

Non-Thematic Edition

Studies in
Politics
and
Society

Volume 9, December, 2020



A Journal Publication of the Nigerian Political Science Association

STUDIES IN POLITICS AND SOCIETY
A Journal of the Nigerian Political Science Association

SIPAS
NON-THEMATIC
Volume 9, Number 1&2, December, 2020

Studies in Politics and Society; Volume 9, Number 1&2, December, 2020
www.npsang.org

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EVALUATING THE PERSPECTIVES ON NIGERIA'S RESTRUCTURING

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Abstract

The Nigerian state is gripped by the debate on restructuring that has come in different dimensions and contexts. Although the debate is often viewed in the political context especially the politics that characterized the 2015 presidential election, so many issues have been thrown up that cut across all the sectors of Nigeria. After a review of the main perspectives, the paper argues that it is still possible to separate the chaff from the wheat in knowing the crucial issues that have made restructuring a topical issue in Nigeria. It is in this regard that the paper frowns at the not-doing-anything perspective. Given the emotions and commitment shown to the numerous issues in contention in the debate, the Nigerian state needs to find a way of addressing the concerns to ensure stability and carrying every segment along in nation-building efforts. However, both the apostles and opponents of restructuring need to find a middle course in addressing the restructuring debate in the country, while the federal Government creates the enabling environment to reach a national consensus on the debate.

Keywords: Restructuring, federalism, perspectives

Introduction

If there is any political concept that has dominated the Nigerian political space in the last couple of years especially since the return of democracy to the country, it is the concept of restructuring upon which several perspectives exist on its meaning and how to bring it about. Nigerians have been engaging it to the point that it became a campaign issue in 2019 general elections. Some candidates in the elections invested a lot on it by coming out with robust ideas on restructuring and how to go about it, hoping that their electoral chances would be greatly enhanced by their positions on the testy concept (Abubakar, 2018a). Some went as far as to conclude that anybody who opposed restructuring was lazy (Abubakar, 2016).

Due to the initial aversion of President Buhari to the idea of restructuring the country, his opponents in the elections made it an issue and concluded that Nigeria was not making the expected progress because of the fake federalism it parades as all known attributes of what they called true federalism are not being respected in this country (Abubakar, 2018b). In their view, the centralist tendencies being exhibited by the country's version of federalism are an anathema that are not known to any functioning federalism in the world (Osaghae, 2016).

Perhaps, reflective of its magical attributes, the unrelenting efforts of proponents of restructuring concept appear to be making some impact on persons who were hitherto opposed to it (Buhari, 2019). One finds the sudden change in the tone of President Buhari in engaging the concept as an eloquent testimony to more acceptability of the concept. Although the President has not gone far enough in his embrace of the concept, his public declaration that the country now needs a true federalism to be able to make more progress is heart-warming to the age-long proponents of restructuring (Adebanjo, 2017; Odumakin, 2017).

So far, at a more general level, one can make some remarks on the nature of the debate. There are some Nigerians who still claim that they do not know what the term means despite the ceaseless campaigns that have been stepped up on it. Of course, Akinyemi, (2017) has come up with what it really means. The engagement of the concept so far indicates that it is more evident in urban centres, as the rural Nigeria seems unperturbed about the debate which is more of an elitist affair, which means that it is an instrument in the hands of privileged Nigerians in their contestation for power and relevance. As once noted by Agbaje (2017), the marginalized groups such as women and youths are not yet at the centre of the debate; their position seems to have been appropriated by vocal elites on the two sides of the debate. The debate has also become more of media issue as all the activities around it either in favour or otherwise have centred on the use of the media.

Unfortunately, the manner of proposing it and opposing it has assumed a regional dimension but broadly, it appears to be a reflection of North-South dichotomy. Its vocal advocates are largely based in the south, while its critics are more northerners. This tendency is itself a major setback for the debate that is retarding a national consensus from being developed on the issue of restructuring.

Based on its topicality and the fears that are associated with the restructuring debate in the country, this paper attempts to evaluate the perspectives that have been shared by Nigerians on restructuring. To be able to do this effectively, the next section of the paper examines the practice of federalism in Nigeria that has given birth to the restructuring debate after which it engages the issues in contention in the debate. The next section examines the perspectives on offered suggestions on how to resolve the debate. The last section concludes the presentation.

The Practice of Federalism in Nigeria

Nigeria's journey to federalism began in 1954 under the British rule. Based on the diversity in Nigeria and in responding to agitations by some Nigerian nationalists that led to series of constitutional reforms, the British agreed with notable nationalists that the best political system for the country was the federal structure. Unlike other federal systems, the Nigerian version did not come about through the desire by the generality of the people. This fundamental evolutionary flaw was to later exert pressures on the country in its practice of federalism (Alli, 2005).

Although the succeeding post immediate independence Balewa government tried its best in operating the federal structure which people now celebrate as a model in the nation's practice of federalism, not minding its imperfections that contributed to the termination of the First Republic in the country. The reality of federal practice under the military was to sack all the redemptive features it contained under Balewa.

Indeed, the decision by General Aguiyi Ironsi's government to jettison it and the partial restoration of the federal principle by the Gowon military government, sowed the seeds for the trouble that Nigeria has in its federal practice. By the time the military finally exited the political scene in 1999, the federal structure had been bastardized and that has led some people to conclude that what we now have in the country is not federalism but a pseudo-federalism (Osaghae, 2016; Ojo, 2017; Elaigwu, 2018).

One of the legacies of the military is the stifling strong centre that dictates the pace for the constituent parts. This is more evident in the nature of fiscal federalism being practiced in the country, whereby the centre takes over fifty-two per cent of the federal allocations. The states and local government councils are left with what is barely enough for them. Also, contrary to what was experienced under the First Republic, major economic activities such as mineral resources are firmly under the control of the centre.

There is also the congestion of the Exclusive List where duties that are supposed to be performed by other layers of government are reserved for the centre. People have raised the issue of agriculture which ordinarily should have devolved to the states and local government councils that own the lands on which farming takes place, but the power over it is being shared with the centre that has no lands based on the 1978 Land Use Act that conferred the control of lands on the states. Yet, there is a big bureaucracy in Abuja that is managing agriculture for all parts of the country.

In the absence of control by the states over some sectors, they are made the appendages of the centre that distributes financial allocations to other levels of government. The ritual of all states going to Abuja for financial handouts distinguishes Nigeria's federalism from most other federations. Ideally, some vital resources are supposed to be controlled by other tiers of government in the federation (Ojo, 2017; Anyaoku, 2017).

The skewed federal practice in the nation has produced some noticeable implications for Nigeria. A few of them are worth discussing in this paper. One, the integrative elements that a federal system should exhibit are missing. Over sixty years of independence, most Nigerians still think in terms of their tribal roots with the cry of marginalization vibrating across the country. Virtually all parts of the country harbor some resentment against the current constitution of the country.

Thus, we have the Arewa Youth Congress (AYC) speaking for the north; Odua Peoples Congress (OPC) for the southwest and the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB), among other separatist groups, speak for the southeast. With the ever presence of these ethnic champions, the nation-building efforts in the country are not being pushed forward (Abubakar, 2017; Ugwu, Okibe and Eleje, 2018).

Two, Nigeria currently has 36 states plus the Federal Capital Territory, but most of the states are unviable to the extent that they are in arrears in the payment of salaries and allowances to their workers. Gratuities are also in arrears in the midst of decayed infrastructure. It is not an overstatement to say that no development is taking place across the states. Most times, when people analyse Nigeria's affairs, they often forget that the country is a federal state where resources at all levels should be pulled together for the rapid development of the nation. However, with insolvent states and local government councils, all attention is focused on the centre which itself is

facing some financial stress, leading to accumulation of debts both local and foreign (DMO, 2019).

Three, it is not surprising that the centre is having a huge financial burden to carry. The contributory role of the constituent parts to the national treasury is not being seen as the states seem to be happy with their on-looker's role. At times, state governors pile up pressures on the centre over issues they should ordinarily handle. Creativity and innovation in terms of generating more wealth for the nation are not being experienced across the land. So many untapped resources are buried under the lands with state governors not challenged to tap them for the overall development of the country.

It is not uncommon to hear state governors arguing that if they try to do anything for wealth generation, the federal will emerge from nowhere to claim control over their efforts. The impact of this development is being seen in illegal mining that has encouraged banditry in Zamfara and other states that leave both the federal and states economically worse-off.

Four, to be sure, the unhealthy federal practice has almost relegated the local government councils to the background. Not sure where they belong in the scheme of things, the local administrations have been elbowed out of functional existence as their basic duties of tax collection and provision of markets have been usurped by the states under the excuse of joint accounts over which the former have no control. Most citizens have therefore, forgotten the desirable role of the councils in the provision of essential services for the people (Mohammed, 2005).

Five, in a way, the nature of political system in the country is the incubator for corruption. As more resources though not adequate, are concentrated at the centre, the struggle to control it is always fierce with all the country's fault-lines resorted to gain an advantage at the expense of other contenders for the various positions in the legislature and the presidency. Apparently because of the immense resources at the centre, some politicians often resort to selling off their assets in order to be adequate in the struggle for power to control the centre as whoever gains the control automatically becomes the controller and distributor of the resources that are attached therein. With laws on corruption and mismanagement mere decoration items, limited to the centre, pilfering goes on unhindered at the state level to become a major threat to the existence of the country. Thus, politics remains the most attractive business with 'do-or-die' mentality serving as its underlying principle.

Six, federalism is expected to bring governance closer to the people but in the country's experience, that is not easily the case. The operators of the system fancy treating the people with contempt as their basic needs are not usually a top priority. Local harnessing of resources and the spirit of competition in terms of development are not what one can identify with the country's practice of federalism in recent times. The centre is always there to give monthly handouts and other special allocations to other levels of government in the country.

Seven, Nigeria's federalism thrives in an oil economy that sustains it. Although a finite resource, the tendency in the country betrays this reality. Money comes into the federal kitty from it without much consideration for its finite nature. Its springboard role in stimulating development in other sectors is being frustrated by the attitude of a drunken sailor being displayed by successive managers of the country. Diversification is usually mouthed about but not much of it has taken place as virtually all other sectors have been 'killed' by the oil sector that fetches over 90 per cent foreign exchange for Nigeria. It is safer to conclude that the continuous oil revenue though unpredictable at times has compounded the problem of the ideal practice of federalism in the country as economic planning is being paid a lip service to (Osinbajo, 2016; Osinbajo, 2018).

Eight, in another context, the availability of oil and the way it is being managed have another implication for Nigeria's federalism. Agitations over resource control are common with oil-bearing communities still restive over the matter. It has been contended that going by the principles of federalism, constituent parts should be allowed to control their own resources and pay royalties to the centre. In the Nigerian context, the centre controls the main source of revenue, oil, a situation that has turned a section of the country that produces oil to be perpetually restive. The desire of the Niger Delta Zone is to be allowed to control the oil resources in their area or to be given an enhanced percentage based on derivation. This request is not, however, pleasing to other parts that have objected to the request. As the zone that lays the golden egg, anytime there is an upheaval there, the whole nation feels its impact as oil production will be affected and the amount of money available for sharing will also be reduced. These, will in turn, produce a telling effect on the practice of federalism in the nation especially intergovernmental relations (Mohammed, 2006, Orebe, 2019).

Nine, due to the reliance of Nigeria on a mono-cultural economy, healthy social relations have not developed among the states with those without oil always taking exception to the claim by oil bearing communities that they are sustaining the nation; all non-oil producing states are parasites that are feeding fat on their resources. Of course, some of the non-oil producing states have countered the argument by maintaining the position that their farm produce brought about the oil facilities and installations that are sustaining the nation. As the arguments go back and forth, the smooth operation of federalism is being negatively affected as the co-operative spirit of federalism is not being made a reality among the constituent parts (Report of 2014 Constitutional Conference).

Ten, based on the deep-rooted reservations about the federal practice that cover the security management and is responsible for the slow pace of development in the country, there is an increased level of agitations for fine-tuning the federal structure to make the country a balanced federation. Historically and in comparative terms, all federations are work-in-progress, as everyone of them is always in the mood of restructuring which can take a variety of forms such as secession, revolution, adjustments, self-determination, among others. Nigeria has, no doubt, been restructuring, manifesting in state creations, boundary adjustments, the switch from parliamentary system to presidential system, among others (Saliu, 2017a).

The current wave of restructuring therefore, finds easy accommodation within the country's socio-political history. The only difference is that it is more widespread, as about four of the geopolitical zones in the country would seem to have embraced it and that means it is no more a localized or sectional agitation that was hitherto restricted to southwest of the country. Hardly can one open the pages of notable national dailies in the country without one issue or the other connected with it being raised. Worthy of note also is the fact that the current agitations have embraced virtually all sectors of the political economy as there are economic, social, geographical and political restructurers in Nigeria.

Issues in Contention in Restructuring Nigeria

Nigeria is in the thick of debate for restructuring. Analysts, commentators and political actors have taken different positions on the debate. This section of the paper attempts to present the major issues that Nigerians have raised on the ongoing debate on restructuring. It needs to be noted that

the issues are not mutually exclusive as the personalities involved in the debate hold different positions on restructuring depending on the issues under discussion and the audiences being addressed. Notwithstanding, some discernible perspectives can still be distilled from many concerns that have been expressed. In the main, we have perspectives on the economy, politics, security, devolution of powers, tiers of government, fiscal federalism, geography and others.

Political Issues

Some Nigerians have pitched their tent with the political aspects of the debate. Their concerns are in different dimensions. A few of them are examined in this paper. The first to be noted are the people whose belief is that the country is practicing the improper federalism. Their arguments centre around the breaches of federal principles that are associated with Nigeria's federal practice. One of these is a tendency whereby the federal/centre is too big and unwieldy. It is carrying out functions that are better performed by the constituent parts.

To these concerned Nigerians, there is no way the nation can make progress with its centralist federal system. There are others whose displeasure is with the powers that the federal has over other units in the federation. They are pissed off with the power that the federal has over certain issues. One of these is its power to approve the creation of local government councils. In most notable federations, the states or the second leg of administration has power over the control of local administration.

The argument is that the centre is far removed from the rural areas for it to be effective in controlling the affairs of the councils including their creation. The issue of imbalance in the number of states in each of the geopolitical zones has also been raised. While the southwest has six states, the southeast has only five. For the apostles of this perspective, there is no way the country can be at peace when a geo-political zone has a lesser number of states. We therefore have geographical restructurers whose interest is to have political justice done to the southeast by increasing the number of states in each zone to make it equal (Ekweremadu, 2017).

Appointments and their distributions across the zones have agitated the minds of some other Nigerians. The reality of virtually all the security apparatuses being under the control of the northern segment of Nigeria is

detested and therefore, they have called for a fairer regime of distribution of appointments across the country.

Politics is noted for allocation of resources including projects to all parts of the country. There are Nigerians who believe that projects being executed by the federal government are skewed in favour of certain political zones at the expense of the other zones. What is difficult in spreading them across the zones, if not the states? Some restructurers have asked. In demonstrating this concern, the sittings of the 8th National Assembly were characterized by the need to be fairer in the distribution of projects especially to the southeast zone (Abaribe, 2017).

Among others, the Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB has been unrelenting in its crusade for secession from the federation on account of marginalization of the southeast in the scheme of things. For some, the fact that no citizen of the Igbo extraction has ever had the opportunity of ruling Nigeria since the time of Major Aguiyi Ironsi has been used to strengthen this perspective. There are also calls for the sacking of the presidential system of government and its replacement with the parliamentary system because of the apparent relative cost of running it. The assumption is that with the stress in the national economy, the parliamentary system commends itself for the nation in addition to its less cumbersomeness to operate for the country with its many diversities and a high illiteracy level. More so, the presidential system though elegant, is only best suited for a better organized and developed political environment, not Nigeria.

In strengthening the federal system in the country, some apostles of restructuring have called for the disbandment of local administration in view of the paralysis that currently defines that level of administration in the country. It has been contended that Nigeria is about the only federation with the third tier of government with constitutional recognition. It would be better for the nation to be in the league of other federations with two tiers of government for the smooth operation of its federal system. Happenings in Senegal and Burkina Faso where the Houses of Senate have been sacked, have encouraged some Nigerians to ask for a unicameral legislature for the country. The assigned legislative functions of the National Assembly can adequately be taken care of by one legislative house in place of the two that the country currently has. The Senate in particular has been descended upon for its low productivity, yet being run at a high cost to the nation. Another dimension of

this is the call for a part-time legislator in view of the volume of duties that are being carried out.

Specifically, the low level of development being witnessed in the country is a source of worry to some concerned Nigerians. This has been attributed to the nature of federalism being practiced. For now, the states instead of being the real centres of developmental activities, are now distribution centres where their managers do not reckon with developmental aspirations of their citizens. Corruption is unperturbed by the concern of the federal to combat it and mismanagement seems to be the order of the day at the state level where the helmsmen allocate resources in the fashion desired by them, not in the direction of rapid development that people crave for.

This unfortunate situation has been blamed on the long list of items that come under the Concurrent List that provides for sharing of some responsibilities with the octopus federal. Arising from this, apostles of restructuring believe Nigeria needs to restructure to devolve more responsibilities to the states and accelerate the level of development in the country (Odumakin, 2017).

Economic Issues

The impression needs not to be formed that the calls for restructuring are only concerned with the political arrangements in the country. There are economic dimensions to the debate. Although politics is key to it, the economic angle to the debate is equally important. We will therefore, present the major economic dimensions under this heading.

Some agitators have focused their attention on economic issues such as the mono-cultural economy, fiscal federalism, control over economic resources, high cost of governance, federal allocations, among others. Oil is central to the current political economy of the country. Anything that affects it is bound to affect all other sectors. Nigeria walked into and exited from recession in 2017 but again back into it in 2020 due to the unreliability of the oil sector which prices fluctuate according to external developments that are beyond the control of the country. The rampaging Covid-19 epidemic also has a hand in the slide of the country into another recession barely three years of exiting from it. Anytime the prices of oil in the international market falls, the effects are usually felt more in Nigeria due to the twin issues of it being the mainstay of the economy and its exportation in its raw form.

The development is not pleasing to some Nigerians who share the belief that several years after independence, the country should have used oil to get out of oil. Their agitation for restructuring is focused on diversification beyond mouthing it so that the country can walk away from the occasional shocks that come from the sector; the economy needs to be diversified by focusing on other sectors such as agriculture to balance the foreign earnings of the nation (Ahmed, 2017; Agbakoba, 2017; Osinbajo, 2016).

There are others who have joined the restructuring debate on the strength of the high cost of governance in the country. It has been posited that hardly will the country develop when the recurrent expenditure consumes about 70% of the annual budget of Nigeria, leaving the capital project part of the budget at a miserable 30%. They, therefore, want the cost of running government to come down through the act of restructuring of the administrative structures (Agbakoba, 2017; Ogunseye, 2016).

The history of Nigeria's economic management shows a tendency towards private and public sectors-led approaches. Some restructurers want the nation to make up its mind on the direction it wants to go (Ezekwesili, 2018). In view of the wide embrace of neo-liberal economic system, some of them would want the nation to vote completely for the private sector-led economic management. All the impediments or vestiges of public sector-led economic management should be removed to make the national economy more attractive to the elusive foreign investors to come to the country to invest.

There is a counter-argument. The apostles of the public sector approach to economic management are not impressed with the neo-liberal economists. Based on the level of development in the country, there is no way the gate can be left open for the wholesale adoption of the capitalist mode of production (Aremu, 2015). That will harm the country more than the little gains that will accrue from the private sector-led initiatives.

Nigeria has two chambers of National Assembly, one based on equal representation, while the other is based on population. Some Nigerians are not too pleased with this arrangement. Derived from the cost consideration, the country cannot afford the high cost of maintaining the 469 members of the National Assembly. For example, the annual budget of the Senate of N120 billion which its members considered to be inadequate is offensive to some Nigerians who are not persuaded that the Senate is adding much value to governance in the country as its members have displayed a tendency to be

after their own welfare, not issues of utmost concern to the generality of Nigerians (Saraki, 2019).

Also informed by the cost element, the twin issues of merging of states and scrabbling of the Senate are being debated within the context of restructuring of the country. The 36-state structure in the face of low-aching economy is frowned at and the existence of two legislative houses are not fancied by some restructurers who want the states to be merged and senate scrabbled to reduce the cost of running the Nigerian nation (Ogunseye, 2017).

Not only do some Nigerians want more powers to be devolved to the states, they also want more resources to be allocated to them in carrying them out efficiently. These Nigerians are not pleased with the federal government taking 52.2% of the federal financial allocations at the expense of the states and local government councils. Examples have been given of the insolvency of most of the states that lead them to be unable to pay the salaries of their civil servants.

Contrary to the high premium placed on the principle of sustainability in the establishment of a federation, Nigeria's federalism is a negation of the principle as the states cannot perform their duties without monthly allocations from the federation account. A reversal of this situation is being called for (Report of APC committee on true federalism, 2017; Report of 2014 Constitutional Conference).

Social Issues

Another perspective which this paper has recognized is the social perspective. There are Nigerians who have viewed the call for restructuring as an ethnic warfare, i.e., some ethnic champions have been using the debate to advance the cause of their regions at the expense of other ethnic groups. Yakassai (2017) is very strong in his perspective that the southwest is using restructuring as a way of creating problems for the nation. Adebajo (2017) has however countered this perspective on the ground that the southwest has been calling for restructuring a long time before the Fourth Republic and the intention is not against any other region but for the betterment of the nation. Ethnicity is therefore, an issue in the current debate on restructuring.

The country needs to do something about mutual suspicion that is reigning in the country. Some social groups are not really committed to the goal of Nigeria for development because of the perceived cases of justice

meted out to them. The only way to change the tide is to restructure to give satisfaction to such groups (Ohaneze, 2017).

Some conflicts that are going on in the country such as the herders-farmers conflicts though have a long history behind them, their current dimensions have worsened inter-group relations with mutual suspicions across the nation. The failure of all initiatives to resolve the issue has encouraged some Nigerians to call for restructuring of the nation to stem the tide of the conflicts and find a permanent solution to the problem (Soyinka, 2019; Obasanjo, 2019a; 2019b).

Insecurity generally reigns supreme in Nigeria with kidnapping, *boko haram*, herders-farmers and armed robbery serving as manifestations of the state of insecurity in the country. Some have doubted the capacity of the federal government to overcome the seeds of insecurity. Restructuring is therefore being called for to effectively manage them.

Nothing is Wrong with Nigeria

The paper has also recognized another perspective that is dubbed as “doing nothing perspective.” In fairness to some of its apostles, they admit that all is not well with the federal structure in the country but they are not convinced that restructuring is the most urgent antidote to the problems of nation-building in the country (Obasanjo, 2017). The first strand of this perspective is that which is associated with the position that there is nothing fundamentally wrong with the present constitution of Nigeria (Gowon, 2017). There are policies and laws in place to address the concerns that people have with the federal structure in Nigeria (Obasanjo, 2017).

In any case, the concept of federalism is universal but its application varies from one country to another. There are peculiarities associated with every federal system in the world. When people talk about faulty federalism, it is nothing more than peculiarities that require addressing without agitations. The constitution and extant laws can be relied upon in addressing them. They, therefore, maintain no restructuring stance (Gowon, 2017; Obasanjo, 2017).

Another stance which has been identified with Obasanjo (2017) is the belief that if any restructuring is required, it is in the direction of re-orientating the attitude of Nigerians. For him, whatever shape of federalism that Nigerians may want to come up with that does not address the attitude of Nigerians will not deliver the outcome being desired. He contends that the country does not

need any restructuring as the worries of people can still be addressed using the existing structure.

There are others who believe that restructuring is not going to do any good for the nation as there is not yet consensus on it. A perspective thus exists that it will be difficult to start it without dissolving the nation. There are many injuries in the nation that people are emotionally attached to. Addressing some and leaving out some others will create more agitations that may eventually lead to the disintegration of the country. For all these reasons, Nigeria should be left as it is, while efforts are made along incremental lines in adjusting the federal system (Gowon, 2017).

An Evaluation of the Perspectives on Restructuring

Given the many issues involved in restructuring Nigeria, only a few of them have been discussed in this paper. Arising from this, our attention in this section will equally focus on a few of the proposals that have been put forward in confronting it.

The first approach is the path of constitutional engineering which people believe is involved in bringing about restructuring. While some have called for a return to the 1963 Republican Constitution with its flavor for a balanced federation, some others have opposed it. For those who share this view, the 1963 constitution, in comparative terms, is believed to be far better than the 1999 constitution, as amended, in the practice of federalism. Under it, regions were allowed to control their resources and they only paid royalties to the centre. Based on this arrangement, a better developmental climate prevailed then in the country.

Regional governments were solvent to the extent of embarking on developmental projects. Marketing Boards established for groundnut, cocoa, palm oil and rubber were generating revenues for the regions, which made them not to be too dependent on the federal government. Each of them had its own constitution and maintained some presence outside the country. Freedom of actions guaranteed to the regions made them not to be appendages of the centre. For example, while the northern regional government refused any assistance from Israel, both the western and eastern regional governments and the centre had warm relations with Israel. Therefore, for some older Nigerians, the experience of First Republic is a model in federal practice (Abdullahi, 2017).

For this paper, however, there is no doubt about a better practice of federalism under the republic when compared with the present situation but no impression should be created that all was well under the regime. One admits that there was a spirit of competition among the regions in terms of development, but there were also troubling moments in the federal practice.

One clear example that did not project the republic as a model was the western regional crisis that led to the controversial involvement of the centre in aid of one of the factions of the Action Group that was involved in the crisis. Poor management of the crisis in the form of declaration of a state of emergency obviously contributed to the fall of the republic. People have also not forgotten the constitutional crisis that made President Nnamdi Azikwe to have difficulty in inviting Tafawa Balewa to form his government when it was clear his party, the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC), did not have a majority in the legislature. For some days, the country had no leader of government.

More importantly, the population of Nigeria shows that young Nigerians are in the majority. How are they going to appreciate the constitution and the parliamentary system on which it was anchored? Most Nigerians are more familiar with the presidential system birthed in 1979 with the Shagari government. So, taking them back to the First Republic as being suggested may necessarily run into some problems. Some good sides of the republic may be borrowed but to argue for a wholesale return to the republic may not be the right way to go with the glaring mismanagement of diversities that has made mutual ethnic suspicions to be rife in the country (Soyinka and Ogunwusi, 2019, Masari, 2017).

With the specific reference to the parliamentary system of government, one does not think it is going to be cost-saving in the context of contemporary Nigeria (Anyako, 2017). Our politicians do not have the restraint of the past politicians and their commitment to overall development of the nation is at best doubtful. Given the mentality of the country's politicians, it, too, can be made as expensive as the maligned presidential system due to their lack of discipline. Ordinarily, the presidential system in its original formulation is not as expensive as it has been made in Nigeria. What I think need to be tackled is not necessarily the system of government but rather the operators who always crave for the creation of comfort zones.

In the same way, one is afraid that if tomorrow Nigeria goes for part-time legislators, the cost may still be high as unknown expenditure headings may be created by politicians that may make people to wonder if the change to

part-time legislators was worth it. Going by what the law says, the cost of running the National Assembly should not be high but the penchant of members to be self-serving has turned the institution into a money-consuming outfit. The real issues to address therefore, are the attitude of members of the National Assembly and the process of recruiting them. Once the process is not made expensive and the demands by their constituents on the members are tolerable, the current regime of high cost can be brought down. The fight against corruption, if extended to the two chambers, can drastically bring down the cost of running the legislative institution. Nigeria, with her diversity, can still make do with two chambers and on full-time basis if the environment is seriously worked on to discourage a parasitic living among their members.

Security management is a federal function which some citizens are not pleased with it (Soyinka,2019; Obasanjo, 2019a; 2019b). Therefore, they want states to be in control of the police. This is a normal practice in federal states but there must be a reason why it is an exclusive federal assignment in the country. Some state governors who cannot pay the emoluments of their civil servants may not be a credible alternative to the less satisfactory performance of the federal on this score too.

The fear of misuse is also there, as opposition elements may begin to experience more challenging moments in the hands of the ruling parties in the states. They are likely to populate the police with their sympathizers. It is therefore, necessary to argue that the control of police can be made a joint responsibility of both federal and the states for the time being until such a time when the country's federalism and the political actors are more mature in the handling of state matters.

Jonathan (2019) and others have canvassed the view that a revisit of the report of the 2014 National Conference convened by his administration represents an angle for the Buhari government to look at in addressing agitations for restructuring. Given the caliber of persons who participated in the conference, its rich recommendations, if considered by the current government in the country, can navigate it away from its tense situation. Indeed, Nigeria had another constitutional conference in 2005 under the Obasanjo government whose report like the 2014 has not been acted upon. My view on these reports is that the administration that empaneled them ought to have actualized their recommendations. There is also the dimension of lack of representation to contend with on the reports. With particular reference to the 2014 conference, the APC, now the ruling party in Nigeria, did not participate

in the conference and this partly explains the disdain that President Buhari has for the report.

He has therefore come up with his own preference on how to address the calls for restructuring. President Buhari holds the strong belief that all agitations for restructuring should be channeled to the National Assembly for consideration (Buhari, 2017). Two issues are worth noting in this regard. One, not all issues on the agenda for restructuring are constitutional in nature that will require legislative inputs. Two, the last attempt at amending the constitution that touched on devolution of powers under the 8th Assembly showed unmistakably the dichotomy between the north and south. Based on this scenario, the Buhari government has to show more interest in the debate in finding an amicable solution to it.

On the issue of what economic management strategy to adopt, this paper believes that the wholesale adoption of the private sector-led approach is not best suited for the country at least for now. The economy will come into more danger if the public sector is completely eliminated. A mixture of the two is still necessary as the private sector also depends and feeds on the public sector through patronage for survival. In the absence of sustainable welfare programmes in place in Nigeria, the only antidote against a worsening human security dimension is to allow some role for the public sector as is the case in western countries. It is theoretical to believe that the private sector is strong enough in Nigeria to take over a commanding height of the economy.

There seems to be a consensus on the devolution of powers to the two lower levels of government and the urgent need to review the federal allocation formula. However, there is need for caution here. With corruption alive in most of the states, the more money that goes to the states, the more the likelihood of irresponsible behavior one will see being displayed. It is not enough to give more money to the states, there is also the need to improve on leadership recruitment at that level of governance. Already, not many people are impressed with what they do with their current allocations. Similarly, one doubts if additional responsibilities are given to both states and local government councils, they can be justified based on their current level of delivery. We think Nigerians should also spare a thought on how to re-direct affairs at those levels of government in such a manner that they can be made to be alive to their responsibilities.

Mere restructuring would not be an adequate antidote for local government councils. They really need re-inventing as their derailment is total

and complete in most of the states. We do not see anything changing in their orientation, even if the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) takes over the conduct of elections into the councils. The quality of manpower and the stifling control of the governors are other realities. Judging by the way the Joint Account is being operated, according autonomy to the councils may not do much to change their situation. What we think needs to be done is to encourage people with integrity to serve at that level of governance, while some checks are put in place for judicious use of resources. This paper, however, supports the removal of federal control over creation of local government councils. That should not foreclose the preparation of guidelines on how to create them and what needs to be done in case of aberrations.

Nigeria does not need elaborate restructuring to diversify its economy. This can be done administratively. No Nigerian is opposed to diversification of the national economy to wean it off from the strong control of oil. All what is required is to formulate policies and programmes that can realistically encourage other sectors to improve on their performance in revenue generation.

In the same way, there are in existence copious laws that can be re-activated to address the lumpsidedness in appointments. There is no need for restructuring to bring this about. The federal character and the quota principles are already adequate to address issues connected with unfair distribution of appointments. It only requires sensitivity, commitment and vigilance on the part of Nigerians to allay the fears that people have and solve the problems.

The idea of merger of states is easier to mouth about than to bring it into fruition. No doubt, most of the states are unviable economically, judging by their capacity to generate internal revenues. They are, however, rich in untapped resources. In view of the complications that will arise from merger of states, this author believes that the states can be left the way they are as whatever criteria worked out to address the issue will create more problems than being a solution to the high cost of running government. What is then required is to challenge existing states to discover more mineral resources and the federal should share power over discovery of new resources with the states. The mining laws should also be reviewed further to accommodate the states on the exploration and marketing of the discovered resources.

Other incentive regimes can equally be put in place to encourage state governments to take more risks in revenue generation. No Nigerian will want to forgo the emotional attachment to the existing state structure. Equally laced

with dangers is the idea of going back to the regional governments. Nigerians especially the younger ones, are more accustomed to the state structure that it is theoretical to believe that they will easily go with the concept of regionalism at the expense of the states. While the major tribes are pressing for it, areas such as the North-Central geopolitical zone may not be willing to succumb to the bait, as religion and ethnicity are so diverse there that the people's fancy may not be easily teased by the idea.

On the issue of more states' creation that some people have canvassed for, the position of this paper is that the case of the southeast can be isolated and addressed, instead of opening the floodgate for more state creations. Drawing the line would be difficult as every geopolitical zone has arguments for more state creations to address some perceived injustices. All Nigerians seem to have agreed that the existing states are challenged economically and adding more states will not be a wise decision. The current number of states should be maintained, while efforts are made to consolidate on them.

One argues that every hamlet wants to be a state because of the problem of leadership in the country. Once there is a new orientation that delivers fairness and justice to all, there will be little motivation to demand for more states. From the perspective of the national economy and constitutional provisions, the idea of state creation cannot fly, at least for now.

This author does not agree that nothing can be done to the federal system being practiced in the country. Restructuring in whatever form is a kind of lubricant that makes federalism to work better. If the USA is experiencing continuous demands for restructuring, Nigeria with less than 100 years' history of existence cannot but pay attention to it in one way or the other (Saliu, 2017c).

