

Social Marginalization as a Mechanism Generating a Culture of Violent Protest among Algerian Youth – A Sociological Approach to the Dysfunctions of Integration and Recognition

التهميش الاجتماعي كآلية منتجة لثقافة الاحتجاج العنيف لدى الشباب الجزائري - مقاربة سوسيولوجية في اختلالات الإدماج والاعتراف

Dr. Nadia BEN NAIM*

University Center of Aflou, Algeria

n.bennaim@cu-aflou.edu.dz

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Abstract:

الملخص:

This research paper aims to examine violent protest behavior among Algerian youth as a product of multi-dimensional structural crises.

Using an analytical sociological approach, it assumes these protests are not random reactions but symbolic expressions of a struggle over reconfiguring actors' positions amid the breakdown of integration and recognition mechanisms.

The study reveals dynamics linked to cultural distortions and a crisis of institutional legitimacy, concluding that violent protest behavior reflects rejection of an order that denies youth belonging, calling for restructuring the social system through inclusive cultural, social, and political integration policies.

تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلى تناول سلوك الاحتجاج العنيف لدى الشباب الجزائري بوصفه نتاجا لأزمات بنيوية متعددة الأبعاد.

اعتمدت الدراسة مقاربة سوسيولوجية تحليلية، وانطلقت من فرضية مفادها أن هذه الاحتجاجات ليست ردود فعل عشوائية لكنها تعبير رمزي عن صراع حول إعادة تشكيل مواقع الفاعلين داخل النسق الاجتماعي في ظل تعطل آليات الإدماج والاعتراف.

كشفت النتائج عن اختلالات في النسق الثقافي وأزمة شرعية مؤسسية، خلصت إلى أن هذا السلوك يعكس رفضا للنظام القائم ويدعو إلى إعادة هيكلة شاملة للنسق الاجتماعي بسياسات إدماج ثقافية واجتماعية وسياسية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التهميش الاجتماعي، الاحتجاج العنيف، الإقصاء الاجتماعي، الإدماج الاجتماعي.

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* Corresponding author.

1. Introduction

Modern societies have witnessed profound structural transformations that have produced new patterns of social marginalization, consequently shaking the foundations of the bond between the state and society and creating complex forms of relationship between the individual and its formal institutions. Within the context of these transformations, marginalization is no longer a transient socio-economic condition but has become a sustainable structure that reproduces itself through various mechanisms, thereby weakening social integration and establishing a new sphere of alienation and protest.

In the case of Algeria, marginalization assumes a multifaceted dimension, whereby economic, political, and cultural factors intertwine to shape a fragile reality in which large segments of youth experience a sense of social meaninglessness; with rising unemployment rates, the absence of developmental strategies capable of absorbing young energies, and the weakness of institutional channels for expression, these young people find themselves confronting a social system that appears closed and incapable of accommodating them, where this sense of exclusion not only generates individual frustration but transforms into a collective phenomenon embodied in patterns of protest, ranging from peaceful to violent escalation, as an attempt to reclaim the self and redefine the relationship with authority and society.

Violent protest, as a form of expression for social tensions, cannot be reduced to mere individual or circumstantial reactions; rather, it is the product of historical social accumulations formed by persistent exclusion and the blockage of social mobility horizons, as when trust in formal institutions is absent and the role of dialogue as a means for conflict resolution recedes, violence becomes a functional choice for some groups, transforming into a symbolic mechanism for renegotiating a denied social status and conveying unheard demands.

Proceeding from this, the study poses a central problem: To what extent does social marginalization, with its economic, social, and political dimensions, contribute to shaping a culture of violent protest among Algerian youth? And how can this behavior be understood in light of psychological and social variables?

Through an analytical approach based on concepts from the sociology of crime and deviance, the study seeks to deconstruct the dynamics underlying this phenomenon, understand its structural and psychological dimensions, and propose solutions capable of enhancing social integration and rebuilding bridges of trust between youth and institutions.

2. Social Marginalization and Violent Protest

Numerous individuals worldwide experience social marginalization and violent protest; essentially, marginalization constitutes an uncomfortable state for the individual and a mechanism for imposing harsh, socially unacceptable practices, and to achieve the required strategic plans, individuals are often compelled to relinquish some or all of their core convictions.

Violence sometimes becomes a symbolic means of protest, particularly among certain movements with leftist and socialist orientations, where it is viewed as a form of resistance or an expression of social anger; in some instances, violence may serve as a tool to instigate change in social relations, such as its role in labor movements or strikes led by marginalized groups. However, in such contexts, it does not constitute organized, institutional violence but is exercised through indirect and unsystematic means; furthermore, it does not necessarily lead to clear institutional alternatives, instead remaining part of the dynamics of spontaneous protest that reflect a deeper crisis within the social structure.

