted political party organisation (Lebas 2011: 5).

Though the protests in these countries have launched the signal for political reforms, they can only consolidate their gains by boosting grassroots mobilisation (Lebas 2011: 254). Given the impact of globalisation, protest mobilisation is no longer a herculean task. Carothers and Youngs (2015: 23) analyse protests in line with the fast-changing dynamics of global politics. According to them, political protests reflect today's world, with their diversity and complexity reflecting the characteristics of this age rather than any singular, overarching character or set of effects. The deepening of globalisation equally facilitates the transnational character of contemporary protests. Before the rise of new digital technologies, the challenge of protest was largely that of mobilisation. A situation that made injustice a much more common feature of society than the collective efforts to oppose it (Johnston & Noakes 2005: 1).

In their book *Frames of Protests: Social Movements and the Framing Perspective,* Johnston and Noakes (2005) provide a roadmap to understanding what brings protesters together. Their work analysed and synthesised theoretical research on protest framing of

over two decades. Protest framing refers to the process of defining a situation in order to encourage protest (Johnston & Noakes 2005: 3). Their research analyses the role of cognition and interpretation that ferments the motivation to join a protest.

Currently, protest framing has shifted from the domain of the 'social movement entrepreneur', as Johnston and Noakes (2005) phrase it, to the domain of young citizens, now popularly labelled as netizens. The study of *Gender, Protests and Political Change in Africa* demonstrates how, in most African countries, youths with no formal societal roles take to the street to protest the injustices of their time. This has been facilitated by the communications revolution (Rucht 2013: 253), which has provided an edge for protest mobilisation as never witnessed in the previous era. It has created a new state-society relationship (Olonisakin 2020: vi) that scales beyond the needs of the youth constituency to the overall transformation of governance. According to Okech (2020: 4), contemporary protests are framed by the demand for accountability.

The utilisation of the Internet as a protest mobilisation tool has not only revolutionised protest framing but has also ushered in a new way of analysing protests. Matsilele et al. (2021) provide a lucid study of contemporary protests through the internet prism. These researchers investigated how human rights and social media-driven movements utilised Twitter (now X) to protest oppression in Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Eswatini. They argue that X provided a better avenue for engagement in these limited democratic spaces, especially Zimbabwe and Estwatini (Matsilele et al. 2021: 16).

For contemporary protest mobilisation to flourish predominantly within the digital space, it suggests that besides the limitation associated with physical convergence, repressive governments have set mechanisms that thwart physical mobilisations. There have been great scholarly debates about the very idea of a physical public sphere. In describing what the public sphere means, Habermas notes:

> A realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion
> can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens. A portion of the public
> sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals
> assemble to form a public body […] Citizens behave as a public body when
> they confer in an unrestricted fashion – that is with the guarantee of
> freedom of assembly and association and the freedom to express and

publish their opinions – about matters of general interest (Habermas 1989: 73-74)

Habermas' idea of the public sphere, as captured above, was viewed with immense scepticism as it was interpreted to be limited to physical spaces such as coffee shops and saloons that are, by their very setting, exclusionary of certain members of the community (Mpofu 2014: 98). Matsilele et al. (2021) contextualise this idea of the public sphere in contemporary times as spaces dominated by the mainstream media that is in turn dominated by political elites and businesspeople. The mainstream media then performs the mediatory role between those in power and the ruled in a way that excludes certain voices (Matsilele et al. 2021: 4).

The emergence of new media spaces such as Meta (formerly Facebook), X (formerly Twitter), and WhatsApp has not only created an alternative public sphere but has enabled the realisation of the public body envisioned by Habermas. Matsilele et al. (2021) refer to this realm as the 'digital public sphere' that has become integral to contemporary protests. For Breuer and Farooq (2012), this sphere contributes to protests in three stages: preparatory, information dissemination, and collective identity formation. The Arab Spring of 2010 and 2011 became the key indicators of the role of the digital public sphere in protests (Matsilele et al. 2021).

Though Habermas considers citizens to attain a public body when they confer in an unrestricted fashion, there has been growing government censorship of the digital public sphere which provides citizens with an avenue for convergence. This situation has been termed "Digital Dictatorship" as governments seek to squash information and limit communication in the digital space (Gopaldas 2019: 4). To further cope with the growing convergence of citizens in the digital public sphere, authoritarian governments are equally utilising this space to discredit and change narratives that enhance protest mobilisation (Okech 2020; Matsilele et al. 2021: 17).

Despite the attempts by governments to shrink this digital public sphere, it has continued to endure as an unfettered avenue for citizens' expression and mobilisation for protests. Consolidated by the physical sphere, governments find protest repression more

difficult. An example is the Arab Spring[5] protests in Egypt, where the government shut down cell phones and internet access, but old-fashioned face-to-face networks covered the gap (Jasper 2014: 218). Another factor that has granted durability to contemporary protests in the face of repression is its transnationality. The transcendence of the digital public sphere beyond specific national boundaries has enhanced transnational protest mobilisations. As Matsilele et al. (2021) puts forth, contemporary protests gain momentum from transnational solidarity. Since no contemporary protest occurs in isolation, and the government's response is widely visible to the international community, this has further enhanced protesters' resolve to engage repressive governments.

The enduring power of protest continues to influence significant changes in governance, both in terms of policy and the behaviour of politicians. A study by Wouters and Walgrave (2017) reveals how protest persuades the behaviour of political representatives. With a focus on Belgian politicians, their findings show that protesters' demands affect the beliefs of their elected officials. These researchers categorise protest as a critical societal signal that points the government to what the public wants. Since the larger public is often resource-poor and lacks direct access to challenge policies, protest offers them the avenue to mobilise social support and set in motion a process that makes it difficult for elected officials to ignore them anymore (Wouters & Walgrave 2017: 362; Jasper 2014: 42). They argue that elected officials attend to protesters' demands as it tends to affect their re-election.

Analysing protest from a cultural perspective, James Jasper (2014) notes that social movement arose to pressure representatives. He submits that although people have always found ways to express their displeasure against their rulers, even in societies where no election takes place, the modern idea of citizenship which emerged in 18th-century Britain and America, empowered ordinary people to frame and engage in protests as they do today (Jasper 2014: 41). The status of a citizen has empowered the ordinary people demand for political participation and accountability from their rulers. As Jasper (2014) contends, this trend crystallised citizens' convictions about freedom, boosting the spread of democracy as a form of government. Hence, the very recognition and rights enjoyed today by previously

---

[5] In his *book False Dawn: Protest, Democracy, and Violence in the New Middle East*, Steven Cook (2017) provides a seminal study of causal factors, mobilizations, and outcomes of protests in that region. He provides a comprehensive cast of characters and timelines of significant events in the revolution.

marginalised groups in both democratic and non-democratic societies worldwide were obtained through protests.

Another important point raised by Jasper (2014) is that the frequency of protest is higher in democratic societies, given the easy channels for expression and public mobilisation. Though his claim that the goal of contemporary protests is to deepen democracy no longer holds in the light of new evidence, but his claim that protest is most frequent in democratic societies has been validated. The United States of America is upheld as the beacon of democracy – albeit the liberal model – yet it continues to witness increasing ubiquity of protests. A study of protest at the centre of US politics shows that "if Americans see a problem, staging a protest is usually a go-to political response" as they view "more traditional options -such as voting, running for office, or contacting elected officials – seem, to many people, to be too slow, too corrupt, or too unlikely to work" (Heaney 2020: 11).

The believe by American citizens that protest is necessary for their voices to be heard anchors on three key factors: institutional illegitimacy, political polarisation, and decentralisation of communications media. Heaney (2020) explains these factors thus: institutional illegitimacy refers to Americans' lack of trust in their prevailing governance system; Political polarisation depicts the extreme political spectrums held by their elected officials; While decentralisation of communications media (especially the social media) provides ease of protest mobilisation.

In their edited collection to mark the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., who became famous for leading the Civil Rights Movement in the US, Halliwell and Witham (2018) identified 1968 as the year that critiques of authority cemented the conviction that all institutions of power should be held accountable by the masses. One of the biggest ironies in protest studies is that the civil rights movement occurred and endured in a country that champions liberal democracy – that holds rights, freedom, and justice as its key features. This collection provides contextual depth to the historical trajectory of protests in the US that has gained increased momentum in light of the information revolution.

In their edited collection titled *Protests in the Information Age: Social Movements, Digital Practices and Surveillance,* Melgaco and Monaghan (2018) explores the complex and contradictory relationship between communication and information technology, as well as with social movements. Their study acknowledges that while social media has

transformed the dynamics of protests in contemporary times across the globe, public authorities have simultaneously adopted it as a surveillance tool to monitor and suppress protests. Calatayud and Vazquez (2018) provide a classic case of the government's surveillance of the 2011-2014 protests in Spain. Their study analysed how the National Police in Spain utilised the 'Integrated Telephone Monitoring System' that Ericsson developed to identify and detain suspected leaders of the protest. Also, the National Police created a special unit for monitoring activist networks to predict protests and adopt proactive responses. The criminalisation of social media is a step that some governments have taken, as depicted by the Israeli arrest and detainment of Palestinians who are social justice activists (Santos 2018: 108).

In a study titled "Digital Publics, Digital Contestation: A New Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere?" Robin Celikates (2015) provides a comprehensive analysis of protests in the digital era. The study begins by examining the role of the public sphere in democracy. Here, the author admits that only a functioning public sphere can influence civil society activities effectively. He further argues that such a mutual link has been broken in many democratic societies today. That notwithstanding, the author acknowledges how members of the public sphere utilise protest as a dissenting tool to obtain their demands, given that "democracy is precisely about what citizens want, each of them and all of them together" (Celikates 2015: 163).

Celikates (2015) views protest as a political contention that serves as a corrective to the deficits of democracy. This makes protest an integral component of any complex democratic society (Celikates 2015: 166). The emergence of the digital public sphere has only helped blossom the transformative capacity of protest in all societies. From the *collective action* of the public sphere to the *connective action* of the digital public sphere (Celikates 2015: 167), which has created transnational protests and global activisms[6], protest continues to manifest as an inherent human tendency for self-expression. The study by Celikates provides five key relevance of protests: initiating and reopening deliberation, enlarging participation and representation, information dissemination, stimulation of alternative possibilities, and pushing for action where political institutions suffer apathy.

---

[6] The edited collection titled *Transnational Protest and Global Activism*, della Porta and Tarrow (2005) provides lucid accounts of the significant changes that have transformed protest in the 21st century.

## 2.3 The EndSars protest: An overview

The EndSars was a decentralised social movement that flourished in Nigeria via the hashtag #EndSars. It witnessed a series of nationwide protests against police brutality that was facilitated through its Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). #EndSars started as an X (formerly Twitter) campaign in 2017 to disband the notorious police unit that became famous for profiling young Nigerians based on fashion styles. According to Amnesty International (2020), over 82 undocumented cases of SARS brutality occurred between 2017 and 2020, with no record of prosecution by the perpetrators of such brutality. These brutalities occurred in varied dehumanising forms, ranging from illegal arrests, undue prolonged detention, sexual harassment, brutal torture, summary and extra-judicial killings, illegal confiscation of properties, as well as the denial of the fundamental human rights of their detainees (Lawan & Ibrahim 2021).

The EndSars, which started as a digital-based social movement in 2017, began to gather momentum for physical protest demonstrations on 3 October 2020 when a video of SARS operatives assaulting two individuals in Ughelli, Delta State, went viral. These SARS operatives were seen dragging these two individuals down the Wetland Hotel staircase, shooting and killing one of them, and then carted away in an SUV car that belonged to the victims (Human Rights Watch 2020). That was the moment that sparked public outrage. More accounts of previous SARS victims started trending on social media platforms, with X as the main mobilising channel.

As more accounts of SARS brutality unfolded, public anger aggravated. The general consensus of the public, predominantly young Nigerians, was to stage a nationwide protest to end police brutality. On 8 October 2020, nationwide youth-led protests, as never experienced before in the country's history, erupted across all regions. Eteng (2020) reports that the protest occurred in over 100 cities nationwide, as protesters occupied major roads in about 26 of the 36 states in the federation. Abuja, the nation's capital, and Lagos, its commercial hub, were the epicentres of the protests. The protesters utilised common protesting strategies such as occupying public facilities and road blockades. Within the first three days of the protests, #EndSars became the most popular hashtag on X. According to BBC reports, the Chief Executive Officer of X at the time, Jack Dorsey, created an emoticon for the protest.

The protests gained global solidarity and turned the searchlights on human rights abuses in Nigeria. Important enablers of the protests were Nigerians in the diaspora who supported the protests by improving its global visibility through online campaigns and providing donations to support its logistics. A critical feature of this protest was its leaderless nature. The protesters refused to acknowledge any single or group of individuals as their leader(s). Attempts were, however, made by some celebrities to become the face of the protest, but the protesters rebuffed such. The primary concern of the protesters was the disbandment of SARS. However, as the protests gathered momentum with the government initiating attempts to repress the protests, protesters converged on a Five-Point agenda, which became their overriding demand to the government:

1. Immediate release of all arrested protesters
2. Justice for all deceased victims of police brutality and appropriate compensation for their families
3. Setting up an independent body to oversee the investigation and prosecution of all reports of police misconduct (within ten days)
4. In line with the new Police Act, psychological evaluation and retraining (to be confirmed by an independent body) of all disbanded SARS officers before they can be redeployed.
5. Increase police remuneration so that they are adequately compensated for protecting the lives and property of citizens.

Upon the submission of these demands, the initial response by the government was to immediately disband the SARS unit of the National Police Force. Simultaneously, the Special Weapons and Tactics Unit (SWAT) was launched as SARS replacement. Lawan and Ibrahim (2021) described this turn of events as the moment that heightened public distrust for their government, which had long promised to disband SARS prior to the eruption of the protest. To the protesters, SWAT was just a rebranded SARS.

The government's gesture, which was largely viewed as deceptive, only stoked the protest intensity. Protesters then summed their 5-point agenda into one: the demand for good governance. Within the context of this protest, good governance anchors on the supremacy of the constitution and the upholding of the rule of law. Protesters considered the government to be acting unconstitutionally, with its law enforcement agencies, such as the

police, breaching the rule of law. Law became what the enforcement agencies ascribed rather than what the Constitution prescribes, as interpreted by the courts.

Given that the protest evolved from simply opposing police brutality to opposing bad governance, the government felt threatened by the prospect of a revolution. To disperse the protest, the government resorted to both covert and overt strategies. First, the peaceful protest suddenly started witnessing elements of violence. Though the protesters distanced themselves from the violence, the government capitalised on it to describe the protest as disrupting public peace and order. Hence, the protest was securitised. Curfews were declared across many states in the country, but to the protesters' defiance, particularly in Lagos, where the largest protest was concentrated.

On the night of 20 October 2020, while the protesters were still demonstrating at the Lekki tollgate in Lagos, the Nigerian military was deployed to dispel the crowd. Accounts of the military opening fire on the peaceful crowd circulated widely on the internet. The Human Rights Watch (2020) reports that over 12 protesters were shot dead, with more wounded. Though both the Nigerian government and the military denied such claims in the face of strong evidence, Punch (2020) reports that the infiltration of violence into the protest cost the lives of 43 protesters and six police officers.

The most controversial narrative about the EndSars protest revolves around the killing of the protesters by the military. The federal government ordered the setting up of Judicial Panels of Inquiry across many states to investigate and prosecute complaints about police brutality and make public their reports within six months. The panel in Lagos produced a special report on the Lekki incident. Here are some key findings captured in the report[7]:

1. Protesters had the objective of communicating the grievances of the youths to the appropriate authorities. They had Nigerian flags, and it was comprised of people from different tribes and religions, old and young.
2. Protesters maintained cordial relationships with the security agencies and even paved the way for some Naval officers who were on a mission.
3. Protesters were not hoodlums or cultists and even had private security and bodyguards who apprehended miscreants and handed them to the police. They had an effective crowd control mechanism.

---

[7] See pages 297-298 of the *Lagos State Judicial Panel of Inquiry on Restitution for Victims of SARS Related Abuses and other Matters* for a comprehensive list of casualties of the Lekki Toll Gate incident.

4. The deployment of the army from the 65 Battalion under 81 Division Garrison at Lekki Toll Gate on 20 October 2020, without any reported violence, was totally unwarranted.

5. Both accounts of Forensic Experts and Ballistic experts confirm that many protesters were killed and injured at the Lekki Toll Gate.

6. The presence of the protesters at the Lekki Toll Gate did not threaten the territorial integrity of Nigeria. It could not be considered a civil insurrection to warrant the intervention of the Nigerian Army.