The issue of attitudinal change is important but it can be pursued together with other forms of restructuring. They are mutually inclusive. What I think is unnerving about the debate is the lumping of everything not working in the country with restructuring. There is need for shifting the wheat from the chaff. Of course, we are in agreement that the issue of restructuring the country should not be equated to disintegration. Some of the issues can be addressed without much noise as it has been done with the granting of financial autonomy to local councils and the judiciary. The two sides in the debate therefore need to develop the spirit of give-and-take. Consensus-building is vital to bringing the apostles of restructuring and its opponents to a

point where they can develop understanding for each another's point of view (Masari, 2017).

The federal government must take a lead in creating a platform for ventilating views on restructuring. There is nothing to fear about the concept. There is no truth in the perspective that the agitation for restructuring is aimed at targeting any particular section of the country as what is agreed is likely to get implemented with all the constituents giving the opportunity to air their views on it (Saliu, 2017c).

In the theatre of politics, all views are welcome but not all views can ever be agreed upon. Undoubtedly, there is too much politics in the restructuring debate and that should be expected. For instance, there is nothing wrong with the Niger Delta Zone asking for total control of the oil resources located in its region. It is up to other parts to agree to it or modify their position. That is the beauty of democracy and it should be expected in nation-building efforts.

Conclusion

The paper has evaluated the perspectives on restructuring in Nigeria. Its major submissions are that Nigeria as a federal system has been restructuring its socio-economic structures right from the days of colonialism that birthed federalism in the country, and all the post-independence governments have also restructured the country in one form or the other. The current debate on restructuring is in line with the tradition of the country. However, unlike the previous efforts, the country has been more engaged by agitations for restructuring, covering all spheres and sectors. It has its proponents as well as opponents who do not agree that restructuring is the most urgent national issue to address in contemporary Nigeria. After a review of the contending issues, the paper went into discussing the perspectives on offered solutions to the national issue.

After evaluating the perspectives on it, the paper came down with the conclusion that there is too much politics in the debate which it considered not unusual. However, it submitted that all kinds of issues have featured in the debate and therefore, the offered solutions are equally varied and diverse. It held the view that more responsibilities should be given to states and local councils but with a caveat that something should be done to prepare the states for more responsibilities. The idea of giving states some roles in security provisioning also caught its attention and its view is that it is desirable but it

harboured some fears about the preparedness of the states to discharge this responsibility. The paper therefore, called for a gradual approach in bringing this about.

It further held that in view of the too many perspectives being shared on it, there is need for consensus among Nigerians on which issues and perspectives to consider for implementation. It therefore, concludes that confronting the issue of restructuring as the Buhari government in its second term has started, is commendable. The nation can no longer pretend that the agitation for restructuring is a localized issue. Its wide embrace calls for more attention to be paid to it.

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**LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY IN ELECTION MONITORING:
AN ASSESSMENT OF CREDIBILITY RATING IN NIGERIAN
ELECTIONS**

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Abstract

This paper makes a case for the growing literature on the use of technology in election management. It sets to provide evidence on how the use of modern technology by civil society groups in election observation and monitoring helped in assessing election credibility rating in Nigeria. This is despite the risks that characterize Nigeria's election security environment. The article argues that election observation and monitoring should be overhauled to totally embrace the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), and with the citizens as critical stakeholders. However, as Nigeria makes effort to digitalize its electoral process, concerned stakeholders should closely monitor shrewd politicians whose activities may be inimical to the process.

Keywords: Technology, Elections, Election monitoring, Credibility, Civil society.

Introduction

Conducting credible elections in Africa poses serious challenge, which issues from three fundamental conditions: first is the winner-takes-all character of

African politics where election is a major deciding tool, second is the process of organizing elections which does not substantially guarantee that popular candidate(s) would be the ones to be declared winner, and third is the juicy opportunities that come with political offices. Amidst these situations, Africa continues to witness a declining voter turnout during elections, rising disengagement of citizens especially women from politics, and increasing distrust in political institutions and politicians (Aichholzer & Allhutter 2009). As such, both the election management bodies (EMBs) and other concerned stakeholders, including the civil society organizations (CSOs) who observe and monitor elections are constrained on how best to deliver an acceptable, free, fair and credible process that would restore the hope and trust of the people in the electoral process. One sure way of addressing these notable problems has been to strengthen the elements of direct participation of citizens through application of modern technology in election management. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) (2018) notes that a number of countries have turned to technology in a bid to make elections more efficient and cost-effective, and to strengthen stakeholders' trust in each stage of the electoral cycle. This is the revolution brought into the electoral process by information and communication technologies (ICTs).

The 2007 general elections in Nigeria, which were adjudged as the worst electoral outing in the annals of the country's political history (Ezirim & Mbah 2011), and the enactment of the 2010 Electoral Act increased the agitations for the adoption of ICT in election management. The voices of notable organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and MacArthur Foundation escalated these agitations, which helped in pushing for the use of technology in civic engagements. For instance, MacArthur Foundation and the UNDP in collaboration with the Joint Basket of Donors (JBD) held a one-day interactive meeting in Abuja on 24 March 2010 on the use of ICT in civic engagements. Central to this interactive meeting was to enlighten the CSOs on how to enhance the conduct of credible elections by deploying ICTs in election observation and monitoring, beginning with the 2011 general elections. In view of this development, the pattern of

election observation, monitoring and supervision witnessed some revolutionary changes using ICT. Consolidating on the advantages provided by ICT in election observation and monitoring, civil society groups in Nigeria embarked on some modern technological innovations such as the creation of ‘virtual communities’ through internet, especially the digitalized election monitoring situation rooms and social media networking. These online outlets give the public information infrastructure that is independent of the state. Despite these initiatives, the link between the use of ICT in election monitoring and the credibility of election has received little academic attention in Nigeria. Thus, this article provides evidence on how modern technological innovations of the CSOs in election monitoring have improved the conduct of credible elections in Nigeria, although not without some notable challenges.

Data for this study were generated through field observations, interviews and desk research. Essentially, the research benefitted from an interview with the Executive Director of Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC), Clement Nwankwo, who also doubles as the convener of Election Situation Room (ESR) in Nigeria. Others interviewed include Dr Freedom Onuoha – a senior lecturer and consultant to CLEEN Foundation on the Situation Room, Audu Liberty Oseni of CLEEN Foundation and Barrister Esther Uzoma of Proactive Gender Initiative (PGI). The interviews were conducted between September 2018 and June 2019. The information obtained from the interviews was transcribed and presented in tables. Logical deductions were used to explain other non-numerical data culled from secondary source.

The remaining parts of the paper were structured as follows: the next section clarifies the trio of election observation, monitoring and supervision. The following section engages the debate on the link between the use of modern technologies in organizing elections and credibility of the exercise. What follows next is the contextualization of the election security environment in Nigeria, which makes less human presence through modern technological innovations within the voting arena vital. Immediately after this,

is the contribution of CSOs' modern technological innovations to elections credibility in Nigeria. The final section contains the conclusion.

Understanding Election Observation, Monitoring and Supervision

Although these three levels of intervention in electoral process have been used interchangeably, they do not in any way mean the same thing. However, they have one thing in common, which is "strengthening the delivery of credible elections across countries". Observation, monitoring and supervision deal with pre, during and post-election matters such as voters' registration, nomination of candidates, campaigns, voting and counting during elections, and dispute resolution, among others (ACE Practitioners' Network 2006).

Election observation is the process by which elections conducted are assessed by specialized organizations, both local and international, to evaluate the freeness and fairness of the process, levels of access, performance of electoral officials and bodies, and behaviour of stakeholders in the process. This is a general report that highlights strengths and weaknesses in the electoral process and provides recommendations for improvement. Accredited observers are usually free to move from one electoral location to another. However, they have neither the rights to intervene in the electoral process nor submit claims or complaints to the EMB.

Monitoring is very closely related to and often confused with observation. Nevertheless, monitoring has an expanded mandate. Thus, it incorporates an additional ingredient that has to do with reviewing the EMB's capacities and the adequacy of procedures in the electoral process. Sometimes, EMBs on their own organize monitoring team to help them identify gaps that could impede electoral success. Monitoring team could therefore make suggestions that could lead to electoral reforms.

Election supervision is the highest in the list of election intervention mandates. Supervision is usually undertaken by participants in the elections

such as candidates, political parties and security agencies through their accredited agents. Supervisors ensure that the guidelines governing the conduct of elections, including the electoral rules and regulations, as well as procedures, are fulfilled correctly by relevant stakeholders, especially the EMB. They are usually assigned to specific locations, where they take part in the endorsement and certification of the electoral process. Unlike observers and monitors, they have the prerogative to submit claims and observations to election officials, and to file complaints, and to obtain official copies of electoral documents such as election results.

Use of Modern Technologies and Election Credibility in Africa: A Theoretical Framing

Plethora of thoughts and arguments have dominated the literature on the use of modern technologies *vis-à-vis* their benefit or otherwise in conducting a credible election in Africa. Some policy-makers, analysts and politicians also offer explanations that are most often contradictory or tainted with politics and designed to undermine the adoption of ICT in election management. This explains the vehement resistance of electronic voting (e-voting) in many African states, including Nigeria (Ayeni & Esan 2018), as well as the endorsement of electoral laws that are pro-ICT. Thus, mixed feelings trail the use of modern technologies in election management not only in Africa but also around the world (IDEA 2018).

For instance, Dalton (2015) notes that since 2000, the development of the internet has potentially opened up new channels and forms of political participation, particularly for the younger generations who are generally engaged in online activities. Similarly, the Collaboration on International ICT Policy in East and Southern Africa (CIPESA) (2012) supports the argument that the use of ICT in electoral process has the potential to enhance citizen advocacy and engagement, and to increase government transparency and accountability. This has evidently defined the shift in the mode of election

management that is driven by technological innovations and which has significantly changed the ways people express their political views and try to influence politics. With the development of social media, blogging, file sharing and other elements of an interactive internet, political activities, including election campaigns, observation, monitoring and coverage, among others are increasingly embracing the internet as a communication tool, and various reforms are expanding in the form of e-Government (Dalton 2015). In the same vein, Aichholzer & Allhutter (2009) observe that, with the diffusion of the world wide web (www), new expectations were raised that modern technological tools may alter the situation of politics and stimulate increased citizens' participation in political decision-making. Other scholars argue that the use of modern technologies in election management has revolutionized political participation in several ways, including in eliciting opinions of people through online election surveys (Clarke et al 2008), campaign communication (Karlsen 2009; Karan, Gimeno & Tandoc 2009) and opening up new opportunities for people to express and pursue their interests (Sola-Morales & Hernandez-Santaolalla 2017; Collin 2015; Abott, MacDonald & Givens 2013; Rai 1994). Abott *et al* (2013), for instance, note that the social media have revolutionized political activities in two distinct ways: first, by democratizing information, and second, by expanding political participation and mobilization. Mustapha (2017) also holds the view that unlike the traditional media such as radio, television and newspapers that are largely in use in the offline method, the social media are more interactive and accessible. More empirically, Ayeni & Esan (2018) demonstrate that technology enhances the credibility of the electoral process by drastically reducing incidences of electoral malpractices such as: ballot box stuffing, result sheet mutilation, manipulations, over voting, and alteration of result sheets. These scholars maintain that modern technologies hold the key to ensuring a credible election that is less manipulable by unscrupulous politicians.

Very few other scholars such as Akram & Marsh (2016) dismiss the application of technologies in election management as mere *clicktivism* or *slackivism*, referring to an easy way of doing things which may not encourage

sustainability. While not ruling out the potentials of ICT in the electoral process, Obasanjo *et al* (2018) argue that the innovation does portend some threats that could reverse the hands of democratization in Africa. Other scholars hold the view that the use of ICT such as social media in electoral process could be counter-productive. For instance, relying on the activities on Facebook in Nigeria and Indonesia as examples, Apuke and Apollos (2017), Olabamiji (2014) and Anggraini, Mustofa and Sadewo (2014) maintain that, the social media create room for deliberate distortions of information, maligning, intimidating and discrediting political opponents through comments and posts, which could trigger conflicts. Deibert (2019, 25) referred to this as “the road to digital unfreedom.”

Although ICT presents enormous opportunities in civic engagements, scholars note that its adoption in the electoral process is challenged in three major ways: first is the digital divides between the global north and south, which may deepen the control of democracy in Africa by the West (Sambo & Alexander 2018; Avgerou 2008), second is difficulty ICT faces when it is applied in rural and less technologically advanced areas (Iwuoha 2018), and third is the tendency of modern technology to escalate post-election violence given quick dissemination of information, including fake news and hate speeches through internet and social media (Ireton and Posetti 2018; DePaula *et al* 2018; Martens *et al* 2018). Despite the arguments against the use of ICT in the electoral process, it is beneficial to CSOs involved in election observation and monitoring in three specific ways: firstly, it reduces the physical and face-to-face contact of observers and monitors during elections. This saves the team the security threat that often underpins election environment in Africa, and which has resulted in injury or loss of lives on the part of observers, monitors or even supervisors. Secondly, the use of modern technologies saves time and cost. Huge amount of money and time needed to have a smooth election observation and monitoring by engaging many actors directly can be addressed through the deployment of ICT tools and activation of citizen journalism through social media networking. Thirdly, using modern technologies has the potency to rope greater number of actors into election

monitoring and observation without being directly engaged. Essentially, it also helps the organizations to cover wider geographic areas, including places that are far removed from centres and areas of interest. These detached places are usually where the bulk of electoral malpractices take place in Africa.

Election security environment in Nigeria

Election security has to do with all measures taken to counter fear and threats to safety and of electoral violence. Essentially, electoral violence involves all “acts or threats of coercion, intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that arise in the context of electoral competition” (Verjee, Kwaja & Onubogu 2018, 2). When the violence is perpetrated to affect an electoral process, it may be aimed at delaying, disrupting or derailing a poll; in an attempt to influence its outcomes. Virtually, every election in Nigeria has been challenged by one security threat or the other, especially politically-motivated violence (Onwudiwe & Berwind-Dart 2010; Omotola 2010a). Potentials for violence in election periods come from political, economic and social dimensions of a society. Scholars have therefore blamed the recurrent political violence in Nigeria on the neo-patrimonial character of African states (Omotola 2010b), weak institutions of democracy in the continent (Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs 2013), lack of ideology-driven political parties (Ugwueze 2016; Omotola 2009) and the struggles that underpin a developing democracy (Burchard 2015).

Since 1999, elections in Nigeria have been characterized by perceived or manifest security threats. These threats have been heightened in recent times following the elevation of fake news, hate speeches, and bureaucratic lies as means of profiting from electoral outing. For instance, the Governor of Kaduna state, Nasir el-Rufai, raised a security alarm that crisis erupted in Maro, Kajuru Local Government Area and that about 66 Fulani people were killed. This alarm was later discovered to be false. Yet, it came from a chief

security officer of the state. El-Rufai’s alarm was believed in many quarters to be aimed at inciting reprisal attacks and scaring voters from the areas from coming out to vote (*Thisday* (Nigeria) newspaper, 17 February 2019). The same Governor threatened that foreign election observers and monitors who interfered in the 2019 general elections in Nigeria would return to their countries in “body bags” (*the Punch* (Nigerian) newspaper, 21 February 2019). These combined to create a tensed election security environment during the 2019 general elections. In the same vein, election observers, INEC and other government actors openly condemned the unprofessional conduct of the military during the collation of the 2019 Governorship and State Assembly elections in Rivers State (Ezugwu 2019). These allegations point to militarisation of the electoral process in Nigeria, which creates a trend that is strong enough to discourage citizens’ participation in politics.

The climax of electoral violence in Nigeria was the post-election crisis of 2011, where about 800 people were killed and up to 65,000 others displaced (HRW 2011). This was despite that the 2011 elections were adjudged as significant improvement upon the 2007 elections in terms of administrative credibility and fairness (UNDP 2012). It was the worst post-election violence in Nigeria for decades (Lunn & Harari 2015). Threats of repeat of this experience continued to pervade Nigeria’s election security environment, as witnessed even in the just concluded 2019 general elections. Thus, many states in Nigeria presented security risk during the last elections (see table 1).

Table 1: Nigeria’s election security hotspots

Geopolitical Zone	Risk Categorization	States
North East	High	Yobe, Borno, Adamawa, Bauchi, Taraba
	Medium	Gombe
	Low	Nil

North Central	High	Plateau, Benue, Kogi, Kwara,
	Medium	Nassarawa,
	Low	Niger, FCT
North West	High	Kano, Zamfara, Kaduna,
	Medium	Sokoto
	Low	Katsina, Jigawa, Kebbi
South East	High	Imo, Abia,
	Medium	Enugu, Ebonyi, Anambra,
	Low	Nil
South-South	High	Delta, Akwa Ibom, Rivers, Beyelsa
	Medium	Edo, Cross River
	Low	Nil
South West	High	Ekiti, Ogun,
	Medium	Oyo, Osun, Ondo
	Low	Nil

Source: CLEEN Foundation (2019).

Out of the 36 states of Nigerian federation, threats of insecurity and violence were high in 20 states; eleven states recorded moderate or medium risks; only five states and FCT were not feared to have possessed threats of violence. In effect, distribution of election security threats cuts across the six geopolitical zones with north east (five states), north central (four states) and south-south (four states) appearing highly vulnerable to election insecurity. This is not surprising given that the three geopolitical zones have been ensnared in violent conflicts arising from Boko Haram insurgency, herders-farmers conflicts and Niger-Delta militancy/oil bunkering, respectively. Observing and monitoring elections are highly dreaded in these areas because of high volatility to electoral violence. Yet, free, fair and credible elections must be recorded in the

geopolitical zones and monitoring is central to having such credible exercise. In view of this, election stakeholders, including the CSOs, are increasingly escalating the use of ICT tools before, during and after elections to ensure both credibility of the exercise and protection of lives and property of INEC, media organizations and CSO monitoring teams. Thus, addressing the issue of electoral security threats in order to deepen democratic practice has been at the front burner of political discourse in Nigeria. This prompts scholars such as Ugwueze, Onuoha & Nwagwu (2016) and Mohammed-Nasiru & Kasimu (2012) to suggest the adoption of ICT in security administration.

Addressing some notable frauds that increase election insecurity, INEC has continued to make efforts to ensure that issues of manipulation of voters register, snatching and stuffing of ballot boxes, inaccurate profiling, and mutilation of results, among others are resolved through some kind of computerized system. This resulted in the adoption of some modern technological innovations in election management by INEC. Adoption of modern technology by INEC in managing elections in Nigeria started in 2003 through the use of optical magnetic recognition (OMR) form and automated finger prints identification system (AFIS). However, both OMR form and AFIS could not prevent massive electoral malpractice. Although there was improvement in the use of technological means in 2007 through the addition of Direct Data Capture Machine (DDCM), both 2003 and 2007 elections in Nigeria were adjudged to have failed short of minimum international best standard (Ezirim and Mbah 2011; UNDP 2012). This explains why INEC under Attahiru Jega in 2011 completely discarded all the data collected between 1999 and 2007, including the electronic voters' cards that were used during the 2007 general elections. Efforts were made to improve on the electronic innovations and the result became the continuous voter registration and the use of smart card readers (SCR) in verifying the authenticity of the voter on the day of election. Added to these innovations is the electronic collation (e-collation) and transmission of results to INEC's central server introduced and used for all the off-cycle elections conducted between 2016 and 2018 in Anambra, Ekiti, Osun and Sokoto (Bamigbola 2019). These

innovations have succeeded at preventing ballot box snatching and stuffing, as well as production of results before elections were concluded (as it was the case during the 2003 and 2007 general elections in Nigeria), among others. Despite the innovations, the 2015 general election still faced serious security challenge. This was owing to “the grave security threat posed by the Boko Haram insurgency, the competing claims to the presidency by northern and southern politicians, a keenly contested campaign smeared by inflammatory messages, and serious gaps in electoral preparations” (Orji 2015, 73). The same applied to the 2019 general elections. To be sure, INEC could not transmit result to its server electronically (Bamigbola 2019), and the phone numbers provided by INEC for taking complaints during the 2019 elections all got crashed (Oseni 2019). These created suspicions and have been generating credibility questions concerning the 2019 general elections.

Although INEC’s modern technological innovations slightly improved the electoral process in Nigeria, the election security environment remained charged with vote-buying becoming a new national political epidemic and burning of ballot boxes and invalidation of votes by armed political thugs giving stakeholders serious concern. In the 2019 presidential and national assembly polls, for instance, election related violence led to the death of at least 39 Nigerians within two days of the elections (*Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room 2019a*). This was distributed as follows: Borno State – 4, Bayelsa State – 4, Rivers State – 16, Yobe State- 2, Kogi State - 2, Ebonyi – 2, Lagos – 1, Oyo- 1, Delta- 2, Zamfara – 1 and Taraba State- 4. In Lagos State, there were reports of disruption of voting by suspected political thugs who were shooting in the air in some places and setting ballot boxes and paper on fire in others. In the Okota, Isolo and Oshodi suburbs of Lagos, there were reports of violence; some caused by non-arrival of INEC officials and materials. During the governorship and state assembly polls, reports from *Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room (2019b)* revealed that more violence erupted with suspected thugs in Ezza North LGA of Ebonyi State who were reported to have set fire to election materials at the RAC. In Etinan LG of Akwa Ibom State, Youth Corp members were attacked by suspected thugs

while voting materials were snatched and a police officer shot in Odukpani LGA of Cross River state. Six (6) Journalists were kidnapped in Ahaoda West LGA of Rivers State, with more than seven (7) people killed in Rivers and Kogi states. There was also the burning of INEC offices and materials in Anambra, Abia, and Benue states, including taking some INEC staff hostage on the day of election by suspected thugs (Duru 2019). With high insecurity during election, the use of ICT has become inevitable.

CSOs' Modern Technological Innovations and Election Credibility in Nigeria

Available evidence shows that CSOs have played vital roles in the enthronement and consolidation of democracy in Nigeria, as many of them, including Campaign for Democracy (CD), Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR) and Civil Liberties Organisations (CLO), were very instrumental in the restoration of civil rule in 1999 (Omede and Bakare 2014). In line with their efforts to consolidate democracy in Nigeria, there are several modern technological innovations introduced by CSOs to ensure adequate election monitoring and credibility. Central to these innovations is the creation of 'virtual communities' through internet such as the digitalized election monitoring situation room and social media networking. Each of these innovations is designed to ensure that observation and monitoring penetrate all the nooks and crannies of Nigeria's election environment. No doubt, they have, in one way or the other, improved the credibility of election by boosting and escalating some sharp practices of both the EMB officials and other security personnel that would have otherwise gone unnoticed during the offline era. Efforts were made to explain how some of these innovations have conducted to strengthen the electoral process, including conducting credible elections in Nigeria.

Election situation room (ESR)

Election Situation Room is an information sharing platform between and among civil society groups working on elections to strengthen collaboration, advocacy and provide rapid responses to correct dysfunctions in the management of the electoral process (Holt 2018). In Nigeria, ESR was convened by human rights activist, Clement Nwankwo of PLAC, and it is made up of CSOs that have track records on public safety, security, transparency and accountability, governance and rule of law, electoral matters, gender and development (Onuoha 2019). These CSOs were INEC accredited observers and monitors working in support of credible and transparent elections. They include: PLAC; CLEEN Foundation; Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC); ActionAid Nigeria; Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD); Enough is Enough Nigeria; Centre for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD); Partners for Electoral Reform, Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth and Advancement (YIAGA); Human Rights Monitor; Proactive Gender Initiative (PGI) and Alliance for Credible Elections (ACE), among other CSOs numbering over seventy. Essentially, ESR thrives on a collaborative approach that allows for the balance of diverse opinions with the common goal of free and fair elections and its focus is not on criticizing the electoral process, but ensuring that elections are credible (Diallo 2017). Since 2011, ESR has played important role in ensuring credible election in so many ways in Nigeria; some of which are summarized in table 2.

Table 2: Contributions of ESR and SMN to conduct of credible elections in Nigeria

E S R Initiative	Target	Result achieved	Challenges noted
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Common digital monitoring and observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * To provide a unique ground for cross-breeding of ideas among CSOs, the media, and other monitoring teams * To produce a reliable and harmonized post-election report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Addressed conflicting reports of election observers that characterized the offline era. * Reduced incidence of report manipulation by unscrupulous politicians 	Attempts by politicians to corrupt the initiative
Escalation of election irregularities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * To expose sharp practices of INEC officials, security agencies and political parties * To scare potential defaulters from behaviours that are inimical to the electoral process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Exposed malpractices that would have gone unnoticed or unaddressed, including vote buying * Reduced incidents of manipulation on the part of INEC officials * Reduced impunity and intimidation from security agents deployed to provide election security 	Undermined adequate access to volatile interest areas
Interfacing with INEC, security agencies and Diplomatic community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * To help INEC improve voter sensitization and awareness * To assist INEC with some modern technological innovations * To help security agencies in planning and deployment of personnel for election security * To liaise with diplomatic community in delivering an internationally acceptable election result 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Enhanced the avenue for citizens to ventilate their opinion on political matters, especially on election day * Improved voters' interest in the electoral process. * Ensured prompt confirmation of sharp practices by security agents. * Helped in checking comments that are inimical to peace and security 	Fear of dominance by established CSOs

Serves as Information Command Center	* To reach out to wide audience at the same time * to get a real view of the activities on election day	*Provided opportunity to observe and monitor elections in hundreds of polling units across the country at the same time * Helped in addressing notable challenges such as late arrival of materials and technical failures, among others.	Fear of donor preferences in determining outcomes
Activation of online citizen-journalism through social media	To rope the citizens into the CSO information unit, especially those in areas not covered adequately by accredited observers or monitors	Reported cases of unprofessional conduct of INEC officials, security agencies, as well as technical failures in some polling units on election day, especially in areas that might have been overlooked.	Fear of increased incidence of fake news

Source: transcribed from the interviews with Clement Nwankwo, Esther Uzoma, Freedom Onuoha, and Audu Liberty Oseni

As table 2 demonstrates, it is evident that ESR has contributed in improving election credibility since its introduction. First, it provides the platform for a common digital monitoring and observation of elections by credible CSOs in Nigeria. This initiative has helped in reducing production of conflicting reports that usually issue from election observers after election, as well as in reducing the incidence of possible report manipulation by unscrupulous politicians. Second, as an escalation room, ESR has helped in escalating issues of misconduct on the parts of both the EMB and security agents. In Anambra off-cycle election of 2016, escalation of a reported case involving a police officer who was caught on camera trying to compromise the credibility of the election resulted in his apprehension and prosecution (Onuoha 2019). In the same way, vote buying that came to characterize Nigeria’s elections in the recent times was escalated by both the ESR and

through other social media platforms by the CSOs (Oseni 2019). These types of sharp practices could have gone unnoticed in the offline era. To be sure, this initiative helped in strengthening professional conduct of the officials of both the EMB and security agencies. Essentially, it was the escalation that made INEC to ban voters from moving into the voting cubicle with their phones in an attempt to prevent selling and buying of votes (Oseni 2019, int.). Third, by interfacing with INEC, security agencies, and diplomatic community, ESR restores and improves the trust of the electorates in the electoral process. This has helped in ensuring that Nigerian elections, especially those of 2011 and 2015 met the minimum international best practice. The introduction of electronic collation and transmission of results, largely used during the off-cycle elections in Anambra, Ekiti and Osun by INEC was credited to the interface. The initiative also helps security agencies in ensuring professional conduct, and leverages the diplomatic community in checking inimical and inflammatory comments. Finally, as an information command centre, ESR provides opportunity to observe and monitor elections in hundreds of polling units across the country at the same time, including in rural areas where the bulk of rigging takes place. These findings are in consonance with Diallo (2017) argument that ESR improves the credibility of elections by putting the electoral process in the spotlight while increasing accountability through evidence-based documentation of how elections are conducted; thus, addressing some limitations inherent in the traditional election observation model. This helps both the EMB and other relevant stakeholders to take urgent actions that could forestall electoral violence and disenfranchisement of voters.

In the concluded 2019 general elections in Nigeria, the ESR discovered that there was high level of militarization, following the deployment of military arsenal including fighter jets and attack helicopters across the country (*Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room 2019b*). ESR report also revealed that accredited observers and poll officials were arrested with their phones, and other personnel effects confiscated by the military and police across the country, especially in Oruk Anam LGA of Akwa Ibom State. Also, the

technological innovation was able to burst military officers involved in arresting poll officials and carting away election materials in Ini LGA of Akwa Ibom State, including military interference in Okrika LGA of Rivers state (*Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room 2019b*).

Social media networking (SMN)

Social media networking has been conceived differently. It is sometimes retained as social media, social networking, online social interaction, or connection. As media, network or interactive site, social media networking is the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue (Cohn 2011). It is also seen as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, view, traverse and/or communicate, as well as others outside their connections but who are within the system (Boyd and Ellison 2007; Liu & Ying 2010; Ahmad 2011).

Since social media revolution, there has been a rising interest in online social networking, which is often used when referring to popular websites such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, MySpace, and LinkedIn, among others. Many of these online services started with targeted audience but shortly expanded to a more general audience and are very popular with younger generation. Meanwhile, those who drive electoral violence as foot soldiers are largely drawn from among this category of population. Because of its usage and wide acceptance by the youths, many organizations have resorted to using the media in transacting most of their businesses. As such, CSOs find SMN as a great tool for reaching wider audience and making impact in the electoral process. The use of social media by CSOs as a tool of political mobilization in Nigeria started around 2011 but gained wider coverage in the build up to the 2015 general elections. Since then, it has continued to record progressive achievement in terms of ensuring the conduct of credible elections (refer to table 2).

During 2011 and 2015 general elections, the CSOs made enormous use of social media as watchdog in communicating political events, including informing the public as regards the results in several states as they were being collated. This practice prevented manipulation, increased political awareness among citizens and added value to the political culture (Apuke and Tunca, 2018). In the off-cycle elections in Ekiti and Osun governorship in 2018, this practice was largely used. However, while the Ekiti and the first ballot in Osun were highly successful, the CSOs were prevented from observing or monitoring the Osun rerun that upturned the lead margin of PDP in favour of the APC by federal security agents. Available evidence from the social media raised the concerns expressed by stakeholders that the rerun was highly manipulated, as voters, especially those suspected to be PDP supporters were prevented from exercising their civic responsibility; just as the media and CSOs were barred from covering the exercise. In situation of intimidation, denial, poor network or inadequate coverage by election observers and monitors, the CSOs usually fall back on *Citizen-Journalism* through social media platform. This initiative gives members of the local communities the opportunity to transmit information to election monitoring central server. This was how the activities of security agents in Osun rerun, Kano governorship rerun in 2019 that also upturned the victory of PDP in favour of APC, and filming of military trying to cart away electoral materials in Rivers State during the collation of the governorship and state assembly elections were revealed and escalated (Oseni 2019). Oseni (2019) particularly pointed out that CSOs monitoring elections usually have a “Central WhatsApp” where all their monitors, observers, and other citizens in the field transmit information concerning what is happening around polling units. This added to how such issues as late arrival of materials, delay in voting, political violence, and technical failures, among others were reported for INEC to address.

The process of denial of access to, and intimidation of, citizens, judiciary, media and CSOs, as well as sabotage from both the elected and appointed government officials, and failure to sign the 2010 Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill into law prevented adequate coverage and management of

the 2019 general elections (Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room 2019c; *Leadership* (Nigeria) newspaper, 27 April 2019). Added to INEC's failure to sustain electronic innovations used in the off-cycle election between 2016 and 2018, the credibility of the 2019 was put to question. The unpredictable political atmosphere resulted in apathy, especially during the governorship and state assembly elections (*Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room 2019a*). Recent report from the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) in Nigeria and Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room (2019c) revealed that the 2019 general elections were not transparent as they were marred by significant irregularities and systematic failures. Majority opinion is that these problems set the electoral process backward from the achievements recorded previously, especially during the 2011 and 2015 general elections (Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room 2019c). The media was not left out as the post-election documentary aired by African Independent Television (AIT) resulted in temporal withdrawal of operational license by the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC). The uproar generated by this temporal suspension confirmed the belief in many quarters that watchdog agencies such as the media and CSOs were being suffocated in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Contrary to the argument against the adoption of technology in the electoral process, it is evident that ICT is central in having a credible election. Two conditions confirm this assumption in Nigeria: first is the improvement recorded during the 2011 and 2015 general elections, as well as the off-cycle elections in Anambra, Ekiti, Osun and Sokoto held between 2016 and 2018. In these elections, technology substantially determined the direction of the exercise beginning with biometric registration of voters to the use of smart card readers for accreditation, and electronic transmission of results especially during the off-cycle elections. Second is the credibility questions that have

continued to trail the 2019 general elections, which saw INEC drop some of the modern technological innovations that were used particularly during the off-cycle elections.

Importantly, the adoption of smart card readers and other technological innovations in 2011 and 2015 reduced the incidence of ballot box snatching and stuffing, as well as production of results before elections were concluded, which characterized the previous elections in Nigeria. Electronic transmission of results in the off-cycle elections between 2016 and 2018 also enhanced the transparency and accountability of the exercise. However, the failure of INEC to adhere strictly to the use of ICTs in the just concluded 2019 elections on account of the refusal of President Buhari to sign the 2010 Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill, which would have legalized strict adherence to technological innovation, undermined transparency and accountability of the exercise. Various reports of EU EOM and Nigerian Election Situation Room confirm this assumption.

Meanwhile, CSOs' modern technological innovations have continued to pay off in terms of ensuring credibility of elections in Nigeria since 2011. Without the media and CSOs as watchdogs, it would be very easy for EMBs and other relevant agencies to compromise electoral outcomes. The CSOs may not have sufficiently delivered on this role without leveraging the opportunities presented by the use of ICT in election observation and monitoring. Thus, the adoption of modern technological initiatives through the creation of virtual communities via ESR and SMN remains a masterstroke that would continue to improve the conduct of elections in Nigeria in the foreseeable future. To be sure, Nigeria has no alternative to the use of modern technology in conducting elections in the 21st Century.