2.1. The Concept of Social Marginalization and its Structural Dimensions

Social marginalization represents a fundamental concept in sociology, as it refers not merely to an absence of integration or weak participation, but to an ongoing structural process of reproducing inequality within society; it is not a transient event, but a system of relationships that excludes certain groups from accessing the material and symbolic resources necessary for a dignified life, such as work, education, healthcare, and political representation. Consequently, marginalization can be considered an invisible mechanism of domination, exercised through multiple structures, which produces categories existing outside the system or on its margins—categories often more vulnerable to violence or more prone to employing it as a defensive strategy, where these structures manifest through three primary dimensions:

2-1-1- The Economic Dimension

Economic marginalization constitutes one of the most significant avenues for understanding the dynamics of protest violence; the loss of employment and declining purchasing power generate a sense of futility and exclusion from the economic contract of citizenship; In Algeria, the high unemployment rate among university graduates reflects a stark paradox, whereby education—presumed to be a vehicle for social mobility—has transformed into a source of frustration, leading to a crisis of confidence in social mobility institutions, which translated into violent protests expressing a loss of hope in distributive justice and a rejection of an economic system that perpetuates privileges for specific groups. While economic marginalization lays the material foundations for exclusion, its repercussions extend into the social sphere, where livelihood precarity evolves into symbolic isolation that deepens marginalization within the social structure.

2-1-2- The Social Dimension

Social marginalization is linked to the weakening of traditional support networks—family, school, unions—which historically constituted spaces for belonging and solidarity; with the erosion of these networks, youth find themselves outside circles of social recognition, lacking institutions that accommodate their aspirations or represent them. Moreover, the prevailing social discourse contributes to the reproduction of marginalization by stigmatizing the unemployed and idle as unproductive or irresponsible, thereby shifting a structural crisis into a false individual responsibility; at this precise moment, violence transforms into a symbolic response against stigmatization and a means of reasserting the self within a public space that culturally and socially excludes them. Extending from this social dimension, marginalization in Algeria assumes a more complex political character, where exclusion is not confined to the loss of social status but extends to deepening the rift through depriving young segments of participation in decision-making and institutional recognition.

2-1-3-The Political Dimension

Political marginalization represents the most visible facet of the structural crisis in modern societies, whereby youth are excluded from decision-making circles, both within formal institutions and political parties; weak political representation, the absence of genuine dialogue channels, and

a security-oriented approach to handling protests all fuel a sense of political futility.

According to Pierre (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 122), the absence of political and social capital drives individuals to seek alternative spheres of influence, which may lie outside institutions—sometimes in the street—through violent protest as a symbolic performance of political existence; in this context, violence is understood not merely as a rejection of the system, but also as a coercive reclamation of the right to recognition and participation within a political field monopolized by the center.

Through analyzing the social, economic, and political dimensions of marginalization, it becomes evident that the phenomenon does not merely represent an absence of integration or weaknesses in participation mechanisms; rather, it expresses a structural dysfunction in the distribution of capital within social fields, as described by Bourdieu.

Marginalization, in essence, is not a static condition but a perpetual dynamic that reproduces inequality and, in turn, fuels forms of symbolic resistance, particularly among young groups seeking to redefine their positions within the social system; from this dynamic emerge profound repercussions affecting the structures of society, economy, and politics, which subsequent sections will analyze as reflections of a complex interaction between exclusion and violence.

2.2. The Concept of Violent Protest

Violent protest is a form of collective behavior characterized by the use or threat of force to achieve political or social demands. It cannot be understood as an isolated, individual phenomenon; rather, it is the product of a complex interactive process between groups and authority, whereby violence becomes a means to renegotiate social and political recognition (Castells, 2012, pp. 180-181).

2-2-1-The Sociological Dimensions of Violent Protest

Manuel (Castells, 2012, pp. 138-139) argues that violent protest cannot be explained solely as a psychological or security phenomenon; instead, it must be interpreted within the logic of the structural crisis of legitimacy in modern societies. When political and economic institutions fail to respond to the demands of marginalized groups—such as unemployed youth, the poor, or communities lacking genuine representation

within the system—a rupture of trust and recognition between the state and society emerges. This rupture creates a legitimacy vacuum, as individuals no longer perceive institutions as vehicles for achieving justice or representing their interests.

Consequently, protest violence emerges as a symbolic act rather than mere destructive behavior; it is an alternative social language through which the marginalized seek to impose their presence and redefine their relationship with power. Thus, violence here serves a coercive communicative function, aimed at drawing the attention of the state and society to the profound dysfunction in patterns of integration and recognition. In other words, violent protest is not merely an outlet for anger, but a form of symbolic struggle reflecting the attempts of the marginalized to redistribute symbolic and political capital when avenues for legitimate dialogue and expression are closed to them.

2-2-2-Violent Protest as a Mechanism for Social Empowerment

Drawing on Erving Goffman's labeling theory, marginalized groups, when reduced to negative stereotypes, develop resistance strategies aimed at shattering these representations and renegotiating their position within the social structure. From this perspective, violent protest can be interpreted not as a deviation from the norm, but as a symbolic defense mechanism through which stigmatized groups seek to reclaim their identity and impose a missing social recognition.

In the Algerian context, waves of violent protest can be understood as forms of counter-social empowerment, whereby marginalized youth attempt to renegotiate their relationship with society and the state through resistance strategies embodied in violent action; while ostensibly destructive, this violence carries profound symbolic meaning related to the pursuit of recognition, dignity, and equal opportunity.