Though both the Federal Government and the Lagos State government rejected the report by the panel, what remains clear is that neither the Nigerian and Lagos state governments can escape the charge of violating the International Human Rights law, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) – both of which Nigeria is a signatory, and the Nigerian Constitution – which clearly adheres to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That a government-constituted panel produced a report that indicted the government suggests that the evidence of killing presented to the panel was too overwhelming to be suppressed. The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) issued a strong statement condemning the gross violation of the fundamental rights of Nigerians prior to and during the protest.[8] On 27 October 27, just seven days after the Lekki conundrum, the United States Congressional Research Service (CRS) issued a report that reads in part:

> The Nigerian government's response to the protest also could have consequences for U.S.-Nigerian military cooperation. The October 20 crackdown on protesters in Lagos was not the first instance of the military using lethal force against civilians. In 2015, military personnel reportedly killed nearly 350 members of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN), a Shia Muslim sect, during a gathering; security forces have since violently suppressed a series of IMN protests, killing dozens. More broadly, observers have accused Nigeria's military of executing hundreds of civilians, arbitrarily detaining thousands more, and committing widespread torture during counterterrorism operations. Impunity for such abuses remains endemic (Husted 2020: 2).

---

[8] The NBA's reproach to the Nigerian government anchored on security agencies' violation of the constitution.

All the moves made by the Nigerian government to vindicate itself from the accusations of protest repression have not been successful. If the government's reputation was already threatened during the protest, the most recent report by an international human rights organisation, Global Rights, has made it more questionable. In their report titled Shege!: *A Scorecard on the Buhari Administration's Impact on Nigeria's Civic Space*, Global Rights (2023) assessed the health status of Nigeria's civic space between May 2015 and May 2023, precisely the administration of former President Muhammadu Buhari. In his "Forward", the Executive Director of the organisation described the government of Nigeria within the timeline as follows:

> From several bills intended to stifle civil society, to the arbitrary ban on [X], to the #EndSARS massacre at Lekki tollgate, to profiling and shutting down humanitarian NGOs in the North-East region, to several infractions on freedom of expression, access to information and press freedoms, to the suppression of a secessionist movement in the South-East region, the quashing of religious freedoms of Shiite adherents of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria in the North, to disrupting opposition political party rallies, to flagrant disregard for the rule of law, in particular, judicial orders; the administration painted Nigeria's democratic canvas with authoritarian brushes and strokes of impunity (Balyewu 2023: 2).

The scorecard by Global Rights depicts the repressive and closed governance environment in Nigeria. It holds that during Buhari's administration, at least 69 peaceful protesters were killed; 250 peaceful protesters were arrested; at least 4 instances of government interference in the activities of Civil Societies; more than 189 journalists were either arrested, detained, or harassed; more than 322 instances of media censorship; at least 8 restrictive laws passed; with 9 out 10 citizens (89%) holding the view that the country is going in the wrong direction. The government received an overall poor score.

One would hardly expect that the report above seeks to describe a severely repressive situation in the biggest democracy in Africa. The eruption of the EndSars protest signalled the citizens' resolve to utilise all legitimate avenues to demand accountability from their government. The concluding remarks in the report by the Lagos State Judicial Panel of Inquiry emphasise the need for the protest. According to them:

The movement highlights the need for more young people to exercise their civil and political rights to speak out against injustice, irregularity in the systems of government and Reforms in the Police systems and a review of their emoluments to stem down this wave of corruption, illegal arrests and detention of the citizens by the police officers (2021: 309).

To provide more context to the EndSars protest, it is important to highlight how researchers have studied it over time.

## 2.4 The EndSars protest in literature

One of the first scholarly works on the EndSars protest focuses on assessing how the protest influenced Citizen Moral Panic (Usua & Agbo 2021). Their study argues that through the instrumentalisation of social media, Nigerian citizens became moral entrepreneurs during the EndSars protest. Moral entrepreneurs are citizens who raise the alarm about perceived deviant actions that go against the common moral values of society. The study indicates elements of public panic that were caused by the tensions of the protest and recommends that regulations be established to prevent reckless public alarms. The claim by these scholars that the EndSars protest "posted some threat to the security situation and development of the society" (Usua & Agbo 2021: 239) is a misrepresentation.

One can infer that the failure of these researchers to examine the character of the protest informs this misrepresentation. Investigations into the protest corroborate the popular awareness that hoodlums infiltrated the protest to enable its securitisation by the government. Hence, the protesters did not pose any security challenge to the state. Rather, it was the state's covert attempt to repress the protest that posed security situations in the country. This submission by Usua and Agbo (2021) only feeds the narrative from the political class and accuses the youths of instigating their own woes (Lawal & Ibrahim 2021: 26-27).

Rather than turn the narrative tides against the protesters, the degeneration of the protest calls for an inquiry into the modalities of protest policing in Nigeria. An empirical study by Etim et al (2022) titled "Protest policing strategy and human rights: A study of End SARS protests in Nigeria" reveals that the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) failed to discharge their duties during the protest. Acknowledging citizens' right to protest, the basic responsibility of the police is to ensure that protest takes place without disrupting public peace and order. Unfortunately, the police failed to follow the global best practices on protest

policing during the EndSars. The overall failure of the police was evident in the military crackdown on the protest at Lekki Toll Gate, where protesters were killed by unknown personnel (Etim et al. 2022: 230). In the authors' words:

> Defective protest policing strategy triggers violence, disrupts public order, facilitates the violation of basic rights, causes engenders resentments, and leads to injuries and loss of lives and properties. Evidence during the End SARS protests, as was in the Occupy Movement, shows ill-preparedness and inexperience by the police in protest management (Etim et al. 2022: 231).

One can infer that a contributing factor to the failure of the police to guard the protest hinges on the fact that the protest was sparked by police brutality, never minding that key aspects of the protesters' demands were targeted at improving police welfare. The poor protest policing, which ultimately led to the murder of protesters, informed the proposal by Ezeugwu et al. (2021) that Nigerians should rather adopt street theatre as an improvised advocacy tool to address their socio-political and cultural challenges. These researchers base their proposal on the argument that street theatre remains a veritable means of addressing issues without destroying lives and properties (Ezeugwu et al. 2021: 138). While the proposal of these researchers has its valid points, it fails to realise that street theatre has the potential to increase public awareness about issues, and that would only enhance the mobilisation of the public into a protest. For the public to abandon their right to protest would be to give up their role as citizens.

A common theme in the EndSars literature is a study of its effect on the Nigerian economy. Ochi and Mark (2021) conducted a survey which revealed that the protest had a devastating effect on the Nigerian economy. Given that the Nigerian economy was already plagued by the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused a recession in most economies globally, the protest, erupting within the same timeframe, hindered the smooth running of many businesses. Citing the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry, their study disclosed that Nigeria lost more than N700 billion within 12 days of the protest – signalling a loss of N58 billion daily. Their study further showed that the large concentration of protesters in Lagos affected the transport industry. For instance, the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system lost over N100 million within 6 days of the protest. There were losses of revenue, means of livelihood, properties, and ultimately, loss of lives.

Unfortunately, just like Usua & Agbo (2021) did, the claim by Ochi and Mark that these losses were "occasioned by activities of the EndSars protesters" (2021: 4) is only an unbalanced account. It cannot be overemphasised that to provide a balanced account of its impact, the protest needs to be assessed in the totality of its occurrence without limiting the scope to the activities of the protesters only. The EndSars protest was about the demonstrations by the citizens and a response by the government. The dynamics in the interactions between both forces offer the only route to a proper understanding of protest. For instance, while the demonstrations of the protesters hindered the smooth operations of the transportation industry, the loss of lives and properties was occasioned by the government's response to the protest (Lawal & Ibrahim 2021: 25).

In their article titled "Covid 19 Protest Movement and its aftermath effect on the Nigerian State", Abang et al. (2021) situate all the public menace that erupted during the protest as activities of hoodlums who later hijacked the protest. They argue this was possible because the EndSars protest lacked coordinated leadership. These researchers viewed the protest through the lens of the grievance and deprivation theories, thereby explaining how the protest erupted from the frustrations of Nigerian youths. They conceive of the EndSars protest as the Nigerian Spring – likening it to the Arab Spring – that gained inspiration from previous protests that called for the transition from military to civilian rule, claims for election mandates, and price hikes for petroleum products.

Another dominant focus of EndSars researchers is on the role of social media in contemporary protest mobilisations. In his article titled "Social media as a strategy for protest movements: A study of #EndSARS in Nigeria", Adedokun (2022) notes that social media enabled the mobilisation of EndSars protesters into one of the largest demonstrations in the history of Nigeria. Platforms such as X, Meta, and WhatsApp enabled protesters' framing and sustenance of common emotional dynamics, collective identities, symbolic artefacts, and mutual values. The study considers social media as the channel through which atrocities of the security agents and government officials were exposed to the wider public, as the mainstream media delved into censoring these atrocities, thereby allowing their consistent reoccurrence (Adedokun 2022: 448).

Ugoh (2021) provides a detailed study on the role of social media in the EndSars protest. The study emphasises how social media enabled an organic nature of the protest, which is, in turn, redefining protest planning strategies. It facilitated the prompt availability

of moral, human, and financial resources for the protest. Here, the emergent strategy is used to describe the protest. By emergent strategy, the author describes the unpremeditated nature of the protest, yet one that constantly evolved its patterns to cope with un/expected opportunities and challenges that the protest encountered (Ugoh 2021: 8).

That the protest lacked a recognisable leadership further proves its emergent nature. As analysed by Ugoh (2021), the excessiveness in the overall character of leadership in Nigeria, the antecedence of leadership compromise, as well as the history of the government's coercion and hijack of leaders of movements, necessitated the leader-less structure of the EndSars protest. This informs the author's argument that "social media provided an open system that facilitated transparency which was required for youth[s] to trust each other for protest action" (Ugoh 2021: 7-8). The author describes the overall situation thus:

> However, participants revealed that the protest positioning as a leaderless structure was an anticipatory tactic to the known government response to protest action (sic); it is conventional for the government to employ a divide and conquer strategy, whereby it summons the leaders by coercing, blackmailing, or offering them incentives. This has been evident in past youth-centric movements such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) […] (Ugoh 2021: 32).

The issue of trust among EndSars protesters, as raised by Ugoh (2021), corroborates with the findings in an empirical study by Erubami et al. (2021) on the generational dichotomies in public perception of social media coverage of the EndSars protest. The findings of the study show that while there were no significant generational differences in the exposure to and sources of social media news about the protest, significant differences existed in the perception of social media performance in the coverage of the protest, with the younger generation upholding more favourable perceptions that the older ones. This variance in perception provides more context to the demographic distribution of the protest population. Though no data clearly shows the distribution of the protest demography, the fact that young people dominated the protest goes beyond any debate.

Despite the leaderless nature of the protest, protesters were strategic in their approach. In their research, Ajibola and Odeyemi (2022) analyse a key strategy of protester-legislature engagement. Their study shows that at the early phase of the protest, protesters demonstrated

in front of both national and subnational legislative chambers and communicated their grievances to other state actors through members of the legislature, given the proximity of legislators to the people they represent. The study holds that at the climax of the protest, protesters targeted legislators with violence. This claim fails to acknowledge the dichotomy between the protesters and hoodlums who invaded the protest (Iwuoha & Aniche 2021: 17).

Abimbade et al. (2022) provide an exquisite analysis of the digital strategy adopted by EndSars protesters. These researchers contextualised this strategy along the public sphere idea of Habermas. The general idea of the analysis is the emergence of a new digital political culture of improved civic participation by young people who were previously marginalised. Young people who had previously been seen as powerless now consider themselves to possess powerful voices that can enforce change (Abimbade et al. 2022: 7). As these authors observed, "social media presents opportunities for youth to possess these kinds of connections that shape the political trajectory of a nation (Abimbade et al. 2022: 4).

As the protest revealed, young Nigeria voiced their governance concerns on social media and, after gaining momentum, mobilised into physical street demonstrations to express their demands to the government. The digital public sphere not only enabled their mobilisation but offered young Nigerians the space to build their own unique community based on their shared interests. Brought together under a common desire to end police brutality, the shared experiences of young Nigerians enhanced their resolve to demand government accountability while also showing concern for the needs of members of their community. A new identity was created, and new bonds were built and maintained beyond the protest (Abimbade et al. 2022: 7-8). Another significant feature of the protest was the adoption of common symbols that communicated social justice. Images of a clenched fist coloured like the Nigerian flag – green, white, and green – gained popular traction.

Symbols are critical components of social movements and protests. Agbo (2021) employed digital methods to investigate how images produced political effects during the EndSars protest. The study uncovers that the use of digital images enhanced the conviction of Nigerian youths to join the protest, as well as their belief in the transformation of their living conditions. The highlight of symbolic displays during the protest was during its crackdown by the government. Images of blood-stained Nigerian flag circulated widely across the internet with the inscription: 'On this day 20-10-20, the Nigerian flag was stained with the blood of the innocent protesters. The images aroused deep emotional sentiments

and sympathies across the globe. It was these images that transformed the public perception of the protesters into martyrs.  The inscriptions on the images "sounds like a historical record engraved in stone for future generations to meet" (Agbo 2021: 11). The quote below further describes the images:

> To bring out that sense of public history, a similar message is delivered in the form of billboard in the lower left image … they appear to have been created digitally. The lower right segment of the picture plane is filled with Nigerian map rendered in green colour and in front of it is a child crying with the mouth wide open and whose facial expression takes after the crying emoji on the centre of the picture. These are visual codes of a nation in a mournful state (Agbo 2021:11).

A policy series by the Youth and Accountability Governance Through Social Media (YAGSOM) titled *Beyond #Endsars: Effecting Positive Change in Governance in Nigeria* covers interesting themes on the protest. The study identifies the economic and governance exclusion of Nigerian youths that served as the undercurrent to the protest manifestation, while youth profiling and police brutality were just its immediate causes. The study equally highlights the government's response to the protest, as well as its lessons. The study seeks to advance the participation of young people in governance while also promoting the need for their protection, given that their worst form of victimhood is the stereotyping and criminal profiling by security agencies (Lawal & Ibrahim 2021: 9). The study concludes by stressing that the protest further exposed the failure of governance, as police brutality is only its subset. This view validates the findings of Udoms and Atakpa (2021).

Similarly, the African Heritage Institution published a working paper with the caption, *#EndSARS protest: Re-Thinking Nigerian Youth and Government Policies.* The publication x-rayed Nigerian policies on youth empowerment and development. The study shows that the government has failed in all aspects to create an enabling environment for youth-driven policies and programmes to thrive. Here, the EndSars protest is described as an invaluable action by the youths – one that should be recurrent - to assert their agency in governance. Unfortunately, the crackdown on the protest, as well as the worsening governance issues, continues to negatively impact the psyche of Nigerian youths (Okoye et al. 2021).

Iwuoha and Aniche (2021) have challenged the general expectation that the EndSars protest would open up the civic space for improved engagement with the government,

political reforms, and good governance. According to their findings, the EndSars protest rather provides an exploitable opportunity for increased state repression and brutality. The dominant argument in this study is the protest crackdown deepened the trust deficit between the populace and the government. While this submission holds its merit in the lack of citizens' trust towards the government, the protest nevertheless awakened youth interest in the governance of the state. Though the level of youth engagement is predominantly in the digital sphere – which is equally disrupting conventional political processes – no significant political transformation has occurred in the country. This depicts the difficult habitat that hinders and stifles the possibilities of good governance and democracy (Iwuoha & Aniche 2021: 17).

The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), one of the leading sources of real-time data on political violence and protest activities worldwide, published a report that captured the key timelines of the EndSars protest and its lessons. Their report stressed that despite the attempts by some politicians and supporters from northern Nigeria to frame the EndSars protest as a move to topple the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari, the protest transcended the historical and traditional geopolitical barriers in Nigerian politics and retained its national spread and objective (ACLED 2021: 4). This attempt was made on the basis that the EndSars protest started in the Christian-dominated southern part of the country, while the president at the time was from the Muslim-dominated Northern region. This North-South divide narrative had long crippled the possibility of having a united citizenship with a common demand.

The EndSars protest marked the first realisation of such a youth-led nationwide demand for government accountability since the emergence of the 4th republic in 1999. The government's propaganda easily repressed previous protest attempts. As ACLED captures it: "[t]he #EndSars movement primarily demonstrated freedom from the ethno-religious tensions that usually plague the framing of Nigeria's domestic security and political issues" (2021: 5). This corroborates with the submission that the protest attracted sympathies even in the areas where it did not hold (Lawal & Ibrahim 2021: 21).

A critical gendered perspective on the EndSars protest is what Nwabunnia (2021) provides in an article titled "#EndSARS movement in Nigeria: tensions and solidarities amongst protesters". Situating the research around debates on political homophobia and transnational feminist solidarities, the author posits that queer activists created a unique form

of solidarity that resulted in a very complex organising for justice. Without this, the author argues, prevailing narratives about the protest would have centred around the voices of heterosexuals.