However, vote buying is belittling the impact of ICT in election management. Therefore, the convener of ESR in Nigeria and the entire CSOs should watch out for attempts by powerful politicians to corrupt and influence the adoption of modern technology in election management; just as the refusal by the president to sign the 2010 Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill provided the

politicians the opportunity to embark on the outmoded ballot box snatching and stuffing in the 2019 general elections. Also, the tendency to undermine the effectiveness of ESR in dealing with electoral matters by the old generation CSOs, who control the space in this area due to their social network, capital and dominance, should not be overlooked. There is also the fear of donor preferences determining the direction and outcome of ESR and other technological innovations in Nigeria. These are threats that need to be watched as Nigeria makes effort to digitalize its electoral process.

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Endnotes

Kajuru Local Government is in Southern Kaduna that is largely believed to be an opposition stronghold in Kaduna state that is controlled by the People's Democratic Party (PDP).

Perchance, referring to how the Saudi journalist, Jamal Khashoggi, was dismembered and packaged in a bag inside Saudi Embassy in Turkey.

The Executive Director of YIAGA Africa, Samson Itodo, re-echoed this in his media interaction with the Channels Television on its *Sunday Politics* programme on 16 June 2019.

This position was re-emphasized by Tonnie Iredia in Channels Sunrise Daily on 18 June 2019.

GEO-ECONOMIC STRATEGY: AN OVERVIEW OF POST-2019 NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY THRUST IN A GLOBALIZED ERA

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Abstract

In the recent past Nigeria has been having an unhealthy economic situation in a globalised economy. Making Nigerian economy more attractive to the international community has been pre-occupation of Nigeria's international relations and foreign policy scholars. Despite these articulated foreign policy thrusts such as economic diplomacy, citizen diplomacy and reciprocity, the economy refused to be out of wood. Then, what are the likely hindrances(s) inhibiting attraction of foreign capitals and investments to Nigerian economy despite the fact that Nigeria possesses population, resources and market to sustain foreign investments in the country. With the prevailing structural economic defects and insecurity situations that is turning away foreign investors from Nigeria and obvious reluctance of international financial institutions to assist Nigeria in her quest for economic development. The primary objective of the study is to investigate how Nigerian state can evolve dynamically comprehensive economic plans that will have positive impact on all the ramification of Nigerian economy. Geo-economic theory was adopted as the theoretical framework; while qualitative research methods in which secondary data is employed for analysis. The study identifies lack of geo-economic strategy as the bane of success of different Nigeria's foreign policy thrusts. The study concludes that lack of sectorial linkage in Nigeria's economy, over-dependence on foreign build model(s), and disregard for self-reliant policy to rejuvenate Nigeria's epileptic economy. The study recommends enactment of policies that will facilitate improvement in sector based economy where there will be sectorial linkage to maximally tapped domestic potentials for international environment opportunities.

Key words: Geo-economic, Foreign Policy, Economic Crisis, Sectorial Linkage, Investment.

Introduction/Background

International relations is full of intrigues and dynamic changes, and the major aim of states from these intrigues and dynamic changes is improvement of their power base relative to other states either as regional or global economic-cum-political power to facilitate pursuance of other vital national interest (Schenk, 2011). This intrigue has made contemporary world system to be undergoing a lot of fundamental changes and nowhere is these changes more obvious and wide-ranging than in the area of foreign policy and international economic relations, Olusanya (1990:15). Nigeria's foreign policy has been influenced by the domestic economic requirements since independence, because available record shows that Nigeria relations are with biggest trading partners. But every attempt at re-ordering of Nigeria's priorities to have positive and beneficial effects on the ordinary citizens had been substantially manipulated by global economic power thereby making these efforts unsuccessful, Ogwu & Olukoshi (2002:17). Structural imbalance has remained Nigerian economic headache since collapse of fiscal federalism where regional governments had greater autonomy, competitively managed and controlled both revenue and expenditure of their respective regions. Fiscal and financial recklessness that cause structural economic defects was further reinforced by changes in consumption pattern of Nigerians from locally produced goods to foreign and ostentatious goods. This negatively affect domestic economy, caused dependence and inability to formulate good economic foreign policy thrust. Middle East crisis of early 1970s accentuate increase in the oil prices in the world market and propelled extravagant spending on white elephant projects and implementation of Udoji Award. The astronomical increase of workers' income without correspondence increase in production not only leads to demand pull inflation, it also encouraged mass inflow of ECOWAS nationals to Nigeria which later became burden on the nation. This almost strain relations between Nigeria and her ECOWAS sister states. Arbitrary disbursement of wealth from oil boom by the then military leaders created a wider gap between nation's demand and national production. This crippled sectorial linkage between primary produce, manufacturing and service industry. This neglect of domestic sectorial economic linkage affects domestic economic development that would have facilitate Nigerian state to benefit from robust, dynamic, citizen-centred foreign policy thrust like economic diplomacy, citizen diplomacy, concentric and constructive beneficial diplomacy, reciprocity etc. Because waning domestic economy not only

crippled sectors like agriculture, manufacturing, iron and steel production, it completely shut some industry.

One of the central objectives of a state foreign policy is securing the well-being of the citizenry, Ayinde (2009, p.125). Foreign policy is synonymous with symbiosis relationship that exists between domestic and external factors. In taken the right decisions, effort must be taken into consideration on logical ways to give and take (Saliu 2010). Formulating economically beneficial foreign policy requires focusing on the technical pattern of international trade and other states structurally deficient international investment that can change fortune of a developing state like Nigeria from the traditional commercial exchange in agricultural produce that leads to unwarranted competition among West African states technically designated as primary producers (Schenk, 2011). Achieving the position of prosperous state through foreign policy requires a well thought out foreign policy that is developed to captivate and capture the immediate and global environment, Akpotor (1998: 242). Thus, attainment of political-cum-economic prosperous status of industrialised states like China, Japan, France, Britain and the U.S. is not by accident or chance. It is by deliberately scheming of foreign policy with major economic benefit undertone. In view of this, state political leader organise their domestic economy to make meaningful impacts on the nationals of the state as well as having comprehensive benefits on the citizens of other states. Nation-state may use its economic relations to edge out other states to become regional economic power house and assume along with it political, military and technological advancement to boost the power base of the state. Globalization has changed global outlook and fortune of many states and their power configuration. Thus, geo-political advantage and economic potentials are no more major source of political power if a state cannot translate these potentials resources into value added products that command the respect of other states.

The basis of foreign policy of state and international relations is the strong economic base possessed by a nation. Security and welfare are the major responsibilities of state embedded as foreign policy which a state seeks to work on. Every nation-state has responsibility to ensure its survival and opportunity to influence the direction of affairs in the international political system. The ways in which a state empowers and enriches its area of influence and economic power is very important. Over the years the major problems confronting West African states is economic growth and development. Thus

national economic growth and development becomes imperative because regional economic cooperation and integration had yielded little or no results in the face of common primary produce by West African states.

To the realist like Morgenthau, power is very crucial and fundamental in international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy. Major of the power content are military and economic, these are the one that confer political and other influence on a state. However, power in international politics and diplomacy could be 'latent' or 'manifest'; power is latent when all potentials a state have are not been properly and successfully harnessed and utilized for overall development of the country. Power is manifest when a nation has realised and harnessed all power potentials and elements of power (Saliu, 2009) because amount of power a nation is able to muster determines the amount of influence a nation can exert on other nations in the course of playing international politics (Ayinde, 2009, p.127)

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Anothea (2018) described geo-economic as "the use of economic instrument to promote and defend national interests and to produce beneficial geo-politics results of gaining strategic infrastructure abroad". The origin of geo-economic theory is attributed to Edward Luttwak, an American economist, and Pascal Lorot, a French economist. Vusal Gasimli an Azerbaijani economist defines geo-economics as the study of the interactions of economic, geography and politics in the 'infinite core' rising from the centre to the earth to the outer space (Wikipedia). World politics remains a competitive struggle and game that is filled with new/ emerging winners and old/diminishing powers. While the basic structure of the game remains the same, the way it is being played has changed from who controls the largest territory/army to who controls the largest economy/global market share. What matters in the globalization era are economic competitiveness and other aspect of economic performance? Luttwak (1990) argued that the key source of power in international relations is economic competitiveness and not military competitiveness because mere physical possession of territory or resources does not bring with it diplomatic influence and economic control from the power relations of interdependence of states. Geo-economic thrust to Obasanjo (2009:8) is the need for repositioning and restructuring of domestic economy within the Globalized world which is knowledge and technology driven in order to meaningfully maximise the global economy benefits. Geo-

economic theory thrives on three different but inter-related factors: competitiveness, technology and political capacity.

Competitiveness

Competitiveness “is the *degreeto* which a nation can, under free and fair market conditions, *meet the test of international markets, while simultaneously maintaining and expanding the real income of its citizens*” (U.S. Presidential Commission, cited in Hasted & Knickrehm, 2003, p.85). Thus, competitiveness has two dimensions, one is ‘ability to improve the living standards of its citizens’ and the other ‘is ability to match or exceed the economic performance of other states’. Competitiveness as the centre stage of a state’s power base means that goods and services are no longer developed, produced or marketed within the confines of national boundaries. Rather, they are developed for an international marketplace (Akpotor, 1998, p.242). In the course of this, state face the challenges of creating productive, dynamic and innovative industrial base that will make large proportion of wealth to flow to its citizens. What is required for improving and sustaining state competitiveness is long term and constant attention to the basic factors that determine productivity. These are saving rate, high quality education and workers training system. Savings provide funds for investment; increase in savings provides sufficient funds for investing in new technologies without borrowing/loan from abroad (to avoid debt peonage). High quality education and high quality training system for labour force is a way of producing dynamic workforce needed to cope with dynamism of global competition.

Technology

The drive to acquire or adapt (not transfer) modern technology is closely related to the quest for competitiveness. Granger (1979, p.32 cited in Hastedt & Knickrehm, 2003) opined that the amount of technology possessed by a state is an acceptable measure of state power. The higher the ability of a state to adapt its technologies to serve dual purpose of state, the better the state and the more such state command respect in international relations. Therefore, ability of a state technology to adapt to both production of commercial/ industrial products and military products is very central to having technology in geo-economic strategy. Although, having military technological capability and capacity is not entirely production of arms and ammunition. But to have it in reserve so that a state will not be vulnerable to other nations who are aware

of the state short-coming. Therefore, it is different from competitive arm race rather; it is possession military capability to prevent unwarranted attacks or to possess ability to retaliate in case of provocative attacks. Possession of technology also enables a state to fully utilise their mineral and manpower resources.

Political Capacity

It is the ability of political leaders/policy makers to use state power to realize their foreign policy objectives through manipulation of the crucial power potential variables at any given point in time, Hastedt & Knickrehm (2003:89). This depends on circumstance and state involved in the issue. Political capacity also deals with ability of a state to transform their material resources into valued goods desired by other states. This enhance power status of a state in international relations as a strong state that have capacity to shape society into a new forms and make it adapt to the demand of changed circumstances.

Nexus between Economy and Foreign Policy

Economy as the productive capacity of a state is strategic to effective functioning of foreign policy. Thus, there is great relationship between economic power (and development) of a state and it is ability to carry out dynamic, robust and independent foreign policy. Importance of domestic economy cannot be underestimated in foreign policy since in the game of international politics and economic relations, achieving economic wealth as always been central in foreign policies of states. In international relations, economic wealth and prosperity attained through utilization of state's productive capacity confers great honour, influence and power on a state. The role of economy in foreign policy of a state is enormous, it is a prosperous domestic economy that can sustain and enhance dynamic foreign policy. It is only wealthy nation(s) that can offer foreign aid and assistance to other states. It is only where there is buoyant domestic economy that can finance research into production of military hard wares which confer power of military capability on a nation expansionary foreign policy (i.e. Libya under Gadhafi). It is only where domestic economy is booming that state can have a huge external reserve which makes the power/value of a state currency to be strong in international trade. This enables a state to move beyond the purview of Bretton Woods Institutions. Strong domestic economy attracts best global

foreign investments (and investors) into the state and provides employment and other economic benefits to the citizens of a state.

Good domestic economy enhances ability of citizens of a state to have dignity of being stable in the country rather than looking for greener pasture outside the country. Good domestic economy enhances high production that affects balance of trade in favour of a state and this has positive impact on the status of a state in the comity of states. Good domestic economy facilitates sectorial economic production and linkage which reduces a nation's dependence on other states which may affect nation's external relations and foreign policy. Strong economy enables a state to actively participate in peace keeping operations. Domestic economy is the basis on which formulation of foreign policy is laid, a good and dynamic foreign policy thrust rest on good domestic factors, prime of which is the good performance of the country economy to sustain the pulse which the foreign policy creates. The importance of domestic economy to foreign policy was aptly described by Onuoha (2009, p.59) as foundations of state foreign policy, because virile foreign policy and viable political system cannot stand on a *fragile economic base*. It is this economic implication that made Ayinde (2009, p.125) to contend that post-cold war era has witnessed significant rise in the value of economic indices of state capability and influence in the world affairs. This is because in the post-cold war era intensive development through economic growth is generally preferred to military and extensive territory expansion. Ayinde (2009) also observes that rise of Asian Tigers to global prominence was large due to remarkable economic performance than their military arsenal.

Ogwu (2009, p.11) while articulating importance of economy on foreign policy contends that 'a weak domestic economy will lost her autonomy and control over her resources to the industrialised states. But, Eze (2009, p.6) opines that the new world order is not interested in redefining national boundaries but rather access to other states natural resources. It only state with good economic base that can prospect resources of other states. Thus, Nigeria should be planning on how to get global market in terms of her production, and not to be contended with the title of primary producer and continue to supply global economy with strategic and critical resources. A booming domestic economy will be able affords sending diplomatic representatives as ambassadors to many states globally. State with good domestic economy will be able to restructure her economy in order to meaningfully participate in global economy. There is strong interface between

economic and politics, while economic serve as the base for politics to build upon. Politics on the hand serves as the pillars on which economic policies are formulated and implemented. Politics often shapes the intensity and longevity of economic ties between states just as economic helps to determine the substance of inter-state political relations (Ogwu&Olukoshi, 2002, p.23). Foreign policy unquestionably remains one of the major instruments not just for advancing political interests in inter-state relations but also as a means of enhancing national economic growth and development (Babangida, 1990, p.9).

Significance of Geo-Economic Foreign Policy Thrust

Wealth Creation: Geo-economic foreign policy thrust will enable Nigeria to create wealth domestically by turning her raw materials and other potentials to competitive and marketable commodity. Ability of the Nigerian state to produce and create wealth will transform to well-being of citizenry because the state will no longer be dependent on aid, assistance and loans from the international financial institutions and its other affiliates. Roscrance (1986cited in Hastedt & Knickrehm, 2003, p.72). As the Nigeria improve commitment to produce what other states are needed, she enjoys the influence of soft power, diplomatic advantage of economic power and national security which arm build up or expansionary foreign policy cannot provide.

Regional Economic power: Existence of a well-articulated and comprehensive geo-economic foreign policy in Nigeria will make her to become strategic regional economic power house of West Africa. This is quite different from the utopia ‘Giant of Africa’ concept that adds no economic value either to the state or citizenry. Nigeria’s regional economic power will promote her national identity and international image as a productive nation (Sesay, et al 2011, p.9). Regional economic power will also enhance Nigeria’s position as a global actor in the politics of international economic relations. States with geo-economic foreign policy thrust like Japan, China and Germany attained greater economic status solely by virtue of their economic capabilities without fuelling any threat to other nations (Ayinde, 2009, p.125).

Sectorial Economic Linkage: Geo-economic foreign policy strategy acting in tandem with current globalization mantra in which foreign policy formulation and implementation are made purposively to yield new positive and

progressive results. Thus, the thrust will tailor Nigeria's external relations to serve the goals and aspirations of domestic economic growth and technological development (Sesay et al 2011, p.38). This will prevent occurrence of past mistakes where Nigeria's foreign policy were devoid of sectorial economic needs of Nigerians.

Dynamic and Activist Foreign Policy: The international environment is a place where nations play game of politics with foreign policy(Spanier, 1987). This make foreign policy of states in international political system to be dynamics and ever changing, Nigerian state needs such dynamism to formulate dynamically activist foreign policy that is capable of adapting Nigeria as a key member or major player in the international economic relations. Dynamic and activist foreign policy will heighten Nigeria's ability to profoundly play decisive role in international affairs. As a policy that creates forum for easing socio-economic problems like unemployment and poverty within the country and West Africa sub-region. It removes unhealthy rivalry and tensions that are usually associated with primary producers to which many West African states belong.

Political Stability: With geo-economic thrust, Nigeria not only has potent of acquiring security as she pursues her economic diplomacy; she will also have political stability which will enable Nigerian state to give more priority to attaining more economic power at no military cost. Military capability, to Hastedtand Knickrehm (2003, p.84), will only serve as insurance policy held in reserve moderately to bear on foreign policy when all other means failed. Realisation of expansionary foreign policy goals by defunct USSR, East-Germany and North-Korea failed to yield desire result because of heavy reliance on military capability to the detriment of economic needs and well-being of the people and immediate environment, Ayinde (2009, p.125). These cause political instability situations which national sovereignty of both USSR and East-Germany cannot withstand and still technically threaten stability of North Korea as a sovereign state.

Cost-Effective and Capital Generating Strategy: Geo-economic policy foreign policy thrust is cost-effective and capital-generating strategy/approach. Using the strategy of geo-economics will avail Nigerian state to recoup her investment in producing commodity needed globally. States such as Japan,

China and Germany with geo-economic foreign policy thrust do not waste their resources in producing items such as stock of arms that are not immediately needed. Rather state's primary goal and power in world politics is centred on manipulation of economic instruments to produce economic and material wealth to sustain nation's economic needs. Luttwak (1990 cited in Hastedt and Knickrehm, 2003) argued that possession of military clout as a means of pursuing foreign policy objective is very expensive, capital intensive and laid more emphasis on increase in the level of destructiveness and yielded little economic benefits to citizen of the state. But, geo-economic see the strength of a state in competitive economic production that can generate large amount of investment than what was expended in setting up the production and productive activities.

Citizens Welfare is given Priority: Geo-economic foreign policy thrust gives premium to the well-being and welfare of citizens. Strange (1990 cited in Hastedt and Knickrehm, 2003) reasoned that 'the objective of geo-economic state in the game of world politics is centred on 'how well are the people in the state live' as well as 'acquisition of global market share' rather than acquiring more territory, troop or weapons. This is because the power base of a state economy is its ability to improve the living conditions of citizens to match and exceed economic performance of other states to make the citizens more patriotic.

Manpower Development and Training: In a geo-economic thrust, state support and gives greater effort and attention to adequate and effective manpower training to cope with the rigour and dynamism associated with competitive global economy. This is because in a competitive economy state survival to have control of market depends on the state ability to respond quickly to the new market demand in both domestic and international markets. Manpower training gives edge to a state performance in the global economic competitiveness. Reich (1990) maintains that 'for continuous improvement that can sustain industrial base of a state, citizens are given quality education and adequate training on a continuous basis in order to improve citizens' productive potential values.

Industrialisation: The bottom line of a geo-economic state is holistic industrialisation of the economy. Mechanisation of productive sectors of the

state to meet international standard become the watch word, because the products produced are meant to serve both domestic and international market. Effective mechanization of production enhances state productive capacity as well economic of large scale production which will reduce per unit cost of product produced. This will give an edge to the product produced in a state; because a state with economy of large scale production will produce at lower per unit cost and will have ability to sell her products more at competitive market price due to lower price.

Strategies and Prerequisites for Effective Geo-Economic Foreign Policy Thrust

Action-Centred Leadership: The first major requisite for successful formulation and implementation of geo-economic foreign policy thrust is purposive and action-centred leadership (Usman, 2015, p.102) which Agbaje (2002, p.33) termed as ‘quality political leadership’. Focused leadership will have good foresight and forthrightness to organise the citizenry for the purpose of achieving a given national interest in an atmosphere of commitment to economic nationalism. Effective dissemination of information to carry citizens along with government objectives is very central to make articulated foreign policy attainable (Saliu, 2009, p.83).

Stable Polity: Basis and foundation of meaningful geo-economic foreign policy thrust is a stable political system that is devoid of any security threat to productive activities from ethnic militias and militants, religious fundamentalist or extremist groups, irredentist separatists, cattle rustlers, kidnappers and other organised crimes. Stable polity will create adequate, conducive and effective planning environment for the policy and decision-makers to have cooperation of all citizenry both at home and in Diaspora. In order for Nigeria to be a major player in the game of international politics and diplomacy she must be relative healthy by being stable and democratically functioning to elect nationally acceptable leader(s), Sesay et al (2011, p.62). Peaceful environment is prerequisite for economic development because it develop good international image that will attract both portfolio and direct foreign investments that are needed to create strong economic base for geo-economic thrust to survive.

Power Supply: Adequate generation, distribution and continuous supply of electricity is a must in the scheme of geo-economic strategy. Since the policy is centred on production of material wealth of international standard for global market. This requires adequate and constant power supply to carry many industries established in the country. Thus, many internationally acclaimed Nigerian academics especially in Electrical Engineering, Physics and Nuclear Physics can be called upon to turn Nigeria's neglected and wasted resources and assets into money making ventures for the country and West Africa region. Effective tapping of abundant Solar Power from Sokoto to Bornu states in the Northern part of Nigeria can generate thousands of electricity megawatts. Power generated from solar energy can be distributed and supply to neighbouring states like Chad, Niger, Cameroon and if possible Burkina-Faso. These are states that do not have man-power and capital to embark on such project of higher magnitude. Hydro-power can generate electricity from Mambilla/Adamawa Axis down to Niger-Delta areas. The huge amount of electricity megawatts generated from hydro-power sources can be used to power industry within Nigeria while excess power generated could be distributed and sold to Nigeria's immediate neighbouring states like Cameroon, Sao Tome and Principe, and Equatorial Guinea. Coastal states like Lagos, Rivers, Bayelsa and Akwa Ibom can generate large amount of electricity megawatts from the coastal winds/Atlantic Ocean whose wind power is inexhaustible. Effective harnessing of different sources of power supply will be of immense benefit to efficient power supply in West Africa region. It will also leads to training of Nigerians as manpower needed to build and preserve similar power and transmitting stations in other African states.

Iron and Steel Production: The basis of technological development in any state is the production of iron and steel. Size and economic capacity put Nigeria in good position to produce iron and steel products on a large scale for both domestic usage and export. Nigeria as a state is blessed with large amount of iron ore deposit in the Middle Belt region of Itakpe and Ajaokuta (and other ingredient needed to produce iron rods are obtainable in many other areas). Reawaken iron and steel production at Ajaokuta, as well as rolling mills in Aladja, Oshogbo and other places to adequately produce iron products to take care of both domestic and external consumption of West African markets. Resuscitating Aluminium Smelting Company at Ikot Abasi is added

advantage to Nigeria's economic productiveness. All these will make Nigeria to be a quintessential regional producer of iron and steel for West Africa region. It will also create gainful employment opportunity for many Nigerians to participate in exportation of iron and steel products from Nigeria to neighbouring states. This will resuscitate much needed economic diplomacy and citizen centred foreign policy of previous administration.

Self-Sufficiency in Petroleum Product: Nigeria as one of the global largest producers of crude oil, with adequate and competent manpower combine with technology, Nigeria should be able to produce enough petroleum products that are capable of satisfying West Africa sub-regional needs. Nigeria can lead West Africa in production of petroleum products by encouraging Nigerian business magnates to actively invest in oil exploration and refinery in states like Sao Tome and Principe, Equatorial Guinea and even in the ceded Bakassi peninsula as foreign policy of industrialising these states. Many West African states are in dire need of petroleum products including gas to power their electricity plants. Effective and efficient management of Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) to produce petroleum products at cheaper price will not only make Nigeria to command regional economic power, it will also enhance her ability to have political power that commensurate with her economic power within the region. This will prevent continuous smuggling of petroleum which successive Nigerian Government blamed for unwarranted increase in the pump price of petroleum products. There are enough markets for Nigeria's petroleum products in West Africa if only Nigeria can harness these regional markets. Supplying petroleum products at a cheaper price and its continuous availability will not only dissuade many West African states from over relying on European and Middle-East states. It will boost diplomatic and economic relations within West Africa and foster the much anticipated economic cooperation and integration which can facilitate regional economic development.

Self-Sufficiency in Food Production and Value Added to Primary Produce: The biggest part of geo-economic strategies is effective and adequate production of food as well as efficient processing and preservation of perishable food items. Nation's ability to produce and process its food for citizenry makes a state to be out of reach for food insecurity which is one of the areas in which a nation can lose her influence in the international

economic relations. Ability of a state to cater and take care of daily food intake of citizens and the people in the immediate environment will enhance Nigeria's position in the comity of state. Adding value to primary produce is of great importance to geo-economic strategy. One of the most sought after food in the West Africa sub-region is rice. Recently, Lagos and Kebbi states partners to produce 'Lake Rice' to the ever increasing demand of Lagos axis market. Expanding the production processes to cover Abakaliki in Ebonyi state, Ofada in Ogun state and Nupe land in Kwara, Niger and Kaduna states will provide employment opportunity for local rice farmers and rural dwellers. It will also boost regional economy in rice production because many nationals of other West African states will migrate to Nigeria to join in the rice production revolution. Rice production and processing if well harnessed can make Nigeria to have potential of producing rice that can feed the entire West Africa sub-region. Efficient and effective production of rice to feed West African states has its own soft power influence.

Mechanised and Specialised Agriculture: Existence of large specialised and mechanised farming can turn Nigeria into a major market and source of fresh farm produce and dairy products for the West Africa region. A well-articulated private sector with special interest in mechanized agriculture that specialize in different areas of production such fresh milk, fresh eggs, vegetable, poultry feeds and day old chicks as well as frozen chicken and frozen turkey for both domestic and exports. Existence of synergy between Nigerian agriculturists and agricultural scientists on modality to produce technological base and research driven agriculture that will move nation forward to the path obtainable in developed states in the twenty- first century. Thus, mechanized and specialized agriculture that can produce enough food and raw materials for domestic consumption/usage and enough for export will reduce preponderance of importation of both consumable foods and other raw materials. Self-sufficiency will boost Nigeria's image abroad and enhance its economic diplomacy.

Prioritisation of objectives and Setting of Attainable Target: Nigeria's political elites, policy-makers and intelligentsia must properly redefine what will constitute Nigeria's National Interest in tandem with what is obtainable in other developed states to serve as guide lines for successful administration and would-be political leader of Nigeria. Sesay et al (2011, p.53) argued that

setting attainable objectives will prevent in-coming leaders from derailing from strategised plans after a successful take-off of the geo-economic foreign policy thrust. The intended national interest must take care of 21st century inter-state relations and foreign policy as a knowledge driven one (Obasanjo, 2009, p.8). It must be one in which vital economic issues /needs of Nigerians that are germane to domestic survival and can strengthen relations between West African states in particular and Africa continent in general must be embedded in it (Ogwu&Olukoshi, 2003, p.19; Onuoha, 2009).

Trained Manpower: Attainment of desirable economic growth and development necessary for success of geo-economic thrust domestically requires Nigeria to invest in both human and financial capital. It is this investment that will transform into human capital, portfolio and foreign direct investment in other West African states. Trained manpower and education of citizenry makes them globally employable and competitive in the international labour market and this increases their chance of securing (international) jobs worldwide. This will boost Nigeria national image worldwide as more and more are Nigerians are becoming global staff. Trained manpower heightens ability of Nigerians to transform Nigerian economy from service-oriented economy to a productive-oriented economy that can play proactive role in the international system (Ayinde, 2009). Large trained population manpower is crucial to sustaining a large market for large scale manufacturing of goods and service. This will earn Nigerian state commendable political influence within West Africa region and globally, Sesay, et al (2011, p.52). In the present twenty-first century globalized economy, the only credible alternative to military capability for a nation to attain greatness in international relations is trained manpower that can turn state economic potentials to prosperity through technologically driven economy propelled by manufacturing which will turn available raw materials to value added goods. Large population that is not planned, illiterate and untrained will constitute a clog in the will of state dynamic foreign policy thrust like geo-economic (Saliu, 2009).

Scientific Research and Production of Scientific Findings: Production of scientific research that is useful to humanity is keys to a nation's geo-economic policy. Encouragement of Nigerians scientists to carry out research on how best to process locally produced food stuff to meet international standard, to boost marketability of 'home made goods' as well as opening new

frontiers for the sales of made in Nigeria products. Nigerian scientists should be able to process cassava into products (like Tabioka), in a more refine and modern methods that will make it to attract worldwide consumers. Nigeria as the largest producer of yams, cassava and maize in the West African region needs to look at method of processing maize to be inform of 'sweet corn' used in making salad. Cassava is the main ingredient of producing bio-fuel. Encouragement of willing Nigeria entrepreneurs to produce cassava locally or establish large scale plantations in neighbouring states like Congo, Benin Republics, and Togo to boost the production of bio-fuel in large/commercial quantity to supply potential external markets. Establishment of large scale plantations in neighbouring states can help cement cordial relations between Nigeria and these states. There must be synergy between academic discovery in terms of scientific research findings and technological production with ripple effects on both domestic and international markets.

Adaptation of Technology: Nigeria's geo-economic policy must rely primarily on technological adaptation where machines, engines and products are genuinely replicated using wholly Nigerian concepts and philosophy to prevent over reliance on foreign inputs. Nigeria geo-economic foreign policy thrust cannot survive on technological transfer because no nation will transfer technology she laboured to invent and patent after a long period of research. Thus, quality and effective service from Niger dock as the largest modernised ship repair yard in West Africa sub-region confer important economic opportunity on Nigeria's foreign policy in making other African states to repair and fabricate their ships' component parts in Nigeria instead of going to Europe for maintenance and repairs. Availability and improvement in technology is ancillary to achieving viable geo-economic foreign policy that can greatly reduce poverty and improves economic growth and development, Ani (2010:45). Effective sponsorship of technological and scientific research in the tertiary institutions will make room for robust competitive academic research that will reduce over reliance and dependence on technological transfer for locally adapted technology to evolve. This will transform into national self-reliance that can boost the image of the country abroad.

Obstacles to Geo-Economic Policy

The first and major obstacle to the realisation of eco-economic foreign policy thrust is France whose economic interest leads to her unsolicited dominance of

her former colonial territories majority of which are Nigeria's immediate neighbours (Atte, 1992, p.11). The policy may also suffer from getting action-centred leadership that will evolve democratically and be a nationally acceptable leader to provide effective leadership for realisation formulated foreign policy thrust (Saliu, 2009, p.83). Another probable problem is having large population with highest amount of illiterate citizenry which will affect effective implementation of dynamic and activist foreign policy thrust (Saliu, 2009, p.78; Ayinde, 2010, p.13). One of the major obstacles that can mar effectiveness and success of geo-economic foreign policy thrust is poor articulation of strategies to be in line with national interest. Excruciating poverty is a great obstacle to geo-economic thrust; poverty ridden society will not be able to afford good and standard education/training which is prerequisite for this thrust. Poverty ridden society will not be able to have effective demands for goods and services produced in the state thus potential markets that will have spur investors will technically remain untapped.

Preponderance of tribal/ethnic militias and militants, secret cults, kidnapers, religious fundamentalists/ extremists, and cattle rustlers etc. can be thorn on the way of success of geo-economic. This insecurity will constitute a dent on geo-economic foreign policy thrust and needed to be tackled decisively. Insecurity is antithetical to purposeful and dynamic foreign policy, it also serve as threat to successful implementation of dynamic and coherent foreign policy thrust most especially if it occurs in the nation-state internal political system. To have effective geo-economic foreign policy thrust, there must be up to date population data from well conducted population census in which correct data on citizens are fully taken and electronically preserved with bio data, academic qualification of both employed and unemployed citizens. Inaccessibility of Mission Abroad on website globally due to poor funding and low morale of diplomatic corps can affect effective functioning and success of geo-economic foreign policy thrust.

There exist problem of 'dominance of intellectual foundation' in which the vested interests (basically Europeans, Americans & Asians) dominate the structure and process of global economic diplomacy (Agbaje, 2002, p.31). These vested interests through dominance of intellectual foundation control global terrain that dictate how the global economic is reproduced, represented and justified at the level of ideas. The rhetoric of technological transfer and import substitution policy as well as aggressive service oriented economy are strategically inhibiting activist and dynamic foreign policy

posture of geo-economic thrust in Nigeria. The world market price of primary produce has not been favourable to many Nigeria's primary produce and this affect Nigeria's term of trade. While bigger states are making use of the protectionism to prevent healthy competition in their domestic economy. Nigerian state was encouraged by the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to liberalise in an environment of trade restraint and protection. Protectionism in one state and liberalization in one state is a disadvantage and inimical to the success of geo-economic thrust.

Recommendation and Conclusion

Goals and objectives of Nigeria's foreign policy should revolve around quest for healthy domestic economy and wellbeing of citizenry that will drastically reduce poverty level to lowest level through employment generation. When there is improvement in the standard of living of Nigerians and poverty is technically banished from Nigeria and it is spread to the neighbouring states, the much desired respect and glory and recognition will be accorded Nigerian state. Continuous improvement in economic performance that is positively touching lives of majority of West African citizens by reducing poverty and provide greater hope for largest percentage of people will put Nigerian state in hall of fame. Nigeria's ability to take advantage of her immediate power potentials and turn them into viable economic products to marketed in West Africa sub-region depends on how citizens are fully mobilized, trained, empowered and encouraged by government to go into West African states to explore other economic potentials just like Europeans, Americans and lately Asians are doing in Africa. Economic benefits derived from such venture (as profit) could be used as foreign aid and assistance or counterpart funding of cogent projects in foreign states as well as provision of social amenities at no cost to Nigerian state since what is being used is generated from these states and the citizens are also benefitting from it.