Furthermore, these practices express a struggle between social fields and represent an effort by actors deprived of traditional forms of capital to construct a symbolic protest capital, enabling them to emerge as actors within the social system, even if through coercive acts (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 171-173).

Thus, in its sociological dimension, violent protest becomes a language of social empowerment that emerges from the depths of exclusion,

expressing a will to reclaim position and dignity more than it expresses a destructive tendency.

2.3. The Relationship Between Social Marginalization and Protest Deviance

Contemporary sociological studies indicate that social marginalization generates not only material deprivation but also symbolic deprivation, manifested as a loss of recognition and agency within the social structure. When the integration gap widens and mechanisms of social justice weaken, individuals and groups accumulate feelings of meaninglessness and exclusion, thereby increasing their propensity to become protest actors operating outside legitimate frameworks, where this relationship between marginalization and protest deviance can be understood through three sequential analytical stages:

2-3-1-The Stage of Marginalization and Exclusion

During this initial phase, channels for participation and expression—whether in economic, political, or cultural fields—are systematically closed to marginalized actors, as this dynamic manifests as structural impotence, wherein oppressed groups are stripped of their capacity to produce audible opinions or exercise symbolic agency; consequently, a pervasive sense of social helplessness emerges, positioning individuals as mere spectators to the functioning of a system they cannot influence.

2-3-2-The Stage of Tension and Psycho-Social Accumulation

As exclusion persists, actors accumulate layers of frustration and symbolic injury stemming from absent social justice and unequal opportunities, as this phase is characterized by escalating latent anger and the transformation of silent withdrawal into collective tension, fueled by experiences of deprivation and perceived futility. This trajectory finds theoretical explanation in Axel Honneth's thesis on the struggle for recognition, wherein the denial of social esteem becomes a central motivation for resistant action.

2-3-3-The Stage of Outburst and Violent Protest

In this culminating phase, latent anger crystallizes into violent protest action aimed at forcibly reasserting presence within a closed social space; here, the violence is not merely an emotional outburst but a meaning-laden symbolic language through which the marginalized seek to renegotiate their

positions within the social and political fields, which can be interpreted as a counter-symbolic strategy through which marginalized actors attempt to accumulate protest capital to confront sustained forms of institutional symbolic violence.

Thus, protest deviance may be understood as an inverted reflection of social marginalization, embodying the failure of integration institutions to provide spaces for recognition and participation, while carrying within its core an implicit demand for justice and dignity.

2.4. Theoretical Frameworks Explaining the Phenomenon

To comprehend the phenomenon of protest violence within the context of social marginalization, several sociological theories can be invoked to explain the dynamics of the relationship between structural exclusion and violent protest behavior:

2-4-1-Social Conflict Theory

Marxist theory centers on the concept of class struggle as the primary engine of social change. Karl Marx posited that capitalist societies are founded on the domination of the class owning the means of production (the bourgeoisie) over the working class (the proletariat), resulting in exploitative relations and structural marginalization. This situation fosters a growing consciousness of deprivation and social injustice among oppressed groups, causing protests, in their advanced stages, to transform into a violent means of expressing rejection and demanding the redistribution of power and resources (Giddens, 1990, p. 15).

In this regard, violent protests in the Algerian context can be interpreted as a direct outcome of structural imbalances in the distribution of wealth and employment opportunities, where youth feel that the state has failed to deliver on its promises of social justice and equal opportunity, making protest violence a form of symbolic resistance against structures of economic and political hegemony.

2-4-2-Labeling Theory

Erving Goffman (1963) argues that society imposes classifications and normative standards that define who is "normal" and who is "deviant", as when individuals fail to conform to these standards, they are stigmatized, rendering them vulnerable to marginalization and symbolic exclusion, where this stigma is not limited to moral condemnation but actively

contributes to the reproduction of power relations within society, whereby labeled groups are denied opportunities for recognition and participation.

Confronted with this negative labeling, individuals may resort to strategies of symbolic resistance, including violent protest, as a means to renegotiate their social identity and position within the class structure, as youth perceived in public discourse as unemployed, unproductive, or a burden on the state experience a form of dual stigma—economic and political—which drives some to adopt a protest identity manifested in forms of symbolic or physical violence.

In the Algerian experience, violent youth protests can be understood as a sociological reaction to the denial of social and economic recognition, and here, violence cannot be reduced to its destructive dimension; rather, it must be read as a tool for reconstructing the marginalized self and as an existential cry within a social space devoid of recognition and equality.

2-4-3-Anomie Theory

In his classic analysis of anomie, Émile Durkheim observed that societies can undergo states of normative disturbance when traditional value systems collapse without being replaced by new ones capable of regulating social behavior. Under such conditions, individuals lose the value compass guiding their actions, giving rise to a general feeling of disorientation and meaninglessness (Durkheim, 1879, p. 213).

In this context, social marginalization weakens the solidary bonds between individuals and societal institutions, leading to a state of social alienation and depriving them of mechanisms for integration and participation, because the absence of stable values or institutional alternatives capable of absorbing youth aspirations creates a normative vacuum, pushing them to search for alternative identities, which may manifest in violent forms of protest imbued with an impulse to restore a lost symbolic order.