While the Nigerian federal law states punishment by jail for homosexual activities, a new homophobic law that imposed 14 years in jail for gay relationships was signed by former President Goodluck Jonathan in 2014. While this move was widely criticised as a regress of the country's fragile democracy, the law was exploited by security agencies to harass and intimidate queer Nigerians. According to Nwabunnia (2021: 352-353), that did not faze the queer community, as queer activists risked their lives to join the protest with placards, signs, and tweets that publicly displayed their identity just to establish the connection between queerness and police violence. In the author's words:

> In many ways, the visible participation of queer men and women during the #EndSARS movement directly challenged notions of national belonging in Nigeria. By participating in the protest both on – and offline, they disrupted the heteronormative Nigerian in the community imagination. In disrupting this collective national imagination, queer organisers directly shaped public discourse about police brutality and pushed the movement to encompass the voices of all Nigerians. It is the reaction from the protesters to the presence of the queer Nigerians during the #EndSARS protests that we can tie to how homophobia has been deployed in Nigeria (Nwabunnia 2021: 356)

It cannot be contested that the capacity, global visibility, and support that the EndSars protest benefitted from was made possible by the diverse identity groups that framed it. The motivation for the protest anchored on the challenge of police brutality that most social groups were victims of. Hence, to tackle a common enemy, a new identity was forged – one that ignored all prior sentiments, stereotypes, and hindrances – to protest for collective freedom. Ignited by police brutality and faced with the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented human clustering, the EndSars protest still sailed to global prominence, just as the Black Lives Matter protest that erupted under similar circumstances in the same year.

## 2.4 Overview of Black Lives Matter Movement

To understand the BLM protests in depth, one must inquire beyond the spates of protests that erupted in May 2020 in the US following the murder of a Black American, George Floyd, by Derek Chauvin, a White Police Officer. From its inception, the US has been a highly racialised state with a protracted and deep-rooted history of black oppression, segregation, marginalisation, and extermination. Nevertheless, blacks have continued to adopt and adapt modes of resistance to their oppression, from the Emancipation against slavery and the Civil Rights Movement for political inclusion to the contemporary Black Lives Matter movement for human rights. Just like the EndSars protest noted above, police brutality equally ignited the BLM protests.

BLM became a recognised campaign in 2013 as three Black Americans, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tomenti created what they describe as "a Black-centered political will and movement building project called #BlackLivesMatter".[9] This move was motivated by the acquittal of George Zimmerman, who tragically murdered a 17-year-old Black American boy, Trayvon Martin, in Sandford, Florida, on 26 February 2012. From the hashtag, it is clear that the movement started and still functions largely as an online campaign.

As recorded on the BLM official website, the movement marked its first physical mobilisation in 2014 at Ferguson in solidarity with blacks in the community after the murder of Mike Brown by a police officer, Darren Wilson. Within 15 days, BLM organisers gathered over 600 people for the first BLM protest. Inspired by the success of its first outing, BLM garnered 18 new organisers who returned to develop BLM chapters in their local areas. The successful coordination of the network of BLM activities across different local areas led to the establishment of the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation (BLM GNF). This new infrastructure has been responsible for the global wave of BLM activities.

With its renewed mandate of affirming the humanity, agency, and resilience of Blacks across the globe, the Black Lives Matter Global Network is now famous as an ideological and political intervention. The movement places all previously marginalised groups – such as women, queer, transgender and others - in the Black liberation movement at its centre. The was designed to avoid replicating harmful practices of marginalisation.

---

[9] https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/

BLM has seven principal demands:

1. Convict and ban Trump from future political office.
2. Expel Republican members of Congress who attempted to overturn the election and incited a white supremacist attack.
3. Launch a full investigation into the ties between white supremacy and the Capitol Police, law enforcement, and the military.
4. Permanently ban Trump from all digital media platforms
5. Defund the police.
6. Do not let the coup be used as an excuse to crack down on our movement.
7. Pass the BREATHE Act.

BLMGNF has grown to become a very organised yet decentralised movement with over 40 chapters across globe. It is currently anchored on six pillars: policy, arts, healing justice, frontline organising, research and education, and culture. The movement has designed the following open resource toolkits: healing action, healing justice, conflict resolution, Trayvon taught me, and #TalkAbout Trayvon. In collaboration with the Movement for Black Lives, BLMGNF created and supported the launch of the BREATHE Act. This Act is a federal omnibus bill that calls for the divestment from the carceral system that is considered the root cause of police brutality against Blacks. Described as "our modern day civil rights bill" by the BLMGNF, the Act presents "a new vision of public safety that invests in our community, via education, housing, mental health resources, food safety, and the environment instead of utilizing the punishment paradigm" (BLMGNF 2021: 8).

The BREATH Act draws its coinage from "I can't breathe" exclamation by George Floyd as Derek Chauvin strangled him. It was his murder in May 2020 that sparked a renewed wave of BLM protests that gained traction globally. *The New York Times* reports that an estimated 15-20 million people participated in the BLM protests of 2020, thereby making it one of the largest protests in the history of the US (Buchanan et al. 2020).

The protest strategy adopted was local rather than national organising. A highly decentralised structure of leadership enhanced the efficiency of the protest and enabled its mobilisation in different parts of the globe. The impact generated during these protests opened a broader movement involving several organisations and activists under the common umbrella of Black Lives Matter. This protest displayed the full scale and impact of transnational protest activities, as significant BLM rallies were organised in Australia,

Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. In the US, despite the racial divide which affected the varied perceptions of the protests, a part of the street outside the White House was renamed the Black Lives Matter Plaza (Wu 2020). BLM transformed protest strategies in the US and around the globe. It was the first protest that successfully utilised the internet as a protest mobilising tool, thereby introducing the phenomenon of 'mediated mobilisation' (Roberts 2018)

## 2.5 Black Lives Matter in Literature

A compelling starting point is with the foundational question that is equally the title of Mumia Abu-Jamal's (2017) book: *Have Black Lives Ever Mattered*? This provocative, and at once, historically blunt piece positions BLM as an enduring struggle against the normalcy of black oppression in the United States. Abu-Jamal draws from the chattel slavery that positioned blacks in the Americas as subhuman, through the emancipation that left them economically dislodged, to the Civil Rights Movement, which depicted their political exclusion, and finally, the police brutality that re-enacts the low value of black lives in the US.

One would imagine that the existence of a pacesetting liberal constitution made provisions for equal citizenship. But as Abu-Jamal points out, "[t]he naked denial of constitutional rights for perhaps a century lasted until the Civil Rights and Black Liberation movements demanded change" (Abu-Jamal 2017: 6). The height of marginalisation in recent times was best exemplified through police brutality. As Abu-Jamal contends, "[t]he police in our community … couldn't possibly be there to see that we receive due process of law, for the reason that the police themselves deny us due process of law" (Abu-Jamal 2017: 8; Camp & Heatherton 2016; Cachelin 2023).

This recycling experience has only been met with changing patterns of resistance. The contemporary resistance by blacks -BLM – is spearheaded by black women: Patrisse Cullors, Opal Tometi, and Alicia Garza, further signifying the novelty of the movement as a total resistance against all forms of marginalisation. In the words of Abu-Jamal, "[t]hese determined sisters have both studied history and altered it and continue to do so today" (Abu-Jamal 2017: 2). A leading founder of BLMGNF, Patrisse Cullors, provides more depth to the stance of BLM as she notes:

When our political activism isn't rooted in a theory about transforming the world, it becomes narrow; when it is focused only on individual actors instead of larger systemic problems, it becomes short-sighted. We do have to deal with the current crisis in the short term. That's important. We have to have solutions for people's, and we have to allow people to decide what those solutions are. We also have to create a vision that's much bigger than the one we have right now (Patrisse Cullors cited in Ransby 2018: IV).

*Making All Black Lives Matter: Reimagining Freedom in the Twenty-First Century* by the historian Barbara Ransby (2018) provides an exposition of the dominant themes in BLM: the reassertion of a politicised black identity, the power and limits of new communication strategies (social media), intergenerational organising and youth leadership, black feminist influences, abolitionist practices and accountability, and class politics of the movement. According to Ransby, this thematic mix depicts the distinct forces in the movement that move in a coordinated direction of shared assumptions, values, and demands (Ransby 2018: 96).

The edited collection by Hinderliters and Peraza (2021) titled *More than Our Pain: Affect and Emotion in the Era of Black Lives Matter* provides multiple perspectives of how grief, joy, and rage framed a collecting indignation that stoked the BLM protests. "Black joy and love brought communities together when the weight of trauma, pain, and murder – historical and contemporary – was too much to bear" (Hinderliters & Peraza 2021: 2). This emotive mobilisation influenced the radical modes of BLM protests, as it sought to trigger action and not mere empathy.

As the book reveals, the emotive framing of BLM made it a human rights protest rather than a Civil Rights Movement that characterised black struggles in the 20th century. The key distinction provided in this book is worthy of note: While the Civil Rights Movement displayed more affect – fear, disgust and anger – in private than in public and hoped to influence righteous indignation in observers of their demonstrations, BLM rather unleashed its rage, through nonviolent direct actions, as a righteous response to the abuse of human rights (Hinderliters & Peraza 2021: 7-8). The makeup of the BLM demonstrated a significant shift from an attempt to appeal to the conscience of a nation to a demand for accountability.

Attempts to delegitimise the emotions embodied in BLM were repelled. As these authors note, organisers of BLM protest cultivated the emotional resources to mitigate the ability of "White emotions" to undermine the legitimate grievances and claims of social injury (Hinderliters & Peraza 2021: 3). In this collection, black rage is considered "a righteous force for change", while black joy serves as "a shield against oppression" (Hinderliters & Peraza 2021: 14). Rather than negate the capacity of this radical stance by blacks in the US, this study argues that this movement will inspire an equitable, just, and democratic US, given that *affect* is central to contemporary failures of US democratic values (Hinderliters & Peraza 2021: 12). The centrality of this emotional force has characterised literary and artistic works on BLM.

Music and folklore have proven instrumental in the framing of this protest architecture. It has long been established that music and other artistic expressions are powerful tools for reforms. Music has been an expressive and mobilising instrument for the fight against oppression since the years of Transatlantic Slavery. Contemporary Black activists still use it to raise awareness and mobilise people for political action. The edited collection by Orejuela and Shonekan (2018), *Black Lives Matter & Music: Protest, Intervention, Reflection* offers insights into how music has enhanced contemporary Black resistance in the US. Led by millennials, BLM does not seek sympathy. As engraved in the music and arts, BLM is rather framed to portray the movement as a show of pride and resistance against all forms of racial injustices, black oppression, and gender inequalities. Hence, the power of Black music is considered most effective when channelled towards political and civic activities (Orajuela 2018: 10).

Gurcan and Donduran (2021) provide a comprehensive analysis of the political and socioeconomic dynamics that informed the emergence of BLM and enabled its impact. They summarise these factors into three themes: political-economic, strategy, and framing. For the political-economic factor, these researchers point to the increase in ethno-racial inequalities, police brutality, and the economic crisis of 2008 that widened racial gaps. On strategy, adopting social media as a facilitating tool to organise the protest with a decentralised structure helped rally a large participation. Finally, for framing, these authors refer to the deployment of powerful slogans, symbols, appeal to public emotions, and modes of collective action through shared convictions. The height of BLM sprang under the Presidency of Donald Trump, who demonstrated observable behaviours that endorsed White superiority. Within this purview, these researchers analyse BLM to show how it marked a

"cognitive liberation from the White supremacist frameworks that have become unbearable for large segments of American society" (Gurcan & Donduran 2021: 161).

Daniel Turillo (2021) provides deep insights into the COVID-19 and bubbling political opportunities that enhanced the emergence and spread of BLM. The research points to the increased public awareness about the institutional disorder in the US that COVID-19 exposed. These gaps enabled BLM to mobilise and launch its large-scale protests. This study shows that during the pandemic, over 14 million Americans lost their jobs between February and May 2020 and that these COVID-19 effects disproportionately affected Black communities, thereby exposing protracted systematic issues. Tensions heightened between the police and black communities given their unbalanced enforcement of COVID-19 restrictions (Turillo 2021: 7). The lived experiences of Black during the pandemic motivated their belief in the need for a major change (Turillo 2021: 6). Their determination to force the change marked the resistance from previous ones.

Rather than adopting either a culturalist or structuralist approach to studying BLM, Gurcan and Donduran (2021) adopt a holistic approach to analysing the protest. Their approach considers both the social classes and state actors that influence protests, as well as the personal leadership, communication network, tactics and strategies that inform the organisational dynamics of protest. This approach acknowledges the multiplicity of factors that underlie protest mobilisations (Gurcan & Donduran 2021: 164).

BLM is categorised as a New Social Movement that launched the successful employment of social media to orchestrate protests with global impacts. Understanding its complexities and dynamics requires a critical view of social media's impact on the protest. In a fascinating study titled "What Kind of Movement is Black Lives Matter? The View from Twitter", Tillery (2019) examines 18,078 tweets produced by six Social Movement Organisations (SMOs) that are affiliated with BLM to ascertain if BLM encouraged contentious politics.

By examining the content of the messages tweeted by these organisations – to provide a historical and ideological context to the movement –the study's findings show that liberal right-based language framed the movement, as X was used for expressive communication. This provided the basis for the author's submission that the SMOs "tweeted more to urge their adherents to participate in the political system than they did urging them to pursue protest activities" (Tillery 2019: 5). The very demands of the protests do not point

to any ideological tension. As validated by this author, the communications of the SMOs only sought to mobilise their adherents and motivate them to participate in the extant political system rather than contentious politics. Tillery adds that "[t]hese tweets contain messages that demonstrate sadness and or outrage with police shootings and other hardships faced by African Americans in the United States" (2019: 14).

It cannot be overemphasised that despite the attempts to minimise or deny the legitimate concerns of BLM through the mainstream media, the resilient character of these protesters has changed the local and global perception of black power. "Black Lives Matter: Power, Perception, and Press" by Teresa Chen (2021) reveals that BLM forced the American populace to see clearly and acknowledge the machinations of police brutality towards black people. Though the media rather portrayed the protests as largely disruptive simply to deflect public attention from the main issue, protesters' use of social media opened the route to citizen journalism that gave global visibility to the protests. First-person testimonies broadcasted via social media orchestrated a massive shift in public opinion about the protest. The author notes:

> Built on years of activism demanding racial justice, Black Lives Matter shifted the paradigm of American discourse on institutional racism to a point where the imagined alternatives to the status quo are now seen not only as possibilities but occasionally as existential imperatives for a democratic society. Legislative proposals including the Breathe Act and campaigns … highlight the movement's impetus thus far. The durability and pace of change is yet to be fully seen, but the trend so far has been nothing short of inspiring (Chen 2021: 5).

Contributing to this body of knowledge, empirical research by Dunvin et al. (2021) studied large volumes of Google searches to measure public attention and discovered that BLM has triggered and sustained attention to anti-racial ideas and equally encouraged the use of concepts such as systematic racism, White supremacy, and mass incarceration. This development is considered a pathway to redress that never existed in the US prior to BLM (Woodly 2022: 161) Beyond the political reforms targeted by the protests, it succeeded in marking a cultural change in the US. As the study shows, long after the spates of protests, public attention continues to be drawn to BLM's concerns. Centring antiracist ideas on the

popular discourse in the US informs the submission of these authors that BLM has incited a significant socio-political change.

The wide-ranging focus of scholarly works on BLM depicts its revolutionary impact on American society. For instance, Chambers et al. (2021) describe the actions and experiences of Black College students in rural communities with White preponderance. The study recounts how black students who were members of the school band opted to kneel during the national anthem before a football game. The study reveals that these students were determined to demonstrate the BLM protests in their schools to raise awareness and demonstrate their resilience against black oppression.

The study shows that these students embarked on this protest at very stringent costs, such as the potential loss of their scholarship. Nevertheless, these students proceeded with their protest unfazed. They started off by creating a group chat through which they mobilised their actions. The protest action was to kneel during the national anthem without playing their instruments. Consequently, only the sounds from the instruments of their White colleagues were given voice and that created a gap in melody. As these authors note, this protest was "metaphorically demonstrating the value of Black voices and Black lives" (Chambers et al. 2021: 70).

The findings of Chamber et al. (2021) resonate with Helper and Jourbert (2021) study titled "Activism in the Boonies for Black Lives and Educational Change: A Critical Conversation with Youth Rural Activist Gem Amber Sun Helper". Their research holds that educational reforms have gained centre stage in BLM, given the high participation of young people in the protests across many learning institutions. That BLM brings to the fore all systematic and salient means of black exclusion and oppression in the US has made students clamour for ethnic studies curriculum, accountability for racialised bullying and violence in schools, hiring of black educators and counsellors, the removal of school police, and the abolishment of zero tolerance policies. Protesters in these rural schools were not simply demonstrating solidarity with BLM but were most emphatically calling on all members of their communities to antiracist actions (Walker 2021: 47).