Geo-economic strategies as an integrated economic development strategy that involves complete utilization of both human and material resources to achieve holistic development in all ramifications. Nigeria will be a great economic power house that can influence direction of states' affairs if she can harness her human and natural resources under action-centred leadership. In the current globalized world respect and influence a state command in the international community is not how large is the country's

army or how large is the country's territory, but how largely and effectively are the productive sectors driven by technology? How well is the state able to adapt natural resources to become national resources that will better the lives and improve the well-being of citizens and people beyond? How well are the citizens of the state being catered for (in terms of adequate remuneration, health facilities available, life span, education etc.)? How efficient are the potential powers being turned into real and effective power? Geo-economic thrust is an antidote to the various economic problems facing Nigeria which the previous administrations proffered solutions failed to cure. Creation of an enabling internal and external environment conducive to the take-off of sustainable economic development that encompassed ripple benefits not only to the citizens but the entire sub-regional environment.

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**IMPACT ANALYSIS OF MUHAMMADU BUHARI
ADMINISTRATION'S ANTI-CORRUPTION WAR IN NIGERIA,
2015-2019**

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Abstract

The study investigated the extent to which Muhammadu Buhari administration's anti-corruption war had impacted on corruption in governance in its first term in office. In doing this, the study employed survey method and documentary methods of data collection relying on both primary and secondary sources of data. The theory of collection action was adopted for theoretical assessment of the subject matter. The questionnaire was major research instrument employed for sourcing primary data from a drawn sample size of 300 respondents among Ogun Central and Ogun East Senatorial Districts of Ogun state. 300 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 280 copies of the questionnaire were eventually retrieved which represents 93% of the total responses generated. The major findings indicated that implementation of TSA, effective usage of the existing anti-corruption bodies, innovative involvement of whistle-blowers, among others, put Buhari administration anti-corruption war on the expectant right course in its first term in office. However, selective nature of the anti-corruption war and absence of holistic involvement of the entire populace have made Buhari administration anti-corruption war in his first term less impactful. It is recommended that the Buhari-led government must display enough political will to investigate and prosecute all past office holders suspected of personal enrichment while in office irrespective of political affiliation while collective approach to anti-corruption war should be adopted for meaningful impact in the second term.

Keywords: anti-corruption measures, corruption, collective action, Muhammadu Buhari

Introduction

The ubiquity of corruption in governance and its destructive tendencies and manifestations have been acknowledged by scholars across the globe (Ferguson, 2017). The need to curb this menace led to the establishment of various non-governmental global anti-corruption institutions such as Transparency International (TI), Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC), Global Witness, Corruption Watch, South Africa, Anti-Corruption Coalition, Uganda, Azerbaijan Anti-Corruption Academy, International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC), among others. Thus, the adoption of varied anti-corruption strategies by these bodies attest to the fact that anti-corruption fight is of utmost importance and needs deserve intervention.

In Nigeria, various anti-corruption agencies and strategies had been put in place. Starting from military regimes, Yakubu Gowon regime (1967-1975) started with “X” Squad; Public Complaints Commission and Code of Conduct Bureau came on board under Murtala Muhammed administration (1975-1976); Muhammadu Buhari/ Tunde Idiagbon regime (1983-1985) created War Against Indiscipline (WAI); Ibrahim Babangida (1985-1993) regime put in place War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAIC); while Sani Abacha regime (1993-1998) founded the Code of Conduct Tribunal & Failed Banks Tribunal.

Based on the foregoing, there had been anti-corruption strategies, policies, legislative, judicial and institutional frameworks in existence at various levels of government deal with acts of corruption in Nigeria prior to 1999 (Babalola, 2017). However, the ineffectiveness of these anti-corruption frameworks led the emergence of more direct strategies in the Fourth Republic. The TI was the foremost global agency that raised the country’s consciousness towards anti-corruption fight (Akpan & Eyo, 2018). This was due to the persistently derogatory TI’s corruption rating of Nigeria from 1999 as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. Enweremadu (2012) observed that during Olusegun Obasanjo’s reign as president (1999-2007), corruption fight was pursued via various strategies and directed at accomplishing a number of objectives. The main anti-corruption policies included establishment of several anti-corruption bodies such as the

Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI); Anti-money Laundering Regulations Act and the Money Laundering Provisions Act were also put in place to counter the laundering of looted funds by public office holders domestically and internationally; Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP); Nigeria Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) among others were created to confront the menace of corruption in the Nigerian public service.

Under Umar Yar'Adua administration (2007-2010) and Goodluck Jonathan (2010-2015) presidencies, there was no clear-cut anti-corruption strategies and nonchalant attitude to the fight against corruption were noticed (Ekpo, Chime & Eno, 2016). Part of the non-committal agenda on anti-corruption war was the conferment of a national honour to Sani Abacha in 2014, as part of the Nigeria's centenary celebration, who had been adjudged as the one of the foremost corrupt leaders in Africa. As a matter of fact, it was at the period of the conferment that the United States government announced that it was freezing \$483 million in foreign accounts linked to Abacha which was believed to be part of the \$3 billion that Abacha had looted from Nigeria (Ekpo, Chime & Eno, 2016).

Thus, corruption in Nigeria for several decades has been so insidious and appeared to have transformed public service into a kind of scandalous venture. In 2012, Nigeria was estimated to have squandered \$400 billion due to corruption (Okoye, 2012). No doubt that corruption has aggravated political violence leading to national insecurity (Ayodeji, 2016; Adagbabiri & Okolie, 2018), deprived citizens the required access basic health facilities (Tormusa & Idom 2016; Ikhisemojie, 2017) and education services (Nwankwo & Nweke, 2016; Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu, 2017), and has put country's economy into state of comatose on different occasions (Ogbonnaya, 2018) whereby in Nigeria it "could cost up to 37% of GDP by 2030 if it's not dealt with immediately. This cost is equated to around \$1,000 per person in 2014 and nearly \$2,000 per person by 2030" (Pricewaterhouse Coppers, 2018, p.3).

Based on the foregoing, Muhammadu Buhari, prior to his accession to power in May 2015, employed 'change mantra' and leveraged anti-corruption measures as one of the cardinal programmes of his electioneering campaign.

Thus, he vowed to fight corruption in governance to a standstill (Akpan & Eyo, 2018). The overall objective of the study is to determine the extent to which the Buhari administration's anti-corruption war has been able to curb pervasive corruption in governance in Nigeria. In specific terms, this study sought to answer the following questions. 1. What are gains of Buhari administration's anti-corruption war in Nigeria between 2015 and 2019? 2. What are the factors that hindered Buhari administration's anti-corruption war between 2015 and 2019? 3. How can these challenges be overcome to make Buhari administration's anti-corruption war more effective?

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

The study made use of mixed approach owing to the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry and equally adopted a descriptive survey. It also relied on the thematic analysis of both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was sourced from journal articles, textbooks, newspapers and the internet. The questionnaire was the major research instrument employed for sourcing primary data drawn from a sample size of 300 respondents among Ogun Central and Ogun East Senatorial Districts of Ogun state. 300 copies of the questionnaire were distributed with the aid of 3 research assistants (undergraduate students) and 280 copies of the questionnaire were eventually retrieved which represents 93% of the total responses generated with just 7% attrition level. The research outcome is descriptively presented below using statistical tools such as tables, frequency and percentage distribution.

The collective action approach was adopted for theoretical appraisal of the subject matter. The reasons for its adoption is that historical antecedents of the approaches to anti-corruption campaigns in Nigeria which had been more or less elitist and had not been bought in or supported collectively by all citizens. Thus, the change of the elitist nature of anti-corruption will lead to the needed collective action to tackle governance corruption in Nigeria.

Collective Action Approach

Despite the fact the collective action approach to capturing the vagaries of corruption is relatively new in the field, the collective theory was first published by Mancur Olson in 1965 (Ostrom, 2015). The foremost

scholars that their contributions are notable in this area comprise Teorell (2007), Rothstein (2011), Persson, Rothstein and Teorell (2013), and Marquette and Peiffer (2015). They contended that the collective action problem lens could at best explicate several facets of corruption which encourages a marked approach to confronting corruption. The focus of the collective action theoretical framework is on the incentive structures and consequential behaviours in a society. That is why such impactful social change cannot foreclose all-inclusive reform encompassing the multitude of institutions, stakeholders and initiatives to re-establish or boost trust and integrity (Marquette & Peiffer 2015).

By means of the collective action theory, a corruption-free environment turns into the goal while free-riding behaviour develops into corruption itself. At this point, what propel corrupt behaviour is the elevation individual's interests over those of the group and corruption leads to depletion of tangible resources to be experienced by everyone (Marquette & Peiffer 2015). According to the proponents, this is at variance with the earlier top-down monitoring and authorisation of narrower anti-corruption strategies and they propose a clear-cut design of anti-corruption strategies. Thus, instead of reckoning with a select few government officials, the attendant policies tackle expansive social incentive structures. In essence, Schwertheim (2017) averred that within context of collective action approach regarding corruption, it underscores the collective over the individual nature of corruption, and acknowledges the systematic nature of the phenomenon. Norms, behaviour and level of trust in society are recognised as the major challenges confronting anti-corruption efforts. The utility of the collective action approach is that it counteracts the absence of political will dilemma as it engages incentives and day-by-day norms to deal with corruption. The approach has been criticised on the grounds that thriving collective action may also be "exclusive, exclusionary and hierarchical" (Warren, 2004 cited in Marquette & Peiffer, 2015, p.10). On balance, existence of a small group size can be viewed as helpful to resolving a collective action dilemma, and collective action dilemmas are deemed to occur when no clear and legitimate leadership is available to public or common goods.

Incidence of Corruption in the Nigeria's Fourth Republic

As contended in the extant literature, corruption is better described and criminalises rather than being defined, based on its definitional fluidity and

complexity (Faloore, 2010; Egwemi, 2012; Okechukwu, Igwe & Ezenwafor, 2017). That is why corruption has been described as the abuse of entrusted power for private gains (World Bank, 1997; United Nations Development Programme, 1997; Transparency International Perception Index, 2000). Corruption within the context of governance relates to deviation from the formal rules of conduct guiding the behaviour of somebody in position of public trust owing to pecuniary motives and other extraneous factors such as wealth, power or status. Thus, the United Nations clearly underscored bribery, embezzlement, illicit enrichment, abuse of office, laundering of proceeds of corruption, and obstruction of justice among others as corrupt acts.

Also, based on available literature and relevant anti-corruption regulations in Nigeria, the following acts are considered as forms of corruption in governance: receipt of gratification, embezzlement, bribery, fraud, the award of contracts by public officials to kith and kin and personally owned companies, kickbacks on contracts; misuse and conversion of public funds for personal advantage, procurement rip-off, diversion and misappropriation of funds via manipulation or fabrication of financial records, procurement of judicial decisions, among others (Ijewereme, 2013; Waziri, 2010).

Heidenheimer (1977 cited in Makinde, 2013) asserted that corruption could be categorised in three major ways, namely, public-office centred corruption, market-centred corruption and public-interest centred corruption. Public-office centred corruption deals with the idea of public service and behaviours that controls its processes (Bayley, 1966; Myrdal, 1968, 2008; Nye, 1967, 2008 cited in Enweremadu 2017), generally emphasising the abuse of trust and power in public office for illegal personal gains and not essentially material in nature. Market-centred corruption laid emphasis on the change of public office or positions into an enterprise with a view to maximizing income, just like the way an entrepreneur attempts to maximise profits from his investments (Kluveren, 2008 cited in Enweremadu, 2017). The public-interest centred corruption linked corruption to the concept of public interest and has to do with certain behaviours that deviate from prevalent norm that that is be prevalent in a given situation which may be political (Heidenheimer & Johnston, 2008 cited in Enweremadu, 2017). All these categories of corruption mostly occur and prevalent in governance in Nigeria as will be shown in the subsequent sections.

Relying on the foregoing description of corruption, it is incontestable that corruption, especially in the Nigeria's Fourth Republic, has undergone various manifestations, continues to erode trust in governmental institutions and has played a negative role in country's public administration. Thus, almost all scholars considered corruption as the bane of governance in Nigeria (Makinde, 2013; Ganiyu & Taiwo, 2014; Hoffmann & Patel 2017; Toromade, 2019). As stated by Mohammed (2013) and later reiterated by Ijewereme (2015), the pervasiveness of corruption in governance in Nigeria was so unprecedented when Olusegun Obasanjo became the president in May 29, 1999 and his administration established various anti-corruption institutions and measures to curb the menace. Thus, the institutionalisation of these anti-graft mechanisms, raised people's hope with the expectation that the past and future corrupt public officials would be brought to book and this also would have deterred others. However, this was not to be with the benefit of hindsight, because the manifestation of corruption in the executive, legislature, judiciary and other government agencies very discouraging.

In the views of Human Rights Watch (2007), Enweremadu (2012) and Ojereweke (2015) corruption that ensued in the public sector under Obasanjo administration was ridiculous. That is why some western diplomats opined that between US\$4 billion and US\$8 billion were lost to corruption yearly during the eight years of Obasanjo administration (Human Rights Watch, 2007). Similarly, Ijewereme (2013) observed that Nigeria was rated very low by TI on the popular Corruption Perception Index (CPI) for four consecutive years, between 1999 and 2003 indicated high level of corruption. To some extent, anti-corruption efforts of Nuhu Ribadu, when he became the EFCC's Chairman were noticeable via the gradual decline of the Nigeria's CPI between 2004 and 2008. However, these anti-corruption efforts were overshadowed by the general contention that the EFCC's anti-corruption schema was not only selective, but influenced by the political vagaries of the presidency that was bent on dealing with perceived political opponents. Whereas the seriously corrupt public office holders who were the favourites of president Olusegun Obasanjo became sacred cows and were untouchable (Oluwasanmi, 2007). In the view of Oluwasanmi (2007), during Obasanjo administration (1999-2007) corruption in governance became all encompassing and electoral fraud and disobedience of court rulings were leveraged. Corroborating this view, Aderonmu (2009), Ebegbulem (2012) and Imhonopi and Ugochukwu (2013) submitted that Obasanjo administration was

typified by unimaginable greed, extreme dislike for the rule of law and human rights abuse, selective investigation of corrupt public office holders, among others. Thus, the revelation at the end of Obasanjo's government revealed that due process for awarding of contracts was usually set aside while government property was eventually purchased by himself and his companions below the cost price (Oluwasanmi, 2007; Aderonmu 2009; Ebegbulem, 2012; Imhonopi & Ugochukwu, 2013).

Corruption in governance under Umaru Yar'Adua administration also manifested, despite the persistent reaffirmation of his government's commitment to fight corruption, observance of rule of law and due process (Aderonmu 2009; Ijewereme, 2013). Thus, one prominent manifestation of corruption under Yar'Adua was the aiding and abetting of James Ibori (a major financier of Yar'Adua's Election), the former governor of Delta State, via the office of Attorney General of the Federation, who was shield from being prosecuted and jailed. However, the same James Ibori was accused of stealing \$250 million from the Nigerian public purse and pleaded guilty to the charge. He was later jailed in the United Kingdom for 13 years for money laundering and conspiracy to defraud at Southwark Crown Court, London on April 17, 2012 (*BBC News*, April 17 2012).

Corruption under Goodluck Ebele Jonathan administration (2010-2015) also manifested in various dimensions and different areas such as the civil service, security architecture, petroleum resources, among others. Thus, Jonathan government has emphatically been as corruption ridden. *The Economist* (2016) corroborated this when it stated that corruption thrived under Jonathan administration, "who let politicians and their cronies fill their pockets with impunity". Thus, so much money had been used dishonestly many times adding up to N3.98 trillion (US\$20 billion) was supposedly missing (Udo, 2015) and N398 billion (\$2 billion) of military funds appeared to have been mismanaged among the higher echelon of the military (*Premium Times* Press Release, 2016a; Odebode & Adetayo, 2018). Former president, Goodluck Jonathan was also accused of personally ordering over N3 trillion (\$15 billion) from the Central Bank of Nigeria to support his electioneering activities and other self-seeking projects on the pretence of intervention fund for national stability; thus emerging evidences abound that there was a massive fraud in weapons and defence procurements, and misuse of N3 trillion defence budget since 2011 under the guise of fighting Boko Haram (Ayodeji, 2016).

Since former President Jonathan left office in 2015, other fresh allegations of corruption against his government have emerged. Few instances will suffice here. First, the civil service was ambushed by corruption (Ijewereme, 2015). This contention emanated from the audit report on the tenure of former President Jonathan which revealed presence of ghost employees in the Nigerian Federal Civil Service. Thus, over 45,000 unaccountable workers were on the federal payroll alone while government spent over N100 billion annually on such frivolous expenditure (Okekeocha, 2013). This ghost workers scam also featured on the payrolls of many states in Nigeria.

Second, an international tax and audit firm, KPMG, audit report indicted the NNPC, Petroleum Product Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA), and the Ministry of Petroleum Resources of large-scale corruption and absence of transparency (Melaye, 2013). This indicted has been corroborated by the recent discoveries EFCC whereby the former Minister of Petroleum, Diezani Alison-Madueke, who has been reported to have swindle Nigeria during her reign. Under the supervision of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), from 2009 to 2012, 60 million barrels of oil valued at \$13.7 billion was stolen (Melaye, 2013). In August 2017, the United Kingdom National Crime Agency froze 10 million British pounds sterling worth property linked to Alison-Madueke. In the United States, authorities had launched a process to recover \$144 million worth of assets claimed to have been purchased for her by two businessmen (United States Department of Justice, 2017; *Punch Editorial*, September 9, 2017). In Nigeria, at the instance of EFCC, courts have ordered the forfeiture of various sums of money and property multi-million dollars which comprise real estate (\$37.5 million) paid for in cash in Ikoyi and Abuja, 58 others houses exist in Abuja, Port Harcourt and Yenagoa and N9 billion traced to some banks to which nobody has claimed ownership (*Punch Editorial*, September 9, 2017). EFCC also claimed to have traced \$1.5 billion in Swiss banks and property worth N7 billion in Dubai linked to Alison-Madueke. The EFCC echelon stated that assets discovered at that period represented no more than 15 per cent of what Alison-Madueke acquired during her reign as minister (*Punch Editorial*, September 9, 2017). It was claimed that Alison-Madueke became untouchable during Jonathan era. This is because despite the fact that she was indicted by five separate investigative panel Committees reports on different occasions, the president at a particular

period disbanded the Board of NNPC without removing the Minister of Petroleum (Melaye, 2013).

Third, out of the \$1 billion foreign loans secured from the Chinese by the Ministry of Finance, 60% was diverted ; there was a diversion of \$2.2 million vaccination medicine fund by Ministry of Health; up to N1.9 billion Ebola fight fund was also diverted); [../HOD/Desktop/NEW-Corruption in Nigeria - Wikipedia.htm - cite_note-50](https://www.hod.gov.ng/HOD/Desktop/NEW-Corruption%20in%20Nigeria%20-%20Wikipedia.htm)Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) fraud and diverse scams not excluding N2.7 billion worth of contracts that do not conform to the Public Procurement Act; and Police Service Commission embezzlement investigated by ICPC that exposed stealing of over N150 million related to election related trainings while (Eme, Ugwu, Chibuike, Onuigbo & Okeke, 2017).

Lastly, manifestation of corruption under Jonathan government was linked to the former president's wife, Patience Dame Jonathan. The EFCC recently froze some identified accounts worth \$31.5 million which regarded as alleged corrupt enrichment and former first lady claimed ownership of the accounts (*Voice of America* (VOA), 2016; The Centre for Anti-Corruption and Open Leadership (CALCOL) cited in Nwachukwu, 2018). On March 8, 2019, the Supreme Court upheld the request of the EFCC in tackling dubious wealth when it affirmed an order of interim forfeiture made by the Federal High Court in Lagos regarding \$8.4 million (about N3 billion) linked to Patience Jonathan (EFCC, Media & Publicity, 2019). Afterwards, in the judgement delivered by Justice Mojisola Olatoregun at the Federal High Court in Lagos ordered the permanent seizure by the Nigerian government of \$8.4 million and N9.2 billion belonging Patience Jonathan and ruled that the said money was reasonably suspected to be illegally acquired and amounted to proceeds of crime (Kuponiyi, 2019).

Little wonder then, when Falana (2012) submitted that corruption manifested with impunity under Goodluck Jonathan administration to the extent that the fight against corruption was inconsequential. That is why the administration's financial irresponsibility was likened to that of the former president of Uganda, Idi Amin (*Premium Times* Press Release, 2016b; Ugbede, 2018).

President Muhammadu Buhari administration in its first term (2015-2018) was not also immune from manifestation of corruption. One of the prominent corruption cases that manifested in the Buhari administration first term was the N270 million grass-cutting fraud/scandal involving the

former Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Babachir David Lawal. Babachir Lawal, in collaboration with others allegedly used his privately owned company to remove wild grass at the cost of over N270 million (Baiyewu, 2017; Daniel & Nnochiri, 2019). Another corruption infested matter involved former Director-General of the National Intelligence Agency, Ayodele Oke, and his wife, Folashade Oke, over their involvement in the \$43.5 million that was discovered in a flat in Ikoyi, Lagos state (*The Guardian*, November 9, 2017; Daniel & Nnochiri, 2019). There were documents established that the flat was bought in 2015 by Folashade Oke and it was alleged that the property was bought at \$1.66 million from government funds to which her husband had access (*The Guardian*, November 9, 2017). Recently, Kano State governor, Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, became the subject of one of the most manifest acts of corruption in Nigeria in \$5m bribery scandal (Ogundipe, 2018; Odogwu, 2018; Toromade, 2018). Fifteen different video clips in possession of online based Daily Nigerian (described as a sting operation) went viral on social media revealing how he accepted bundles of dollar notes from a yet-to-be-identified contractor. However, the governor maintained his innocence and claimed that the videos were doctored by his political adversaries to damage his reputation and a Kano High Court had since restrained Kano state House of Assembly Investigative Committee from further investigating the allegation (Odogwu, 2018; Toromade, 2018).

There was another N2.5 billion scandal under Buhari administration, involving Mustapha Maihaja, Director General of National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) while the EFCC questioned 13 more top officers in the agency over the alleged fraud in May 2018 (*The Nation*, 2018; Toromade, 2018). The House of Representative of the National Assembly indicted Maihaja and NEMA in November 2018, for mismanaging N5.8 billion set aside for the North East Intervention Fund. It was also unearthed via the investigation the manhandling of the 6,779 metric tonnes of rice donated by the Chinese government to internal displaced persons (IDPs) in the northeast and the payment of about N800 million demurrage on the donated rice that allegedly that did not reach the affected IDPs (Toromade, 2018). The investigation disclosed that the Federal Government lost the sum of N33 billion due to Maihaja's mismanagement. The Lower Chamber eventually recommended for called for Maihaja's dismissal and prosecution for fraud, corruption and embezzlement of N33 billion Emergency Intervention Fund, as

well as all the government officials involved in the approval, processing, release and diversion of the fund (Toromade, 2018).

Lastly, there was the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) scandal in a bid to curb a serious fuel scarcity crisis late 2018 and early 2019. It was discovered that the Federal Government was illegally paying subsidy without proper authorisation (Toromade, 2018). The NNPC was discovered in October 2018 to have illegally diverted N378 billion sourced from the NLNG dividend funds to secretly fund subsidy payment on petroleum products (Toromade, 2018). The fund in question was secretly diverted into payments on petrol supply and distribution when it should have been shared between the federal, state and local governments (Toromade, 2018). Thus, the funds involved were expended on fuel subsidy without the necessary consultation with states or the compulsory appropriation by the National Assembly. The legislature tagged the payments as illegal and called for a probe of the major actors in the scandal (Toromade, 2018).

Dimensions of Anti-Corruption Strategies Under Buhari administration

Under Buhari administration's anti-corruption war in its first term, certain anti-corruption strategies were introduced and the existing ones re-invigorated to achieve better results. In the view of Akpan and Eyo (2018, p.35), "preventive but non-legislated policies" and "preventive-prosecutory but legislated policies" could be regarded as the major anti-corruption strategies under Buhari administration. The preventive but non-legislated policies comprise first, the Treasury Single Account (TSA) which is a public accounting system employing a single account or a set of linked accounts by government to certify that all revenue receipts and payments are undertaken via a Consolidated Revenue Account (CRA) at the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). The pilot TSA scheme began in 2012 and this was based on a unified structure of accounting for 217 Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) for accountability and transparency in public fund management (Udo, 2017). Though the TSA policy was adopted from the previous government, but it has been claimed that it has helped the Buhari government to curtail excesses in government income and expenditure in the MDAs. Second, the whistle blowing policy: This is a policy recently initiated by the Buhari government which allows whistleblowers to receive between 2.5 and 5 percent of the amount recovered (*This Day*, 2016). It is deemed the policy has achieved some appreciable success, but has "suffered abuse due to

administrative red-tapism and counter-claim by whistle blowers themselves as well as the questionable involvement of officials of the agencies in anti-graft cases” (Akpan & Eyo, 2019, p.35).

The preventive-prosecutory but legislated policies of anti-corruption comprise first, Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal; second, Public Procurement Bureau; third, Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI); fourth, the ICPC; oversight functions of the legislatures at Federal and State levels; among others (Akpan & Eyo, 2018).

Aside the foregoing, there was the establishment of the Presidential Advisory Committee Against Corruption (PACAC) who is “to formulate a strategy and co-ordinate the anti-corruption war of the administration ensuring that all sectors of the Nigerian society are involved in the fight” (Otinuga, 2016 cited in Amannah & Adeyeye, 2018). There was also the re-focusing of Bank Verification Number and publication of the NNPC monthly accounts. There is general belief that the EFCC was re-invigorated as some high-profile cases were being diligently prosecuted and yielding results. Thus, some have argued even at the continental level, in recognition of Buhari administration’s anti-corruption efforts in Nigeria, African leaders at the 29th African Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia unanimously endorsed Buhari to champion the African Union’s theme for 2018. This has led to his appointed as the African Anti-Corruption Champion for the continent by the African Union (Enumah, 2017).

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

S/N	Variables	Options	Frequencies	Percentage (%)
1.	Sex	Male	154	55
		Female	126	45
2.	Age (in years)	21-40	203	72.5
		41 and above	77	27.5
			280	
3.	Religion	Christianity	132	47.1
		Islam	131	46.8
		Others	17	6.1
			280	

4.	Educational Background	No Formal Education	0	0
		WASCE/NECO/GCE	34	12.1
		NCE/OND	82	29.3
		HND/BSC	117	41.8
		M.Sc. & above	47	16.8
			280	
5.	Occupation	Student	32	11.4
		Businessman/woman	38	13.6
		Civil/Public Servants	137	48.9
		Politicians	52	18.6
		NGOs Representatives	21	7.5
			280	

Source: Author's Field Research, 2019

Data displayed in table 1, showed that 55% of the respondents were male while 45% were female. Also, 72.5% of the respondents were between the age-bracket of 21-40 while 41 years and above were 2.7%. The respondents' religion spread showed that 47.1% were Christians and 46.8% as Muslims, while 6.1% of the respondents did show preference for any religion. Also, the educational background of the responds showed that 0% of the respondents indicated no formal education, 12.1% signified that they possess WASCE/NCE/GCE, 29.3% reached the education level of NCE/OND, 41.8% possess HND/B.Sc. while 16.8% of the respondents claimed M.Sc. and other higher levels of education. Lastly, the respondents' occupation indicated 11,4% of the respondents were students, 13.6% were businessman/woman, 48.9% of the respondents were civil/public servants, 18.6% were politicians while 7.5% were non-governmental organisation representatives.

Table 2: Respondents' views on the gains of Buhari administration's anti-corruption war in Nigeria between 2015 and 2019

S/n	Items/Options		
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1.	Was corruption prevalent in governance before Muhammadu Buhari became the president in Nigeria? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 255 25 280	Percentage 91.1 8.9 100
2.	At the commencement of the Buhari administration's first term, did it have genuine intention of fighting corruption in governance? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 199 81 280	Percentage 71.1 28.9 100
3.	Did Buhari administration in first term have specific anti-corruption agenda? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 126 154 280	Percentage 45 55 100
4.	Did the Presidential Advisory Committee Against Corruption (PACAC) establish for the formulation and co-ordination of anti-corruption strategies was able to achieve its mandate? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 178 102 280	Percentage 63.6 36.4 100
5.	Was the thorough implementation of Treasury Single Account (TSA) policy part of the Buhari administration's anti-corruption war gains? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 230 50 280	Percentage 82.1 17.9 100
6.	Did the usage of Executive Orders as anti-corruption instruments serve as Buhari administration's anti-corruption war gains? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 195 50 280	Percentage 82.1 17.9 100

7.	Was usage of the Code of Conduct Bureau and its Tribunal to hold public office holders accountable made the Buhari administration's anti-corruption war more effective? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 201 79 280	Percentage 71.8 28.2 100
8.	Did the adoption of whistleblower policy assist in the Buhari administration's anti-corruption war? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 267 13 280	Percentage 95.4 4.64 100
9.	Were the diligent investigation and prosecution of suspected corrupt public office holders by the ICPC and the EFCC part of the gains of the Muhammadu Buhari administration's anti-corruption war? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 245 35 280	Percentage 87.5 12.5 100
10.	Was the absence of specific anti-corruption agenda part of major challenges facing Muhammadu Buhari administration's anti-corruption war in its first term? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 111 169 280	Percentage 39.6 60.4 100
11.	Was the selective prosecution of public office holders accused of corruption part of the major challenges facing Buhari administration's anti-corruption war? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 277 3 280	Percentage 98.9 1.1 100
12.	Did non-observance of rule of law and disobedience of court orders negatively affect the successful impact of Muhammadu Buhari administration's anti-corruption war? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 138 142 280	Percentage 49.3 50.7 100

13.	Did the absence political will partly hinder the successful impact of Muhammadu Buhari administration’s anti-corruption war? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 178 102 280	Percentage 63.6 36.4 100
14.	In spite of all these challenges, did the Buhari administration’s anti-corruption war yielded positive results in its first term? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 159 121 280	Percentage 56.8 43.2 100
15.	Will all-inclusive prosecution of public office holders accused of corruption irrespective of party affiliations make Buhari administration’s anti-corruption war more effective in its second term? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 274 6 280	Percentage 97.9 2.1 100
16.	Will the usage of collective action approach whereby every individual is involved in the anti-corruption war make Buhari administration’s anti-corruption war more effective? YES NO TOTAL	Frequency 245 35 280	Percentage 87.5 12.5 100

Source: Author’s Field Study, 2019

Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Objective 1: Determining the gains of Buhari administration’s anti-corruption war in Nigeria between 2015 and 2019.

As shown in table 2, the responses to the item 1 in the questionnaire shows that 255 (91.1%) respondents agreed that corruption in governance remains a major challenge in Nigeria, while 25 (8.9%) felt otherwise. The majority views of the respondents (91.1%) as shown in the table are in tandem with general views of scholars such as Egwemi (2012), Ekundayo (2012), Enweremadu (2012, 2017), Imhonopi and Ugochukwu (2013), Ijewereme (2013, 2015), Adegbabiri and Okolie (2018). The foregoing negative views

about prevalent of corruption in governance Nigeria led to the Buhari administration's anti-corruption war when he became president in 2015.

Items 2 and 3 are interrelated. Item 2 queried the Buhari administration's intention of fighting corruption in governance and majority of the respondents 199 (71.1%) believed the administration from on the onset had genuine intention; others, that is, 81 respondents (28.9%) did not believe so. On item 3 which sought to find out whether Buhari administration's anti-corruption war had specific agenda, 154 (55%) believed that the administration had no clear-cut agenda while 126 (45%) contradicted this position. Thus, the opinions expressed on this issue were sharply polarised. However, some scholars and analysts like Ekpo, Chime and Enor (2016) and Enweremadu (2019) contended that Buhari's administration anti-corruption strategy lacked specific strategy. According to Ekpo, Chime and Enor (2016, p.61) "Buhari's anti-graft strategy in its first eight months is misguided and misconceived". In a contrary expressed opinion, another knowledgeable respondent, Dr. Olawale Adetoyi of the Department of Political Science, Caleb University, Imota Lagos believed that the Buhari administration had well-articulated anti-corruption agenda in first term in office (Adetoyi, 2019). In the same vein, Akpan and Eyo (2018) agreed with Dr. Adetoyi and went further to specifically mention certain measures tagged "home-grown laudable anti-corruption policies and legal frameworks" such as Code of Conduct Bureau and its Tribunal, Treasury Single Account (TSA), whistle-blowing, and Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) and Governance Code, among others which they claimed the administration had re-revitalised to fight corruption.

Items 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10 which sought to discover whether various anti-corruption strategies deployed by Buhari administration had delivered. These anti-corruption strategies as stated in the questionnaires were PACAC, TSA, Executive orders, Code of Conduct and its Tribunal, whistleblower policy and reinvigorating of EFCC and ICPC for better performance.

On the item 4, 178 (63.6%) of the respondents believed that the Presidential Advisory Committee Against Corruption (PACAC) done fairly well while 102 (36.4%) held contrary opinion. The opinion of the majority of the respondents on this issue coincides with the author's observation regarding the actions and anti-corruption pronouncements made severally of the PACC.

On item 5, majority of the respondents 230 (82.1%) agreed that the thorough implementation of TSA policy has brought about gains towards

Buhari administration's anti-corruption war. However, 50 (17.9%) of the respondents disagreed. According to Ndubuaku, Ohaegbu and Nina (2017), Ofor, Omaliko, and Okoli (2017), TSA has had a tremendous impact on the country's public accounting system.

Item 6 captured the respondents' views on the gains of the usage of Executive orders as anti-corruption instruments under the Buhari administration's anti-corruption war. Most of the respondents 195 (82.1%) felt that the Executive orders have enough yielded anti-corruption gains in favour of Buhari administration, while 50 (17.9%) showed contrary views. According to Onyekwere, Jimoh, Onochie, Daka and Olaniyi (2018), Executive Order 6 of 2018 (E06) which deals with preservation of suspicious asset recovered from corrupt officials, reinstates the Buhari administration's commitment to corruption fight. The Executive Order 6 led to the controversial placing of 50 prominent personalities on a watch-list and restricted them from leaving Nigeria pending the determination of their cases.