In the Algerian case, youth protests of a violent nature can be read as a manifestation of societal anomie, as a segment of the youth experiences a symbolic disconnection from the political society due to a loss of trust in its institutions and the absence of clear prospects for social mobility and economic future; thus, violence transforms into a symbolic language for rejecting meaninglessness and a form of resistance against social disintegration through an unorganized striving to reconstruct belonging.

2-4-4-Relative Deprivation Theory

Relative deprivation theory is predicated on the hypothesis that individuals do not evaluate their socio-economic status according to absolute standards, but rather through social comparisons with others inside or outside their society. When individuals or groups perceive that the rights, opportunities, or rewards they receive are less than what they believe they deserve compared to other reference groups, a sense of relative deprivation emerges, which gradually transforms into a motive for protest.

In the Algerian case, this pattern is clearly evident among the youth, particularly university graduates, who compare their social and professional reality with the status they expect or observe among their peers in other countries or within more affluent classes of their own society. This gap between aspirations and actual reality generates a sense of frustration and injustice, which accumulates over time and morphs into organized or spontaneous social anger.

With worsening unemployment rates and widening social inequality, violent protest becomes a form of expressing collective grievance and an attempt to restore a symbolic balance between effort and reward. From this perspective, waves of youth protests in Algeria can be interpreted as manifestations of escalating relative deprivation—not merely as an expression of systemic rejection, but as a pursuit to reassert the individual's value within a social order perceived as unjust in its distribution of opportunities and rewards.

Consequently, protest violence cannot be understood merely as a reflection of structural crises in the distribution of power or resources; it must be viewed as a conscious social action practiced within the very fabric of the social structure, aimed at either reproducing or destabilizing it.

Actors do not operate outside the logic of the social fields that frame their actions; however, in moments of crisis, they possess a temporary potential to redefine the rules of the symbolic game governing the relationships between the dominant and the dominated; thus, protest violence becomes not an automatic reaction to marginalization, but a symbolic practice aimed at redrawing the boundaries of legitimacy and reshaping the social order from within.

3. Analysis of Social Marginalization Manifestations and Their Impact on Forming Violent Protest Behavior Among Algerian Youth

In the Algerian context, social marginalization transcends being a mere incidental reflection of economic crises or a circumstantial result of public policy failures; it represents a deeply rooted sociological structure that perpetuates relations of inequality and reinforces forms of symbolic and material exclusion affecting broad segments of youth, as this marginalization operates not only by depriving them of resources and opportunities but also by undermining their sense of belonging and social recognition, ultimately leading to the emergence of what might be termed "lived marginality," which translates into increasing protest practices.

The manifestations of this marginalization are evident in protest behavioral shifts characterized by violence, not perceived as behavioral deviance or moral delinquency, but rather as a symbolic mechanism for renegotiating power and recognition, where violence transforms into an alternative social language that expresses the rejection of exclusion and reframes the relationship between youth and the state, thereby constituting a form of non-institutionalized political and cultural expression that profoundly signifies a crisis of legitimacy and integration.

To analyze this interaction between marginalization and violent protest behavior, it is essential to deconstruct the multiple dimensions that reproduce social exclusion and entrench dynamics of violent protest, as follows:

3.1. Economic Marginalization

3-1-1-The Structural Failure of Economic Integration Policies

Despite the multiplicity of government programs aimed at youth employment, they have failed to achieve genuine and sustainable integration of this group into the labor market, due to a set of structural imbalances that have reproduced precarity instead of overcoming it, including:

- The patchwork nature of employment policies: Most programs are limited to temporary solutions such as pre-employment contracts and temporary positions, without addressing the deep-seated economic structures that generate unemployment; this has rendered these

policies akin to social pacification mechanisms rather than tools for development.

- The expansion of the informal economy and the contraction of the formal labor market: The proliferation of informal work has created fragile economic spaces that reproduce exploitation and weaken social and economic protections for youth, placing them outside any institutional system that guarantees stability or professional recognition.
- The disconnection between the education system and market needs: The Algerian university suffers from a growing gap between academic training and labor market requirements, leaving university degree holders vulnerable to long-term unemployment and exacerbating their feelings of marginalization and symbolic exclusion.

This structural failure in economic integration produces not only material deprivation but also generates symbolic deprivation, manifested in the loss of social recognition for the value of effort and knowledge; consequently, violent protest becomes an expression of a dual rejection—a rejection of poverty as a material reality and a rejection of exclusion as a symbolic reality.

3-1-2-The Symbolic Economy of Protest

Violent protest can be viewed as a form of symbolic economy through which marginalized actors seek to reclaim their lost symbolic capital within a public space that excludes them both materially and symbolically, as public spaces—streets, squares, and public facilities—transform into symbolic arenas for the struggle over recognition and legitimacy in the absence of economic and political integration mechanisms, where violence becomes a symbolic tool of pressure to redefine power balances within society; thus, the act of violent protest translates into an attempt to redistribute symbolic hegemony by reclaiming the right to appear and exert influence within a space typically governed by a logic of exclusion and marginalization.