With a similar focus on BLM and rural education, Nichols (2021) provides an autoethnographic study of three generations of Black women in Mississippi - reflecting, connecting, and analysing 20 years of their lived experiences in the school system. Findings from this study reveal that a nurturing and supporting network of educators enabled their

sustained success in the school setting. The author recounts that schooling in an institution that was structured around White supremacy required that they find alternative ways of achieving their educational goals. This support was obtained from the small community of blacks who had mobilised to help each other in what the author describes as a 'homeplace'- a place where black women have dignity and respect. The quote below gives a clearer picture of the situation:

> While recording memories at a school that I attended in Mississippi, I began to understand that the support and resources made available to me were more important [than] the formality of the educational setting. Being part of a nurturing community, engaging with others who truly believed and invested in me, and knowing that the only limits on my life were self-inflicted gave me the courage to live outside of the box. My insights and reflections further revealed that Grace, Morgan, and I have been able to successfully navigate segregated and integrated educational spaces because of the supportive *village* that helped guide us through our studies and because of the empowering movements of the respective eras during which we came of age. […] Additionally, we were self-advocates who worked within and across groups to develop skills and ideas that have been passed down throughout generations. Reflective of the Black Lives Matter movement's … principle of collective value, Morgan has worked with youth and community leaders to change the punitive treatment of students who have experienced trauma. This work focused on increasing the number of counsellors and decreasing the number of police officers in schools in the city of Memphis … (Nichols 2021: 10).

Woodly (2022) uses BLM as a case study to establish the democratic necessity of protests. Beyond the political and social claims that BLM has made on behalf of marginalised groups, its persistence promises a historical and uniquely transformative effect (Woodly 2022: 4). The study considers BLM as contributing significantly to awakening citizenship consciousness to their roles in governance. A significant impact of these protests is that they made the submerged components of the state visible and traceable to governing institutions (Woodly 2022: 168). Hence, there can be no denial of the systematic killing of blacks in the US through structural racism. According to the author, BLM has helped inspire

new political activism, developed a unique political philosophy, crafted new techniques for contestation, and envisioned new horizons of institutional change. This points to an uncommon belief in the protesters' ability to orchestrate social and political changes that will characterise the 21st century (Woodly 2022: 18).

Despite the glaring necessities for BLM, its wide-ranging participation involving diverse races, and its global relevance, Johanna Luttrell (2019) points to the need for deeper self-reflection about BLM within the White community. In a fascinating book titled *White People and Black Lives Matter: Ignorance, Empathy, and Justice*, Luttrell raises awareness to the agelong conditioning of Whiteness' feelings and responses to public, democratic social movements and discourse. Luttrell argues that Whiteness is a construct that is designed to undermine, dispel, and ignore black experiences in systems that favour Whiteness.

The author acknowledges that while some within the White community find it difficult to understand black struggles, such hindrance is only evident in the enclosure of White communities. Luttrell, being a White, further argues that the limitations of Whiteness in this discourse are borne out of its confidence about what it already knows; its assumed worldview, common sense, and set of truths. The author submits that only through an understanding of the White epistemology of black political movements and the way in which Whiteness manifest against liberatory movements, can a just engagement, belief, empathy and solidarity with BLM suffice (Luttrell 2019: 1). The high antipathy within the White community helps our understanding of their opposing voices to the BLM Kim and Lee (2021).

How the police, whose brutality served as the immediate trigger to the protest movement, responded to BLM is worth highlighting to further shed light on the racial barriers in the US. Shala Cachelin (2023) conducted an in-depth study on the police response to the protest. The study reveals that the police utilised tear gas and other lethal weapons to repress BLM protests between 2014 and 2020. The author argues that such a response by the police only re-enacted the Jim Crow legacies.

## 2.6 The missing link

Protest research has been framed through the analytic lens of scholars who view protest essentially as a response to certain causal factors without acknowledging the constructive patriotic disposition that motivates its manifestation. As shown in the literature

reviewed above, the concerns of protest researchers have been on the causal factors of protest, its operational mechanisms, and attendant effects on society. In his book published in 2009, *Theories of Political Protest and Social Movements: A Multidisciplinary Introduction, Critique, and Synthesis,* the renowned sociologist Karl-Dieter Opp provides what is arguably the most comprehensive anthology of protest theories. The book provides a synthesis of the theoretical perspectives that have attempted to explain why protests and social movements erupt, as well as their associated puzzles, such as why people choose to protest in the face of repression, among others.

After a succinct critique of all existing theories, by evaluating their explanatory power and empirical validity, Opp (2009) suggests modifications of the theories and demonstrates how they can all be integrated into a single theoretical framework called the structural-cognitive model, which he considers the most viable model for explaining micro variables of protest through its macro events (Opp 2009: 344). On the micro level, the author proposes an explanation of protest through the changes in its incentive and cognitive processes. At the macro level, such as demonstration, the focus should be on providing hypotheses that transform individual action into collective action. Opp (2009: 337) describes this as the "micro-to-macro transition".

What remains striking is that despite the comprehensive analysis of protest and social movement provided by Opp (2009), the concept of patriotism evades the literature completely. The easy assumption would be that his analysis of the micro factors of protest, which addresses incentives and cognition, should have encompassed patriotic disposition as an enabling impetus for the protesters. This is the obvious gap in protest research. The concept of patriotism continues to escape even the most lucid studies of protests that demonstrated the quest for improved governance and equal citizenship.

Without undermining the causal factors of protests, it is important to stress that viewing protest from a patriotic prism rather complements existing protest studies. It enriches our understanding of protests, with the potential of influencing future protest mobilisations to be transformative while simultaneously enabling governments to appreciate protests rather than repressing them. There appears to be a contentious relationship between the unflinching quest for self-preservation of the protesting citizens and regime preservation by governments. Therefore, the fundamental motivation for protest repression by the

50

government is the fear of losing political power and not necessarily disregarding protesters' demands.

What can easily be inferred from all the literature reviewed above is that *will* is the crux of protest manifestations. However, *will* does not emanate from a vacuum. In the context of this analysis, *will* is considered emergent from a patriotic consciousness. Nevertheless, one can again infer that the ambiguities associated with the very concepts of protest and patriotism – both its blind and constructive components - make their nexus difficult to establish. It can be argued that the 'politicisation' of the concept of patriotism and the failure to categorise protest as an essential feature of constructive patriotism by researchers (Ekup-Nse, 2021) accounts for the gap in protest analysis. Hence, it becomes imperative to assess the theoretical basis for constructive patriotism to offer a complementing analytic lens to protest scholarship.

## 2.6 Theoretical Framework

The Constitutional Patriotism theory (Habermas 1997) was adopted as the analytical tool for this research. This theory holds that citizens' commitment to the state should hinge on the shared values and norms of a liberal democratic constitution, above the unique forms of identities that they possess. Philosopher Karl Jasper is acknowledged as the originator of this theory (Muller 2007: 16). Nevertheless, Jurgen Habermas, who is of German heritage, popularised this theory in the English-speaking world. He has established himself as the most ardent advocate of constitutional patriotism. He argues that because of certain factors such as migration, symbolic unity, founded on collective identity, should outgrow primordial (nationalistic) identities (Habermas 1998: 6-7).

Despite the extant literature that delineates what this theory proposes, several criticisms have been raised against it: Jan- Werner Muller (2006) highlights a perceived German agenda toward the theory, as some critics claim it is a theory designed to address exclusive German problems (Muller 2007: 15); The value divide between the state and religion threatens the proper realisation of what this theory advocates for (Brenda 2014); Also, Yack's (1996) submission that unity within the state transcends absolute loyalty to democratic values, questions the efficacy of this theory.

However, Jan- Werner Muller's (2014) reaction to the above concerns offers improved clarity to the position of this theory. According to him, constitutional patriotism speaks to a set of commitments upheld by diverse people who are united under a sovereign state, without necessarily prescribing the system of governance such a state must adopt. Also, imbibing constitutional patriotism does not eliminate other forms of identity consciousness, such as nationalism. Rather, it moderates other identity consciousness into a complimentary peaceful coexistence, harmony, and progress of the multicultural state.

Given the above, this theory fits into this study because it advocates for collective interest above group and self-interest in a multicultural state such as Nigeria and the USA. As noted by Muller (2007), a key feature of constitutional patriotism is that it allows individuals to freely express their views or silently agree to the opinion of others through clear political debates. This is quintessential in poorly governed states where extreme nationalism is prevalent and race relations in discord. It cannot be overemphasised that such political settings are in urgent need of a constructive patriotic consciousness that will inform the citizens' engagements with the government, especially when utilising the instrument of protest.

**Chapter three**

**Assessing the theoretical Basis for Constructive Patriotism**

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter assesses the theoretical basis for constructive patriotism. It begins by attempting a conceptual delineation of protest. It goes further to clarify the distinctions between blind and constructive patriotism. This chapter concludes with an analysis of constitutional patriotism.

### 3.2 What is patriotism?

There are few concepts in social science studies with more undertones and overtones than patriotism, depending on the kind of user and the context of its usage. The most popular view of patriotism is that it is a form of attachment and love for one's country. This attachment connotes citizens' basic responsibility of protecting the sovereignty of their country. Hence, to be a citizen is to be patriotic because patriotism is "a form of social identity that is based on national membership" (Schatz 2018: 4). It is also seen as an "attachment by group members to their group and the land in which it resides" (Bar-Tal & Stuab 1997: 2). Nathanson (1993) holds that the following features best describe patriotism: A sense of affection for one's country, a sense of personal identification with the state, special concern for the wellbeing of the state, and willingness to sacrifice and promote the country's good. These points to the behaviours and attitudes expected of a patriotic citizen, given that patriotism anchors on both individual self-concept and social identity (Bar-Tal & Stuab 1997: 2).

However, the attitudes and behaviours highlighted above continue to raise serious contentions as individuals consistently seek to define patriotism in tandem with their political and ideological agendas (Spry & Hornsey 2007: 151). Researchers also define the concept in relation to the context of their research focus. For instance, research that is focused on analysing patriotism in a post-colonial state in Africa will differ in certain aspects from one that is focused on imperial nations like Italy, which emerged largely out of its internal evolution. In the post-colonial state, patriotism is researched as a goal of the nation, while in the imperial nations, it is rather examined to show its strengths and weaknesses.

The above is evident in the research by Negedu and Atabor (2015) when they studied nationalism in Nigeria to plead the case for patriotic citizenship. Their research conceptualised patriotism as "an emotional journey of loyalty, allegiance, impartial love and total obedience to one's country or one's chosen country other than one's country of birth, which bestows all the rights and privileges accorded to him/her by the constitution" (Negedu & Atabor 2015: 75). Given the nature of Nigeria as multi-national/religious entity, these researchers proposed a form of patriotism that is nationalistic and one that has to be attained through a deliberate education of citizens from early childhood (Negedu & Atabor 2015: 79). For these researchers, the concerns of patriotism should be nationalistic, because nationalism is more akin to geographical concerns, even though patriotism appeals to humanitarian feeling (Negedu & Atabor 2015: 76). However, the key motivation for the

appeal for a nationalistic patriotism in Nigeria is that the country is still struggling to develop a national identity (Emegha et al. 2019).

The nexus between patriotism and nationalism has continued to be a subject of debate among researchers. Backhouse (2017) argues that the connection between both social forces is religion. For Backhouse, Western nationalism and patriotism are primarily reworked religious constructs and points to Christian contours such as worship, divination, creation, eschatology, ecclesiology, and soteriology as spring points of patriotism (Backhouse 2017: 9). This informs the author's proposition that we can best observe nationalism and patriotism through the lens of theology, and not ethnicity, politics, geography, or law (Backhouse 2017: 16). Here, nationalism is conceptualised as a love for one's nation, while patriotism is viewed as love for one's country, with both deriving its power from the same sources and uses the same language which makes their synonyms to be conclusive (Backhouse 2017: 4).

The view of patriotism above stems from the symmetry in the most common behaviours of patriotic and religious loyalists. John Kleinig (2014) describes these loyalists as "frequently jingoistic, exclusionary, and even terroristic" (cited in Merry 2017: 5). Horvat adds:

> In public debates, especially on the left of the political spectrum, patriotism has become a customary suspect of reactionary politics, an epitome of exclusion and agent of stigmatization (of the other). Because it invokes ethnic identity as the principle of its politics, it is easily confused with nationalism (Horvat 2017: 5).

This view of patriotism only points to its perils. Unfortunately, these perils are not simply inherent in the nature of the concept but in the application of aspects of its connotations, especially as preferred by states. For the state, patriotism is bred and sustained through symbolic rituals to solidify unwavering loyalty. A premium example points to how patriotism is cultivated in the United States. Here, school children stand before the national flag, sing the national anthem, and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. This resonates with Russia's patriotism agenda in this 21st century: absolute adherence and support for the values and ideology of the state, and military service (Dauce *et al*. 2015).  In their critical evaluation of patriotism in Russia, Dauce et al. (2015: 4-6) discovered that Russia pursues a "catch-all nature of patriotism" with the objective of situating patriotism on the revival of Russia's national identity. As they caption it:

This policy has been conveyed by official institutions such as the educational system, the military, and the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as by the United Russia and pro-presidential youth movement such as *Nashi* and *Molodaya Gvardiya*. Patriotic symbols have emerged in public space – the tricolour flag, St. George's cinema, the most influential media outlets, have been significant in staging this revival of Russia's national identity. Reference to the fatherland is used as a means of mobilising a detached public around the state and giving renewed prestige to a country whose international status has been questioned (Dauce *et al*. 2015: 1).

Such patriotism cultivation processes indoctrinate and instil uncritical dispositions in citizens rather than rationalise patriotism. Its outcome, therefore, is nationalism rather than patriotism. Such an outcome eliminates the consciousness of statutory belongingness to the country – which is the criterion of patriotism -and focuses on the principle of origin (Horvat 2017). It equally lacks the needed objectiveness and inclusivity of the historiography that frames national consciousness towards justice (Merry 2017: 15).

It is important to stress that the challenge here is not in the teaching of patriotism in schools, but the kind of patriotism that is taught, and to what end. A lucid study by Altikulac and Yontar (2019: 123) recommends that patriotism, global citizenship, and nationalism should be taught at all levels of schooling using the democratic and constructive paradigm. The lack of this offers a solid foundation for critics of patriotism to predict its extinction in the evolving modern nation-state system and deepening transnationality occasioned by globalisation. Discussing "Patriotism and its Critics", Sardoc (2020) summarises the objections against patriotism into three: non-reflective (past); discriminatory, exclusive, assimilative, and homogenising (present); as well as deterministic (future).

No clear-cut prescriptions exist on what a patriot should or should not do. For scholars like MacIntyre (1984) the moral lens of each society determines what patriotic actions should be. MacIntyre views patriotism within moral prisms and analyses it to espouse virtue. This led to the submission that for patriotism to be considered virtuous, the beliefs and practices of the nation must be subjected to moral criticism. Bar-Tal and Stuab (1997) argues that patriotism needs to be broadened beyond the moral imperative. Costa (2020) also argues that MacIntyre's idea of patriotism is particularistic and therefore condones form of seriously unjust behaviours.

Reflecting on MacIntyre's idea of liberal moral theories as the base of an unbiased moral evaluation of the state, Fainos Mangena (2010) frames out two forms of patriotism that cannot be themed within moral domains: *mala fide* and *bona fide*. The first describes a form of patriotism where the selfish interest of a few abuses the rights of the majority within the nation. While the later explains a form of patriotism that critically and dispassionately evaluates the policies and practices of the state (Mangena 2010:44-46).

To save the concept from diminishing, researchers have offered delineations of the types of patriotism to demonstrate its theoretical value. For instance, the idea of 'Moderate Patriotism' was advanced to provide an alternative to the nationalist and xenophobic types of patriotism (Nathanson 2020). 'Cosmopolitan Patriotism' was equally advanced to expand the virtues of patriotism into nurturing the idea of civil liberties that are accessible to all, irrespective of origin, cultural background, and kind of migrant (Horvat 2017). 'Critical Patriotism' was introduced to emphasise the infusion of the passion for justice into patriotic virtues and the implementation of moral universalism (Merry 2020). 'Liberal Patriotism' has been conceptualised to recognise multicultural diversity and serve key ends such as maintaining stability, democratic deliberation, and, ultimately, social justice (Soutphommasane 2020). 'Constitutional Patriotism' has been analysed to depict a critical loyalty to a constitution above any other form of identity or ideology (Breda 2017).

What remains central to the different types of patriotism is eliciting one's attachment and feeling towards one's nation. What differs is the modes and manner that such attachment and feelings are expressed (Schatz 2018: 4). We, therefore, group the different modes of expression into two categories: Blind and Constructive.

### 3.3 Blind vs Constructive Patriotism

In their article "Patriotism: Its Scope and Meaning", Bar-Tal and Stuab (1997) offer a lucid analysis of the dichotomies and sources of blind and constructive patriotism. They define blind patriotism as an uncritical attachment and support to the nation or state even when its practices and policies violate human rights, marginalise, discriminate, and/or harm other groups. Constructive patriotism, in contrast, empowers citizens to oppose policies and practices that violate human rights, discriminate, or betray the fundamental interest of the country (Bar-Tal & Stuab 1997: 13-14). These authors identify a set of personal and social factors that influence the development of both forms of patriotism. For blind patriotism:

1. The early childhood learning of the differentiation between in-group and out-groups.

2. Shared culture

3. An overly strong 'authority orientation' in the group, and

4. Difficult life situations and conditions of stress and threat.

For constructive patriotism:

1. The nature of an individual's personal identity in connection with others

2. Self-awareness

3. Knowledge of one's own group and of processes that have a destructive potential, and

4. The development of prosocial values

Bar-Tal and Stuab (1997) further describe the attributes evident in both forms of patriotism. According to them, while both form of patriotism love the country, the blind patriot remains unwilling to criticise and accept criticism of their country. On the contrary, the constructive patriot supports the questioning and criticising of their country in order to bring positive change. While blind patriots are tied to militaristic nationalism, cultural purity, and perceptions of national vulnerability, constructive patriot is tied to empathy, inclusivity, human rights, multiculturalism, and justice (Schatz et al. 1999: 153).