Item 7 sought the opinion of the respondents on Code of Conduct Bureau and its Tribunal to hold public office holders accountable made the Buhari administration's anti-corruption war more effective. Out of the 280 respondents, 201 (71.8%) were of the opinion that Code of Conduct Bureau and its Tribunal (CTT) assisted in rejuvenating anti-corruption war under Buhari administration first term while the remaining 79 (28.2%) respondents did not believe so. Corroborating the opinions of the majority of the respondents, Makinde (2016), contended that the renewed anti-corruption campaign in Nigeria under Buhari administration has restored some confidence to Nigerians through the operations of the CCT. Despite the eventual favourable judgement on Senator Bukola Saraki's trial who was accused of making false declaration of his assets while he was the governor of Kwara state, his trial the CCT sent a strong signal of the seriousness of Buhari's anti-corruption war. Also, according to Adesomoju (2019), the conviction and the removal of the former Chief Justice Nigeria, Walter Onnoghen by the CCT for false asset declaration bolstered Buhari's anti-corruption war.

Item 8 focused on the adoption of whistleblower policy to assist in the Buhari administration's anti-corruption war and the majority of the respondents 267 (95.4%) concurred that the policy indeed had assisted the administration while 13 (4.64%) disagreed. The views of the majority of the respondents tallied with the contention of Ogbu (2017) and Onuora and Uzoka

(2018) and when they submitted that within the first six months, the Nigeria's whistle blowing policy which was formally launched by the Federal Ministry of Finance on December 22, 2016, led to the commencement of over 3,000 investigations and the recovery of over N11.6 billion. Also, the federal government within the first six months of the policy paid N375.8 million to twenty whistleblowers who provided information that led to the recovery of over N11.6 billion and as of May 2018, EFCC through the whistleblower policy recovered over N527 billion, \$53 million and 122,890 UK pounds sterling in physical cash traced to the homes of suspects and in the bank accounts (Affe, 2019). This was also attested to by the former Minister of Information of the Buhari administration, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, who applauded the gains from the whistleblowing policy on different occasions as an attestation to the progress made in the war against corruption in Nigeria (Ogbu, 2017).

Item 9 sought find out from the respondents whether the diligent investigation and prosecution of suspected corrupt public office holders by the ICPC and the EFCC should be regarded as gains of the Buhari administration's anti-corruption war. Out of the 280 respondents, 245 (87.5%) believed so while 35 (12.5%) did not believe so. In line with the opinions of the majority of the respondents, according to Makinde (2016), it can be contended that the effective usage of the EFCC and the ICPC appeared to be the most visible institutions driving the Buhari's anti-corruption war. Amannah (2018) also contended that the EFCC has played a vital role in the massive scam in weapons and defence procurements that led to the misuse of N3 trillion defence budgets since 2011, under the guise of fighting the infamous Boko Haram threat. Supporting this contention, the acting Chairman of the EFCC Ibrahim Magu (cited in Nwezeh, 2019) stated that "in 2015 the Commission secured 103 convictions, 194 in 2016, 189 in 2017 and 312 in 2018. From January 2019 to date, the Commission has secured 406 convictions and recovered several assets worth billions of naira."

Objective 2: Ascertain the challenges that hindered Buhari administration's anti-corruption war between 2015 and 2019.

Items 10, 11, 12 and 13 sought to ascertain some selected major challenges that hindered Buhari administration's anti-corruption war in its first term in office. Item 10 asked the respondents whether the absence of a clear-cut anti-corruption agenda was part of major challenges facing Buhari

administration's anti-corruption war in its first term. Out of the 280 respondents, 111 (39.6%) believed so while 169 (60.4%) felt that absence of clear-cut anti-corruption played insignificant role. Dr. David U. Enweremadu of the Department of Political Science, University of Ibadan ardently believed that Buhari administration's anti-corruption war in its first term lacked clear-cut strategy and there was no any stated mandate (Enweremadu, 2019). However, Dr. Olawale Adetoyi of the Department of Political Science, Caleb University, Imota Lagos believed that Buhari administration had well-articulated anti-corruption agenda during its first term in office which comprise zero tolerance for corruption by strengthening anti-corruption agencies with responsibilities for detecting, exposing and prosecuting corrupt practices, declaration of assets by public office holders, but it was just that the agenda achieved only partial success (Adetoyi, 2019). The focus of item 11 is on determining if selective prosecution of public office holders accused of corruption was part of the major challenges faced Buhari administration's anti-corruption war in its first term in office. To this end, 277 (98.1%) respondents agreed with this notion while 3 (1.1%) respondents disagreed. It is believed that Buhari's anti-corruption war would have been more impactful it had not been selective. Hence, the anti-corruption war was ineffective and lost credibility because the fight targeted political enemies and looked the other way when Buhari's cronies were accused of corruption with pointer evidences. One popular instance was that of Kano Governor, Abdullahi Ganduje who was recorded receiving bribes and putting the money into his robes and Ganduje was neither investigated nor prosecuted. In relation to this, a statement credited to the current Chairman of the Buhari's party, All Progressives Congress (APC), Mr. Adams Oshiomhole, saying that "Your sins are forgiven, once you join the APC" in one of the campaign rallies leading to election of Buhari for second term was great indicted on the credibility of the administration's corruption war (Affe, 2019). According to Senator Sheu Sanni of Kaduna Central in 8th National Assembly, "when it comes to fighting corruption in the National Assembly and Judiciary and in the larger Nigerian sectors, president uses insecticide, but when it comes to fighting corruption within the presidency, they use deodorants" (cited in Musser, 2019). On the other hand, others like Executive Chairman of the Coalition Against Corrupt Leaders, Debo Adeniran reported to have stated, it became a worrying norm in the first term of Buhari administration's corruption war for the main charges against a suspect to be neglected, while needless political arguments took the

centre stage and he cited the case of the former Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Walter Onnoghen as an example (cited in Affe, 2019). According to Adeniran,

Those involved in grand corruption would want to wriggle themselves out of the quagmire by any means. This is the reason why so many public servants and politicians, who have engaged in grand corruption, must introduce politics into their trials...The political colouration has become an easy tool which they use to blackmail government agencies...(cited in Affe, 2019).

Item 12 addresses likelihood of the non-observance of rule of law and disobedience of court orders being part of the impediments to the meaningful impact of Buhari administration's anti-corruption war. To this end, 138 (49.3%) answered affirmatively, while 142 (49.3%) disagreed. The almost equal responses on this issue signify the extent that the Buhari administration's anti-corruption war has been really grounded with the people. There is this general position in the extant literature mostly expressed by legal practitioners and experts that

On item 13, which asked whether absence political will partly hindered the successful impact of Muhammadu Buhari administration's anti-corruption war attracted positive responses from the majority of the respondents. Out of the 280 respondents, 178(63.6%) said yes while 102(36.4%) said no. The supporters of the anti-corruption stated that Buhari possesses political will to fight corruption. Comparatively, Buhari's government showed some level of political will to fight corruption unlike his predecessor, Goodluck Jonathan, who once infamously stated that stealing is not tantamount to corruption. However, on the contrary, Falana (cited in Awoyinfa, 2017) claimed that Buhari-led administration lacked the political will needed to fight corruption and its attempt on rooting out the scourge was scratch on the surface. Part of this is the administration's failure to engage those politicians known to have had issues of corruption in their past participation in governance that were part of Buhari administration in its first term. For instance, people continue wondering why Babatunde Fashola, Kayode Fayemi, Kemi Adeosun, Rotimi Amaechi, among others had not been invited by the anti-graft bodies despite the claims put forward by the Executive Chairman of CACOL, Debo Adeniran that he had on several occasions petitioned the president and the EFCC and

ICPC to investigate them for personal enrichment when they were in office (Adeoye, 2015).

Responses on item 14 which probed further to assess the overall impact of Buhari administration's anti-corruption war in its first term in office indicated that 159 (56.8%) believed that the administration performed fairly well or what could be regarded as partial success according to Adetoyi (2019). Also, Akpan and Eyo (2018, p.32) submitted that Buhari administration's anti-corruption war ... has brought about a modicum of victories in certain aspects of the corruption perception index. However, 121 (43.2%) did not think that the anti-corruption war yielded the desired results. According to Ojeifo (*Vanguard*, February 17, 2018), "there is a common sense in the submission that the anti-corruption crusade of the President Muhammadu Buhari's government has slumped". Just like Ojeifo, a knowledgeable respondent, Dr. David U. Enweremadu of the Department of Political Science, University of Ibadan, also felt that it is difficult to measure the Buhari's anti-corruption war because of no clearly stated mandate (Enweremadu, 2019).

Objective 3: Identifying solutions towards Buhari administration's anti-corruption war for its improvement in its second term.

Items 15 and 16 bother on the expected solutions to be generated from the identified causes and challenges impeding Buhari administration's anti-corruption war. Item 15 queried whether all-inclusive prosecution of public office holders accused of corruption irrespective of party affiliations, which have generated much controversy, would make Buhari administration's anti-corruption war more effective in its second term. 274 (97.9%) respondents answered in affirmative while just 6 (2.1%) disagreed. The preponderance of the views in the relevant literature also tallied with the views expressed by the majority of the respondents. Adeoye (2015), Ekpo, Chime and Enor (2016), Awoyinfa (2017), Falana (cited in Awoyinfa, (2017), Makinde (2017), Enweremadu (2019), Toromade (2019), among others firmly opined that until Muhammadu Buhari displays necessary political will by investigating and brought to book if the need be all past political public holders irrespective of party affiliations, through the EFCC, the ICPC, the Code of Conduct Bureau and its Tribunal, his anti-corruption war will yield the needed results. Also, item 16 focuses on whether the collective action approach whereby every individual is involved in the anti-corruption war would make Buhari administration's anti-corruption war more effective. Out of 280 respondents,

245 (87.5%) representing the majority believed that this could be possible while 35(12.5%) did not believe that collective action would make Buhari administration's anti-corruption war more effective. This understandable based on the observation that past governments' anti-corruption efforts in have not only been elite-driven, but most of attempts to curb corruption in governance Nigeria have been concentrated at the federal level, and some occasions at states level while less anti-corruption searchlight had been properly beamed on local government administrations and other public agencies. As observed by Falana (cited in Folarin, 2019):

no state government in Nigeria is fighting corruption. Out of the 36 states, the APC has 21. Not one is fighting corruption. So, there is no way you can make any meaningful impact with EFCC in Abuja roaming round the whole country. EFCC has less than 5,000 staff... We cannot win it unless Nigerians own the fight.

In line with the foregoing observation, the views of the majority of the respondents corroborate the submissions of scholars such as Teorell (2007), Rothstein (2011), Persson, Rothstein and Teorell (2013), and Marquette and Peiffer (2015), Schwertheim (2017), among others, on the need to let the people own the fight against corruption if it is to be effective.

Conclusion

There is no doubt corruption in governance is real in Nigeria and attempts had been made by Buhari administration to curb its prevalence. It has been established in this study that implementation of TSA, effective usage of the existing anti-corruption bodies, innovative involvement of whistleblowers, among others, put Buhari administration anti-corruption war on the expectant right course in its first term in office. However, selective nature of the anti-corruption war absence of holistic involvement of the entire populace have been found majorly amiss and stand out to responsible for the less impact of Buhari administration anti-corruption war in his first term. It is therefore recommended that Muhammadu Buhari administration must show the necessary political will by investigating past political public holders irrespective of party affiliations and brought to book, if the need, all those found guilty for its anti-corruption to be meaning and more impactful while

collective approach should be adopted to leverage its anti-corruption war its second term.

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**THE IMPACT OF COURT SETTLEMENT OF ELECTORAL
DISPUTES ON DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN NIGERIA:
THE NEGATIVITIES OF LEGAL TECHNICALITIES**

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Abstract

This paper examined the propriety of the courts in determining electoral outcome as opposed to free and fair polling conducted by the electoral commission, and its effects on the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. The major assumption of the paper was that election result that depends on court ruling weakens the confidence of the citizens on the electoral commission and other political institutions thereby generating instability in the practice of democracy in the country. The paper relied heavily on the historical and descriptive methods of investigation and drew data from the secondary sources which were analyzed within the context of Separation of Powers theory. The paper contended that Nigeria's democracy cannot be consolidated so long as the results of electoral contests remains subject to legal contest even as court verdicts cannot be translated into credible, fair and free elections. Moreover, the paper noted that the electorate desires and are more satisfied with free and fair elections rather than court rulings which are often based on technicalities against merit. Consequently, the paper recommended among others the internalization of democratic values in the political system to ensure that citizens' votes count.

Keywords: Election petition, electoral contest, electoral dispute, judiciary, legal technicality.

Introduction

All over the world, one of the hallmarks of democracy is the conduct of regular and frequent elections to choose who will occupy public positions

or offices in a peaceful and orderly manner. The need for regularity of election as the basis for selecting an occupier of an office is based on the fact that it is about the only way that a democracy can peacefully transmit from one person to the other and from one government to another. But more disheartening and discouraging about the institutionalization of an enduring democracy in Nigeria is the fact that the enabling environment for its growth and development is lacking both in institutional and behavioural ethos.

In contemporary Nigeria, it is rather unfortunate that the practice of democracy has deviated from the real democratic approach. This fact is better buttressed by Imah (2003, p. 1) who remarked that:

It is in Nigeria's democracy that the opposition is intimidated, threatened, maimed and silenced. It is in Nigeria's democracy that the ruling party would want to have everything to itself. What we therefore see here is a bandwagon followership and an unprecedented but dangerous breeding of sycophants and praise singers who benefit from the looting spree that has become the system in Nigeria's Forth Republic. Who says our democracy is not cosmetic?

The realization of these imperfections in Nigeria's democracy and the electoral system calls for a redress mechanism (court) where an aggrieved individual will ventilate his or her grievances against the outcome of an election. The fair and timely resolution of electoral disputes is a critical part of any electoral process and there is a world-wide consensus that those availing themselves of formal adjudication process should be entitled to a quick and swift resolution of their disputes by the tribunals. This is the rationale behind the institutionalization of elections petition tribunals in Nigeria.

The success and consolidation of democracy depend tremendously on the way elections are conducted and concluded by the Election Management Body (EMB). In Nigeria, over the years, due to the failure of the Electoral Commission to produce election results that are satisfactory to the contesting parties, the burden of deciding election outcomes to a large extent shifted to the judiciary, thereby giving an added advantage to the judiciary in deciding electoral cases. However, the snag is that, the judiciary while deciding electoral results often relies more on legal technicalities rather than the socio-political consideration of the people and the determination of the genuineness

of the vote. As such, some popular candidates who ordinarily would have won the elections often lose on grounds of legal technicalities.

Given the foregoing, this paper intends to examine the involvement of the judiciary in settling election petition matters and the impacts on consolidating Nigeria's budding democracy. Hypothetically, the paper assumes that (i) the more election results are dependent on court decisions, the weaker the confidence of the electorate on the electoral commission as a political institution; and (ii) the higher the level of mass dissatisfaction with the performance of the electoral commission, the higher the number of electoral cases that will be decided by the courts and, consequently, the stronger the indication of weakness of the electoral commission as a political institution. Flowing from these assumptions, the paper raised some vital questions:

- i. Can election lead to democratic consolidation when it is the court that determines who wins in electoral contest?
- ii. Does the outcome of judiciary verdict satisfy the citizens as much as result from free and fair election?
- iii. How effective is the judiciary in promoting the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria?

Deriving from the above stated problems, the ultimate objectives of this paper were set:

- i. To examine the impacts of the primacy of court decisions in electoral disputes on the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria.
- ii. To established the relationship between court rulings and the confidence of the people in political institutions.

Considerably, the analysis of this paper will contribute in unveiling the fundamental problems that affect the judicial decisions in settling election disputes and also fashion out strategies that will address the future legal challenges in Nigeria. More pragmatically, the findings of the paper will avail government functionaries, mostly judicial officers and legal pundits, officials of INEC, political contestants, political analysts and other stakeholders in the electoral process the opportunity to be acquainted with the imperative of free and fair elections rather than the frequent resort to the courts.

Democracy and Democratic Consolidation Conceptualized

One of the classical writers on democracy, Heater (1964) asserted that many elements of modern democracy are usually taken to have originated in ancient Greece, particularly the city-state of Athens. Indeed, the word, democracy is derived from two Greek words, 'demos' which means 'the people' and 'kratia' which means 'rule or government'. The term democracy, therefore, literally means 'rule by the people'. Heater (1964, p. 117) emphasized that:

Democracy has its roots in Greek where individuals in a polis have an opportunity of taking part in decision making. The position explains democracy as a universal principle of governance that upholds high moral imperatives, accord the citizenry the right to participate in decision making that adheres to their collective will and interest.

The author summed up that democracy can be regarded as a governmental system that involves the widest spectrum of participation, either through elections or through the administration of the accepted policies. It is a government founded on the principle of rule of law which is against arbitrariness, high handedness, dictatorship and also antithesis to military regime.

Collaborating the thought above, Alapiki (2010) outlined the basic principles or elements of democracy to include, ascendance to political authority through periodic elections, the presence of universal adult suffrage, respect for the rule of law, observance of fundamental human rights, strict adherence to the provisions of the constitution, institutionalization of an autonomous judiciary and uncensored press, the presence of majority rule and the protection of minority's interests. The author stated further that it is necessary that the people be broad-minded, have a liberal disposition, and a sense of responsibility to use one's political rights for the public good and a positive interest in public affairs.

According to Hermet (1991) election is fundamental to installing democratic regimes and in fact in 'sacking' them where the people no longer

have confidence in them. He added that democracy rests on popular participation of the citizens since the government in the first place is for them and their choice is undeniably paramount. Huntington (1996) reinforced Hermet's position that democracy exists where the principal leaders of a political system are selected by a competitive election in which the bulk of the population has the opportunity to participate. Implicit in this view is the notion of election as a fundamental element of democracy. It equates democracy to election and the electoral processes in which the power of decision and choice rests with the people. Democracy to the author revolves around the selective processes through which leaders emerge and ascend to power.

On the other hand, democratic consolidation is one concept that has attracted the attention of scholars and writers from diverse academic orientations. For instance, Linz and Stepan (1996) viewed consolidation in two ways: consolidation as avoiding democratic breakdown and consolidation as transformation from a diminished sub-type of democracy to a consolidated liberal democracy. To them the former has to do with the process of stabilizing and maintaining the new democracies while the latter focuses on the process of deepening, completing or organizing democracies. By extension, democratic consolidation, according to Asiwaju (2000) implies the internalization of democratic culture and institutionalization of democratic best practices by a country that successfully embarked on a democratic transition.

Despite the nebulous nature of the concept, most scholars accept the original understanding of the concept as being associated with the challenge of securing and extending the life expectancy of new democracies, of building immunity against the threat of regression to authoritarianism and reverse waves (Adeosun, 2014; Beetham, 1994). Oni (2014, p. 6) amplified the view that literally, democratic consolidation means an identifiable phase in the transition from authoritarian rule to civil rule and by extension democratic systems that are germane and fundamental to the establishment and

enthronement of a stable institutional and enduring democracy, because according to him:

Achieving democratic consolidation therefore calls for the enthronement of democracy as a system of organizing both society and government and thereafter creates concomitant institutions, culture, ethics, support system and the will that are crucial in making it stable, efficient and responsive. Essentially, arriving at a consolidated democracy requires nurturing democratic values and ethos, principles and institutions in a matured sense that prevent a reversal to a hitherto authoritarian regime.

The above emphasizes the fact that democratic consolidation begins with the enthronement of democracy after a free and fair election, and spans through the period when its probability of breakdown is very low or on the other way round, when its probability of survival is very high.

Writing on the imperatives of democratic consolidation, Linz and Stepan (1996) brought to prominence the role of election in guaranteeing consolidation of democracy. The authors reasoned that if democratic governments depend so much on elections, then any fraudulent conduct of election will jeopardize the life of democracy in such states. They concluded that when elections and their surrounding freedom are institutionalized, democracy can be said to be consolidated.

Obviously, therefore, democratic consolidation requires that political elite and contestants adhere to peaceful competition for power based on the foundation of rule of law, mutual respect and tolerance devoid of rhetorical irritants that might lead to violence and the use of military force. When the political actors have consensus and agreement on the democratic procedures, democratic norms and practices will become embedded first at the elite level and then radiate throughout the polity, establishing a firm foundation for democratic consolidation.

Theoretical Framework

For its theoretical bearing, this paper is located within the framework of the theory of separation of powers as popularized by Charles-Louis de Secondat Baron de Montesquieu (1945). The essence is to separate the institutions and their functions. The theory holds that political liberty can only be ensured if the three organs of government are separated both in personnel and functions and each acts as a check on the excesses of the other even as it emphasizes the need to follow the constitution to the letter with the view to promoting good governance; hence, the legislature is vested with powers to make laws, the judiciary to interpret the laws of the land and executive is responsible for the day-to-day administration and enforcement of rules in the political system. Since most of the rules in the political system are administrative, the executive sometimes creates institutions to assist in the administration of rules and laws through bureaucratic or other governmental institutions to enforce its decisions. In Nigeria, one of such institutions is the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) that performs the function of election administration (1999 to date).

However, the function of election administration has relevance in the concept of Polyarchy (rule by the many) which emphasizes that control over governmental decisions is constitutionally vested in officials chosen in a free and fair election (Dahl, 1971). This means that election of officials is the most important, and for election to be free and fair the citizens must have confidence or agree with the outcomes of election. Therefore, the electoral commission as an institution vested with the responsibility of conducting elections must satisfy a set of functional requirements, and operational conditions if the structure is to continue to exist; failure for this institution to function in its primary assignment, will lead to malfunctioning of the whole structure, thus hampering democratic consolidation and consequently leading to structural decay.

The theory as applicable to this paper is supportive of Valenzuela's (1992) argument that 'when political institutions are weak, the chances of democratic consolidation are slim', hence, the need to build or strengthen state's institutions in the struggle to consolidate democracy. That is, to achieve democratic consolidation there is the need to ensure that the state bureaucracy, legislature, judiciary, executive, etc. discharges their duties with maximum standard of efficiency and creditability. It is within the above context that this

paper examines the propriety of the courts in determining electoral outcome and the implications for democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

Judiciary-Democracy Nexus

Democracy and justice are related to the extent that the former facilitates and enhances public participation and prevents abusive power from becoming concentrated at the centre of society. Arguably, democracy cannot exist in the absence of fundamental human rights, whether individually or collectively. This standpoint is in consonance with the notion that democracy is a system of government which usually involve freedom of the individual in many respects of political life - equality among citizens, justice in the relationship between the people and the government (Nnoli, 2003).

According to Bryce (1921) there is no better test of excellence of a government than the efficiency of its judicial system, for nothing more nearly touches the welfare and security of the average citizen than his knowledge that he can rely on certain and prompt administration of justice. Bryce (1921, p. 421) opined emphatically that:

Law is respected and supported when it is trusted as the shield of innocence and impartial guardian of every private civil right. If the law be dishonestly administered the salt has lost its favour; if it be weakly enforced, the guarantees of order fail; if the lamp of justice goes out in darkness, how great is that darkness!

In consonance with the above viewpoint, Agarwal (2006) stated that in all democratic countries, judiciary is considered the guardian of the freedom of the people and also of the constitution. The author noted that in countries where there is no democracy, the judiciary is not free and the fundamental rights of the people are not protected. He stressed that not only is the judiciary a watchdog against violation of fundamental rights guaranteed under the constitution and thus insulates all persons, indigenes and aliens alike against discrimination, abuse of state power, arbitrariness and tyranny, but is truly the only defensive armour of the country and its constitution and laws. If this armour were to be stripped of its onerous functions it would mean, the door is wide open for nullification, anarchy and convulsion.

Writing with focus on the Nigerian experience, Alabi (2005) observed that the major challenge to the democratic process is the problem of justice delayed and unnecessary bureaucracy in Nigeria's judicial system. The author

noted that the promotion of the rule of law is a necessary correlate of democracy which requires that citizens have access to the courts of law for the determination of disputes and ventilation of grievances. In fact, access to justice is a part of fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy. Notably, access is often denied through delay and technicalities in the administration of justice, especially, in relation to electoral disputes. Yet, access to justice can only be meaningful where cases are determined fairly, promptly and expeditiously.

Despite the potentially strong nexus between democracy and judiciary, it is not sufficient for a people or a society to claim to practice a democratic form of government except there is a clear and unambiguous evidence of popular participation. Ordinarily, a functional democracy creates an environment that is conducive for social and economic development and resultantly critical to the entronement and sustenance of justice in any society or polity. Democracy embodies the will of the governed; and the consent of the ruled will not only endorse and enhance legitimacy, it will also unleash the confidence of the people for great transformation that is needed (Ajibewa 2006). Thus, one cannot but admit Garner's (1955) submission that a society without legislative organ is conceivable, but a civilized state without judiciary organ is hardly conceivable. But in the Nigeria's context, how has the judiciary fared in driving the country along the part of rule of law under democratic dispensation? The discussion and analysis in the succeeding sections of this paper will focus on the involvement of the judiciary in settling electoral disputes and the impacts on consolidating democracy in Nigeria.

The Judiciary and Electoral Disputes in Nigeria: An Historical Overview

Resort to the courts and electoral tribunal has always been a feature of Nigeria's electoral process, especially in the post-colonial era. As observed by Duru and Nwagboso (2005) no election conducted in Nigeria since independence has been completely free of charges of irregularities, electoral malpractices, violence and various degrees of disruption. In the First Republic, political parties put a lot of stock in the office of their legal advisers and teams of lawyers assembled to defend their candidates and supporters who were victims of intimidation by functionaries of opposing governments especially during election campaigns. The breakdown of law and order in Western Nigeria after the 1964 general elections can largely be attributed to the

imprisonment of Chief Awolowo, a votary of legalism who would have reined in his embittered and frustrated supporters.

This ugly situation has continued to impede the country's drive at political development. Since 1979 every single presidential election conducted in the country has been legally challenged, as have several other contested political elections in the country. Simply put, the 1979, 1983 and 1993 federal elections were alleged to be characterized by various forms of malpractices (Duru, 1994). It was alleged that the citizens were not only denied of their constitutional rights to vote, but were also imposed with candidates who could hardly win elections in their families not to talk of exalted positions they found themselves. Also the 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015 general elections were replicas of previous elections in the annals of the electoral history of Nigeria. This ugly trend has affected the citizens' participation in the country's electoral process as well as led to the collapse of various democratic institutions in the country. It even became a culture for those who never won elections not only to be declared winners but be allowed to serve out their stolen mandates through the delay tactics of the tribunals (Nwagboso, 2011).

To start with, the election of the first Executive President of Nigeria in 1979 was controversial and in fact, contested at elections tribunal up to the Supreme Court of Nigeria as provided for by the 1977 Electoral Decree. The Progressive Parties Alliance (a conglomeration of the UPN, NPP, GNPP and a faction of PRP) led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo contended that the declaration of Alhaji Shehu Shagari as winner was unlawful since he had not satisfied Section 34a sub-section i(c) and (ii) of the Electoral Decree which stipulated that for a winner to emerge, he/she must have one-quarter of lawful votes cast in at least two-thirds of all the States of the Federation. The election was, however, confirmed because the Court was satisfied that Alhaji Shehu Shagari met the constitutional requirement in 12 States of the federation and two-thirds of the votes cast in the thirteenth State. The case was rested on the premise that it was impossible to have one-quarter of human-being and the two-thirds is greater than a halve hence, the thirteenth State was regarded as a whole (Joseph, 1991).

The decision of the court, emphasizing as it did substantial compliance rather than the reasonable meaning of relevant words of the statute and its admonition for the judgment not to be considered a precedent paradoxically set a bad precedent for subsequent actions brought before the courts on matters bordering on politics and electoral disputes. That the majority allowed

themselves to be swayed by political expediency rather than what the then Attorney-General of the Federation later characterized as “Crass legalism”, laid the foundation, wittingly or unwittingly, for distrust and mistrust of Nigerian judges by the people especially in respect of highly charged political cases which electoral petitions represent. Thus, cases with similar facts could actually be decided differently, depending on their perceived potential for political fallout.

The erosion of the people’s confidence in the judiciary, regrettably, was not limited to political cases. Stories were being bandied about that justice in the country had been put on sale to the highest bidder, with devastating consequences for the image of the judiciary. This explains why Chief Awolowo, a firm believer in the rule of law, could not see any point in pursuing any redress in the courts when he once again felt cheated out of victory at the 1983 presidential election, preferring instead to leave everything to God since the judiciary had become terribly corrupt. Accordingly, the low esteem with which the judiciary is held by many people today, especially with regard to election petition cases has its foundations in the scepticism of the past.

The election of 1993 should be seen generally in the context of the desire of the people to see the back of the praetorian rulers after nearly thirty years of authoritarian rule. However, this is not to take anything away from the winner of the presidential election, M. K. O. Abiola, whose “farewell to poverty” programme had earned him wide support across the country. That those seeking political offices but lost out at the polls had decided to lick their wounds quietly instead of embarking on costly and, ultimately, fruitless effort in court houses would seem to have underscored the relegation of the judiciary in the electoral process. Besides, the compromised status of the judiciary under military dictatorship and the contrived and convoluted transition programme of Babangida regime could not encourage any wise political actor then to put much stock in the courts.

Election Petitions and Legal Technicalities: Matters Arising

As would be remembered, counting from 2003, elections in the country became a veritable test of maturity and resilience of Nigeria’s democracy project. The entire country was steeped in the anxiety of a civilian-to-civilian transition, the first in the nation’s history. Despite feelings of apprehension and self-doubt felt in many quarters, some Nigerians, however,

were optimistic that the country was going to pass the test. Although the fears of widespread violence and disruption failed to materialize, the elections, especially the presidential elections were, arguably, the most acrimonious in recent times.

According to the Supreme Court (2017, p. 309), “elections are hardly ever conducted without some irregularities. No matter how well the regulatory authority conducts an election, there are complaints”. These complaints, more often than not, leads to formal election petitions filed by losers who are unsatisfied about the outcome of the election. An election petition commences all actions instituted to challenge the result of an election in Nigeria and the legal means used to dispute an alleged election irregularity by a candidate or party in an election (FGN, 2010).

Since the return to civil rule in 1999, Nigeria’s electoral process has been fraught with rancour and protestations, often giving rise to a plethora of election petition cases. For instance, at the end of the 2003 elections, 560 petitions were filed; 1,290 petitions in 2007; 732 petitions in 2011; and 611 in 2015 (INEC, 2015). In all the cases, the protesting litigants demanded a reversal of the declared results in their favor or that new voting be conducted. They often alleged fraud of egregious proportions. It is noteworthy that for the first time in the history of elections in Nigeria since 1999, no petition was filed to challenge the outcome of the 2015 Presidential election. In 2007 five candidates in Rivers (Rotimi Amaechi), Edo (Adams Oshiomole), Ondo (Olusegun Mimiko), Osun (Rauf Aregbesola) and Ekiti (Kayode Fayemi) States were declared the rightful winners in their respective gubernatorial elections (EUEOM, 2011; Onapajo and Uzodike, 2014). This might generate an unhealthy belief in the minds of some political elites in Nigeria, where politics is seen as a ‘do-or-die’ affair, that elections which cannot be legitimately won at the polls may be won technically in the courts with the aid of some manipulations of the judicial process.

As it were, a greater number of petitions were decided on grounds of technicalities against substantive issues raised in the petitions. The accompanying table contains useful information on court decisions on selected election petitions that were based on technicalities rather than substantial issues of the petitions between 2003 and 2015 in Nigeria.