Economic marginalization does not solely produce material deprivation but also reshapes the self-perception of marginalized groups, whereby violent action becomes a strategy to challenge entrenched economic and social hierarchies and a means to reconstruct the self through a logic of resistance rather than submission, and in this sense, violent protest

emerges as a symbolic practice expressing a struggle for recognition and dignity, far more than merely a rebellion against the established order.

3.2. Social Marginalization

3-2-1-Transformations in Social Structure and Their Impact on the Sense of Exclusion

The profound structural transformations Algerian society has undergone in recent decades have weakened traditional solidarity networks that once served as symbolic frameworks for protection and belonging, which have intensified feelings of exclusion and a loss of recognition, coupled with the failure of modern institutions to absorb vulnerable groups and integrate them into spheres of social participation

Also, the decline of social support networks, both within the family and the associational fabric, has contributed to the emergence of what can be termed forced individualism, pushing individuals, particularly youth, towards isolation and disconnection from the intermediary groups that previously provided them with social meaning and mutual recognition.

Within this symbolic void, violence sometimes becomes a compensatory means to reproduce social interaction, even if through confrontation or escalation, serving as a mechanism to reclaim symbolic existence within a space where the individual feels forgotten and excluded, as this form of violence can also be understood as an expression of an oppressed habitus formed within social spaces marked by precarity and inequality, because individuals experiencing marginalization do not produce violence as a free or random act, but as a conditioned response shaped by a perceptual framework forged under the weight of chronic symbolic and institutional violence.

The symbolic violence inherent in unspoken exclusion and the denial of cultural and institutional capital to lower social groups reproduces relations of domination in the form of physical or protest violence; thus, violent action becomes an attempt to rebalance skewed power relations and to assert recognition of the self within a social field that assigns it only a marginal position. In this sense, violence cannot be read in isolation from the exclusionary structures that generate it; it transforms into a symbolic language of protest against a social system that closes integration channels and denies recognition.

3-2-2-Protest Violence as a Redefinition of Social Identity

Protest violence constitutes a symbolic act through which the marginalized reconfigure their relationship with society. It is exercised not merely as a rejection of the status quo, but as a means to break social isolation and reproduce a sense of collective belonging, as the protest arena transforms into a domain for constructing an alternative collective identity, founded on rebellion and challenge rather than compliance and obedience in the absence of traditional integrating institutions.

In this context, protest groups form new solidarity networks outside the institutional framework, whereby the shared identity of the marginalized becomes a form of symbolic capital invested in confronting structures of social hierarchy, where violence is not merely an aggressive act, but a symbolic language for declaring presence within a public space that refuses recognition.

Furthermore, social marginalization entails not only an absence of recognition but also produces alternative forms of conflictual solidarity, whereby violence becomes a means to reconstruct the collective self and redraw the boundaries of the relationship between the individual and society—between those who possess recognition and those who strive to seize it.

3.3. Cultural Marginalization

3-3-1-The Loss of Cultural Reference Points and the Production of an Alternative Protest Identity

Algerian youth today experience a dual cultural schism: on one hand, there exists a conservative traditional value system deriving its legitimacy from the past (family, religion, custom, the authority of elders); on the other hand, there is a distorted modern system emanating from digital and media spaces, producing new modes of thinking and representation without offering genuine alternatives for integration or meaning.

This contradiction generates a state of cultural alienation—a loss of the ability to position oneself within a coherent symbolic order. Within this vacuum, youth begin constructing an alternative protest culture, manifested in styles of dress, music, everyday language, and even forms of physical and symbolic violence; this alternative culture is not merely a rejection but a search for a new voice within a space that does not acknowledge their

aspirations; it thus transforms into protest behavior imbued with cultural significance, involving both rebellion against old symbols and an attempt to redefine the marginalized collective self.

3-3-2-Violence as Cultural Discourse Against Symbolic Exclusion

Violence here is understood not solely as a physical act but as a cultural discourse aimed at breaking the symbolic silence imposed upon marginalized groups, as in the absence of cultural institutions that accommodate new youth identities (cultural centers, free expression spaces, independent youth media, etc.), violence becomes a symbolic means of negotiating cultural legitimacy. In other words, when youth are not recognized as cultural actors or full citizens, they resort to the language of violence as a language of recognition; it is a method of forcing society to listen and of rebelling against the dominant symbolic authority that determines whose voice is heard and whose is excluded.

Here, one can invoke Manuel Castells' perspective on resistant identities that emerge from the margins as acts of resistance against cultural and political power—through violence, marginalized youth forge an identity of resistance that redefines the self not as a victim, but as an actor who imposes their presence in the public sphere.

Therefore, cultural marginalization in the Algerian context signifies not only depriving youth of resources or employment, but depriving them of meaning—of the right to have their own symbols, voices, and unique worldview, as when this symbolic horizon closes, violence transforms into culture—that is, into a symbolic mechanism for expressing an identity that finds no recognition within the official cultural system—it is a protest against cultural guardianship as much as it is a rejection of social marginalization, thereby rendering violence the symbolic language of the periphery confronting the center.