Schatz et al. (1999) further elaborate on the dichotomy between blind and constructive patriotism within the context of nationalism. As noted in the previous section, some researchers describe patriotism wholistically as nationalism without concern for its multifaceted dimensions, while some adopt the concept of nationalism to imply blind patriotism (Davidov 2010). Here, blind patriotism is positively related to nationalism as it seeks, in an unquestioning and uncritical manner, the nation's superiority. Conversely, the constructive patriot is negatively related to nationalism, given the tendency to critically question and examine the activities on the nation (Schatz et al. 1999: 155; Backhouse 2017) in relation to the fundamental principles of human rights, freedom, and justice.

Using the analogy of the United States, the blind patriots believe that their country is characterised by equality and fairness and displays absolute symbolic allegiance to the state, while constructive patriots believe that their country possesses positive values as we all have negative attributes. This makes the constructive patriot more politically active than the blind patriot – also because the constructive patriot is positively associated with gathering political information and consequentially obtaining objective political knowledge that leads to political activism (Bar-Tal & Stuab 1997: 14; Schatz et al 1999:153). According to these

authors, constructive patriotism is both the future and desirable form of patriotism. In their own words:

> […] patriotism cannot exist separately from other human obligations. Patriotism derives from the sense of belonging to a nation and development of self-social identity. But in addition, members of a nation should also be committed to moral values that serve as safeguards against violations of basic human rights and thus assure that nations do not commit major offenses against humanity. Members of groups need to develop a feeling of obligation to stop such offenses when they occur. […] A patriot can be attached to country and nation without supporting particular politics (Bar-Tal & Stuab 1997: 17-18).

An empirical study of patriotism in the United States by Johnson (2017) offers a credible reference to the national framing of blind patriotism, which Johnson terms as hegemonic patriotism. Here, patriotism is framed to depict the White male Americans as exclusively responsible for the nation's greatness and none of its failures (Johnson 2017: 3). This model of patriotism has infused a corollary of colour-blindness and pseudo-meritocracy which discards the legitimate concerns of racism, systematic killing of blacks, and overall oppression and marginalisation of other minority groups as false or exaggerated. This prejudice is encoded in mainstream patriotism in the US to essentially oppose black identity (Johnson 2017: 4).

As a response to hegemonic patriotism in the United States, Black Americans have continued to develop alternative forms of patriotism, one that fits into the constructive domain. Here, Black Americans continue to criticise the State for Black oppression and systematic killing through the instrument of peaceful protests. Baldwin gives it a clearer picture when he averred, "I love America more than any other country in this world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticise her perpetually" (Baldwin 1984 cited in Johnson 2017: 4). For Du Bois, Black protests against their oppression against the injustice in the US is but a patriotic endeavour that seeks to benefit all true Americans. In his own words:

> The battle we wage is not for ourselves alone but for all true Americans. It is a fight for ideals, lest this, our common fatherland, false to its founding, become in truth, the land of the thief and the home of the slave, a byword

58

and hissing among the nations for its sounding pretensions and pitiful accomplishments (Du Bois 1906 cited in Johnson 2017: 5).

Critically questioning one's country does not imply less loyalty or attachment to the country. However, advocates of blind patriotism have labelled the constructive patriots as unpatriotic. An empirical study by Johnson (2017) shows that Black Americans are less patriotic that White Americans. But this is in the context of hegemonic patriotism, which minimises Black belongingness to the shared nation. The oppressed and oppressor view patriotism differently. Nevertheless, another empirical study by Schatz et al. (1999: 160) shows that the constructive patriot is equally as attached and loyal to their country as the blind patriot, with their difference only limited to the manner and process in which they relate with their nation (Schatz et al. 1999: 169).

The political setting of a country plays a role in the degree of constructive patriotism of its citizens. In a comparative study of patriotism in the US and Turkey, Altikulac and Yontar (2019) reveal that blind patriotism behaviours were higher among the Turkish participants than among their American counterparts. When their global citizenship attitudes were examined, participants from the US who exhibited high constructive patriotism scored higher (Altikulac & Yontar (2019: 122). This finding suggests that constructive patriotism is positively related to globalisation.

Findings evinced from the Cross-National survey conducted by Gal Ariely (2020) on how people view patriotism is that highly developed countries that are more open to globalisation, high-income equality, and less prone to threat or external terror manifested low pride for their nation. While citizens in countries with high-income inequality, low access to globalisation, and conflict-prone uphold high national pride. Another critical finding is that minorities in more exclusive countries view patriotism more negatively than minorities in inclusive countries. A critique of this research is that it fails to distinguish what type of patriotism the study investigated. However, the nature of the analysis shows clearly that the author was referring to nationalism, rather than patriotism. For instance, the author notes that the findings are in line with the diversionary theory of nationalism, which holds that nationalism is often fuelled to counteract the high rate of economic inequalities. According to the author:

"[n]ational sentiments enable citizens to form a sense of solidarity irrespective of the unequal conditions they may experience and discourage

them from challenging country institutions that benefit only the few. They thus tend to be promoted by political elites seeking to mask discriminatory governance" (Ariel 2020: 640)

Ariel (2020) fails to acknowledge the theoretical and methodological problems associated with studying patriotism. Addressing these complexities, Sagikyzy et al. (2014: 230) notes that "patriotism is complex multifaceted phenomenon that includes both sensual and rational, ordinary and ideological, acts of actions, various complexes of interpersonal and public relations and relationships".

In another study, Gal Ariely (2011) examined the effects of globalisation on the relationship between constructive patriotism, nationalism and xenophobic attitudes towards immigrants. Here, the author notes that both nationalism and constructive patriotism are two aspects of national identity that are located across different national contexts. Hence, the author argues that since both are attached to a national identity, that in itself impedes globalisation. However, the constructive patriot is positively related to globalisation than the nationalist (blind patriot). The blind patriot, therefore, resists globalisation because it seeks to blur the boundaries that national identity creates to distinguish between groups (Ariely 2011: 542).

Ariely's observation about the impact of national identity on constructive patriotism finds merits in the study of "Constructive Patriotism in Wartime" by Eyal Lewin (2013). Lewin studied the American invasion of Iraq and the Israeli war in Lebanon and discovered that constructive patriotism manifested differently in both democratic societies. Lewin categorised the distinctions into two types of constructive patriotism: political and moral. The study's findings evinced that there were more political constructive patriots who supported the wars than moral constructive patriots who condemned the aggression of their countries. This led the author to conclude that categorising constructive patriotism as being critical and questioning is not enough, as war has proved that constructive patriotism needs to embody a moral concern.

The criticism above does not seek to invalidate constructive patriotism but offers a dimension that should not be ignored in its theorising. While the observation of Ariely (2011) finds merits in some aspects of the submission of Lewin (2013), to suggest that an attachment to national identity in a globalising world should be discouraged is to assume that only globalisation can guarantee a universal moral rail to justice and human rights.

There is currently no substantial evidence that points to globalisation as a unifying force for identity scrimmage. It is only upheld as a moral compass towards attaining universal human rights. The fact that a few Americans and Israelis exhibited moral constructive patriotism suggests that it is possible to improve constructive patriotism within national boundaries, while applying it for global relevance.

To desire to attain globalisation without national boundaries and national identities is to assume that in a globalised world, patriotism would be irrelevant. By the way, what scholars have consistently described as globalisation is the high connectivity of humans and institutions. With the high spates of migrations and multiple identity fragmentations in the globalising world, national identity becomes relevant to allow for multilayer management of social conflicts. Globalisation is not without its own threats and is yet to serve as an independent governance architecture. Only nations/countries have succeeded in governing diversity so far. And that success is largely tied to a modicum of patriotism. The argument that national identity prevents the recognition of migrants has been addressed by Butera (2005), who posits that a country that is able to instil constructive patriotism in its citizens would inevitably solve the normative social conflicts caused by migration.

Though renowned for her anarchist political philosophy, Emma Goldman's trial by the United States as being unpatriotic for discouraging young people from drafting into the US military to fight in World War 1 provides a strong reference to the manifestation of constructive patriotism in wartime. Goldman's famous response to the Jury: "The kind of patriotism we represent is the kind of patriotism which loves America with open eyes" (Becker 2018: 18), can as well pass for the maxim of all constructive patriots.

Constructive patriots in the US often turn to their Independence Charter, which holds that "All [humans] are created equal" and that they are endowed - not by their government but - by their creator with certain unalienable rights such as the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The president emeritus of the Foundation for Economic Education (FEE), Lawrence Reed, anchored his version of patriotism upon this credo. Writing on "The True Meaning of Patriotism", Reed (2003) argues that patriotism does not mean blind adherence to the dictates of the government, nor is it limited to symbolic gestures such as voting, waving of flags, or mourning soldiers. Rather, the fundamental aspect of patriotism is to uphold the credo of the American Founding Charter (Reed 2003: 14-15). Reed explains further:

Freedom – understanding it, living it, teaching it, and supporting it, and supporting those who are educating others about its principles. That, my fellow Americans, is what patriotism should mean to each of us today (Reed 2003: 15)

The founders of the United States, such as Thomas Jefferson, long understood the price of freedom. This informed his celebrated assertion that when government no longer meets the needs of the people, it rests on the people to alter or abolish it and institute a new form of government. Similarly, even the framers of the American Constitution recognised protest as an essential of patriotism (Bunch et al. 1992: 5). The irony is that the government's preference for blind patriotism has rather stereotyped constructive patriotic activities such as protest.

It is clear that the shortcomings of patriotism, as witnessed across the globe, have necessitated its criticisms. Nevertheless, its shortcomings do not imply its irrelevance. As Macedo (2011) argues, a special attachment to one's country is not a global vice. Rather, Macedo (2011) recommends practical institutional reforms to address the manifest dangers of patriotism. Reforms such as:

greater protection for rights of political dissent and contestation, insulating the school curriculum for politicization and bringing more attention to the nation's shortcomings, and greatly expanding the role of international institutions and perspectives which furnish a salutary check on national self-preference (Macedo 2011: 1).

For Macedo (2011), a 'Just Patriotism' can only be realised when the above is considered, but how it can be realised is left open for more theorising. The foregoing analysis in this chapter already points to the kind of patriotism that the state favours: blind. This suggests that major changes in patriotism policies will hardly come by through the government's benevolence. Hence, it hinges on citizens to persuade these changes to occur. Education is still instrumental in this process. Teachers can take responsibility for raising constructive patriotism in the learners without necessarily waiting on a formal policy to do so. Margaret Becker, a US-based teacher, offers insights:

Inspired by Goldman, I believe that to be a patriot is to question one's country and seek the answers to those questions. Part of the way in which I enact this patriotism is through my teaching. That is, my students and I ask tough

62

questions about the past, present, and future of America, and we seek to answer them. In doing this inquiring, we are learning and striving to be patriotic. In fact, I see such patriotic learning and teaching to be the future of America (Becker 2018: 18).

Furthermore, the discourse on constructive patriotism, within its common notion of critical loyalty, appears to be a mere aspiration if it is not tied to national statutes such as a constitution. This claim is made on the basis that a constitution offers the framework upon which the political and moral virtues of constructive patriotism can be legalised. Whether such a statute would be adhered to and enforced by the government is a different debate. But its mere existence offers a reference and a pathway for citizens to hold their governments to account. This then call for some explanations of constitutional patriotism.

### 3.1 On Constitutional patriotism

The central idea of constitutional patriotism is that citizens need to anchor their commitment to the State on shared values and norms of a constitution above any other personal or group identity. While the philosopher Karl Jasper is accredited to propound this theory (Muller 2007: 16), Jurgen Habermas (1997) stands as its lead advocate. Delineating the theory further, Habermas (1998: 6-7) explains that increasing migration and fragmentation of identities requires that citizens outgrow nationalistic identities and embrace a shared constitution. The allegiance to the supremacy of the Constitution is the crux of this theory, as it allows citizens to freely engage in political debates and express their views without reprimand (Muller 2007).

Vito Breda (2017: 4) explains the theory as a deliberative democracy that suggests a rational explanation for citizens' communal endeavour. This draws from Muller (2008: 85) caption of this theory as a "collective learning process". Breda (2017: 1) adds that constructive patriotism offers a persuasive justification for a democratic constitutional system as it enables diverse people to be bonded into a shared constitutional document.

Several criticisms have been raised against this theory: From a perceived German agenda (Muller 2006; Muller 2007) to its inability to synchronise the divide between state and religion (Brenda 2014). Sagikyzy et al. (2014: 226) adds that the weakness of constitutional patriotism is the identification problem. Muller (2014) responds to these criticisms by

explaining that imbibing constitutional patriotism does not erase other forms of identities; it rather moderates their peaceful coexistence in a shared political space. Muller adds the theory does not prescribe any political system, as individual nations are free to apply its principles to their preferred governance system.

Andrew Vincent (2017) offers a more contemporary criticism of constitutional patriotism in an article titled "Patriotism and Human Rights". The thesis of this study is that patriotism is incompatible with human rights either on moral or legal grounds. Hence, one is either a patriot or believes in human rights (Vincent 2017: 3). The author premised this argument on the claim that constitutional patriotism lacks a deeper understanding of the very nature of the state and the complexities of politics, especially as patriotism is always "politically defined" (Vincent 2017: 7). Vincent explains that:

> If a particular state exists, there will inevitably be other states. there is no universal order, only a pluriverse of antagonisms. The state, by the logic of the case, cannot be universal. Politics cannot embrace humanity. It follows that there could be no politics of humanity, since humanity would have *no* enemy (Vincent 2017: 5).

For Vincent (2017), pursuing universal human rights means an end to both states and politics. It adds that despite Habermas's claim that constitutional patriotism embodies universalistic principles of democracy and liberty, adherence to such still requires citizen-state solidarity (Vincent 2017: 7). Here, adherence to the universal human rights principles becomes impossible because "a constitution is focused on an association of equal citizens" (Vincent 2017: 10). Vincent argues that in such instances, citizens only respect state law, which is recognised as right (Vincent 2017: 8).

Vincent accuses Habermas of building a theory on an idealised and abstract constitution and adds that existing constitutions contain components that do not correspond with the notion of universal human rights This was in particular reference to the diverse rules on citizenship and refugee status (Vincent 2017: 9). This resonates with the claim that constructive patriotism "is seldom described as supporting democratic or constitutional principles of a specific country" (Ariely 2011: 541). Vincent's criticism of constitutional patriotism is based on the delineation of patriotism as loyalty to the state, which presents "a discrete particularist understanding of morality, as linked intimately to communal group",

which results in "an implicit tension with the universalist understanding of human rights" (Vincent 2017: 6). Here, Vincent views patriotism from its blind dimension.

While Vincent's argument holds some merit, a fundamental flaw can be deciphered in it: It presumes that what is today framed as universal human rights is a natural order rather than a human and social construct, just as the state and politics. Every human construct fits within a context, including universal human rights. To equally submit that loyalty to a state is antithetical to the universal principles of human rights is to ignore that these very principles received their universal legitimacy through the cooperation of states. it is important to stress that states reflect human settings, and they are not physical bifurcates. This suggests that if citizens can respect the principles of human rights in their country, they have the capacity to do the same at a global level.

Vincent's argument resonates with the ambitions of the proletarian idea of international patriotism. The Marxist's *a*national view that 'workers have no country' assumed that the proletarian internationalism would eclipse national patriotism. The goal of this movement was to replace national identity – which they considered a bourgeois ideology – with a solidarity form of identity. The unfolding events that followed the peak of these agitations prove the triumph of national patriotism (Gomberg 2020: 586). As Gomberg points out, Marxist progenitors simply envisioned things based on the circumstances of their era. The experience of Marxism-in-power in the Soviet Union, China, Vietnam and many other places creates a national consciousness to restore capitalist social relationships (Gomberg 2020: 592).

It then follows that if loyalty to the state points to a group loyalty of Us-vs-Them, even the universal human rights principles create a similar grouping with more severe complexities. For instance, after World War 11, Germany was charged with committing crimes *against* human rights. Yet, the leading power in this trial and a supposed beacon of human rights, the United States, has committed multiple crimes *for* human rights. The ambivalence enshrined in the universal principles of human rights limits its capacity to engender a cosmopolitan patriotism.