Table1: Court decisions on selected election petitions between 2003 and 2015

S/N	Nature of elections	Nature of disputes	Nature of decisions	Outcomes
1.	Senatorial/Benue N. Waku vs Joshua Adagba	The use of Soldiers / Policemen to carry out electoral fraud.	Necessary parties were not joined and petition struck out.	Technicality upheld
2.	Governorship/Benue Paul Unongo vs Geoge Akume	Electoral fraud by the use of armed soldiers and police.	Necessary parties were not joined and petition struck out on technical ground.	Technicality upheld
3.	Governorship/Abia Onwuka Kalu vs Orji Uzor Kalu	Hijack of electoral materials and mass rigging.	First respondent's running mate was not joined and the petition struck out on technical ground.	Technicality upheld
4.	Governorship/Enugu Ugochukwu Agballah vs Chimaroke Nnamani	Elections did not hold in many wards.	Non certification of petition by the tribunal secretary	Technicality upheld
5.	Senatorial/Anambra Flint Obekwe vs Ben Obi and others	Manipulation of election results from many wards.	Non certification of petition by the tribunal secretary.	Technicality upheld
6.	Federal House/Kebbi Abdullahi Yelwa vs Garba Umah	The results of some wards were not taken into consideration.	The petition was struck out due to the failure of the tribunal secretary to issue the petitioner with form TF 002 on time.	Technicality upheld

7.	Governorship/ Lagos Funshu Williams vs Bola Tinubu	Manipulation of election results in many wards.	The petition was struck out because the petitioner did not sign the petition.	Technicality upheld
8.	Senatorial/Kaduna Yohanna Dickson vs Isaiah Balat	Sensitive electoral materials were hijacked in many voting centres.	The petition was struck out because service address of the petitioner was not filled.	Technicality upheld
9.	Governorship/ Cross River Usani Usani vs Donald Duke	Manipulation of election results in many wards.	The tribunal refused to grant application of the petitioner to amend document filled. Petition was struck out due to improper documentation.	Technicality upheld
10.	State House of Assembly/Akwa Ibom Bassey Edet vs Esio Udo	Many wards did not vote in the elections.	The petition was not certified by the tribunal secretary and the petition struck out.	Technicality upheld
11.	Governorship/ Anambra Peter Obi (APGA) vs Chris Ngige (PDP)	Manipulation of results and tenure elongation.	That the Appellant's (Peter Obi's) tenure as Governor has not expired until March 17, 2010; that the Appellant returns to office immediately.	Technicality upheld
12.	Governorship/ Akwa Ibom Ime Umanah (ANPP) vs Victor Attah (PDP)	Irregularities of snatching of ballot boxes and giving bribes to the tribunal members.	Petition struck out for lack of jurisdiction to entertain the suit.	Technicality upheld

13.	Governorship/ Akwa Ibom James Iniama (AD) vs Godswill Akpabio (PDP)	Impersonation and irregularities.	Petition struck out for lack of merit.	Technicality upheld
14.	Presidential Olusegun Obasanjo vs Muhammadu Buhari	Rigging and manipulation of results.	Petition struck out for lack of merit.	Technicality upheld
15.	Governorship/Abia State Chinenye Anyim vs Okezie Ikpeazu	Non-compliance with the Electoral Act and corrupt practices (rigging, violence and irregularities).	Petition struck out for lack of diligent prosecution.	Technicality upheld
16.	Governorship/ Akwa Ibom Sen. Helen Esuene (LP) vs Udom Emmanuel (PDP)	Respondent not duly elected by majority of lawful votes; Non-compliance with the Electoral Act and corrupt practices (massive irregularities and malpractices).	Petition struck out on ground of incompetence having not been properly presented or signed as required by law.	Technicality upheld

Source: *Quarterly Law Report*, 14(43); INEC, (2015)

This analysis was undertaken to examine the impacts of courts settlement of electoral disputes on democratic consolidation. The analysis revealed that, there were manifest injustices and inconsistencies in the judgments of Election Petition Tribunals on some of the petitions raised. To start with, inherent in the analysis are lapses such as administrative bottleneck ranging from failure of the tribunal secretary to certify the petitions which accounted for striking out of several cases after the 2003 election, as in the cases of *Ufikaro Efet vs Adasi Abulum*, *Imoh Imoh vs INEC & Ors* and *Bassey Edet vs Esio Udo* (State House of Assembly/Akwa Ibom), thus making the petitioners to pay the price of misconduct that was not clearly theirs (Ugochukwu, 2004).

Undue delay in determination of petitions is another worrisome issue. It took over two years for the petition of General Muhammadu Buhari against the re-election of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as President to be concluded in the Supreme Court. The case became, perhaps, one with the most number of witnesses, averments and affidavits supported ever in Nigeria's legal history. It was fought at the Court of Appeal right through to the Supreme Court. Hearings in the matter attracted considerable public interest and wide media coverage. It was bad enough that the matter ran into nearly half of the tenure of President Obasanjo, thereby becoming, in effect, a clog in the democratic process. However, the Supreme Court reinstated the election results voided at the Courts of Appeal sitting as the electoral tribunal while Hon. Justice Nsofor, the sole dissenting judge in the case, was reportedly dismissed without retirement benefits. This, indeed, cast a pall on the role of the judiciary in the electoral process.

At the State level, it was not until the middle of May 2006 that the Supreme Court finally pronounced judgement on the judicial challenges to the election of Chief James Onenafe Ibori as Governor of Delta State. The Court held that, that Chief Ibori was an ex-convict was not proved and consequently, that his election was valid. While the outcome did not lead to disruption in government work, the long-drawn-out court challenges meant a long period of uncertainty about government and government actions. Another reference point and a metaphor for the analysis of the problems and challenges of electoral dispute resolution is the case of Ngige vs Obi (NWLR, Part 999, pp. 1-241). Peter Obi, the then gubernatorial candidate of APGA filed his petition against the declaration of Chris Ngige of the PDP on the 16th day of May, 2003. The Election Petition Tribunal took more than two years to deliver judgment on the 12th day of August, 2005. The Appeal came up for hearing on the 23rd day of January, 2006 and judgment was delivered on the 15th day of March, 2006. The petitioner waited for 35 months to receive justice! The situation was even worse in respect of the Presidential Petition filed by Muhammadu Buhari against the declaration of Umaru Yar'Adua in the 2007 elections: the main petition and appeal thereof took 42 months to be decided. Situations such as enumerated above led a Supreme Court judge, Justice Pats Acholonu, to lament as reported in 13 NWLR (part 941) p. 1), that: "a situation where an election petition lasted more than two years for a 4-year presidential term leaves very much to be desired. It is an affront to the rule of law."

Again, majority of the petitions decided after the elections were not heard on their merit but were rather struck out on, at times very spurious and flimsy technical point. However, many such decisions were reversed on appeal though there was equally a discernible lack of consistency in the judgments of the appeal tribunals. There were instances where petitions were struck out on frivolous grounds, flimsiest of excuses and sometimes very ridiculous reasons. One of such was the case of J. K. N. Waku vs Joshua Adagba who slugged it out for Benue South Senatorial District at the 2003 Polls. The petition was struck out because, according to the tribunal, the person who contested the election was Chief J. K. N. Waku, while the person who filed the petition was Senator J. K. N. Waku. “Chief” and “Senator” turned out to make the difference while the real complaint of the petitioner was ignored. The second case was the petition filed by Great Ogboru, candidate of the Alliance for Democracy (AD) in the 2003 gubernatorial election against the return of incumbent Governor, James Ibori. The case was thrown out based on the argument that instead of suing the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the petitioner sued the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). What made the difference was the “National” that was omitted (Ugochukwu, 2004; Kari, 2017).

In another instance, Sections 133 (2) and 134 (2) and (3) of the 2010 Electoral Act (as amended) provided that “a petition filed before the High Court in respect of any election shall be disposed of by the court not later than 30 days from the date of such election and any petition not disposed of shall be time barred and such petitions shall be null and void.” Based on this provision, the court ruled in some cases that did not meet the time limit requirement, that the petitions were time barred. The logic and rationalities of such judgments were too technical and legalistic. For instance, the Court of Appeal, Makurdi Division, delivering judgment in an appeal filed by Sa’idu Galadima, a candidate of Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) for election into Nasarawa State House of Assembly in Toto/Gadabuke Constituency, ruled that hearing of any election appeal from tribunals must abate 60 days after judgment has been delivered by the election tribunal. The court held that the statutory time within which the appeal could be heard and disposed of had expired. The tribunal delivered its judgment on 28th June 2011, in which the petition was dismissed. Being dissatisfied with the decision of the tribunal, the appellants filed their appeal on 15th July 2011. As conceded even by the presiding judge of the Court of Appeal, “unfortunately, the appeal could not be

heard until 10th October 2011 through no fault of the parties as the panel to hear the appeal was not constituted by the appointing authority". Yet, the Appeal Court struck out the matter for being abated, on the ground that the appeal having waited and nothing done until the 60 days were over, the court no more had jurisdiction to entertain the appeal (Kari, 2017).

Moreover, a good number of the petitions were struck out when the tribunals and Appeal Court held that parties necessary to their proper determination were not jointed either as petitioners or respondents. They relied on the provision of Section 133 of the Electoral Act (2010) which identifies a candidate in an election and a political party that participated in the election as proper parties to present a petition. Where a petitioner complains of the misconduct of an electoral official in the election, such an official whether electoral, presiding, returning or any other official is deemed to be a respondent and joined in the petition in his/her official status as a necessary party (Ugochukwu, 2009). In the event, the person complaining is not allowed to prove his case and the person against whom the complaints were made runs away with a pyrrhic victory secured by recourse to technicalities. When a person who is aggrieved is sent away from the juridical forum without the opportunity of presenting his case and having it thoroughly weighted against the rebuttal of those defending, neither democracy nor the rule of law is well served. Rather the party sent away on such technical point leaves the forum of justice more aggrieved than before he went to the court.

The foregoing trends put no one in doubt that the nation is confronted with a serious crisis of confidence with respect to the judiciary and the electoral process. Moreover, it can be seen that the existing situation amount in reality to a technical denial of rights of contenders to effectively challenge the results they disagreed with. While there might have been some notable decisions concerning issues such as interpretation of electoral petitions, nature of petitions, nature of election tribunals, it must be stated that the general thrust of judicial intervention in electoral matters has been less than satisfactory. What these portend is that the tribunals were constrained by technicalities to the detriment of justice. The behaviour of these tribunals called to question the training and character of the panellists, how they were appointed and what informed their decisions. There are clear demonstrations of the incompetence and insincerity on the part of the court to give verdict that is satisfactory to the electorate; this is also an indication that the electorates are less satisfied with the performance of the court, as their verdicts cannot be

translated to a free and fair election. When this happens, the court cannot determine the genuineness of the vote, as such, popular candidates who ordinarily would have won the election often lose to legal technicalities and as such as outcome of the judiciary verdict does not satisfy the citizens as much as a free and fair elections. There is no gainsaying the obvious that the judiciary has not been effective in sustaining democracy in Nigeria. This bitter truth was acknowledged by Musdapher (2011, p. 129), a former Chief Justice of Nigeria, in a declaration that: “in light of the challenges that the Nigerian judiciary grapples with, there is no disputing the fact that, as it stands today, it appears that the society we serve is not entirely satisfied with our performance”.

Frankly speaking, the success and consolidation of democracy in Nigeria depends tremendously on the way elections are conducted and concluded by the Electoral Commission and not on the verdicts of the courts. This is to say that elections cannot lead to democratic consolidation when it is only the courts that determines who wins in electoral contest. Nevertheless, perhaps one should be charitable enough to acknowledge that one should not heap the entire blame for the nation’s inadequateness on the judiciary since the courts are bound to operate within both at the extant substantive and adjectival law. Matters such as eligibility to be a candidate, preliminaries like campaigning for office, filling of nomination papers, the voting procedure, impersonation, declaration of results and dereliction of duty by polling officers, etc, should be properly spelt out in the electoral law in order to facilitate the judicial process with regard to electoral matters. At present, the greatest challenge facing judges in election petition cases would seem to be a hard and fast time frame within which to conclude such matters. This ugly scenario continued to affect the electoral tribunals, whose performances have raised critical questions among Nigerians over the capability of election tribunals in correcting errors in the country’s electoral process.

Comparatively, it is simply unheard of in the advanced democracies for election petition proceedings to go on for upwards of two years into the tenure of an office-holder. For instance, the resolution of the issues arising from 2002 elections in the United States of America took just one month, as the US Supreme Court resolved all the issues pending before it from the Florida District Court (Okoye, 2009). Accordingly, Nigerian judges must be put on a tight leash so that they can in turn call counsels to order if and when they are raising frivolous and unnecessary motions on employing sundry delaying

tactics to the detriment of expeditious determination of cases. Litigants and judges should be equally aware that not only is delayed justice denied justice but that prolonged hearing of cases is detrimental to the entire judicial process and could actually encourage self-help among citizens. In political matters especially, the resultant distrust could prove very costly indeed for public peace and social equilibrium.

Court Decisions and Attainment of Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria

The analyses in preceding sections of this paper have to a large extent shown that dependence on court decisions which relies on technicalities will not strengthen the electorates' participation in the electoral process as much as a free and fair election, probably because of injustice or corruption in the court system; meaning that the electorate prefer a free and fair election to court decisions in determining electoral results. Alabi (2003) lent a supportive voice in his view that access to justice is often denied through delay and technicalities in the administration of justice. Striking the same chord, Bola Ajibola, former minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation and former justice of the International Court of Justice observed that what is being practiced in Nigerian courts is 'judicial or legal justice and not social justice'. The ex-minister frowned at the attitude of Nigerian judges to law as well as their strict adherence to precedents based on the principle of *stare decisis*. As captured in *The Guardian* of 28 June 2004, the ex-minister stated that:

Technicality defeats justice. Procedural rules and technicalities have been allowed to becloud the justice of many of our cases in court and the users are getting disenchanted. Actions in courts are bridled and overwhelmed by applications or motions applications to amend pleading applications to file pleading and document out of time, applications for substituted services, applications for adjournments and so on.

In the same vein, another constitutional lawyer and prominent election observer commented, as quoted by Okoye (2009, p. 131) thus:

An electoral dispute resolution mechanism that is slow and technically inclined and does not deliver substantial justice adds to the pains of the people and slows down the entrenchment of democracy. It also corrupts the electoral process and leads people towards alternative and unconstitutional means of resolving electoral disputes.

The foregoing implies that the electoral commission should build a strong and functional institution that will restore the confidence of the electorate in the ballot box, since the electorates still prefer a free and fair election than fighting an unresolved battle in the court. On the other hand, if the electoral commission cannot restore the confidence of the electorate by conducting free and fair election and also build viable and strong electoral institutions, then the electorate will always have no choice than resort to court, as such, there will be more electoral cases that will be decided by the courts.

Candidly, as asserted by Valenzuela (1992), when political institutions are weak, the chances of democratic consolidation will be slim. If the political institutions do not perform creditably well, for instance, the electoral commission not being able to conduct free and fair elections, and the judiciary not being able to dispense justice to the electorate, this will lead to structural decay. If these political institutions remain ineffective in performing their functions, then the result will always be weak institutions, hence, the electorate will always look for alternative. This in turn will heighten the level of instability in the practice of democracy in Nigeria. When this happens people's confidence in the electoral process is not encouraged.

Conversely, it is glaring that the judiciary is ineffective in consolidating democracy in Nigeria. As aptly averred by Enweremadu (2011), soon after Nigeria completed her transition from military to civil democratic rule in May 1999, its judiciary became enmeshed in very gigantic corruption scandal which culminated in the sack of several judges by the National Judicial Council (NJC) for accepting bribes and making improper judgments, some of which were perceived to be in favour of the ruling party or the government. This may have informed Ekefre's (2004, p. 13) assertion that with regards to the practice of democracy in Nigeria:

If you seek redress in the court said to be the last hope of the common man, you are fighting an unresolved battle, rules have darkened the minds of our judges and bribery has blinded their judgment. Democracy which is said to be the government of the people by the people and for the people, where the masses have the right to ask and be answered and when their rights are denied then they must seek redress in court until they win, are mere riddle.

One important measure of democratic development is the number of post-election electoral disputations that ends up in court. The fewer the post-election petitions, the more consolidated a democracy is regarded. Courts are hardly suitable for the resolution of electoral or political disputes. Politicians, in their desperation, would mostly seek to influence the normal course of the law. In this instance, the outcome of court verdicts does not satisfy the citizens as much as a free and fair election. Judging from the above, it can be reliably concluded that the performance of the judiciary in electoral matters is less satisfactory and so the judiciary cannot consolidate democracy in Nigeria.

For democracy to be consolidated in Nigeria, democratic values must be internalized in the political system. This will engender greater level of stability in the practice of democracy. In essence, the beginning of wisdom as far as Nigeria's democracy is concerned is an awareness of the need to ensure full confidence of all and sundry in the electoral process. Once the electorate has confidence in the ballot box, all those who extol the virtues of democratic governance can rest assured that voters would always turn out in large numbers whenever the exercise of their franchise is required.

Conclusion

The task of this paper was to examine the impact of court involvement in the settlement of electoral disputes on democratic consolidation. The objectives of the paper were set to ascertain whether democracy can be consolidated when it is the court that determines electoral results in an electoral contest as well as to find out whether the outcome of judiciary verdicts satisfies the electorate as much as a free and fair election. Within the limit of examination and the analysis of results of the elections and the outcomes of a number of petitions that followed them, it has been found that the general thrust of judicial intervention in electoral matters has been less than satisfactory. Put differently, the way and manner the judiciary has acted with regard to election petition cases has not altogether been reassuring in terms of the growth and development of the nation's electoral process and the future of democracy in general.

Thus, Nigeria's democracy cannot be said to be consolidated so long as a large number of the results of electoral contests remains subject to legal contests amid legal technicalities. This in effect means that democracy cannot be consolidated in the situation where the courts keeps determining who wins in an electoral contest, even as its verdicts cannot be translated into credible

and transparent election. It is no misnomer to conclude that holding free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria is the greatest challenge or perhaps threat to democratic practice in the Fourth Republic. It is regrettable that in Nigeria we cannot talk about consolidated democracy because there is no free and fair election and that is why it is constitutionally provided for an aggrieved party to go to court and claim its right. But from the recent experiences on court-ordered re-runs, it is clear that there is limit to which courts can help since the court tries cases, but cannot conduct election. That is why sweeping electoral reforms are absolutely necessary in the Nigeria's political landscape.

On a final note, many analysts and major parts of our findings insist that there is nothing to celebrate after 20 years of civil rule in Nigeria. Nigerians need serious, courageous and compassionate leaders with social conscience.

Recommendations

Going by the dilemma of INEC's inability to produce election results that are acceptable to the contesting parties and the ineffectiveness of the courts in handling electoral disputes, the following suggestions, as derived from this work, are proffered towards enhancing credible election and reducing legal battles over election results with a view to attaining democratic consolidation in Nigeria:

- ✓ The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should be made truly independent and unbiased umpire in striving to conduct credible, free and fair elections that will be satisfactory to parties in electoral contests.
- ✓ The judiciary should through rigorous orientation, produce judges who can shun unnecessary technicalities which tend to defeat the cause of justice.
- ✓ All petitions and subsequent litigations arising from and out of the conduct of any election into an elective position by INEC should be adjudicated and determined on their merits and promptly.
- ✓ There should be a new Electoral Act which would require INEC to prove certain facts within its knowledge. For example, if the question for determination is whether or not a particular election has been conducted in substantial compliance with the provision(s) of the Acts, the burden of proof should be on INEC to establish such facts. It is

unfair to require litigants to prove facts which are not in their possession.

- ✓ The electoral umpire, INEC, should speedily and efficiently release the results of all elections at various levels, possibly polling station by polling station, so that results could be checked and independently verified for accuracy and uncover any sign of possible 'doctoring' at source. The results should also be posted on the web in the same manner and for same reason.

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APPLICATIONS OF MARGIN OF LEAD PRINCIPLE IN THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC REVERSAL IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper explored the applications of Margin-of-Lead Principle in the 2019 general elections and how these translated to democratic reversal in Nigeria. Basically, the margin of lead principle states that where the margin of lead between the two leading candidates in an election is not in excess of the total number of voters registered in polling units where elections are not counted or voided, in line with section 26 and 53 of Electoral Act, the Returning Officer shall decline to make a return until votes have taken place in the affected polling units and the results collated into the relevant forms for declaration and return. The principle surrounding this, and the seeming and perceived politicization of the applications raise fundamental questions on the credibility of the electoral process. The paper interrogated the thesis which states that the basic principles rather promote state-sponsored political violence and the haphazard manner and slipshoddiness in which the principles were implemented in 'selected constituencies/States' defaced the legitimacy of the electoral management body and reverses the gains already recorded in democratic consolidation project in Nigeria. The paper was anchored on some basic extracts culled from the Marxian analysis of neo-colonial state and internal recurring traits of authoritarian leadership. We shall scoop our data from documentary method and input our participant observation as INEC ad hoc staff during the 2019 general elections. Our analysis shall be based on contextual evaluation rooted on logical deductions. The study made useful suggestions to strengthen the contents of the margin of lead principle and hence reverse the receding democratic principles.

Keywords: Margin-of-Lead Principle, Democracy, Election, Electoral Act, Politicization, Democratic Reversal.

Introduction

Hybrid regimes are nations where consequential irregularities exist in elections, regularly preventing them from being fair and free. These nations commonly have governments that apply pressure on political opponents, non-independent judiciaries, widespread corruption, harassment and pressure placed on the media, anaemic rule of law, and more pronounced faults than flawed democracies in the realms of underdeveloped political culture, low levels of participation in politics and issues in the functioning of governance. *Democracy Index*, 2015 (Wikipedia).

Where the margin of lead between the two leading candidates in an election is NOT in excess of the total number of voters registered in Polling Units where elections are not held or voided in line with sections 26 and 53 of the Electoral Act, the returning officer shall decline to make a return until polls have taken place in the affected Polling Units and the results collated into the relevant forms for Declaration and Return. This is the Margin of Lead Principle and shall apply wherever necessary in making returns of all elections to which these Regulations and Guidelines apply - *Clause 33(e) of the INEC Regulations and Guidelines for 2019 General Elections*.

...it was Section 26 of the Electoral Act that INEC had been relying on to declare polls inconclusive. INEC can declare elections inconclusive by the provision of the Electoral Act but whether the intention of the draftsman is noble in putting that in the Electoral Act is another thing...The drafting is defective, and I do not believe in that clause... We should not empower the electoral body to declare what it has done or what it is still doing inconclusive because it could be abused. Anybody can influence them to declare an election inconclusive and such person will go and intensify their rigging plans and will be declared winner after the supplementary elections. They are abusing that clause and I think it should be expunged – Dele Oloke, The Chairman, Nigerian Bar Association, Ikeja Branch, in *Punch*, March 31, 2019. <https://punchng.com/inconclusive-elections-emerging-threat-to-nigerias-democracy/>

The above citations are apt, revealing and congruous with the concern of average Nigerians and in fact the international community. Much of the debilitating factors that undermine development in Nigeria concern the issue of conducting free, fair and credible elections. The journey to achieving this seemingly unassailable goal dated back to the independent period. Meanwhile the history of elections in post-colonial Nigeria dates to 1959 and continued to 2019. Thus, Nigeria has conducted about eleven general elections since independence. The essence of these elections is to deepen democracy and hence stimulate development and nation building. Hence, election is very critical for democratic consolidation.

According to Lindberg (2006, cited in Omotola, 2010, p. 536) the comparative literature on democratization, particularly during Africa's 'third wave', emphasizes the significance of elections. Among others, elections guarantee political participation and competition, which invariably drive the process of democratic transition and consolidation. Meanwhile democracy is consolidated when there is no serious attempt by political groups to threaten the democratic regime or secede, when a democracy can survive political and economic crisis, and when all relevant stakeholders believe political conflict will be ineffective and costly (Lin & Stepan, 1996). Furthermore, they enunciated five inter-related characteristics of consolidated democracy, to include: free and lively civil society, autonomous political society, rule of law, state bureaucracy that is usable, and institutionalized economic society. Nevertheless, elections stimulate democratic consolidation and its relevance are outlined below:

1. Elections are central to the institutionalization of orderly succession in a democratic setting;
2. It creates a legal-administrative framework for handling inter-elite rivalries;
3. Elections provide a modicum of popular backing for new rulers (Hughes & May, 1998);
4. Elections are critical to the institutionalization of popular participation, competition, and legitimacy, which remains the three core foundations of democracy (Lindberg, 2004); and
5. Elections can also be used to disguise authoritarian rule, what Andreas Schedler called 'electoral authoritarianism' (Schedler, 2006).

Viewed from the perspective of Schedler (2006), Adejumobi (2000) remarks that elections are only held as a transitional ritual where the people have little or no choice, as has been the case in many African countries. Nigeria is neck-deep into this category and therefore was classified by the democracy index under the category of hybrid regimes as specified in the first indentation. It is important to state that States attain the apex height in the electoral process when they are accepted and inducted into the club of full democracies. In this case they will join the club of States where:

civil liberties and basic political freedoms are not only respected, but also reinforced by a political culture conducive to the thriving of democratic principles. These nations have a valid system of governmental checks and balances, an independent judiciary whose decisions are enforced, governments that function adequately, and diverse and independent media. These nations have only limited problems in democratic functioning (Democracy Index in *Wikipedia the Free Encyclopaedia*, 2015).

Over the years Nigeria's efforts aimed at entrenching fundamental structures that will drive the process of free, fair and credible elections have yielded meagre returns. Thus, the history of elections in Nigeria has remained largely the history of changing patterns and dimensions of electoral fraud. Recently, the electoral system has come to deal with the issues of margin of lead principles inserted in the Electoral Act apparently to deepen fairness and credibility in the electoral process.

Among others the principle states that where the margin of lead between the two leading candidates in an election is not in excess of the total number of voters registered in polling units where elections are not counted or voided, in line with section 26 and 53 of Electoral Act, the returning Officer shall decline to make a return until votes have taken place in the affected polling units and the results collated into the relevant forms for declaration and return. The principle surrounding this, and the seeming and perceived politicization of the applications raise fundamental questions on the credibility of the electoral process particularly in the just concluded 2019 general elections.

In this paper, we shall evaluate the provisions and applications of the margin of lead principle with a view to determining the **credibility of its**

validity in terms of its applications and implications for democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

Theoretical Perspective

The paper adopted the Marxist theory of the neo-colonial state. The main attributes of a neo-colonial state as presented by the Marxist theory include:

1. The state as an instrument of class domination.
2. The centrality of the state and its apparatuses as the main instruments for primitive accumulation especially by the dominant class and their foreign collaborators.
3. The rentier or extractive nature of the state.

According to the Marxist theory, the state is the product and a manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms (Lenin, 1984, pp. 10-11). This state, which arose from the conflict between classes, is as a rule, the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which by this means also becomes the politically dominant class and thus acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed (Jakubowski, 1973, pp. 41). Therefore, Marx and Engels (1971, p. 38) contextualised this point when they stated that “the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie”. Thus, contrary to the claim of Western liberal or bourgeois scholars, the state is not class neutral, rather, it is immersed in constant class struggle within and between the various institutional groups that make it a reality.

The classical Marxist theory of the state was further developed to take into consideration the peculiarities of the neo-colonial state (Alavi 1973, pp. 146-147; Ekekwe, 1986, p.12). As Ekekwe (1986, p. 12) noted:

The difference between the two forms of capitalist state is thus: that whereas the state in the advanced capitalist formations functions to maintain the economic and social relations under which bourgeois accumulation takes place, in the periphery of capitalism, factors which have to do with the level of development of the productive forces make the state, through its several institutions and apparatuses, a direct instrument for accumulation for the dominant class or its element.

This peculiar attribute of the neo-colonial states can be traced to the colonial era. The colonial governments in their quest to achieve their economic interests discouraged the emergence of a strong indigenous capitalist class. This they accomplished by discriminating against African businessmen in the disbursement of bank loans, award of contracts and other business incentives. In the absence of indigenous capitalist class strong enough to establish hegemony over the state at independence, the neo-colonial state such as Nigeria became the main instrument of economic investment and economic development. Besides, the new indigenous bourgeoisie that inherited control over the neo-colonial state and its apparatuses had a very weak economic base, and hence relied on this control for its own capital accumulation. As a result, the state and state apparatuses such as public corporations and parastatals have remained the main instruments for the formation of an indigenous capitalist class. Hence in Nigeria, institutions of the State have collapsed into private establishments appropriated to further deepen grip on public offices and hence secure resource-security. Therefore, the seemingly only means of achieving resource appropriation is through the vicissitudes of hijacking the security, electoral management bodies and related institutions. Thus, the apparatus of the state is deployed for conducting self-reproducing elections that negate the principles of fairness and justice.

As a corollary of the above, the unique nature of the neo-colonial state such as Nigeria therefore lies primarily on the fact that it combines the function of serving as a major instrument of capital accumulation with that of being a direct instrument of class formation and domination. Thus, the Marxist theory of the state is very relevant to understanding and explaining the fundamental goal of inserting and manipulating the margin of lead principle in the electoral process. Applying the theory, we state as follows:

1. **The peculiar nature and role of the neo-colonial state of Nigeria as an instrument for capital accumulation.** This explains why the indigenous capitalist class represented by the ruling class, top government officials and the electoral management bodies as well as the security agencies and related institutions connive to insert and enforce safe guards in the electoral laws that will reduce voting to mere periodic rituals that will institutionalize unfettered grip to power by the economic parasites whose primary motivation remains to keep the masses in absolute servitude. Hence the masses vote without choosing and when they use their voters'

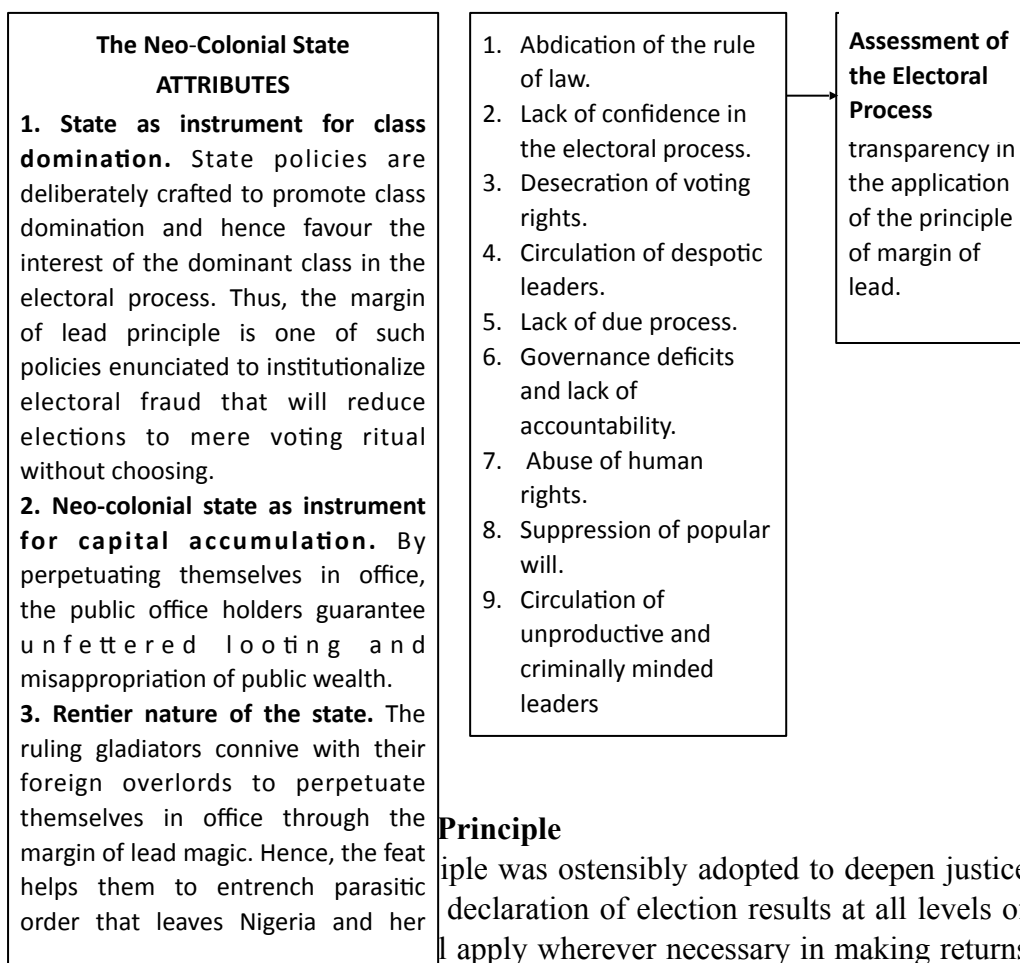
card to stimulate change the margin of lead principle is deployed to subvert popular will and sustain the *status quo* using the security agencies and other negative/destabilizing forces of the state.

2. **The class character of the Nigerian state.** The Nigerian state, like in other peripheral capitalist states is not class neutral, but locked in constant class struggle within the polity. Indeed, the character of this on-going class conflicts define the content and direction of the electoral process. This manifests in alignments and re-alignments; party defections and counter-defections and yet these group still agree in one project: rigging and working in harmony in instigating rapacious and unabashed looting and plundering of public wealth and parcelling out the state into spheres of influence and control.

3. **The Nigerian state as ‘rentier’ or essentially “extractive” in nature.** The indigenous class, working in concert with global expropriators have reduced the country to a mere tenant that must redeem their rents to the global extractive actors through their local platform. Thus, through well contrived policies and programmes they pave way for seeming unending exploitation and slavery and hence earn the ticket of return to their respective political offices. Therefore, the margin of lead principle becomes a veritable safeguard for guaranteeing uninterrupted but disguised seizure of state power by extractive conglomerates working in concert with external economic parasites that lives Nigeria and her citizens on the constant throes of anaemia and precipice. The postulations are better captured in the diagram below:

Electoral Process and democratic reversal

Application of Margin of Lead Principles and democratic Reversal



Principle

Principle was ostensibly adopted to deepen justice declaration of election results at all levels of apply wherever necessary in making returns of all elections to which these Regulations and Guidelines apply - *Clause 33(e) of the INEC Regulations and Guidelines for 2019 General Elections*. According to Clause 47 of the INEC Regulations and Guidelines for 2019 General Elections, the following responses and procedures shall be used in managing the issues identified in this Clause during elections and collation of results, particularly in determining where supplementary elections may hold in line with the ‘**Margin of Lead Principle**’ as in Schedule 1; these are also presented in the *INEC Manual for Election Officials (2019, p.65)* captioned ‘Margin of Lead Scenario’. It stated that ‘there are mandatory responses and procedures identified for managing issues during election and collation of results, particularly in determining where supplementary elections may hold, in line with the ‘**Margin of Lead Principle**’.

These include:

- a) Where the Commission is unable to deploy to Polling Units as a result of logistical challenges, a date for supplementary election shall be announced.
- b) Where there is wilful obstruction or resistance to deployment/distribution of election materials, enter zero votes for the affected polling units and proceed.
- c) Where there is voter resistance to the use of the Smart Card Reader (SCR), enter zero votes for the affected Polling Units and proceed.
- d) Where the use of the SCR is discontinued midway into the elections due to sustained malfunction and no replacement is available before 2pm, a date for supplementary election shall be announced.
- e) Where the Commission determines that violent disruptions occurred at a substantial number of Polling Units before announcement of result, a fresh date for election in the affected Polling Units shall be announced by the commission.
- f) Where a violent disruption occurs after announcement of results and ballot papers and result sheets are destroyed, regenerate the affected results from duplicate copies, fill new replacement result sheets with the approval of the Resident Electoral Commissioner and proceed with collation of result.
- g) Where result sheets are snatched or destroyed before they arrive at collation centres, regenerate the affected results from duplicate copies, fill new replacement result sheets with the approval of the Resident Electoral Commissioner and proceed with collation of result.
- h) Where balloting materials are still available or remaining after disruption at any stage of the election, proceed with available materials and conclude that stage of the election. However, where materials are inadequate, a new date will be announced by the Commission to conclude the stage.
- i) Where there are issues with results of a Voting Point (VP) such as over voting, treat the votes from the affected VP as rejected votes and proceed with the valid votes from other VPs of the Polling Unit.”