3.4. Political Marginalization

3-4-1-The Failure of Political Participation Mechanisms in Absorbing Youth

The political exclusion of youth constitutes one of the most prominent manifestations of structural marginalization in Algeria, as the traditional political structure maintains distance from new generations through both weak representation in elected institutions and the constriction of official

dialogue channels, where this systematic absence of youth voice generates a pervasive sense of political futility, where political action is no longer perceived as a domain for change but as a closed space where decisions are made remotely from them.

When participation channels close, the street transforms into an alternative parliament and violence into a parallel political language to compel authority to listen; thus, youth who feel invisible within the political field resort to violent action as a means for recognition and existence, not necessarily as a nihilistic or destructive act. Consequently, public space—the street, the university, the neighborhood—becomes a symbolic arena for contesting legitimacy, where the relationship between citizen and state is renegotiated through confrontation rather than institutional representation.

3-4-2-Violence as a Re-engineering of Political Relations

Protest violence here cannot be reduced to its destructive or legal dimension; rather, it must be understood within the struggle between fields—that is, the conflict over who possesses the right to define what is legitimate or political. When the state monopolizes the symbolic capital of political legitimacy through its control over discourse, institutions, and representation, violence becomes a tool for the margins to dismantle this monopoly.

It is essentially a process of redistributing symbolic power from below, whereby marginalized youth attempt to reconstruct the political space outside official frameworks through protest forms that challenge the existing structure and produce new symbols of legitimacy. In this light, it can be argued that protest violence in the Algerian context is not a denial of politics but a rearticulation from the margins; it is a symbolic act aimed at re-engineering the relationship between power and society by transferring the center of political action from closed institutions to the open public sphere.

Thus, according to Bourdieu's theory, protest violence cannot be understood merely as a rejection of the system, but constitutes part of the struggle to redefine power and redistribute it (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 127).

4. Repercussions of Violent Protest Behavior on the Individual and Society in the Algerian Context

Violent protest is fundamentally a product of accumulated social tensions rather than a mere isolated, momentary act; it expresses a reconfiguration of the relationship between individuals and the state amid the absence of legitimate channels for expression and effective response. Although violence manifests as a periodic phenomenon in societies experiencing structural crises, its examination within the Algerian context necessitates delving into its mechanisms of production and reproduction, understanding it as a symbolic negotiation strategy among social actors.

Here, violent protest cannot be analyzed solely from a security perspective; it must be comprehended as an alternative language for the marginalized, reflecting a structural dysfunction in the relationship between power and society, because it is not merely a destructive act but constitutes a form of symbolic resistance that seeks to recalibrate power balances within the social system.

4.1. Psychological and Social Repercussions

4-1-1- Identity Disruption

According to Axel (Honneth, 1996, p. 161), social recognition constitutes a fundamental pillar for the formation of individual and collective identity. When a social group is deprived of this recognition—that is, the feeling that its existence is acknowledged and valued—it develops what Honneth terms a "recognition injury," a symbolic wound that generates protest behaviors aimed at restoring dignity and social visibility. In the Algerian context, this condition materializes within a generation of youth existing on the margins of both economic and political fields, who feel seen only during moments of social eruption, as this invisibility produces an identity crisis in the sense articulated by Anthony (Giddens, 1990, p. 29), as young people find themselves in a rapidly transforming society where traditional reference points (family, religion, work) have lost their explanatory power without stable alternatives being established. Consequently, violent protest becomes a symbolic practice for self-affirmation; the violent act is understood not as pure aggression, but as a search for a lost social identity within a space where recognition and representation are absent.

4-1-2-Violence as a Defensive Mechanism Against Psychological Breakdown

From a social psychology perspective, violent behavior can be interpreted as a psychological defense strategy deployed against feelings of helplessness and exclusion. When individuals perceive that their voices are unheard and that they lack genuine influence over public decisions, violence transforms into a symbolic tool for reclaiming agency and control. In the lexicon of symbolic sociology, this represents a forced rite of passage from a state of social invisibility to one of imposed presence, compelling the system to acknowledge those it has previously ignored.

In Algeria, certain violent protests within working-class neighborhoods or universities can be interpreted through this logic: violence serves not as an expression of aggression, but as a demand for recognition; it is a means of declaring "we are here" within a public space otherwise closed to marginalized groups.

4-1-3-Anomie and the Reproduction of Social Frustration

Émile Durkheim's theory of anomie (Durkheim, 1879, p. 219) offers a powerful explanatory framework for understanding the value chaos that accompanies societies undergoing profound social transformation, as when established norms disintegrate without being supplanted by new ones, individuals experience a state of disorientation and a loss of meaning, finding no rules to govern their expectations or define their position within the social structure. In Algeria, this condition translates into a youth sentiment characterized by a loss of horizons—unemployment, a lack of distributive justice, administrative corruption, and weak political representation, where this situation generates recurrent collective frustration, rendering violent protest a closed cycle: while it expresses collective anguish, it fails to produce substantive change, instead leading to further stigmatization and marginalization (Durkheim, 1879, p. 248), thereby, violence transmutes from an instrument of liberation into a mechanism for reproducing frustration and anomie within a social structure incapable of listening.