Habermas's idea of a 'supranational democratic experiment', which situates the European Union as its litmus test, demonstrates that if larger political entities can be universal, even smaller political entities can do the same (Honohan 2008: 425). Muller (2007: 127) rejects the idea of defining sovereignty in the context of friends and enemies

and points to the relative success of the EU as significant evidence of an alternative way of viewing the world. Honohan further explains that constitutional patriotism is different in certain respects at the supra-state level, as it is less concerned with protecting democracy but rather focuses on moderating the excesses of sovereignty and "establishing a politics of compromise, civilised confrontation and mutual learning (Honohan 2008: 425).

# Chapter 4

## Presentation of Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to analyse protest through the prism of constructive patriotism, with a focus on the EndSars protest in Nigeria and the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in the United States. The following research objectives guided the study: to determine if constitutional patriotism can be used as a theoretical basis for explaining constructive patriotism, analyse two nationwide protests (EndSars and BLM) within the context of constructive patriotism – to determine what qualifies a protest to be categorised as a constructive patriotic activity, and finally examine the possible implications of categorising protest as an activity of constructive patriotism. Research questions were formulated in relation to this research objectives, with data drawn from both primary and secondary sources.

### 4.2 Constitutional Patriotism as a theoretical basis for explaining Constructive Patriotism

Data shows that the key principle of constitutional patriotism, which is the critical loyalty to the shared values and norms of a liberal constitution, undergirds constructive patriotism (Muller 2007). What constitutional patriotism seeks to achieve is to enhance justice within the state while ensuring that the state equally pursues justice at the international level. Constitutional patriotism provides a legal framework for the constructive patriot; it places a statutory demand for citizens to be constructive patriots. It, therefore, goes that a constructive patriot upholds the supremacy of the Constitution above all other sentiments.

It is important to highlight the four pillars of constructive patriotism as provided by Bar-Tal and Stuab (1997: 13-14) and weigh them against the principles of constitutional patriotism: the nature of an individual's personal identity in connection with others, self-awareness, knowledge of one's own group and of processes that have destructive potential, and the development of prosocial values. What informed the design of these pillars is the reality of strife among citizens across various countries. Countries have become largely plural with increasing fragmentation of identities. The erstwhile notion of nationalism, upon which even the most liberal nations were built, no longer suits the evolving nature of states across the globe.

Globalisation, on the other hand, possesses new realities that require new forms of national attachments. Hinged on the principles of universal human rights, migration, war, and international relations are taking cosmopolitan shapes. With increased human and institutional interactions, a constitutional patriotism framework offers to moderate contentious sovereignty through the politics of compromise and mutual learning (Honohan 2008: 425).

As discussed in the previous chapter, globalisation and the universality of human rights does not imply national dissolution. However, the concerns of irreconcilable attachment to either the state or the globe, as raised by Vincent (2017), have been addressed through an analysis of the desirable form of constructive patriotism. It is important to stress here that Vincent's criticism of constitutional patriotism makes it necessary to establish a clear nexus between constructive patriotism and constitutional patriotism.

The findings from the study of both the EndSars and BLM protests show that protesters were motivated by the desire to eliminate marginalisation, discrimination, and all other forms of injustice that plague their country. Worthy of note is that in both spates of protests, protesters anchored their demands on the provisions of the constitution. The desire for constitutional governance necessitated their agitations. As to whether these constitutions embody the principles of constitutional patriotism is a different subject matter. However, it is important to note that constructive patriotism requires that citizens interrogate the constitutions and ensure that it embodies the principles enshrined in the theory of constitutional patriotism. In simple terms, such a constitution must be framed to engender internal cooperation between citizens and migrants, as well as the international pursuit of justice by the state.

There can be no denying that the aspirations of constitutional patriotism are easily obtainable. Subjecting them to philosophical scrutiny would inevitably raise more debates. For instance, what does justice mean? How do various groups within the state view human rights? Does the nature of the international system that consistently displays power dynamics and self-interest encourage states, particularly in the Global South, to pursue constitutional patriotism?

The questions above will require a study more ambitious than what this scope covers. Yet, a proper contextualising, constitutional patriotism does not offer itself as a finished article but a proposal necessary for consistent interrogation for mutual learning. Its validity lies in the unfolding events such as the EndSars protest and BLM. For two contemporary nationwide protests with a wide global reach to anchor their key demand on constitutional governance suggest to us that citizens of varied sub-identity groups can uphold common norms and values enshrined in a democratic constitution. Some unique features exist between these spates of protest: First, both protests erupted in the biggest democracies in their respective regions. For BLM, it erupted in the US, which is upheld as an icon of liberal democracy and a global advocate for human rights and justice. Secondly, both protests were primarily inspired by police brutality, which demonstrates the worst form of intra-national injustice. Thirdly, both protests included all marginalised groups such as women, LGBTQ+, youths, and more.

Before establishing in the next section whether such protests qualify to be categorised as activities of constructive patriotism, it is important to state that the theory of constitutional patriotism provides the framework for assessing both protests. The theory allows us to weigh the protesters' demands on the scale of the collective interest -which is the constitution - rather than dismiss its essence for criticisms that only seek to protect group interest. Furthermore, an assessment of the protests through the lens of constitutional patriotism will not only reveal the national relevance of the protests, but will show how the governments' responses to both protests fall short of this understanding. This now informs one of our key arguments that governments that violate their own constitutions are most likely to repress any protest that demands constitutional governance.

Finally, findings from studies on constitutional patriotism and constructive patriotism evince that both share similar aspirations and uphold similar principles. Constitutional patriotism researchers have succeeded in framing it as a theory, while

constructive patriotism researchers have analysed it as a consciousness. The theory (constitutional patriotism), therefore, allows us to examine manifestations of the consciousness (constructive patriotism) such as protest.

### 4.3 EndSars and BLM as Constructive Patriotism

Evidence from the literature supports the categorisation of EndSars and BLM as protests in constructive patriotism. The demands of the protesters, their motivation to protest, and the very character of the protests provided sufficient evidence for the above claim. First, let us analyse their demands. Beginning with their EndSars:

1. Immediate release of all arrested protesters
2. Justice for all deceased victims of police brutality and appropriate compensation for their families
3. Setting up an independent body to oversee the investigation and prosecution of all reports of police misconduct (within ten days)
4. In line with the new Police Act, psychological evaluation and retraining (to be confirmed by an independent body) of all disbanded SARS officers before they can be redeployed.
5. Increase police remuneration so that they are adequately compensated for protecting the lives and property of citizens.

Prior to the EndSars protest, police brutality was prevalent in the country. Studies and official reports have shown that Nigerians, especially youths, were arrested illegally, tortured, killed without legal proceedings, and unduly detained (Lawan & Ibrahim 2021; Global Rights 2023). That menace instigated the EndSars movement on X in 2017. It later snowballed into a full nationwide protest in October 2020. The first three demands of the protesters were to secure the freedom of Nigerians unduly detained by the police and obtain justice for the ones abused and killed. These demands point to the protesters' quest for justice for fellow citizens with whom most of the protesters had no personal or extended connections. Their shared identity as Nigerians served as the motivating force for these demands. This resonates with the principles of constitutional patriotism which advocates that citizens should uphold, as their highest identity, the shared norms and values of their constitution. The EndSars protest, therefore, demonstrated, in practical terms, the attributes of constructive patriotism.

The most striking aspect of the EndSars protest is reflected in their demands 4 and 5. Here, the protesters were demanding the improvement of the police welfare to enable them to discharge their duties as stipulated in the constitution. It still sounds ironic for protesters to demand the welfare of their oppressors. The very trigger for the protest was police brutality. Yet, the protesters examined the possible causes of such brutality and included its solution as part of their demands to the government. This was a unique gesture that perfectly demonstrates what is required of constructive patriotism. The goal was not revenge, but to repair. The protesters were not self-seeking but seeking the well-being of the entire nation through improved police services.

Another important point about the protest is that it had a national outlook. Its membership spread across all parts of the country and across all ethnoreligious divides (ACLED 2021: 5). The protest attracted sympathy even where the protest marches did not take place (Lawal & Ibrahim 2021: 21), as marginalised communities as the LGBTQ+ were key participants in the protest (Nwabunnia 2021). This in itself was an unprecedented feat in the nation's history. Nigeria is marred with deep-rooted ethnoreligious divisions and marginalisation of all kinds. These issues are evident in its poor governance and apprehensive political processes. That notwithstanding, the EndSars protest offered the first-ever platform for Nigerians – mostly youths – to converge on the convictions of a common national identity and the determination to contribute toward the nation's wellbeing. Here is a fundamental gesture of constructive patriotism.

The protesters equally embodied the symbolic attributes of patriotism, such as waving the Nigerian flag to express their demand for social justice as enshrined in the Nigerian constitution (Abimbade et al. 2022: 7-8; Agbo 2021). This finding validates the postulation of constructive patriotism researchers that one can demonstrate loyalty and attachment while simultaneously questioning the state.

Despite the difficult governance habitat in Nigeria, EndSars protesters were determined to risk their lives to protest. Unlike blind patriots who lack the capacity to question their state, these protesters considered it their fundamental responsibility to contribute towards changing the governance landscape in their country. According to Iwuoha and Aniche (2021: 17), this demonstrated their awakening of young Nigerians to political processes (: 17). Similarly, this fits into the description of a constructive patriot. To be a citizen is to fulfil certain roles and obligations. While the focus has greatly been on normative practices

70

of tax payment, military service (when the need arises), and obedience to the law, among others, little attention is paid to the most fundamental demand on citizenship, which is active participation in the political processes. This is an essential requirement of constructive patriotism which the EndSars protesters met.

Finally, the report by the Lagos State Judicial Panel of Inquiry (2020: 297-298) shows that the protesters engaged in a well-organised and peaceful protest. The report also states that the protesters maintained cordial relationships with the securities agencies and that the protest did not in any way threaten the territorial integrity of the Nigerian State. Yet, as the report also affirms, some of the protesters were killed and injured by the military. The infamous attack on the protesters by the Nigerian military marked the height of protest repression in the nation's history. As the report states, protesters were shot at even when they consistently waved the Nigerian flag and sang the National Anthem as a demonstration of their allegiance to the nation. That gesture was to communicate that their protest was intended for the good of the nation. However, the military's actions depict the government's view of the protest as a looming revolution that sought regime change. Here, we argue that the protesters lost their lives in service to their nation. But since the government is responsible for celebrating national heroes, it cannot afford to celebrate the heroes that it destroyed. Unlike the soldiers who give up their lives to protect their national territory, EndSars protesters gave up their lives to protect their national constitution.

### On BLM:

Unlike the EndSars protest, BLM had seven key demands that frame the entire movement.

1. Convict and ban Trump from future political office.
2. Expel Republican members of Congress who attempted to overturn the election and incited a white supremacist attack.
3. Launch a full investigation into the ties between white supremacy and the Capitol Police, law enforcement, and the military.
4. Permanently ban Trump from all digital media platforms
5. Defund the police.
6. Do not let the coup be used as an excuse to crack down on our movement.
7. Pass the BREATHE Act.

The US government is historically notorious for its treatment of Black Americans who have continued to plead the case for their humanity and citizenship in the country. From the era of chattel slavery, Blacks were conditioned as sub-humans. The era of emancipation made them economic dependants who did not qualify for certain citizenship rights, such as to participate in the political process of the nation. The response of Black Americans through the Civil Rights Movement opened a window of political participation. All eras of Black oppression and marginalisation have been met with Black resistance. Unfortunately, as the resistance persists, their oppression takes a new form. Of contemporary relevance is the institutionalised systematic killing of Blacks through the Police. Unlike any resistance ever witnessed before, the finding of this study shows BLM manifested an uncommon constructive patriotism.

First, the protest anchored on the fundamental principles of the American Constitution. Protesters manifested great belief in the American Charter, which holds as a truth self-evident that all humans are created equal and endowed with certain unalienable rights, such as the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Interpretations of this Charter that excludes Black Americans are only motivated by nationalist blind patriotism. BLM challenges such a notion with a persuasive protest to enhance equal citizenship.

Importantly, Women founded this movement that involved massive participation by members of other marginalised groups, which serves as a strong statement that the protest was against all forms of discrimination and marginalisation in the country. As captured on BLMGNF's official website, the deliberate attempt to avoid replicating harmful practices of marginalisation motivates the movement to place all previously marginalised groups – such as women, queer, transgender and others - in the centre. Clearly inspired by the killing of Blacks, BLM transcended its immediate trigger to encompass the needs of other segments of the American population to demand justice for all.

BLM has brought about significant social and political changes in the US. According to Woodly (2022: 18), it has helped inspire new political activism, developed a unique political philosophy, crafted new techniques for contestation, and envisioned new horizons of institutional change. This points to an uncommon belief in the protesters' ability to orchestrate social and political changes that will characterise the 21st century. Findings also show that the protesters were not demanding for regime change or a new form of government. They were rather focused on improving the existing democracy in the US. This

positions BLM as a protest for "real democracy" Ortiz at al. (2022: 3). By real democracy Ortiz et al. speaks to a democratic governance where the principles of equality, fairness, justice, and human rights are applicable to all citizens. Within this context, constructive patriotism can be said to advocate for 'real democracy'.

BLM protesters framed their protest for national repair and not damage. Findings from Tillery (2019: 5) shows that protesters tweeted more to urge their adherents to participate in the political system than they did urging them to pursue protest activities". Hence, BLM protesters framed their language to be liberal and right-wing based. This demonstrates protesters self-expressive values and belief in democratic processes (Dalton & Van Sickle 2005:16). The analysis of "Critical Patriotism" by Merry (2017) validates BLM as a constructive patriotism.

Beyond the political reforms targeted by the protests, it succeeded in marking a cultural change in the US. As the study shows, long after the spates of protests, public attention continues to be drawn to BLM's concerns. Centring antiracist ideas on the popular discourse in the US informs the submission of these authors that BLM has incited a significant socio-political change (Dunvin et al. 2021). BLM, therefore, validates the view that protest is not a negative inference on democratic governance but a positive recourse to it. Aluko (2023) explains that such rights and privileges accrued to the people to challenge the state help to strengthen the institution of the state, create proper checks and balances, promote stability and the corporation of members of the community over a just course".

Just like EndSars protesters, BLM protesters equally displayed a unique expression towards the national symbols such as the flag and anthem. Most sportspeople and college students who participated in the protest rather knelt towards the flag when the national anthem was sung. This was against the normative standing practice as a sign of respect and reverence (Chambers et al. 2021. A key feature of symbolic patriotism. Though much criticism was raised against such a gesture, with the mainstream media reporting it widely as unpatriotic behaviour, these protesters rather knelt by way of appeal to the flag to attain justice. It can equally be inferred that they knelt to show that a single flag cannot be shared by an oppressed and the oppressor. The flag symbolises unity and equal citizenship. Here were BLM protesters questioning the rationale behind the adoration of national symbols above the lives of citizens. Ikuenobe (2020: 18) argues that the dissent of the US sports people during BLM represents the best support that citizens can give to a nation that upholds

liberal democratic values of freedom, equality, human rights, and justice. The protest transcended symbolic patriotism to demonstrate constructive patriotism.

Findings from this study show that governments only propagate blind patriotism that anchors on national symbols and defence services but does not uphold the same reverence. A good example can be seen in the case of Alton Sterling, a thirty-seven-year-old Black American, whom two White police officers brutally killed on the midnight of America's Independence anniversary on 4 July 2016. Johnson (2017: 1) remarked that Sterling "died wearing a patriotic red polo short". To put it differently, Sterling was killed by individuals who wore the police uniform, even when he wore the national uniform. The Lagos Toll Gate massacre of EndSars protesters who were waving the Nigerian flag and singing the national anthem are classic examples of the ephemeral nature of symbolic patriotism.

Finally, the global impact of BLM signified universal solidarity with the demand for an end to the systemic killing of Blacks and the overall marginalisation of any group in the US. This solidarity draws from the universal principles of human rights. Therefore, BLM best illustrates the capacity of constructive patriotism to retain national identity while demanding universal justice and human rights.

In summary, analysing the character, participation, demands, motivations, and goals of the EndSars and BLM protests, the following qualifies them to be categorised as constructive patriotism:

1. The character of both protests was peaceful yet persuasive.
2. Their participants cut across all sections and identity groups within the country.
3. Their demands encompassed equal citizenship, fairness, justice, and human rights.
4. Their motivations were drawn from their national constitutions.
5. Their goals were geared towards improving the governance of their countries while contributing towards enhancing the universal principles of human rights.

**4.4 Implications of categorising EndSars and BLM as constructive patriotism**

This study identified four key implications of categorising EndSars and BLM as constructive patriotism. The first is that it strengthens and enhances the attainment of equal citizenship. While many researchers have examined both spates of protests from different purviews, their constructive patriotism side has been lacking. Therefore, analysing both protests within this prism opens up a new understanding of the protest by the wider public.

It enables the wider public to view both protests as essential activities aimed at strengthening the status of a citizen and enhancing equality. Most social crises are rooted in inequality, and the citizen's responsibility is to militate against such inequalities by utilising the instrument of protest. But such protest has to follow the principles of constructive patriotism. As noted by Ikuenobe (2020: 17), "citizenship is said to involve a special duty of [constructive] patriotism".