The above principles derive its valid existence from section 26 of the 2010 Electoral Act as amended which stipulates as follows:

26.(1) Where a date has been appointed for the holding of an election, and there is reason to believe that a serious breach of the peace is likely to occur if the election is proceeded with on that date or it is impossible to conduct the elections as a result of natural disasters or other emergencies, the Commission may postpone the election and shall in respect of the area, or areas concerned, appoint another date for the holding of the postponed election, provided that such reason for the postponement is cogent and verifiable.

(2) Where an election is postponed under this Act, on or after the last date for the delivery of nomination papers, and a poll has to be taken between the candidates nominated, the Electoral Officer shall, on a new date being appointed for the election, proceed as if the date appointed were the date for the taking of the poll between the candidates.

(3) Where the Commission appoints a substituted date in accordance with subsections (1) and (2) of this section, there shall be no return for the election until polling has taken place in the area or areas affected.

(4) Notwithstanding the provision of subsection (3) of this section, the Commission may, if satisfied that the result of the election will not be affected by voting in the area or areas in respect of which substituted dates have been appointed, direct that a return of the election be made.

(5) The decision of the Commission under subsection '(4) may be challenged by any of the contestants at a court or tribunal of competent jurisdiction and on such challenge, the decision shall be suspended until the matter is determined.

Meanwhile, INEC in the *Manual for Election Officials* (2019, p. 66) articulated the practical and effective field responses and result management techniques for dealing and minimizing the impact of the adverse implication of ‘number of registered voters outstanding’ while applying the Margin of Lead Principle. Details are presented in table 1 below:

Table 1: Response Scenarios

S/N	Adverse Factor	Required Response	E x p e c t e d Outcome
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1.	Non-deployment at PU by the Commission due to logistics challenges.	Announce a fresh date for the affected PU, if necessary	Supplementary elections is indicated
2.	Obstruction and Resistance to deployment/distribution of materials	Enter zero votes and proceed	Conclusion of the process
3.	Voter resistance to use of SCR	Enter zero votes and proceed	Conclusion of the process
4.	Mid-way discontinuation of the use of the SCR due to sustained malfunction	Request for replacement before 2pm. If no replacement arrives, a new date to continue the election is announced.	Supplementary election is indicated
5.	Violent disruption at substantial number of PUs before announcement of result.	Announce a fresh date for the affected PU if necessary	Supplementary election is indicated
6.	Violent disruption after announcement of result, including destruction of ballot papers and result forms.	Reconstruct result and deploy replacement sheets and proceed to collation in line with approved procedure	Conclusion of process
7.	Snatching/Destruction of result forms enroute or at collation centres.	Reconstruct result and deploy replacement sheets and proceed with collation in line with approved procedure.	Conclusion of process
8.	Where ballot materials are still available or remaining after disruption	Proceed with available materials and conclude	Conclusion of process
9.	Where there is a disruption at the Voting Point	Treat as rejected votes and proceed with the valid balance from other VPs of the PU.	Conclusion of process

Source: INEC *Manual for Election Officials* (2019, p. 66-67)

The principles enunciated above were deployed during the conduct of 2019 general elections. While several members of the ruling party, the All Progressives Congress applauded the use of these principles, most members of the opposition party, the Peoples’ Democratic Party argued that the principles

were manipulated to favour the ruling party. And yet debates among legal luminaries, political actors and scholars centred on the constitutionality or otherwise of these principles. Indeed, INEC has generally been accused of seeking to circumvent the provisions of Section 179(2) of the Constitution, which states that “a candidate for an election to the office of Governor of a state shall be deemed to have been duly elected where, there being two or more candidates – (a) he has the highest number of votes cast at the election; and (b) he has not less than one-quarter of all the votes cast in each of at least two-thirds of all the local government areas in the state.” The veracity of these arguments shall be contextualized and interrogated as we proceed to relate the indices of democratic consolidation with democratic reversal before relating the margin of lead principles with instances of democratic reversal.

Indices of Democratic Reversal

Democracy is a precondition for democratic consolidation. By democracy we refer to “a form of government organized in accordance with the principles of popular sovereignty, political equality, popular consultation, and majority rule” (Ranney, 1975, p.221). Democracy, as a term, is fundamentally associated with popular rule; rule by the people; collective decision-making and implementation; consultative and dialogue-based rule; rule by the majority etc. The basic principles of democracy include:

1. Periodic, free and fair election
2. Political competition and participatory mode
3. Universal and adult suffrage
4. Separation of power with checks and balances.
5. Truly representative government
6. Constitutionalism and
7. Independence of the judiciary.

Extrapolating from the preceding paragraph indicate that democracy has principles, goals and innate responsibilities, that is, empowerment and capacity building. As a goal, democracy must aim at building a just, egalitarian and populist society that has one critical objective: *expanding a wide range of choices for human capacity development and transmutation of the polity*. As aptly stated by Linz and Stepan, democracy is consolidated when there is no serious attempt by political groups to threaten the democratic regime or secede, when a democracy can survive political and economic crisis,

and when all relevant stakeholders believe political conflict will be ineffective and costly. This definition distinguishes democracies that are consolidated from democracies that have merely survived without full institutionalization and socialization of democratic norms. Additionally, democratic consolidation is a process without any set timetable. Attitudes and beliefs will only be fully converted over time, regardless of democratic institutions.

Moreover, Linz and Stepan establish five inter-related characteristics of consolidated democracy, which include:

- free and lively civil society
- autonomous political society
- rule of law
- state bureaucracy that is usable
- institutionalized economic society.

Meanwhile, democratic consolidation involves in part an affirmation and strengthening of certain institutions, such as the electoral system, revitalized or newly created parties, judicial independence and respect for human rights, which have been created or recreated during the first transition. However, when these principles are held more in the breach, they instigate democratic reversal. As indicated in Wikipedia (nd) democratic backsliding occur when essential components of democracy are threatened; for example, when:

- Free and fair elections are degraded (*Democratic Digest*, 2017);
- Liberal rights of freedom of speech and association decline, impairing the ability of the political opposition to challenge the government, hold it to account, and propose alternatives to the current regime (*Democratic Digest*, 2017) ;
- The policy making process is increasingly in service to privileged groups and counter to the needs and views of most citizens, and legislation is used to antidemocratic ends;
- The rule of law (i.e., judicial and bureaucratic restraints on the government) is weakened, such as when the independence of the judiciary is threatened, or when civil service tenure protections are weakened or eliminated (Hug & Ginsburg, 2017); and
- The government manufactures or overemphasizes a national security threat to create "a sense of crisis" that allows the government "to malign critics as weak-willed or unpatriotic" and to depict defenders of

democratic institutions "as representatives of a tired, insulated elite." (Hug & Ginsburg, 2017)

Some of these attributes are presented in table 2 below.

Table 2: Indices for Measuring Democratic Consolidation/Reversal

Empirical Indices	Democratic Consolidation	Empirical Indices	Democratic Reversal
Positive conceptions	completing and deepening democracy	Negative conceptions	avoiding breakdown and erosion
Forward-looking	Expected and promote stability	Backward-looking	Infest the polity with instability
Rule of Law	Respect for the law of the land. Observance of due process based on constitutional provisions. Deepening Democracy. The independence of the legislature and the judiciary is threatened and civil service tenure protections are strengthened.	Abuse of Law	Implant constitutional recklessness and personality/ cult rule. Erodes democracy and promotes arbitrariness in public administration. The independence of the judiciary is threatened and civil service tenure protections are weakened or eliminated
Governance	People -oriented with smack of industry, healthy competition and collegiality. Policies directed at promoting public good.	Governance	Cult-rule rooted in deepening primordial tendencies. Public policies are directed at promoting anti-democratic practices

Behavioural foundation	Affective, participant and Patriotic	Behavioural foundation	Averse to patriotic fervour with observable parochial political culture
Attitudinal Values	Positive norms, values and predictive	Attitudinal Values	Incongruence, unpredictable and disconnected to behavioural currents
Structural foundation	Internal/positive structural linkages that promote collective action towards national building and development	Structural foundation	Disparate, counteracting and tainted in disharmony and unhealthy internal competition
Perception towards governance	Positive and driven by value chain of industry, collective action and productivity rooted in strategic template of cultural securitization	Perception towards governance	Negative and driven by grab-mentality which promotes, cultural segregation, ascriptive proclivities and ethnocentrism
Electoral Project	Conceives as ideal project for collective survival and sustainable human capital development. Free and fair elections are constantly projected.	Electoral Project	Oriented towards entrenching self-serving public officers that champion ethnic, religious and personal agenda. Free and fair elections are degraded

General Political Ambience	Organised, peaceful, satisfying, reign of trust, legitimatizing, disciplined and development oriented	General Political Ambience	Unsecure, disorganised, retrogressing, securitization of public life, distrust, mistrust, social decay, reign of terror and disregard of popular will and subversion of virtue.
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Sources: Author’s Reasoned Contraption

The information contained in table 2 above indicate that various variables – attitudinal, behavioural and structural – combine to produce both positive and negative outcomes to either consolidate or erode democracy. The decline is largely orchestrated and sustained by the state-led weakening of political institutions that sustain the democratic system. In decline it takes various nomenclatures such as democratic reversal, decline, backsliding, reclining and /or democratic roll-back. However whatever name it bears the process can take various forms. According to Bermeo (2016, pp. 5-9) ‘blatant forms of democratic backsliding such as classic, open-ended coups d’etat and election-day fraud have declined since the end of the Cold War, while more subtle and "vexing" forms of backsliding have increased. The latter forms of backsliding entail the debilitation of democratic institutions from within. These subtle forms of backsliding are especially dangerous when they are legitimized through the very institutions that ought to protect democratic values.’

While the contributions of Bermeo may be true in developed states, the allusion that electoral day fraud is receding is questionable in developing states. The greatest challenge facing developing economies, especially Nigeria is the deepening incidence of electoral fraud. In the next section we shall analyse how the application of the Margin-of-Lead Principle has either consolidated or eroded the electoral process drawing empirical lessons from the 2019 general elections in Nigeria.

Margin of Lead Principle and Electoral Outcome: Impact Analysis

Arising from commentaries and controversies surrounding the application of the principle in the conduct of the 2019 general elections in Nigeria, we submit as follows:

- That the margin of lead principle was not introduced for the first time during the 2019 general elections. Indeed, it has remained a critical principle since the 1999 general elections.
- That the principle was not ‘originally’ targeted at manipulating the electoral process but inserted as a critical mechanism for deepening justice, integrity and fairness among contestants in elections.
- The principle when dispassionately applied, provide a level playing ground in electoral contestations and indeed ensure that all votes not only count but are seen to be counted.
- One fundamental fact though is that between 1999 and April 2015, the principle was applied only twice during the conduct of gubernatorial elections in Ekiti State (2007) and Imo State (2011). See the appendix for details of its applications in selected States.
- Between May 2015 and March 2019, the principle was applied ten (10) times during the conduct of gubernatorial elections in Nigeria, see appendix for details.
- In the 2019 general elections, the application resulted in inconclusive elections in seven (7) senatorial seats, twenty-four (24) Federal Constituency elections in fourteen (14) states and three (3) Area Council Chairmanship elections in the Federal Capital Territory.

The spate of inconclusive elections generated public concern as various partisan interpretations littered public conversations. In fact, some public affairs analysts proposed the re-designation of the INEC as **Inconclusive** National Electoral Commission. Basically, the provisions of the principle appear to contravene Section 179 (2) of the Constitution which states that:

that “a candidate for an election to the office of Governor of a state shall be deemed to have been duly elected where, there being two or more candidates – (a) he has the highest number of votes cast at the election; and (b) he has not less than one-quarter of all the votes cast in each of at least two-thirds of all the local government areas in the state.”

This is particularly true when we interrogate the 2015 gubernatorial elections in Bayelsa where the incumbent won six (6) out of seven (7) local

governments and was still compelled to wait for the completion of the exercise. However, when we harvest the provisions that established INEC, we shall recapitulate and must validate the decision of INEC in this regard. Thus, there may be nothing basically wrong with the principle, what perhaps is generating controversies is the manner of its interpretation and the circumstances surrounding the implementation.

A critical appraisal of the principle elicits the following submissions:

(1) The provisions on the inability to deploy to polling units election materials as a result of unmanageable violence, logistic challenges, non or mal-functioning of the smart card readers; proven cases of non-conduct of elections are very clear and should form the basis for declaring elections inconclusive especially if the following conditions are prevalent:

- a. If it is established that the issues stated above were not orchestrated by the staff of INEC to favour one of the candidate or candidates; and
- b. If there is no established complicity by any of the contestants.

In the event of proven cases in the a and b above, the concerned staff or officer should face criminal prosecution and the result declared inconclusive only **if the number of registered voters that collected their PVCs outweighs the margin of lead**. However, if the challenge was artificially induced by any of the contestants, such a candidate should be disqualified, blacklisted and prosecuted accordingly; and if he happens to be the leading candidate, the application of the margin of lead should be between the next two leading candidates.

(2) The provisions on wilful obstructions or resistance to deployment/distribution of election materials should attract zero votes and all the candidates found culpable should be sanctioned in line with item 1(b) above.

Nevertheless, it remains a matter for concern to witness spate of unregulated inconclusive elections in Nigeria under the present dispensation. The scenario has tended to question not only the electoral process but the capacity, competence and neutrality of the Election Management Body (EMB). The disappointment associated with these have socio-economic and psychological impacts on the voter. These include:

- (a) The confidence on the electoral system established over the years has been eroded as the general feeling is that votes do not count again;

- (b) The inconclusiveness of several elections largely for reasons of violence, disruption of voting and deployment of security agencies to perpetrate violence, without appropriate sanctions from INEC and the political leadership has redefined the complexion of electioneering towards **legitimizing violent voting process**. The incidences that played out during the Osun state gubernatorial elections in 2015 and Rivers State gubernatorial elections in March 2019 are very instructive.
- (3) The seeming legitimization of partisanship of the law enforcement agencies in the electoral process undermine the rule of law and diminish the saliency of neutrality of the state and the leadership; and hence upholds the values of arbitrariness and rule by violence in the discharge of governmental functions.
- (4) The flagrant human rights abuses perpetrated by the law enforcement agencies as witnessed in the Rivers and Akwa Ibom State gubernatorial elections in March 2019 without any form of reprimand and sanctions by the political leadership is a direct signpost to anarchy and disregard to freedom of actions and association;
- (5) The untoward clampdown of the opposition parties during campaigns and denial of use of facilities for campaign to opposition parties were reflections of blatant suppression of legitimate rights to freedom of association and choice;
- (6) The use of governmental institutions like the EFCC, ICPC and Code of Conduct Bureau on the opposition on trump-up charges (refer to serial arrests and trials of the Senate President, Dr. Bukola Saraki; Deputy Senate President, Ike Ekweremadu; Senator Dino Melaye; Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe, among several others; and the recent arrest and forceful removal of the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Walter Onnoghen) are clear manifestations of imposition of Nazism and Fascism on Nigerians.
- (7) The refusal by the leadership of the country to assent to the amended Electoral Act and circulation of non-professionals in the leadership of the Election Management of Body were indications that the leadership was not prepared to deepen democratic consolidation.

Conclusion

The study analyzed the application of the margin of lead principles in the conduct of the 2019 general elections. We noted that the principle has been

in operation since 1999 general elections. However, the way the principle was applied and the frequency of declaring results inconclusive raise some fundamental questions which motivated the present study. The intellectual inquest enables us to uncover the link between the neo-colonial state and subversion of democratic principles.

Among others, we discovered that the margin of lead principle was applied to favour interests which are determined to hold onto political power for personal interests and at the behest of their foreign collaborators. We noted that the principle was largely a neo-colonial creation designed to scuttle and whittle down the sanctity and powers of the ballot box. Thus, people now vote without choosing.

Furthermore, the paper discovered that violence is wilfully contrived to scuttle people's mandate via declaration of elections as inconclusive and subsequent deployment of state apparatus to favour preferred candidates (refer to gubernatorial elections in Osun in 2018; Kano in 2019 and; failed attempts in Bayelsa in 2015, Rivers, Bauchi, Adamawa, Sokoto and Benue states in 2019).

The paper also indicated that the politicization of the law enforcement agencies and the use of some of these elements to disrupt elections and attack the opposition has destroyed the basic trust and foundation of these agencies as public power, and desecrated the values of free competition, freedom of expression, association and indeed the rule of law. The raging rules of authoritarianism are reflections of democratic reversal which reproduce desecration of separation of power doctrines, lack of confidence in the electoral system, might is right and proliferation of axis of dissent and insecurity. We therefore recommend a revision in the application of the margin of lead principle based on our adjustments as stated in items 1b above.

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WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper interrogated the issues surrounding women abandonment in the development process and the attendant policies in Nigeria. It employed secondary data obtained from documentary sources and adopted the structural modernization theory as a framework of the analysis. It observed that developing countries, especially Africa and Nigeria in particular, have been characterized as backward, underdeveloped and developing. This is attributed to poverty, unemployment, backwardness, social inequality, a shrinking economy and every other concept that signify an underdeveloped country which are endemic in Africa and especially in Nigeria. Whereas countries like China, the four Asian tigers and some Latin American countries like Brazil including Chile have speedily risen to the ranks of the First and Second Worlds unlike African countries, especially those in sub-Sahara region, who are still rated among the underdeveloped nations. It argued that in spite of Nigerian's large population index and enormous natural resources and concerted efforts towards development through the formulation and implementation of various development policies and programs, the country still grapples with the challenge of underdevelopment. The paper found that the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian political system which has excluded women from the articulation of various development strategies aimed at engendering modernization of the country is majorly responsible for the minimal results. It also highlighted the enormous benefits of engaging women in the process of development. Therefore, the paper recommended the need for the engagement of women in the articulation and execution of development policies for Nigeria. Thus, governments and development stakeholders in Nigeria need to show the will-power to bring women into development and development programs for the country to be classified as developed.

Keywords: women, development, policy, Nigeria

Introduction

Traditionally, social policy overlooks sexual orientation and assumes a heterosexual male subject (Mona and Mackay, 2011). This statement is especially true in Africa and especially in Nigeria. A body of literature has been developed that criticized gender blind posture of development policies by providing analysis of models of social policy from the position of women (Lewis 1998, Woodward 1997, Lister 2000). Development is as old as man. Much of human history has been a fight for survival against natural hazards and against real and imagined human enemies. The quest for survival has accumulated in advancement in the living standards of the people in different countries and continents. For the African continent, the 1950s marked the sovereignty struggles with nationalist movements sprawling in most African states. The era was also a sequel to the emergence of national and economic development plans for the continent of Africa and Nigeria in particular.

However, development across countries in the world tended to vary as the United Nations-sponsored Brandt Commission Report, 1980-1983 confirmed that the world is significantly divided between the rich North and the Southern poor hemisphere (.Klaus 2008). Igwe (2010) believes that the Third World countries are characteristically associated with poor development indicators when compared with developed countries. To him, this is evident in life expectancy, extreme poverty, ethnic conflicts, and wars, amidst an extensive state of corruption, political and social instability while the governments of African states are largely authoritarian. He further stressed that in recent years several countries that were previously grouped under the third world category like China, the four Asian tigers Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and South Korea, some Latin American countries like Brazil and Chile have speedily risen to the ranks of the First World while countries of Africa especially those in sub-Sahara Africa like Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Togo, Niger, DR Congo, and Benin Republic amongst others besides South Africa have continually degenerated rather than developing (Igwe 2010).

According to Rodney (2009) the reason why different countries develop at different rates when left on their own is hinged on factors such as the environment the human groups evolved and the superstructures of such human society. He further argued that as humans battle the material environment, they created forms of social relations in the form of government, patterns of behavior and system of beliefs and codes of conduct which together constitutes the superstructure which is never exactly the same in any

two societies. In establishing these superstructures, Subrata, & Sushila (2007) submit that Karl Marx believes that social status and relevance of man in the development history depends on the position he occupies in the mode of production. Confirming this further, the elite theory contends that a small minority of people consisting of members of the economic elite and policy-planning networks hold the most power. This power according to them is independent of democratic elections or gender. By occupying strategic positions in corporations, corporate boards, rendering financial support for foundations and holding think tanks positions or policy-discussion groups, the elite control power, policy, and consequently, exert significant influence over policy decisions and policy outcomes (Robert 1977).

Collaborating the above statement Wollstonecraft posited that the pre-eminence of man over the others consists of reason and that the only acquirement that exalts one being over the other is virtue and knowledge. Stressing that God in his infinite wisdom implanted passion in people in that by struggling with them man might attain a degree of knowledge (experience) denied to other brutes. (Wollstonecraft 1996). Wollstonecraft believes that from the exercise of reason and knowledge virtue naturally flow when mankind are viewed collectively. These include The Nairobi Conference of 1975, the Beijing Conference 1995 amongst. These conventions and protocols herald the quest for the emancipation, empowerment, and inclusion of women in the development agenda in Africa especially Nigeria. International conventions and protocols heightened awareness and demand consenting countries to implement the platforms for action to women empowerment in their countries. With the added efforts of local feminists and other stakeholders, Nigeria in 2000 established the ministry of women affairs and enacted gender policy in the year 2005 (Emordi 2016).

According to Norris and Inglehart, (2001), Sub-Saharan Africa uses two different types of quotas: the system of reserved seats established by national legislation used in Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania and quotas voluntarily established by political parties. This is practiced in Botswana, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal, and South Africa. Yoon (2004) believes that some consider gender quotas as 'discrimination and a violation of the principle of fairness', but others view them as "compensation for structural barriers that prevent fair competition". Despite the efficiency of gender quotas in ensuring political equality, quota systems are said to violate principles of fairness, competence, and

individualism (Dahlerup, 2003). This paper used a secondary method of data gathering to muster data with the theory undraping to explain why women are marginalized in development process and policy in Nigeria.

Conceptualizing Development

Development, like most concepts in Political Science, is a loose and ambiguous word that has attracted several definitions among scholars. Due to the ambiguity of the concept, it has been difficult to reach a precise meaning of the word development. Therefore there are diverse perspectives on its conceptualization. Some of the definitions given include that of Desai and Potter (2008) conceptualized early development views as catching up with and generally imitating the West. Laval (2011) argues that development is a vital necessity for the growth and sustainability of any vibrant nation. According to Meier (1988), development is the act of rising to the highest value the Gross National Product (GNP) through the process of accumulating capital and industrialization. On his part, Desai (2008) has argued that the fact that economic growth is necessary it is not a sufficient condition for development. For him, without the redistribution of income, wealth and inequalities will not be reduced. Believing that it is inequalities that pique, he stressed that this development must be regarded as synonymous with enhancing human rights and welfare of the people. This makes self-esteem, self-respect and improving entitlements central concerns in the development of any nation.

In this stretch, Meier (1988) sees development as the act of raising to the highest value the Gross National Product (GNP) through the process of accumulating capital and industrialization. Development can also be viewed as the capacity of a nation to increase its static economy to a level where it can generate and sustain an annual increase in its GNP. This implies that development is of concern to any national government as the gains of development are germane to any country's drive to self-reliance. Development is not limited to just the process of industrialization but encompasses such processes as modernization, productivity, social and economic equalization, modern technical know-how, improved institutions, and attitudes as well as rationally coordinated policy apparatus (Meier, 1988). Todaro (1985), buttressing on the multi-dimensional nature of the concept of development opines that it is the re-organization and re-orientation of the entire economic and social system arguing that development is a state of advancement which makes life more meaningful in its various aspects,

including economic, administrative, political, social, cultural and religious aspects (Todaro 1985).

Accordingly, Onah (2005), maintained that development is not static but is a continuous improvement in the capacity of the individual and society to control and manipulate the forces of nature for the enhancement of the living standard of people. This definition introduces another dimension to the meaning of development. It analyses the human aspect of development; that is, the individuals who reside in a given state. Collaborating on this position Ahmed (2007) noted that development is concerned with the general upliftment in the material, social and psychological conditions of a given human society. Also, for development to be achieved, socio-political and economic stability must be guaranteed at all levels of government. This will not only promote the attachment of the people to the governmental process, but it will also ensure the improvement of the living standards of the people.

Based on the foregoing, it can therefore be inferred that development refers to the eradication of limiting constructs such as gender inequality, deforestation, maternal mortality, and morbidity. It also includes Alleviation of poverty, ensuring human rights, provision of potable water, livestock management, and power generation, making available decent and habitable habitat, eradication of child mortality of children under the age of five, improved education for boys and girls, and advanced adult literacy, eradication of hunger for all amongst others. , Sexism, boy child, preference at birth and in education.

Chambers (2017) views development policy as a guideline that the government uses to address specific public or national problems, it is stressed that several issues concerning economic growth and development is addressed through government policies. Specifically, issues such as inequality, inflation, budget deficits, monetary social instabilities, economic diversification, unemployment, poverty, human capital the deficit, boosting manufacturing, rural development, attracting foreign investment and many more.

However, to achieve comprehensive development and remove the constraints require the articulation of development a policy that is holistic and participatory. Contrarily, development policies in most African countries were strait-jackets not considering the needs of women. However, the achievement of the above requires the articulation and implementation of development policy as adduced by Chambers (2012) and FDFA (2003) refers to all political, economic and social measures taken by a donor country to achieve sustainable

improvements in living conditions in developing and transition countries (FDFA 2003).

At the level of the individual, Rodney (2009) believed that it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility, and material wellbeing. However, what is disputable is that the achievement of aspects of personal development is very much tied in the state of society as a whole. From earliest times, man found it convenient and necessary to come together in groups to hunt for the sake of survival. The relations which develop within any social group are crucial to an understanding of the society today. Consequently, freedom, responsibility, skill, etc have real meaning only in terms of the relations of men in society (Rodney 2009). Rodney believes that development makes it easier to comprehend the concept of underdevelopment.

Different Stages of Development

The expansion of the economy leads eventually to a change in the form of social relations. Just as quantitative changes become qualitative after a certain period so is the possession of means of production. Virtue (knowledge) changes the position of groups in the society by placing some as overlords and others as subjects depending on the degree of power they possess; referring to their position in the mode of production. According to Karl Marks within European history the first major stage of development following the simple bands of hunters was communism. In this stage of development, the property was collectively owned, work was done in common, and goods were shared out equally. This way people were seen as equals and women had no reason to demand equality or parity. However, the scheme of things began to change during the second stage of development which is the slavery epoch followed by feudalism where agriculture remained the principal means of making a livelihood. During this period the land which was necessary for that purpose was in the hands of the few (men), and they took the lion's share of the wealth. The workers on the land now called serfs and not slaves as they were no longer the personal property of the masters. The serfs were, however, tied to the land of a particular manor or estate owner. When the manor changes hand, the serfs had to remain there and provide goods for the landlord just keeping enough for themselves for subsistence (Rodney 2009).

Then after feudalism came capitalism under which the greatest wealth in the society was produced not in agriculture but by machines in factories and in mines. Under capitalism, women were not also seen or chronicled to own means of production. Just as in feudal and slavery eras. At the wake of capitalism like the previous development eras women were inactive and did not own means of wealth production instead, they were content with giving birth, cooking and nursing children and husbands.

Consequently, with capitalism, owners of a mode of production also own the resources and therefore determine the trend and patterns of gender relations in the society. The economic position of men in capitalism strategically positions them in leadership and governance to make policies that favor men and disadvantage women. Wollstonecraft stressed that the society is formed in the wisest manner by God the creator but the constitutions (superstructures) are founded on the nature of man because men acquired the virtue to frame the constitutions while women acquiescence themselves to the policies made by men (Wollstonecraft (1995).

Wollstonecraft (1995) argues that at creation, God created everything, he imbued passion in both male and female; so that is struggling with this passion they will use their intellect to invent their needs such as codes of conducts, shelter, clothing, food and many more through learning and experience. With the superstructure in the form of cultures and modes of conduct man-made boundaries were created for male and female and their garments which we call gender were worn on them as we see it today. Through policies, it becomes an infraction for the sexes to via into certain roles considered not appropriate for them (Rodney 2009). Wollstonecraft (1995) believes that women did not pursue knowledge and virtue (science) with which they could master their environment and understand different phases of development so as to properly position themselves in the society's power structure. She stressed that from the pre-development times and start of history men paced themselves in power positions (Subrata, & Sushila 2007).

Today, like the preceding phases of development slavery and feudalism, capitalism has been characterized by the concentration in a few hands the ownership of means of producing wealth. This few hands are majorly men not women. Today, men are in leadership and governance and therefore determined policy directions and outcomes resulting in the unequal distribution of the products of human labor which favors men. In the

contemporary times, women like the serfs are declared free to sell their labor with no means of production own by them in the society to compete favorably with those of men and are marginalized in leadership and governance positions. As the child of the slave was a slave to the children of serfs were serfs. Women are subjugated by men so are girls born by women subjected just like their mothers through culture and lack policy instruments to enforce gender equality.

To Wollstonecraft the passion for the acquisition of wisdom and mastering of the environment, times and seasons were implanted in both men and women by God. Men took the lead to understand and manipulated the environment to their advantage while women were content with cooking and caring for their husbands and children and never negotiated the rules of engagement of their service abinitio. Defining politics as the master science Aristotle believes that almost everything happens in a political context. Appadora (2009) believes that the decisions of the state govern most other things. Lasswell confirmed politics as the determination of 'who gets what, when and how to buttress the argument that men maintain the status quo and retained political positions through which they control resource distribution, ensure that women get what was allotted to them in politics and governance.

Women and Development Policy in Nigeria

In David Easton's perspective, politics is the authoritative allocation of values for the society (Michael Roskin 2006) and (Gunnell, 2013). Those who authoritatively allocate values are the government and the ruling class (elite) who are majorly men. To this extent, policy to the elite theory does not flow from bottom to the top but from top to bottom and that inclusion into the elite class must be gradual. Policies in Nigeria have barely benefited women but gradually involving them into development politics and governance. Men make policies and they determine how far the policies will benefit women. This position collaborates the reason why the landowners granted freedom to the serfs during the feudal era because being free is not being mainstreamed.

Then, when the serfs became restless and considering that the revolt could be expensive to put down, the landowners in the feudal epoch seeing their estates going to ruin, decide that it will be in their best interest to grant the legal freedom for which slaves were clamoring for. However, they

maintained the exploitation of their labor by ensuring that they had no lands to plow other than those of the landlords. The policy was to declare them free to leave the land and to go in search of employment in capitalist enterprises. Their skill (labour) thereby became a commodity, something to be bought and sold. Similarly, the activities of feminists and women empowerment champions engendered gender equality issues around the globe consequently, women like the serfs of the feudal era have been declared free by men and governments to participate in politics, the labor market amongst others but are tied to the aprons of patriarchy, culture, and religion which are maintained through development policies and socialization process which is different for men and women in Africa and Nigeria in particular. Mona and Mackay (2011) believe that the effect of gender on political recruitment can be seen both as a supply-side and demand-side effect. (Norris and Lovenduski 1995)

Again, the United Nations Decade for Women was a period from 1975 to 1985 focused on the policies and issues that impact women such as pay equity, gendered violence land holding, and other human rights. It was adopted December 15, 1975, by the United Nations General Assembly by Resolution 31/136. The Decade formally consisted of three international meetings and conferences in Mexico City for "consciousness-raising", Copenhagen for creating "networks", and Nairobi for "the solidarity of women world-wide" along with several regional meetings with specific UN agencies (UNESCO, WHO, ECLA, EEC) and non-governmental organizations (YWCA, World Council of Churches, National Association of Women. The Beijing conference built on political agreements reached at the three previous global conferences on women, and consolidated five decades of legal advances aimed at securing the equality of women with men in law and in practice ([Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#))

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, China, 1995), at which Ireland participated, is an agenda for women's empowerment. It aims at removing all the obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through ensuring women a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making. This means that the principle of shared power and responsibility should be established between women and men at home, in the workplace, and in the wider national and international communities. The Declaration and Platform for Action affirm that equality

between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice. <http://www.genderequality.ie/en/GE/Pages/BeijingPlatform>

Since then, governments, civil society, and the public have translated the Platform for Action's promises into concrete changes in individual countries. These have ushered in enormous improvements in women's lives. Consequently, Nigeria in 2007, Ghana 2004, South Africa 2007, Uganda 1997, Cameroon 1999 amongst others welcome, and domesticated various women development policies in order to catch up with the gender practice and perspectives of living standards of the sexes in the developed worlds. These national gender-based policies were meant not only to bridge the gap between the genders to engender development, empowerment and consequently, empower and promote the advancement of women in Africa.

As feminists decry the continued exclusion, relegation, and the subjugation of women in development processes which Rathgeber (1995) describes as the condition of women as in the feudal epoch, they called for the emancipation and inclusion of women in development, programs, and policies. Governments adopted the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, which outlined measures for achieving gender equality at the national level and for promoting women's participation in peace and development efforts. To this effect, though there are policy instrument both locally and globally that allow women to participate in virtually in every facet of life endeavor but the gender gap is still very wide and women are still tied to culture, patriarchy, and domesticity.

Development policy determines and controls virtually all aspects of women's lives. This argument was strengthened when Lisa (2003) argues that states and social policies influence everyday life. Stressing that with policies states establish tax rates and exemptions, and determine whether tax revenues, would be used for healthcare or interest on the national debt. States and social policies help determine or not you have redress against workplace grievances. States through policies determine if people can turn to states when they are sick, hungry, abused, homeless or out of work. States and policies also determine the limits and possibilities of collective struggle, environmental sustainability, economic viability, degree of inequality, and civil quality of the life where they reside and work (Lisa 2003). Underdevelopment is not the absence of development because every people have developed in one way or another to a greater or lesser extent. Underdevelopment makes a sense only as a means of comparing levels of development. It is much tied to the fact that

human social development has been uneven and from a strictly economic viewpoint some human groups have advanced further by producing more and becoming wealthier.