4.2. Social Repercussions

4-2-1-The Collapse of Social Capital

In modern societies, as Anthony (Giddens, 1990, p. 12) indicates, trust constitutes a vital element for the stability of social systems, functioning as a mechanism for managing risks that cannot be eliminated, as social capital is understood as the network of mutual trust between individuals and institutions, ensuring social cohesion and the perpetuation of systemic legitimacy, where the escalation of violent protest in the Algerian context has corroded this trust, and individuals no longer regard the state as a partner in development, but rather as a closed authoritarian apparatus, which has weakened bonds of solidarity, intensified tendencies toward isolation and civic apathy, and thereby contributed to the reproduction of social fragility in new forms.

4-2-2-Violence as a Tool for Producing Counter-Power

Violence cannot be reduced to an emotional outburst or an immediate reaction; it can be read as an endeavor to create an alternative sphere of authority that rivals state power. According to social movement theory, violent protests tend to generate parallel structures to official institutions, wherein youth networks form, adopting a permanent protest culture and redefining social conflict around the axis of legitimacy and symbolic sovereignty, where violence becomes an informal language of negotiation in the absence of institutional channels for expression.

4-2-3-Disintegration of the Social Contract

Thomas Hobbes reminds us that the social contract rests upon a balance of rights and duties between the state and its citizens, a prerequisite for ensuring civil peace, as the state's failure to incorporate youth demands through participatory and dialogic mechanisms has led to the disintegration of this implicit contract, where young people no longer feel part of the political community but have become actors operating outside it.

4.3. Economic Repercussions

4-3-1-Resource Drain

As waves of violent protests intensify, the state increasingly directs expenditure towards security and military sectors at the expense of investment in human and social development; this shift in public spending

structure creates what might be termed a control economy, where resources are reallocated towards social control rather than economic production, which leads to an imbalanced redistribution of national resources, prioritizing crisis containment over addressing root causes; consequently, security transforms from a function for societal protection into a self-sustaining productive system that consumes resources and reproduces economic dependency, thereby perpetuating a model of uneven development that excludes youth from the circle of benefit.

4-3-2-Capital Flight and Deepening Economic Disparities

Violence generates an environment of economic uncertainty, prompting local and foreign investors to withdraw or freeze their projects; this decline in investment and production weakens the economic cycle and exacerbates unemployment and poverty rates, particularly among youth who already occupy precarious positions within the labor market, and violence becomes both cause and effect simultaneously: while originating from economic marginalization, it subsequently reinforces this marginalization by disrupting investments and creating an environment hostile to development.

This dynamic establishes a vicious cycle of violence and poverty, whereby class structure is reconfigured on a new basis, privileging those with access to resources through the security apparatus or clientelist economic networks, contrasted against the progressive marginalization of groups outside these networks.

4.4. Political Repercussions

4-4-1-Disintegration of Traditional Legitimacy

The recurrent resort to violent protest erodes the symbolic capital of political institutions, rendering them incapable of fulfilling their representative and negotiatory functions; according to Manuel (Castells, 2012, pp. 311-312), the state's loss of capacity to manage social crises through legitimate institutional channels leads to a collapse of trust between citizens and the political system. This legitimacy vacuum paves the way for the rise of radical, unrepresentative discourses that seek to bypass rather than reform the existing order, creating conditions of acute political polarization and undermining the potential for long-term social consensus.

Within this context, public space transforms into an arena of symbolic contestation where multiple narratives compete over concepts of legitimacy

and representation, thereby redefining the very nature of political authority itself.

4-4-2-Violence as an Alternative to Traditional Political Processes

With declining confidence in formal participation mechanisms, violent protest emerges as a parallel political pressure tool operating outside institutional frameworks; according to Antonio (Gramsci, 1971, pp. 55-65), the state's loss of ideological hegemony leads to the emergence of counter-social forces that form a new historical bloc seeking to reconstruct the system according to its own logic.

In this sense, violence represents not merely a deviation from politics but an alternative politics practiced by marginalized groups when traditional channels of expression fail to accommodate their demands; however, this transformation carries significant risks, as it corrodes civil public space in favor of confrontational logic, potentially escalating conflict from the level of reform to that of structural state disintegration; thus, violent protest in the Algerian context constitutes not merely a circumstantial political crisis but reveals a structural flaw in the legitimacy system, whereby the state fails to reproduce social consensus, transforming public space into a perpetual symbolic battlefield between authority and society.

5. Mechanisms for Containing Violent Protest Behavior and Enhancing Social Integration of Algerian Youth

Containing protest violence cannot be achieved through temporary tactics; it necessitates a profound restructuring of the social and political fields, aiming to dismantle root causes rather than merely confronting them upon eruption.

5.1. Rebuilding the Relationship Between Youth and Social Institutions

The relationship between Algerian youth and institutions is not merely a communication gap but a deeply rooted crisis of trust embedded in historical and political contexts, wherein youth feel marginalized from decision-making spheres; therefore, containing protest violence requires redefining the social contract to ensure mutual recognition, not just temporary pacification.

5-1-1-Mutual Recognition

Instead of perceiving youth as a passive entity requiring control, institutions themselves must be re-envisioned as spaces capable of reshaping according to social transformations; here, Habermas's methodology of communicative action can be adopted, whereby dialogue becomes not merely a procedural exercise but an integral part of institutional structures themselves.