The second implication is that it improves awareness of constitutional and inclusive governance. Evidence from both spates of protests points to the demand for constitutional governance. This demonstrates a citizens-led approach to challenging and altering the nation's political landscape from the bottom-up (Hall 2011). In the context of both democracies, categorising both protests as constructive patriotism is to draw public consciousness to the shared values and norms in their constitutions. Wouters and Walgrave (2017: 362) notes that "studying the persuasiveness of protest signals is of particular substantive interest, as it can increase our understanding of the conditions under which a democracy can be more inclusive (or at least pluralistic)". Heaney (2020: 11) supports this view by stating that "the robust use of protest is a sign of a healthy democracy. It reflects a vibrant civil society, shows that freedom of expression cannot be suppressed by pseudo authoritarian leaders, and reveals people embracing their power as citizens". The report by the Lagos State Judicial Panel of Inquiry (2021: 309) concludes with a call for more young Nigerians to exercise their civil and political rights by speaking against injustice and government irregularities.

The third implication of categorising EndSars and BLM is that it can help to transform global protests into constructive patriotism. The increasing spates of protests across the globe, which led to its description as "a nearly ubiquitous part of contemporary politics" (Norris, 2002 cited in Dalton & Van 2005: 1), requires that protest studies offer paradigms to undergird protest activities. While great thoughts have been given to non-violent protest – so much that the concept of protest is now popularly understood in such context – the study of EndSars and BLM proves the need for a transformative protest paradigm, which constructive patriotism offers. To simply have a non-violent character does not qualify a protest to be transformative.[10]  Hence, protest framing can draw from the categorisation of

---

[10] This idea was shared with me by Dr. Endknowledge Mandinkwaza during a casual conversation about my research focus. The discussion took place at his private residence on 1 December 2023.

EndSars and BLM discussed in the previous section to be deliberate about its transformational objective.

The final implication is the transformation of the government's perceptions of protests. Studies have shown that governments repress protests based on their perception of it. Both EndSars and BLM were met with government repression at varying degrees, with the more brutal one by the Nigerian state. The general perception of the protest was that it sought regime change. Hence, since governments are always poised to secure their preservation, the instrument of force is easily unleashed to dispel whatever it considers dissent. Such response has a negative effect on democracy, undermines constitutionalism, undermines development, deepens and widens inequalities, can result to anarchy (Iwuoha & Anichie 2021: 2021), most consequentially, erode constructive patriotism in citizens (Ekup-Nse 2021). To avoid further governance crisis, government need to view protest through the lens of constructive patriotism for a better appreciation of its transformational capacity. One of the earliest constructive patriots in the US, Fredrick Douglas (1866) remarked that "there is a cause to be thankful even for rebellion. It is an impressive teacher" and that "the thing worse than rebellion is the thing that causes rebellion (cited in Gurcan & Donduran 2021: 152). This remark then calls on the government to, rather than repress protests, focus on repressing the causes of protest.

## Chapter five

## Summary, conclusion, and recommendations

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings and conclusion extracted from the study which analysed the EndSars and BLM protests through the prism of constructive patriotism. The chapter ends with some actionable recommendations.

## 5.2 Summary of Findings

The findings of the study were summarised in line with the objectives of the study, which include: 1) To determine if constitutional patriotism can be used as a theoretical basis for explaining constructive patriotism. 2) To analyse two nationwide protests - EndSars and BLM - within the context of constructive patriotism - to determine what qualifies a protest to be categorised as constructive patriotism. 3). To examine the possible implications of categorising EndSars and BLM as constructive patriotism.

The study found that constitutional patriotism offers a theoretical basis for explaining constructive patriotism. What enables this is that both constitutional and constructive patriotism advocate for critical attachment and loyalty of the citizen to the shared values and norms that unites a plural society. Analysing the EndSars and BLM protests shows that participants in both protests upheld the supremacy of the constitution, while critically engaging with their states to engender justice, equity, and fairness for all citizens. Hence, constitutional patriotism offers a statutory framework for the attributes of constructive patriotism which are quintessential for solidarity and coperation in a plural state.

Also, both constitutional patriotism and constructive patriotism acknowledge adhere to the universal principles of human rights. With globalisation which has stokes migration, cosmopolitanism, increased human and institutional interactions, nationalistic attachments and loyalty to a nation needs to be replaced with constructive attachment. Therefore, the constitutional patriotism framework enables the moderation of rigid and contentious sovereignty through the politics of compromise and mutual learning. As found in the study of EndSars and BLM, protesters were motivated by the desire to attain justice for national benefits through constitutional means. The goal was to enhance inclusive governance locally while also contributing to the pursuit of international justice.

Findings from the study further showed that both EndSars and BLM qualify as patriotic protests. A critical evaluation of the character of both protests, the composition of their participants, their demands, motivations, and goals provide the basis for this categorisation. The findings showed that the character of both protests was peaceful, yet persuasive. The composition of their participants was diverse, cutting across different sections and identity groups in the country. The demands of both protests encompass equal citizenship, fairness, justice, and human rights. Both protests derived their motivation from their national

77

constitutions. The overall goal of the protests was to improve governance while contributing towards enhancing the universal principles of human rights.

The study identified four key implications for categorising EndSars and BLM as constructive patriotism. The first was that it strengthens and enhances the attainment of equal citizenship. Since most social crises are rooted in inequality, an understanding of protest as constructive patriotism empowers the citizens to utilise the instrument of protest to meditate against inequalities and injustices. The second implication was that it improves awareness of constitutional and inclusive governance. Here, citizens take responsibility for leading the changes in their political landscape. The third implication was that it could help to transform global protests into constructive patriotism. given the rise of nationwide protests across the globe, there is a need to transform protest framing from just seeking to be non-violent in character to becoming transformative by drawing from the categorisation of protest as constructive patriotism. The final implication was that it could transform the perceptions of the government towards protest. Studies have shown that the government's response to protest is informed by its perceptions of it. The common perception that protests seek regime change can be transformed into a view of protest as constructively transformative.

## 5.3 Conclusion

This study has shown that despite the rise in global protests, a view of it through the lens of constructive patriotism is yet to receive due scholarly attention. A literature review on protest shows that protest researchers generally ignore the patriotism factor in the motivation for protest. Their concern has greatly focused on the economic, political, and social factors of protests due consideration towards the enabling will for protest, which the current study contextualises as constructive patriotism.

This gap in the protest literature was viewed as a consequence of the ambiguities associated with the very concept of patriotism. This led to the second layer of analysis in the current study. Here, we focused on assessing the theoretical basis for constructive patriotism. To achieve this, the concept of patriotism was first delineated, and its forms were highlighted. The study found that the *manner* and *processes* of citizens' loyalty and attachment to their country distinguished the various forms of patriotism into *blind* and *constructive*. Analysing both forms of patriotism expressions showed that while both display

© University of Pretoria

immense attachment and loyalty toward their country, only constructive patriotism does so in a critical way that allows for the questioning and protest against the state's injustice.

The third layer of analysis attempted to answer the three key questions of the research: 1) Can constitutional patriotism be used as a theoretical basis for explaining constructive patriotism? 2) What qualifies protest to be categorised as constructive patriotism? 3) What are the possible implications of categorising EndSars and BLM as constructive patriotism? The study's findings showed that constitutional patriotism offers a veritable framework for assessing constructive patriotism, as both acknowledge the fundamental principles of equality, fairness, justice, and human rights. Findings further showed that the character, composition of participants, demands, motivations, and goals provided the basis for categorising EndSars and BLM as constructive patriotism. Findings also showed four key implications for categorising EndSars and BLM as constructive patriotism: 1) It strengthens and enhances the attainment of equal citizenship. 2) It improves awareness of constitutional and inclusive governance. 3) It could help to transform global protests into constructive patriotism. 4) It could transform the perceptions of the government towards protest.

Studying protest through the prism of constructive patriotism enables us to analyse protest through the lens of the protesters. It allows us to show their resolve in the same light that the government elevates the exploits of its military. Just as soldiers are celebrated and upheld as the highest patriots for giving up their lives in service of their country, so should protesters who give up their lives in a protest to improve their country be ranked. The logic of celebrating territorial sovereignty above the legitimacy that guarantees such sovereignty should be challenged, given that the geographical space is not more important than its inhabitants.

### 5.4 Recommendations

1. Further studies are encouraged to examine ways of protest framing that can communicate shared perceptions of patriotism.
2. To effectively transform protests globally, it must be included in the curriculum of schools and taught from the prism of constructive patriotism.
3. The government in both Nigeria and the US needs to develop a policy framework that responds to protest demands rather than recourse to protest repression.

4.  Further research should focus on providing more empirical support for analysing protest through the lens of constructive patriotism.

## References

Abang, S., Akpan, E., Uko, S., Ajayi, F. & Odunekan, A. 2021. Covid 19 Protest Movement and its Aftermath Effect on the Nigerian State. *Journal of Public Administration, Finance and Law*, 19: 7-18.

Abimbade, O., Olayoku, P. & Herro, D. 2022. Millennial Activism within Nigeria Twitterscape: From Mobilization to Social Action of #ENDSARS Protest. *Social Science & Humanities* Open, 6: 1-9.

Abu-Jamal, M. 2017. *Have Black Lives Ever Mattered?* San Francisco: City Light Books.

Abu-Jamal, M. 2017. *Have Black Lives ever mattered?* San Francisco: City Lights Bookstore

Adedokun, T. 2022. Social Media as a Strategy for Protest Movements: A Study of #EndSARS in Nigeria. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science*, 11 (6): 438-450.

Agbo, G. 2021. The #EndSARS protest in Nigeria and political force of image production and circulation on social media, *Ikenga Journal of African studies*, 22(2), 1-22, https://doi.org/10.53836/ijia/2021/22/2/002

Ajibola, B. & Odeyemi, T. 2022. The legislature as a target and mediator of ensuing outcomes during social emergencies: revisiting Nigeria's #EndSARS protest, *The Theory and Practice of Legislation*, 10(2), 117-146, https://doi.org/10.1080/20508840.2022.2093496

Akpata, O. 2020. #Endsars protests – A call for the respect of the legal and fundamental rights of Nigerian citizens. Nigerian Bar Association.

Altikulac, A. & Yontar, A. 2019. Nationalism, Patriotism and Global Citizenship: A Comparison in between the Social Studies Teacher Candidates in the US and Turkey. *International Journal of Education & Literary Studies*, 7 (4): 115-123.

Aluko, O. 2023. Political unrest and tyre burning theory in developed democracies and developing democracies. In *Insights and Explorations in Democracy, Political Unrest, and Propaganda in Elections*, edited by Aluko, O. & Oluwadele, L. Hershey: IGI Global, 38-47.

Arbatli, E. & Rosenberg, D. 2017. Conclusion: The Changing Face of Social Movements and Emerging Patterns Across the Non-Western World. In *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli, E. & Rosenberg, D. Cham: Springer, 189-197.

Arbatli, E. 2017. Introduction: Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy in the Age of Transnationalism. In *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli, E. & Rosenberg, D. Cham: Springer, 1-10.

Ariely, G. 2011. Globalization, immigration and national identity: How the level of globalisation affects the relations between nationalism, constructive patriotism and attitudes towards immigrants? *Group Process & Intergroup Relations*, 15(4) 539-557, DOI: 10.1177/1368430211430518.

Ayandele, O. 2021. Lessons from the #EndSARS movement in Nigeria. Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED),

Backhouse, S. 2017. Patriotism as religion. In *Handbook of Patriotism*, edited by Sardoc, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-30534-9_1-1.

Balyewu, A. Forward. 2023 Shege: A scorecard on the Buhari administration's impact on Nigeria's civic space. Global Rights https://drive.google.com/file/d/15cVzkkQs7RsCFbx9vXuA7RaIGtloOTFt/view?usp=sharing.

Barrett, P., & Chen, S. 2021. *Social Repercussions of Pandemics* (IMF Working Paper 21/21). Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund.

Bar-Tal, D. & Staub, E. 1997. *Patriotism: In the Lives of Individuals and Nations*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers.

Becker, M. 2018. Loving America with open eyes: A student-driven study of US rights in the age of Trump. *Occasional Paper Series* 40, 18-31

Belyaeva, N. 2017. Citizen plenums in Bosnia protests: Creating a post-ethnic identity. *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli & Rosenberg, 115-138, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-51454-3

Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation 2020-2021 Impact Report, https://blacklivesmatter.com/2020-impact-report/

Brancati, D. 2016. *Democracy Protests: Origins, Features, and Significance*. Cambridge University Press.

Brannen, S., Haig, C., & Schmidt, K. 2020. *The Age of Mass Protests: Understanding an Escalating Global Trend.* Center for Strategic and International Studies (CISS).

Breda, V. 2017. Constitutional patriotism. In *Handbook of Patriotism*, edited by Sardoc, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-30534-9_5-1

Brenda, V. 2014. Constitutional Patriotism: A Reasonable Theory of Radical Democracy. file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Constitutional_Patriotism_A_Reasonable_T.pdf

Breuer, A., & Farooq, B. 2012. Online political participation: slacktivism or efficiency increased activism? Evidence from the Brazilian Ficha Limpa Campaign, DIO: 10.2139/ssrn.2179035.

Bryman, A. 2016. *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Buchanan, L. Bui, Q. & Patel, K. 2020. Black Lives Matter May Be the Largest Movement in U.S. History. *The New York Times*. Retrieved 20 December 2023.

Bunch, L. & Smith, M. 1992. Protest & patriotism: A history of dissent and reform. Smithsonian Institution.

Butera, F. 2005. ON THE RELEVANCE OF STUDYING PATRIOTISM AND NORMATIVE CONFLICT IN CHANGING ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS, Psicología Política, 30, 71-84, https://www.uv.es/garzon/psicologia%20politica/N30-5.pdf

Cachelin, S. 2023. The suppression and othering of Black Lives Matter protests through tear gas, Journal of Black Studies, 54(6), 513-533, ps://doi.org/10.1177/00219347231184234

Calatayud, M. & Vazquez A. 2018. Mobilisation and surveillance on social media: the ambivalent case of the anti-austerity protests in Spain (2011-2014). In *Protest in the information age: Social movements, digital practices and surveillance*, edited by Melgaco, L. & Monaghan, Oxon: Routledge, 21-39.

Camp, J. & Heatherton, C. 2016. *Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter*. London: VERSO.

Caren, N., Gaby, S., & Herrold, C. 2017. Economic breakdown and collective action. *Social Problems,* 64 (1): 133–155.

Carothers, T. & Youngs, R. 2015. *The Complexities of Global Protests.* Massachusetts: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Celikates, R. 2015. Digital publics, digital contestation: A new structural transformation of the public sphere? *In Transformations of democracy: Crisis, protest and legitimation*, edited by Celikates, R., Kreide, R. & Wesche, T. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 159-176

Chen, H., & Suen, W. 2017. Aspiring for Change: A Theory of Middle Class Activism. *The Economic Journal,* 127 (603): 1318–1347.

Chen, T. 2021. Black Lives Matter: Power, Perception, and Press. Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, Havard Kennedy School, Harvard University.

Christmals, C. & Gross, J. 2017. AN INTEGRATIVE LITERATURE REVIEW FRAMEWORK FOR POSTGRADUATE NURSING RESEARCH REVIEWS, *European Journal of Research in Medical Sciences*, 5(1), 7-15.

Cook, S. 2017. *False Dawn: Protest, democracy, and violence in the New Middle East*. Oxford: Oxford university press.

Cresswell, J. 2014. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Dalton, R. & Van, A. 2005. The Resource, Structural, and Cultural Bases of Protest. CSD Working Papers, http://escholarship.org/uc/item/3jx2b911

Dauce, F., Laruelle, M., Huerou, A. & Rousselet, K. 2015. Introduction: What Does it Mean to be a Patriot? *Europe-Asia Studies* 67 (1): 1-7, DOI: 10.1080/09668136.2014.986964

Davidov, E. 2009. Measurement Equivalence of Nationalism and Constructive Patriotism in the ISSP: 34 Countries in a Comparative Perspective. *Political Analysis*, 17: 64-82 doi:10.1093/pan/mpn014.

Della Porta, D. 2017. *Global diffusion of protest: Riding the protest wave in the neoliberal crisis*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Ding, W. 2018. Propaganda, Patriotic Protest, and Diplomatic Persuasion. https://www.lse.ac.uk/economics/Assets/Documents/job-market-candidates-2018-2019/Weihan-Ding-JMP.pdf.

Diverlus, R., Hudson, S. & Ware, S. 2020. *Until we are free: Reflections on Black Lives Matter in Canada*. Regina: University of Regina Press.

Dunivin, Z., Yan, H., Ince, J. & Rojas, F. 2022. Black Lives Matter protests shift public discourse, https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2117320119

Ekoh, P. & George, E. 2021. The Role of Digital Technology in the EndSars Protest in Nigeria During COVID-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*, 6: 161-162.

Ekup-Nse, D. 2021. Analyzing the Patriotic Implication of the EndSars Protest in Nigeria. Honours Report submitted to the Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria.