5-1-2-Institutional Empowerment

Merely involving youth in consultative frameworks without real authority is insufficient; institutional structures must be redesigned to equip younger generations with direct tools of influence, which can be achieved through:

- Transforming local councils into youth platforms with tangible influence in policy formulation.
- Launching digital democratic platforms that enable youth to submit community initiatives and discuss them directly with authorities.
- Amending legislation to guarantee mandatory youth participation in relevant legislative committees.

5.2. Developing Sustainable Economic Policies

Studies indicate that a central factor driving youth towards violent protest is their perceived lack of control over their economic future; consequently, addressing this behavior necessitates transforming them from passive consumers into active producers within the market.

5-2-1-From a Rentier Economy to an Economy of Opportunity

The reliance on subsidy-based policies must be transcended in favor of developing economic systems that provide sustainable employment opportunities through:

- Adopting a shared economy model that enables youth to access resources without necessarily owning them;
- Supporting youth-led startups through tax incentives and non-traditional financing mechanisms such as crowd funding;
- Restructuring the labor market in alignment with the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, where employment opportunities

extend beyond traditional sectors to fields like artificial intelligence, digital analytics, and cultural industries.

5-2-2-Re-engineering Vocational Training

A paradigm shift from certificate-based training to competency-based training is essential, whereby:

- Entrepreneurship training is integrated across all academic and professional specializations;
- Business incubators are established within educational institutions to ensure the immediate application of acquired skills.

5.3. New Cultural Policies

Violent protest behavior is not merely an economic reaction but an expression of a symbolic struggle over identity and social status; therefore, addressing this phenomenon requires reconstructing the cultural system to make youth feel part of a meaningful societal project.

5-3-1-Reconstructing Collective Discourses

- Deconstructing stereotypes about youth in official and media discourse, replacing them with narratives that promote a culture of success and participation;
- Supporting cultural production that reflects the aspirations of new generations, such as digital literature, video game development, and independent cinema.

5-3-2-Reactivating Public Spaces as Youth Cultural Arenas

- Transforming public squares into interactive spaces incorporating urban arts like graffiti and interactive performances;
- Encouraging alternative, youth-led media that enables them to articulate their issues independently of traditional channels.

5.4. Political System Reform

Violent protest is intrinsically linked to the absence of legitimate channels for expression, where youth resort to violence as a compulsory option resulting from blocked political horizons; consequently, any containment strategy must incorporate genuine political reform that provides youth with tangible opportunities for influence.

5-4-1-Restructuring Political Institutions

- Reducing the bureaucratic barriers that prevent youth from accessing decision-making positions;
- Establishing independent youth councils with genuine legislative and advisory powers;
- Easing restrictions on the formation of independent youth movements, ensuring that participation is not confined to traditional political parties.

5-4-2-Achieving Electoral Justice

- Lowering the candidacy age for elections to enable better youth representation within legislative bodies;
- Implementing youth quotas in elected councils to ensure balanced intergenerational participation.

5.5. Reform of Social and Security Justice

5-5-1-Restorative Justice as an Alternative to Punitive Justice

- Applying restorative justice methodologies in dealing with protesting youth, integrating them into social rehabilitation programs instead of traditional punitive measures;
- Drawing inspiration from international experiences in reintegrating violent protesters through community-based programs that enable them to play a positive role in building their future.

5-5-2-Reforming Security Doctrine

- Enhancing training in negotiation techniques instead of relying on violent security solutions;
- Integrating youth into community security initiatives, thereby transforming them into partners in protecting social stability rather than treating them as a source of threat.

- Conclusion

This analysis clarifies that social marginalization in the Algerian context is not merely an incidental outcome of economic or political imbalances, but a productive structure that continually reconfigures forms of integration and recognition within the social field, where the protest violence enacted by segments of youth should not be understood as behavioral deviance or a rupture from the system, but rather as a counter-social language through which marginalized groups attempt to reclaim their symbolic presence within a space devoid of recognition.

As the crisis of trust between the state and society deepens, and as legitimate channels of expression become obstructed, violence transforms into an indirect negotiate means for redistributing symbolic and political capital, as the sociological approach confirms that the roots of violent protest lie not in the violence itself, but in the failure of social integration mechanisms and the collapse of recognition systems that provide individuals with a sense of belonging and participation.

In light of this, transcending protest violence becomes contingent upon reconstructing a societal project founded on justice and mutual recognition—one that restores to youth their status as actors rather than threats, which necessitates structural reforms across the economic, political, and cultural fields, grounded in:

- Empowering youth as genuine participants in decision-making processes;
- Reorienting the economy towards generating opportunities rather than perpetuating rent-seeking;
- Entrenching a culture of mutual recognition in place of a culture of control and exclusion.

Building a balanced society is not achieved by intensifying surveillance or deterrent measures, but by restoring trust between the citizen and their institutions through a comprehensive integration project that positions youth as levers for social renewal, not targets for control and monitoring policies; thus, it can be asserted that social marginalization is not a structural inevitability, but a product susceptible to deconstruction and reform, provided we transition from a logic of crisis management to a logic of producing social justice and mutual recognition.

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