Emegha, K., Ogbonnaya, O. & Aja, E. 2019. Nationalism and Patriotism: Precursors to Leadership Development and National Unity in Nigeria, IDOSR JOURNAL OF ARTS AND MANAGEMENT, 4(2): 74-86, https://www.idosr.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/IDOSR-JAM-42-74-86-2019.-ANSU-P4.pdf.

Erubami, J., Ufuophu-Biri, E., Anorue, L., Nwabunze, U. & Orekyeh, E. 2021. Generational Dichotomies in Public Perception of Social Media Coverage of the Nigerian #EndSARS Protests: Implication for Networked Communication. *Cogent Arts& Humanities*, 8. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2021.1988192.

Eteng, I. 2020. #EndSARS: Inside Nigeria's fight to end police brutality, https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2020/10/29/nigeria-end-sars-protests.

Etim, E., Duke, O., Fatile, J. & Akah, A. 2022. Protest policing strategy and human rights: A study of End SARS protests in Nigeria, African Security Review, 31(2), 226-239, DOI: 10.1080/10246029.2022.2075708

Ezemenaka, K. 2021. Youth Violence and Human Security in Nigeria. Social Sciences, 10: 267. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsi1007067.

Ezeugwu, C., Omeje, O., Erojikwe, I., Nwaozuzu, C. & Nnanna, N. 2021. From stage to street: the #EndSARS protests and the prospects of street theatre, *Ikenga Journal of African studies*, 22(2), 128-145, https://doi.org/10.53836/ijia/2021/22/2/007

Global Rights. 2023. Shege: A scorecard on the Buhari administration's impact on Nigeria's civic space. https://drive.google.com/file/d/15cVzkkQs7RsCFbx9vXuA7RaIGtloOTFt/view?usp=sharing

Gomberg, P. 2020. Against patriotism, for internationalism: a Marxist critique of patriotism. In *Handbook of Patriotism*, edited by Sardoc, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-54484-7_13

Gopaldas, R. 2019. Digital dictatorship versus digital democracy in Africa. South African Institute of International Affairs. https://media.africaportal.org/documents/Policy-Insights-75-gopaldas.pdf

Gurcan, E. & Donduran, C. 2021. The formation and development of the Black Lives Matter Movement: A political perspective, SiYASAL: Journal of Political Sciences, 30(1): 151-167, DOI: 10.26650/siyasal.2021.30.1.871276

Habermas, J. 1989. The structural transformation of the public sphere. MIT Press.

Habermas, J. 1998. *The Inclusion of the Other*. Cambridge: Polity.

Halliwell, M. & Witham N. (ed.). 2018. *Reframing 1968: American politics, protest and identity*, Edinburgh: Edinburg university press

Healy, M. 2017. Patriotism and Loyalty. In *Handbook of Patriotism*, edited by Sardoc, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-30534-9_18-1

Heaney, T. 2020. Protest at the center of American politics. *Journal of International Affairs*, 73(2), 195-208.

Helper, G. & Joubert, E. 2021. Activism in the Boonies for Black Lives and Educational Change: A Critical Conversation with Youth Rural Activist Gem Amber Sun Helper, *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 2021, 37(7), . https://doi.org/10.26209/jrre3707-05.

Hinderliter, B. & Peraza, S. 2021. *More than our Pain: Affect and Emotion in the era of Black Lives Matter*. New York: Suny Press.

Honohan, I. 2008. Constructing critical patriotism. *Review*, doi:10.1057/eps.2008.41

Horvat, K. 2017. Cosmopolitan patriotism. In *Handbook of Patriotism*, edited by Sardoc, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-30534-9_36-1

Human Rights Watch (HRW). 2020. Nigeria: Crackdown on Police Brutality Protests. Internet: https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/10/16/nigeria-crackdown-police-brutality-protests. Access: 7 September 2021.

Husted, T. 2020. Nigeria: #EndSARS protests against police brutality. Congressional Research Service (CRS) INSIGHT, https://crsreports.congress.gov IN11525.

Iwuoha, V. & Aniche, E. 2021. Protests and Blood on the Streets: Repressive state, Police Brutality and #EndSARS Protest in Nigeria. *Security Journal*, https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-021-00316-z.

Jasper, J. 2014. *Protest: A cultural introduction to social movements*. Cambridge: Polity press

Johnson, M. 2017. The paradox of black patriotism: double consciousness, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2017.1332378.

Johnston, H. & Noakes, J. (ed.) 2005. *Frames of Protest: Social movements and the framing perspective*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield publishers

Joubert, E. 2021. Introduction: Black Lives Matter and rural education, *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 37(7), https://doi.org/10.26209/jrre3707-01.

Kim, S. & Lee, A. 2021. Black Lives Matter and its counter-movement on Facebook, http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3980259.

Lagos State Judicial Panel of Inquiry on Restitution for victims of SARS related abuses and other matters. Report of Lekki incident investigation of 20th October 2020.

Lawal, R. & Ibrahim, K. Beyond #EndSARS: Effecting Positive Change in Governance in Nigeria. YAGSOM Project Research/Policy Paper Series: 1.

Lebas, A. 2011. *From protest to parties: Party-building and democratization in Africa*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lewin, E. 2013. Constructive patriotism in wartime. *Open Journal of Political Science*, 3(4) 107-112, http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/ojps.2013.34015

Luttrell, J. 2019. *White People and Black Lives Matter: Ignorance, Empathy, and Justice*. Texas, University of Houston.

Macedo, S. 2011. Just patriotism? *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 000(00) 1-11, DOI: 10.1177/0191453711399842.

Macintyre, A. 1984. Is Patriotism a Virtue? (The Lindley Lecture) Lawrence: The University of Kansas Publications.

Mangena, F. 2010. "Aristotle, Patriotism and Reason: Reflections on Maclntyre's Question – Is Patriotism a Virtue?" http://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC87688.

Matsilele, T., Mpofu, S., Msimanga, M., & Tshuma, L. 2021. Transnational hashtag protest movements and emancipatory politics in Africa: A three country study. *Global Media Journal-German Edition*, 11(2), DOI: https://doi.org/10.22032/dbt.51029.

Melgaco, L. & Monaghan, J. 2018. *Protests in the Information Age: Social Movements, Digital Practices and Surveillance*. Oxon: Routledge.

Merry, M. 2017. Critical patriotism. In *Handbook of Patriotism*, edited by Sardoc, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-30534-9_23-2

Mertens, D 2009. *Transformative research and evaluation*. New York: Guilford.

Mertens, D. 2010. Transformative mixed methods research, Qualitative Inquiry, 16(6) 469-474, DOI: 10.1177/1077800410364612

Mpofu, S. 2014. Public and Diasporic Online Media in the Discursive Construction of National Identity: A Case of Zimbabwe. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of the Witswatersrand.

Muller, J. 2006. On the Origins of Constitutional Patriotism. Contemporary Political Theory, 5 (3): 278-296. DOI: 10.1057/palgrave.cpt.9300235. S2CID 17560702.

Muller, J. 2007. *Constitutional Patriotism*. Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press.

Muller, J. 2014. Three Objections to Constitutional Patriotism. https://www.princeton.edu/~jmueller/Constellations-CP-Three%20Objections-JWMueller-May2006.pdf

Nathanson, S. 2020. Moderate Patriotism, *Handbook of Patriotism*, edited by Sardoč, M, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-54484-7_26.

Natil, I. 2017. Palestinian Youth Movements and "the Arab Spring". In *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli, E. & Rosenberg, D. Cham: Springer, 33-42.

Negedu, I. & Atabor, A. 2015. Nationalism in Nigeria: A Case for Patriotic Citizenship. *American Journal of Contemporary Research*, 5 (3): 74- 79.

Nichols, S. 2021. A Three Cord Strand: Three Generations of Black Women's Educational Experiences in Mississippi, *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 37(7), 4–14. https://doi. org/10.26209/jrre3707-02.

Nwabunnia, O. 2021. #EndSARS movement in Nigeria: tensions and solidarities amongst protesters, *Gender & Development*, 29(2-3), 351-367, DOI: 10.1080/13552074.2021.1982180

Ochi, I. & Mark, K. 2021. Effect of the EndSARS Protest on the Nigerian Economy. *Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 9 (3): 1-15.

Ogundare, Y. 2023. Governance and public protest: Exercising democratic accountability in Lebanon. In *Insights and Explorations in Democracy, Political Unrest, and*

*Propaganda in Elections*, edited by Aluko, O. & Oluwadele, L. Hershey: IGI Global, 69-81.

Okech, A. (ed.). 2020. Introduction. In *Gender, Protests and Political Change in Africa*, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 1-12.

Okoye, C., Obi-Nwosu, H., Nwafor, C. & Ugwu, P. 2021. They psychological implication of #EndSARS protest in Nigeria: a theoretical expository approach, Current Journal of Applied Science and Technology, 40(16), 20-29.

Okunna, C. 2021. #EndSARS Protest: Re-Thinking Nigerian Youth and Government Policies. AfriHeritage Working Paper: 001.

Olonisakin, F. 2020. Forward. In *Gender, Protests and Political Change in Africa*, edited by A. Okech. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Opp, K. 2009. *Theories of Political Protest and Social Movements*. Oxon: Routledge.

Orajuela, F. 2018. Introduction. In *Black Lives Matter & Music: Protest, Intervention, Reflection*, edited by Orajuela, F. & Shonekan, S. Indiana: Indiana University press.

Ortiz, I., Burke, S., Berrada, M. & Cortes, H. 2022. *World Protests: A Study of Key Protest Issues in the 21st Century*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Porta, A. 2017. Non-Western social movements and participatory democracy: A foreward. *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli & Rosenberg, vii-vii, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-51454-3.

Porta, D. & Tarrow, S. 2005. Transnational processes and social activism: *An introduction, in Transnational protest and global activism*, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield publishers, 1-20.

Porta, D. 2017. Non-Western social movements and participatory democracy: a forward. In *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli, E. & Rosenberg, D. Cham: Springer, vii-viii.

Punch. 2020. Black Tuesday: 49 Killed as Protests Turn Bloody. Internet: https://punchng.com/black-tuesday-49-killed-as-protests-turn-bloody/. Access: 19 August 2021.

Rajhans, S. 2017. The Multitudes of the Invisibles and the Revitalization of the Indian Democratic Space. In *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli, E. & Rosenberg, D. Cham: Springer, 65-84.

Ransby, B. 2018. *Making Black Lives Matter: Reimagining Freedom in the Twenty-first century*, California: University of California Press.

Rashid, Y., Rashid, A., Warraich, M., Sabir, S. & Waseem, A. 2019. Case Study Method: A Step-by-step Guide for Business Researchers. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919862424.

Reed, L. 2003. The True Meaning of Patriotism. Ideas on Liberty. https://admin.fee.org/files/docLib/reed0603.pdf.

Roberts, F. 2018. How Black Lives Matter changed the way Americans fight for freedom, https://www.aclu.org/news/racial-justice/how-black-lives-matter-changed-way-americans-fight.

Rosenberg, D. & Arbatli, E. 2017. Conclusion: The changing face of social movement and emerging patterns across the non-Western world. *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli & Rosenberg, 189-197, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-51454-3

Rosenberg, D. 2017. The "Colorless" Protests in Russia: Mixed Messages and an Uncertain Future. In *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli, E. & Rosenberg, D. Cham: Springer, 11-32

Rosenberg, D. 2017. The "colorless" protests in Russia: Mixed messages and an uncertain future. *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli & Rosenberg, 11-32, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-51454-3

Rucht, D. 2013. Protest movements and their media usage. In *Media and Protest Movement*, edited by Cammaerts, B., Mattoni, A., & Mccurdy, P. Chicago: Intellect mill, 249-268

Sagikyzy, A. & Uyzbayeva, A. 2014. Theoretical and methodological problems in the study of patriotism, Journal of Social Science Research, 3(2):225-23, DOI:10.24297/jssr.v3i2.3105

Santos, M. 2018. Settler colonial surveillance and the criminalisation of social media: contradictory implications for Palestine resistance. In *Protest in the information age: Social movements, digital practices and surveillance*, edited by Melgaco, L. & Monaghan, Oxon: Routledge, 97-114.

Sardoč, M. 2020. Patriotism and its critics, *Handbook of Patriotism*, edited by Sardoč, M, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-54484-7_29.

Schatz, R. 2018. A Review and Integration of Research on Blind and Constructive Patriotism. In *Handbook of Patriotism*, edited by Sardoč, M. New York: Springer International Publishing https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-30534-9_30-1.

Schatz, R. 2018. A Review and integration of research on blind and constructive patriotism. In *Handbook of Patriotism*, edited by Sardoc, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-30534-9_30-1

Schatz, R., Staub, E. & Lavine, H. 1999. On the Varieties of National Attachment: Blind versus Constructive Patriotism. *International Society of Political Psychology*, 20(1): 151-174.

Sekerdej, M. & Roccas, S. 2016. Love versus loving criticism: disentangling conventional constructive patriotism. *The British Journal of Social Psychology*, 55: 499-512.

Shevtsova, M. 2017. Queering Gezi and Maidan: Instrumentalization and Negotiation of Sexuality Within the Protest Movement. In *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli, E. & Rosenberg, D. Cham: Springer, 85-100.

Shishkina, A. 2017. Egypt women in the Arab Spring: Emotions, political participation, and the internet. *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy:*

*Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli & Rosenberg, 161-172, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-51454-3

Soutphommasane, T. 2020. Liberal Patriotism, *Handbook of Patriotism*, edited by Sardoč, M, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-54484-7_44

Spry, C. & Hornsey, M. 2007. The Influence of blind and constructive patriotism on the attitudes towards multiculturalism and immigration. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 59(3): 151-158 https://doi.org/10.1080/00049530701449489.

Staub, E. 1997. Blind versus constructive patriotism: Moving from embeddedness in the group to critical loyalty and action. In *Patriotism in the life of individuals and nations*, edited by Staub, E. et al. Chicago: Nelson Hall.

Staub, E. 2003. *The Psychology of Good and Evil: Why Children, Adults, and Groups Help and Harm Others*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace https://carnegieendowment.org/publications/interactive/protest-tracker#

Tillery, A. 2019. What kind of movement of Black Lives Matter? The view from Twitter, Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics, 4(2), 297-323, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/rep.2019.17

Torraco, J. 2016. Writing Integrative Literature Reviews: Using the Past and Present to Explore the Future. *Human Resource Development Review*, *15*(4), 404-428. https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484316671606

Trottier, D. & Fuchs, C. 2015. Theorising social media, politics and the state: An introduction. In Social media, politics and the state: Protests, revolutions, riots, crime and policing in the age of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, edited by Trottier, D. & Fuchs, New York: Routledge, 3-38.

Turillo, D. 2021. Black Lives Matter, COVID-19, and political opportunities: Understanding social movement expansion through political process theory. Pittsburgh Undergraduate Review, 1(1), https://doi.org/10.5195/pur.2021.18

Udoms, B. & Atakpa, O. 2021. Governance Deficit, National Security and the Development of Nigeria: ENDSARS Protest Perspective. *AKSU Journal of Administration and Corporate Governance* (AKSUJACOG), 1 (1): 1-21.

Ugoh, N. 2021. Understanding Youth Activism and social media in Addressing Weak Systems: The Case of #ENDSARS Protest in Nigeria. Dissertation submitted for the award of MSc. International Development (Security, Conflict & Development), University of Birmingham.

Usua, N. & Agbo, B. 2021. Assessing the Possibilities and Limitations of Citizen Moral Panic: Evidence from EndSARS Protest in Nigeria. International Journal of Humanitatis Theoreticus, 5 (1): 239-250.

Vincent, A. 2017. Patriotism and human rights. In *Handbook of Patriotism*, edited by Sardoc, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-30534-9_37-1

Walker, A. 2021. Black Lives Matter to Latinx Students: Exploring Social Practices of Latinx Youth as Activists in the Rural Midwest, *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 37(7), 38–56. https://doi.org/10.26209/jrre3707-06

Wanca, I. 2017. Cyberspace attacks and social media momentum: Building blocks from Syria to Ukraine. *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli & Rosenberg, 173-188, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-51454-3

Woodly, D. 2015. *The politics of common sense: How social media use public discourse to change politics and win acceptance*. Oxford: Oxford university press.

Woodly, D. 2022. Reckoning: Black Lives Matter and the democratic necessity of social movements, New York: Oxford University Press

Wouters, R. & Walgrave, S. 2017. Demonstrating power: How protest persuades political representatives. *American Sociological Review*, 82(2) 361-383, DOI: 10.1177/0003122417690325

Yack, B. 1996. The Myth of the Civic Nation. Critical Review. *Critical Review*, 10 (2): 193-211. DOI: 10.1080/08913819608443417.

Zaytsev, D. 2017. Brazilian Protests: Actors and Demands for Political Changes. In *Non-Western Social Movements and Participatory Democracy: Protest in the Age of Transnationalism*, edited by Arbatli, E. & Rosenberg, D. Cham: Springer, 43-64.