In Nigeria, the first two decades of post-independence development policies began with a five-year plan. In 1999 the government was positioned to start on a clean slate with the initiation of a four-year medium-term plan called, the National Economic Direction (1999-2003). The plan had the primary objective of pursuing a strong, virile and broad-based economy with adequate capacity to absorb externally generated shocks. According to Donli (2004): the plan was targeted at the development of an economy that is highly competitive, responsive to incentives, private sector-led, diversified, market-oriented and open, but based on internal momentum for its growth. Then in 2003, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) - 2003-2007 was birthed to give vitality to the Nigerian economy. The main drive development plan for was to usher in the return to serious medium-term planning as was the case in the 1960s and 70s. The plan was seen and described as Nigeria's plan for prosperity. NEEDS was implemented by the Nigerian government of the day led by Olusegun Obasanjo.

Beginning from The 60s, 70s, and early the 1990s the development policies were either aimed at positioning the country to have her pride of place in the comity of sovereign nations, reconstructing and rebuilding the country after a devastating civil war or revitalizing the economy after the mild or serious economic recession. However, in the midst of these plans, gender was not perceived because there was a largely unified cultural orientation within the regions. Development plans adopted by the country and indeed most African countries at the inception of independence were basically gender-blind. From the inception of statehood in African countries and indeed Nigeria development policies, gender was never an issue for some reasons. One reason was the fact in Nigeria regional approach to development planning was adopted, Nigeria and African societies are highly patriarchal, and development policies were political and social welfare-oriented and again because development policies were largely generally economically structured. To this end, women's interests were subsumed within the national interest.

Following this approach the overall Gender Development Index (GDI) for the country was considered low. Since the 1999 return of democracy, representation of women in politics has not exceeded 15% nor has women

reached 35% in elective and appointive political office positions. Nigeria women's political, economic and social rights remain largely neglected, as seen in the lack of gender equality and political representation. (Masajuwa 2012). This is further reflected in the position Nigeria in the world gender gap forum as well as gender the poor political representation of women index of the world economic position of presence and place of women in paid employment, politics, leadership and decision-making, the high rate of physical and sexual harassment and assault, trafficking, marital rape, early/forced marriage, and different phases of harmful traditional practices against women and the girl child. Then need to liberate and empower women to become expedient following the United Nation's development initiatives which Nigeria and many countries in the continent of Africa were signatories to.

In spite of awakening and advancement so far made towards the advancement, empowerment, and achievement made by the government and other stakeholders in bridging the gender gap women remain under-represented in leadership, politics, and business (IPU, 2015). Women representation in leadership and politics has been extremely marginal, except at the level of voting and grassroots mobilization. Men are the major determinants of political actions and outcomes generally concerned with the perpetuation of the power of the state. When women compete with men for access to political power, they do so on the terms already established by men for competition among themselves (Pogson, 2015). Diamond, (1992) contends that the dominant place of men in determining the general political and social outcomes contradict the essential tenets of development and democracy, which includes a high degree of competitive choice, openness, civil liberties and popular participation in decision-making and a high inclusive level of political participation in the selection of political leaders through regular, (free) and fair elections, such that no major adult (social group) is excluded (Diamond, 1992).

Conclusion

African states have at different times domesticated various development policies at the wake and post-independence periods. These policies originated from men are often generic in nature thereby neglecting the special needs and concerns of women. Issues affecting male and female are generally treated as though there is the same while as the needs of the sexes

are quite different and consequently are, affected by them unequally (Pogoso 2015). Women are not considered as veritable partners in development early enough due to the structure and nature of African society because women were not part of the policy formulating and implementing partners because of their powerless social status. Women did not also make enough efforts to be part of the development policy early enough. Africa as a continent is highly patriarchal in nature. The aims and gains of women empowerment treaties such as the Nairobi conference CEDAW, Beijing World Conference on Women and several others in contemporary times have not actually been achieved in Nigeria due to patriarchy.

However, the women questions are gradually being addressed and women as gradually getting involved in development policies just like the elite theory stipulates. This is evident in the establishment of women ministries and the adoption of gender development policies in many of Africa states. Women representation in leadership and politics, however, remained extremely marginal, except at the level of voting and grassroots mobilization. This situation contradicts the objectives and outlooks of the gender policies in these countries as well as the essential tenets of democracy (Diamond, 1992). In most developing countries women are responsible for the day to day well-being of their families according to Ejumudo (2013) globally, the growing importance of gender equality has been recognized and accepted. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), women are scarcely present in the conception and implementation of development policies in African states. Women and men are engaged in different social roles in the society and therefore have different needs, interests, and priorities, therefore women cannot be adequately represented in decision making by men (Corner, 1997).

These include The Nairobi Conference of 1975, the Beijing Conference 1995 amongst. These conventions and protocols herald the quest for the emancipation, empowerment, and inclusion of women in the development agenda in Africa especially Nigeria. International conventions and protocols heightened the awareness and demand consenting countries to implement the platforms for action to women empowerment in their countries. With the added efforts of local feminists and other stakeholders, Nigeria in 2000 established the ministry of women affairs and enacted the gender policy in the year 2005 (Emordi 2016).

Since women constitute about 50% of the population in their states and play a very vital role in their society's development. Development policies

need to administer the gender needs of male and female. However, this can only be achieved when women are properly represented in development policy articulation, planning, and other processes. Women would need to take the bull by the horns and bulldoze their way in development by occupying a good place in the mode of production. Women do not need to wait for men to include them in development policy because men will not willingly cede power to women by engaging them in development through development policy. The involvement of women in development policy would be the fastest way women would be part of the elite and make policies that will be in favor of women.

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ROLE OF POLITICAL SCIENTISTS IN PROMOTING ELECTORAL INTEGRITY: PROSPECTS FOR NIGERIA

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Abstract

While there exist so many disciplines within today's occupational world, each being a branch of knowledge has unique focus, specialised skills, techniques and abilities. With the knowledge acquired in the course of study, coupled with the skills, techniques and abilities serving as requisite tools, good products of each discipline are expected to join their field's profession or start and develop careers for themselves. While it is the duty of the experts to work diligently and abide by the ethics of their vocation to earn a living, contemporary professional bodies on their part do safeguard their profession by promoting their discipline's knowledge base, regulating the activities of members as well as checkmating the influences of quacks. These exactly are the roles played by Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), Association of National Accountants of Nigerian (ANAN), Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and Council for the Regulation of Engineering (COREN) to safeguard and promote their various occupations. This paper espouses the Role of Political Scientists in engendering electoral Integrity with a charge to the Nigerian Political Science Association (NPSA) to spearhead this objective. Drawing from empirical impressions made by notable Political Scientists like Pippa Norris, Arendt Lijphart, Simon Hix, Humphrey Nwosu, Attahiru Jega, David Axelrod and Jonathan Zwingina on elections and electioneering, this discourse extols their exhibited professionalism which engendered free, fair and credible polls recorded in various polities at various times. Flowing from these facts, the discourse charges the NPSA to as a matter of necessity become a precursor to (or assume the role of) a preceptor, motivator, moderator, and regulator of Electoral Management Activities in Nigeria with a view to engendering the much-desired electoral integrity in the country.

Keywords: Role, Political Scientist, Promotion, Electoral Integrity, Nigeria

Introduction

Although the conduct of free, fair and credible election is often considered as the hallmark of democracy, it can even further be argued that it represents the beginning of democratic practice and culture anywhere it is claimed to be practiced. This is because it is at the time elections have been seen to be freely and credibly conducted and the outcome conscientiously accepted by majority of the stakeholders that one can start talking about the rule of the people which democracy signifies. This is not to say that other elements of democracy (such as separation of powers, independent judiciary which interprets the law without fear or favor, a free and independent media which is able to report, discuss, and comment on events and expose corruption, the rule of law which protects people's liberties, freedom of association - to form political, religious, civic, and charitable groups free from government control, freedom of speech, Education and literacy - which encourages people to think for themselves) are not that important. In fact, they all contribute to the soundness or incorruptibility of any election which invariably engenders electoral legitimacy. The legitimacy of an election depends in large part on the actual and perceived integrity of the electoral process. If voters and candidates believe that an election is fraudulent or has been poorly administered, they may not accept the outcome. At best, this can breed public dissatisfaction or disinterest; at worst, violence, ineffective governance and long-term instability.

Without seeking data from the moon, every observer of Nigerian government and politics knows that this is where we are in our electoral politics. Electoral integrity has been a huge challenge which the country has been unable to surmount – not even in the fourth republic when problems associated with electoral integrity have observably instigated violent conflicts leading to the loss of lives and properties of many Nigerians. Apart from these deaths and loss of properties, this setback has not only slowed down the pace of good governance in Nigeria, but it has impacted so negatively on national security and development. While this should naturally be a cause for concern to all citizens who mean well for Nigeria, social scientists and especially those of us in the field of political science should be having sleepless nights until the challenge of electoral integrity in our dear country is reduced drastically to a minimum bearable level. Ibrahim (2016) made similar observation when he

narrated that the state is crumbling before our very eyes and it is clear that a rescue mission is necessary. The community of political science has a duty at this very time to work on a cure for the sickness of the state before we are all consumed by its breakdown.

It is in the light of this challenge that this paper adapts the three questions formulated by Norris, Frank and Coma (2014) to set a direction for this discourse. These questions are: When do elections meet international standards of electoral integrity? What happens when elections fail to do so? and what can be done to mitigate these problems? Apart from this introduction, the other sections of the paper are: the conceptual and theoretical basis for the discourse, the nexus between political science, electoral politics and electoral integrity which necessitates the position of the paper, an analysis of the feats, problems and prospects of Political Scientists in the task of promoting electoral integrity in Nigeria. The piece ends with a conclusion and recommendation.

Conceptual and Contextual Clarifications

It is important to commence this conceptual and theoretical framework for analysis with a clear understanding of what electoral integrity, political science, electoral politics and functionalism stand for. Starting with Electoral integrity, it refers to the international standards and global norms which are designed to govern the appropriate conduct of elections anywhere in the world (Norris, 2014). These standards have been endorsed in a series of authoritative conventions, treaties, protocols, and guidelines by agencies of the international community, notably by the decisions of the United Nations' General Assembly, by regional bodies such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Organization of American States (OAS), and the African Union (AU).

The foundation of these standards rests on Article 21(3) of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948). It is specified there that "the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures."

These commitments were further developed in Article 25 of the UN International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966), which states inter alia the need for:

- periodic elections at regular intervals;
- universal suffrage that includes all sectors of society;
- equal suffrage, in the idea of one-person, one-vote;
- the right to stand for public office and contest elections;
- the rights of all eligible electors to vote;
- the use of a secret ballot process;
- genuine elections;
- elections that reflect the free expression of the will of the people.

The *1990 Copenhagen Document of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe* (CSCE) made commitments that included free elections at regular intervals; the popular election of all seats in at least one chamber; universal and equal suffrage; the right to establish political parties and their clear separation from the state; campaigning in a free and fair atmosphere; unimpeded access to media; secret ballots, with counting and reporting conducted honestly and the results reported publicly; and the due winners being installed and allowed to serve their full terms.

The *2002 Venice Commission's Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters* spells out in detail what is meant by principles such as the universal, equal, free, secret, and direct suffrage. Some of the most detailed standards are contained in the practical guidelines for electoral observers published by regional intergovernmental organizations, exemplified by the *OSCE Election Observation Handbook (2002)*. Similar principles have been adopted in the guidelines developed by the African Union, European Union, and Organization of American States *Kaila White nd*.

The most recent statement of these norms in the *UN General Assembly resolution 63/163* (April 12, 2012): “Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization.” The language in this document reflects and extends a series of similar statements of principle endorsed regularly by the United Nations since 1991. Resolution 63/163 reaffirms that “democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives.” Thus, democratic principles are explicitly endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly, along with a commitment to “the importance of fair, periodic and genuine elections” as the primary mechanism that allows citizens “to express their will.”

This does not imply, however, that the United Nations or the international community endorse any specific institutional design or constitutional mechanisms that can best achieve global norms, leaving this as a matter for national sovereignty. The UN resolution recognizes the responsibility of member states, “for ensuring free and fair elections, free of intimidation, coercion and tampering of vote counts, and that all such acts are sanctioned accordingly.”

Following endorsement, these standards apply universally to all countries throughout the electoral cycle, including during the pre-electoral period, the campaign, on polling day, and in its aftermath (Young, 2009).

Contrarily, the notion of 'electoral malpractice' refers to contests violating these international standards and global norms for adjudging an election to possess integrity. Problems can arise at every stage of the process, from electoral and ballot access laws favouring incumbents to lack of a level playing field in campaign finance and media coverage during electioneering to inaccurate voter registers, flawed counts and partial electoral management bodies. Challenges associated with debased elections are not unique or synonymous with Nigerian politics as elections conducted in other climes have been observed to have in the past been reportedly flawed by such irregularities as vote-rigging, vote-buying, over-counting and under-counting. Indeed, during the 18th and 19th Centuries, such practices were common in countries holding popular contests, including in rotten and pocket boroughs in Britain and machine politics in the United States. Concern about malpractices has grown in recent decades, however, along with the spread of elections to almost every state worldwide.

Contemporary campaigns attracting considerable international concern include allegations of irregularities occurring during the Russian presidential election, 2012, problems of violence during and after the Kenyan general election, 2007, and controversies in the Cambodian general election, 2013. While the 2003 general elections in Nigeria was adjudged to be amongst the worst conducted in Nigeria, subsequent ones even gave well meaning Nigerians cause to worry. For instance, while the President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua the declared winner of the 2007 presidential acknowledged that the polls that brought him to power was marred by flaws and irregularities, that of 2011 which a section of the electorate disapproved was marred by violence which claimed over 800 innocent lives. While that of 2015 was deemed credible especially as runner up decided to accept the results despite pressures

from his supporters, the just concluded 2019 polls have equally thrown so many controversies which are currently being challenged in courts by many contestants. Examples of such controversies were the allegation by a returning officer in Imo State that he returned Owelle Rochas Okorochoa elected under duress and the failure of the All Progressive Congress (APC) in Zamfara State to conduct primary elections leading to the nullification of their victory by the Supreme Court in Nigeria.

In the light of these challenges and within the context of this paper, a question which would naturally arise is that which asks what role(s) exist for political scientists in engendering electoral integrity in Nigeria particularly in view of their engagements in political analysis which allows them to predict and prescribe conducts within the political system. Of course, this question cannot be accurately answered until the political science discipline and its components are rightly unveiled. Following the description of politics by Dahl (1991) and Weber (1947) as *any activity that is concerned with seeking and exercising influence, control, power and coercion as well as all that has to do with striving for shares of power for influence or advantage, the definition of science which sees it as a system of acquiring knowledge using the scientific method that is capable of resulting to a correct prediction or a reliable outcome* (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2010), Political Science is that field of knowledge which employs the scientific method to explain the outcome of events or make predictions which are largely reliable.

Having understood that the preoccupation of Political Science is to scientifically study matters that are political in nature, it is noteworthy to infer here that the expert who carries out this scientifically oriented political analysis is known as a Political Scientist. Hence, while politicians practice Politics, it is the political scientists that carry out the proper analysis of Politics. Their analyses are described 'proper' because they are to a very large extent devoid of personal biases and value judgements. The adequacy and integrity of political scientists' theory rests on their ability to set aside their own prejudices and remain objective in gathering, analyzing and presenting their findings. Professionally speaking, they are Social Scientists who study Government and Politics. They analyze many areas of Political Behaviour, including Voting, Public Opinion, party politics, Public Administration, Decision Making and International Relations. Knowledgeable in different forms of government that have existed throughout history, such as democracies, autocracies and monarchies, political scientists no doubt possess the ingenuities to examine the ideas and theories behind these political systems. They analyse the structure and operation of governments at all levels, and the effects that these governments have on the people who live under them. Political scientists also study the patterns, sources, and psychology of political power. They collect large amounts of information and then try to organize it into a theory or system that will explain some area of politics or government. Using commonly available research-interviews, newspaper clippings, periodicals, case law, historical papers, polls and statistics-to test theories and develop new ones, political scientists analyze, compare, and even trace problems back to their sources (Odiji, 2013).

Political Scientists - Electoral Integrity Nexus: A Theoretical Explication

One of the theories which can be explored to draw-up the relationship which should exist between political scientists and electoral integrity is functionalism. The functionalist perspective, is one of the major theoretical models in the social sciences particularly political sociology which can be used to explain the role of social institutions in the political system. It has its origins in the works of Emile Durkheim, who was especially interested in how social order is possible or how society remains relatively stable. Other notable

proponents of this analytical model include Herbert Spencer, Talcott Parsons, and Robert K. Merton. They describe each part of the society in terms of how it contributes to the stability of the whole. Society is more than the sum of its parts; rather, each part of society is functional for the stability of the whole (Macionis, 2010). Durkheim actually envisioned society as an organism, and just like within an organism, each component plays a necessary part, but none can function alone, hence as one experiences a crisis or fails, other parts must adapt to fill the void in some way. Within functionalist theory, the different parts of society are primarily composed of social institutions, each of which is designed to fill different needs, and each of which has particular consequences for the form and shape of society. The parts all depend on each other. According to Ashley (2018), the core institutions defined by sociology and which are important to the understanding of this theory include family, government, economy, media, education, and religion.

According to functionalism, an institution only exists because it serves a vital role in the functioning of society. If it no longer serves a role, an institution will die away. When new needs evolve or emerge, new institutions will be created to meet them. From the functionalist perspective, if all goes well, the parts of society produce order, stability, and productivity. If all does not go well, the parts of society then must adapt to produce new forms of order, stability, and productivity. Functionalism emphasizes the consensus and order that exist in society, focusing on social stability and shared public values (Ashley, 2018). From this perspective, disorganization in the system, such as deviant behavior, leads to change because societal components must adjust to achieve stability. When one part of the system is not working or is dysfunctional, it affects all other parts and creates social problems, which leads to social change.

The Nigerian Political Science Association (NPSA) is here regarded as both an educational institution and a civil society organisation which can contribute immensely to the promotion of electoral integrity in Nigeria. As emphasised earlier, when new needs evolve or emerge, new institutions will be created to meet them. The challenge on the hands of all stakeholders in the electoral system in Nigeria at the moment is that of entrenching the much-desired integrity. This now move us to focus on the role of civil society as exemplified by NPSA in promoting democratic values such as electoral integrity. The work of Nwogu (2015) would aptly fit in here. Consulting the Dictionary of 21st century Lexicon to define a civil society as the aggregate of

non-governmental organisations and institutions that manifest interests and will of citizens, or as composing individuals and organisations in a society which are independent of the government, the author referred to civil society as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The scholar further pitched tent with such other political scientists as Alexis de Tocqueville, Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, as well as Putnam and Pithouse who posited that the political elements of political organisations facilitate better awareness and a more informed citizenry, who make better voting choices, participate in politics and hold government more accountable as a result. They argued that civil societies are capable of building social capital, trust and shared values, which help to hold society together, thus facilitating an understanding of the “interconnectedness” of society and interests within it. According to Pithouse (2005), as far democratic politics is concerned a civil society is supposed to be biased towards the global best practice and for Pallock (2001) since the concept of civil society is closely linked to democracy and representation, it should in turn be linked with ideas of nationality and nationalism.

Conceiving Electoral integrity, as the global best practices and norms which are designed to govern the appropriate conduct of elections (Norris, 2014) such as: periodic elections at regular intervals; universal suffrage that includes all sectors of society; equal suffrage, in the idea of one-person, one-vote; the right to stand for public office and contest elections; the rights of all eligible electors to vote; and the use of a secret ballot process; genuine elections; and elections that reflect the free expression of the will of the people. And linking the role of a civil society organisation with nationalism, it behoves then on an association like the NPSA to see it as a responsibility to fashion out a way of tackling the challenges associated with electoral integrity in Nigeria. Nationalism as we are made to understand by the Merriam Webster Dictionary (2010) is loyalty and devotion to a nation *especially* when it has to do with a sense of national consciousness and exalting one’s nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on promotion of its culture and interests. It is in fact about national interest, national development and national security. It is not by coincidence that the motto of the Nigerian Political Science Association is ‘Advancing democracy and development’. Even the International Political Science Association on its website emphasised clearly that it supports the role of political science in empowering men and women to participate more effectively in political life, whether within or beyond the state in which they live (IPSA, 2019).

Political Scientists and Electoral Integrity in Nigeria: The Paces, Problems and Prospects

In terms of deeds notable especially for courage or acts or products of skill, endurance, or ingenuity which have reportedly been displayed, some notable political scientists have observably made indelible marks in the field of electoral politics and the feats which they have made have demonstrated that given the opportunity to take charge of electoral politics, political hold the promise of accruing to the country the much-desired electoral integrity which is currently lacking in the polity.

The first set of people worthy of mention are Political Science trained experts who have headed the national election management body and have outwit their successors or predecessors in the art of managing elections. They have shown uncommon dexterities and expertise while carrying out that ominous task. They are: Eme Awa – Chairman, National Electoral Commission (NECON) from 1987 to 1989 when he resigned due to disagreement with then military dictator General Ibrahim Babangida (Imam, 2010); Humphrey Nwosu who was appointed FEDECO chairman in 1989 after his predecessor had disagreement with General Babangida (Hank, 2008). He conducted the June 12, 1993 election which was seen as the freest and fairest election to date in which Moshood Abiola was presumed to have won. His commission introduced the novel Option A4 Voting System and the Open Ballot System (Iman, 2010) (Oyinlola, 2010).

Next is Attahiru Jega, who organised and coordinated the 2011 and 2015 General Elections as Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). He is known to have brought so many innovations to the electoral system in Nigeria including the introduction of the electronic card reader which is used today for accrediting eligible voters before actual voting takes place and the use of academics as collating and returning officers. The above mentioned political science oriented electoral umpires no doubt performed far better than the likes of Abel Guobadia who studied solid-state physics and Maurice Iwu who is a professor of Pharmacognosy

Apart from administering elections, political scientists have equally been known to have excellently managed electioneering campaigns with the candidates they sell emerging victorious in most cases. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Dr. Chuba Okadigbo, Stella Afegbua (first female senator in Nigeria), Professor Jonathan Zwingina and Dr. Kayode Fayemi just to mention a few,

have demonstrated how political science is the best platform for training those who will manage electioneering campaigns. While the likes of Azikiwe, Afegbua and Fayemi spearheaded their own campaigns to successes, Zwingina, Okadigbo and Fayemi were instrumental to the victory of MKO Abiola in the 'Hope 93' campaign of the Social Democratic Party (SDP). Fayemi on his part, headed the Policy, Research and Strategy Directorate of the 2015 APC Presidential Campaign just as he later chaired the Buhari/Osibanjo's 2019 presidential election campaign.

Talking now about the challenges, there are so many individuals and even organisations today from various background who just delve into jobs which ordinarily should have been reserved for or best performed by political science trained professionals. It not even uncommon for instance to find on national broadcasting outfits people who are even trained in the natural and physical sciences automatically being regarded as political analysts or public affairs experts carrying out consultancies which should have been the exclusive preserve of political scientists or public administrators. are not even within the confines of the social sciences and humanities.

A second major problem which has heightened the lack of electoral integrity in Nigeria is the free for all character of those who work in electioneering campaigns. While in places like the United States of America the American Association Political Consultants stand as a trade group for the political consulting profession, regulating and checking the possible or manifest excesses of political consultants, pollsters, media consultants, campaign managers, corporate public affairs officers, professors, lobbyists, fundraisers and congressional staffers who form membership of the group and carry out various electioneering functions, such outfit is not yet known to exist in Nigeria. This has made it difficult to question anybody regarding perceived obnoxious campaign activities of any particular candidate or party seeking election. The AAPC is renowned for setting standards of conduct for political and public affairs consulting through its code of professional ethics. Applicants for AAPC membership are required to sign the code and to live by the standards it set as a condition of membership in the organisation.

Thirdly is the low level of both political education, civic education and voter education on the part of majority of the populace leading to the abuse of their political rights and/or robbery of their mandate by unscrupulous politicians. It is within the thought of this paper that the NPSA can fill this lacuna by taking the bull by the horn in the area of carrying out political, civic

and voter's education which the electoral management body, political parties and other interest groups in Nigeria have observably failed to carryout.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It has been established here that while it is the duty of the products of the field of political science to work diligently by abiding by the ethics of their vocation to earn a living, it is the responsibility of their professional body to assist fellows realise this aim by promoting their knowledge base, regulate their activities as well as checkmate the activities of quacks. This exactly is what the likes of Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), Association of National Accountants of Nigerian (ANAN) and Council for the Regulation of Engineering (COREN) are doing in this competitive world to safeguard and promote their cherished professions. For this paper, Electoral Politics is considered as one of the professional fields of endeavour in which the Nigerian Political Science Association (NPSA) can take proper charge by certifying, moderating and regulating the activities of such practitioners as Electoral Umpires, Political Consultants, Campaign Directors/Managers and Party Agents. While citing the exemplary works of notable personalities as evidences that these jobs are better performed by Political Scientists, it is our opinion that this admonition if well taken will not only guarantee jobs for graduates of political science and related fields, but would no doubt engender the much-desired electoral integrity in Nigeria.

As a recommendation therefore, we admonish the NPSA to consider sending a bill to the national assembly just the way other professional bodies which now regulate the activities of practitioners of their occupation have done, so that it can monitor, moderate and sanction where necessary the activities of political consultants, campaign managers, and even party agents in elections. This no doubt will engender electoral integrity in Nigeria. All those who are interested in working as political consultants should be made to register with NPSA or its subsidiary or affiliate organisation. NPSA or its affiliate body should be empowered to certify those who wish to work in campaigns either as consultants or managers.

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**THE PARADOX OF PRESIDENT BUHARI'S ABSENCE IN OFFICE
AND PROACTIVE GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA: A REFLECTION
ON THE ROLES OF YEMI OSINBAJO AS ACTING PRESIDENT,
2015-2019**

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Abstract

The complexities of national governance necessitate the creation of the office of the vice president as an essential political institution. While scholars have variously noted the trivialization and suffocation of the office and person of the vice president, especially in the West, scarcely has any correlated this trivialization with their proactive governance skills as against their principals' poor governance skills, particularly in Africa. Filling this gap, this paper argues that the present onslaught against Nigeria's Vice President, Yemi Osinbajo, by the Presidency was expected, given his proactiveness when he was Acting President during President Muhammadu Buhari's series of foreign trips in their first tenure. That opportunity endeared him to Nigerians who wished he were the substantive president, as his administrative ingenuity provided insights into the deplorable leadership styles of his principal. Relying on the theory of good governance, we argue that Buhari's frequent absence in office was a blessing in disguise for Nigerians as Osinbajo performed exceedingly better within the short period he acted. This was unexpected considering the structure of power configuration in the presidency. The paper deploys mixed-methods approach with qualitative dominance in collecting and analysing data. The study concludes that though Buhari's absence created some ripple effects in the stability of the nation, Nigerians preferred that Osinbajo continued in office to the current collateral damage Buhari's administration has unleashed on the nation. The paper recommends the expansion of the powers and functions of Vice-Presidents, since both are usually elected on joint ticket and mandate.

Keywords: Foreign trips, good governance theory, medical vacation, proactive governance, vice president.

Introduction

The complexities and herculean nature of modern governance have made it imperative and inevitable for the establishment of positions of assistants to occupants of chief executive offices by laws. It is in the pursuit of the above that chief executives of organisations, including states, normally have deputies, assistants and other nomenclatures such positions may bear. For instance, the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended), Chapter VI, No. 141 made provisions for the office of Vice President. In fulfilment of the above provision, aspirants to the office of the President are expected to choose running mates, whom in the absence of their principal exercise the duties of the chief executives. However, the common practice has been for the potential chief executives to nominate a running mate who in their assessment has lesser credentials in terms of material resources, ambition and who will remain loyal and supportive to them. The calculation is that such a person with low resource base will find it difficult, if not impossible, to muster the fellowship and courage to oust or outshine their bosses.

In line with the above, assistants are usually assigned lesser responsibilities by law, and in few cases additional assignments according to the whims and caprices of their principals. In governance, the assistants are usually relegated to the background and the public, most times, do not expect much from them. The chief executives, as accounting officers, are expected to be proactive and decisive in policy initiation unlike the assistants who are merely confined to the few roles assigned to them by law. However, the contrary tended to be the case in Nigeria between 2015 and 2019, as the country usually experienced proactive and more responsive governance any time the Vice President, Yemi Osinbajo, acted in the absence of the chief executive, President Muhammadu Buhari, especially as the latter globe-trotted in search of medical attention and for other state assignments.

Meanwhile, the fact that destinies of nations have become increasingly interdependent in the 21st century calls for inevitable periodic foreign trips by presidents and heads of states. Given that many domestic issues and challenges tend to defy domestic solutions, the need for international collaborations has continued to mount on every nation of the world. This has often resulted in national leaders reaching out to other nations for assistance and association. Arising from this recognition, therefore, the mounting necessity to promote collaboration and shape the contents of bilateral and

multilateral alliances for development and peaceful coexistence in a dominantly realist world has been acknowledged and pursued (Adamu, 2002), and this is mostly done through foreign policy and diplomatic shuttles. Given again that the shaping of foreign policy is a dynamic process involving the interaction between a country's internal and external environments; and that one propels the other (Ezirim, 2010, p.1) in keeping with these diplomatic exigencies of their offices, national leaders do frequently embark on foreign trips.

Muhammadu Buhari, who emerged President of Nigeria in 2015, spent significant part of his first tenure on foreign trips, delegating his assignments to Professor Yemi Osinbajo, his Vice. The first official international trip of Buhari was a one-day visit to the Republic of Niger on 3rd June 2015, barely five days after he was sworn in. Within ten months in office, Buhari had completed 28 foreign trips (*Daily Trust*, 2016). Indeed, between 15th February 2016, when he embarked on a six-day medical vacation to London, and 8th May 2018, when he took off to London for medical review, President Buhari travelled to the United Kingdom on health/medical grounds on six (6) separate occasions. In 2017 alone, he spent a total of one hundred and fifty-four (154) days in London on two separate medical visits. Between 15th February 2016 and 3rd August 2018, President Buhari had embarked on over forty-three (43) international trips and had visited 23 countries of the world. The declared objectives of most of these foreign trips by Nigerian presidents have remained to repair Nigeria's poor image abroad, attract foreign investments, debt cancellation, peace, security and prosperity through friendship (Chris, 2015; *Sunday Trust*, 2016).

However, it must be noted that during most of these international trips by the President, the Vice President was (as always) constitutionally empowered to take the mantle of leadership on domestic affairs. Hence, during the medical vacations he spent in London between 2015 and 2018, President Buhari in line with Section 145(1) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended), communicated the National Assembly, officially appointing Vice President Yemi Osinbajo to discharge the duties of the presidency in his absence. During this period of holding brief for his boss, Osinbajo made many critical appointments and introduced some strategic reforms in the military hierarchy, judiciary, economy, education and security apparatus in the country, all of which were aimed at improving the lives of the citizenry. While these outstanding exhibitions of good and proactive governance would ordinarily

have called for commendation and endearment on the part of the principal in advanced climes, they seem to have arguably achieved the opposite, as Osinbajo has recently come under heavy attacks and noticeable political sidelining within the presidency. Meanwhile, Osinbajo and Nigeria are not the only cases in Africa where vice presidents and deputy national leaders seem not to be enjoying the amity and confidence of their principals and the ruling class, especially as it affects the accordance of constitutional leadership responsibilities.

Events and developments in Africa seem to suggest that vice presidents in Africa are generally there to merely fulfil the constitutional requirement of “there shall be a vice president”, and not necessarily to provide governance continuity or even alternative. Apart from being capriciously dissuaded from outshining their masters; African vice presidents usually face lots of political intrigues in the hands of the opportunistic ruling class when trying to constitutionally assume the mantle of leadership in the event of their principal’s exit. Far from engendering wholesome relations for national development, this trend tends to result in bickering, distrust and ill-feelings between the president and the vice president, especially if the latter is assertive and not the expected political puppet. In Nigeria, this played out between the then President Olusegun Obasanjo and Vice President Atiku Abubakar between 2003 and 2007, resulting eventually in the exit of the latter from the ruling party. In Angola and Malawi, the political classes were up against the succession of the presidents by their vice presidents the same way they initially whipped up ethnic and primordial sentiments to cause a constitutional somersault against the assumption of office of Vice President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria and Deputy Prime-Minister Hailemariam Desalegn of Ethiopia for President and Prime Minister respectively.

In Malawi’s case, Vice President Joyce Banda faced expulsion from the party by the then President Bingu wa Mutharika so as to pave way for his brother upon his exit. Even when death struck the 78-year old president in April 2012, some members of the political class moved to replace him with his brother, Peter Mutharika, to the anger of even the U.S. State Department which maintained that the vice president, who is the next in line, be sworn in (Ighobor, 2013). Like in Malawi, Presidents had pursued similar agenda of grooming and designating their relatives to succeed them upon death in Gabon, Togo and Congo DR. Although such moves were greeted with revolts and controversies in Egypt and Burkina Faso, all these go to show the extent

to which the office of the vice presidency is being disdained and desecrated with impunity in Africa.

The objective of this paper therefore, is to present the indices and indicators of good and proactive governance demonstrated by vice president Yemi Osinbajo during the many times president Buhari was on foreign trips, and to correlate this with the present onslaught and political sidelining against him by the presidency. We hypothesize that while Buhari's frequent absence in office was a blessing in disguise for Nigerians as his vice performed exceedingly better within the short period he acted on behalf of the President; it is more like a curse to Vice President Osinbajo as the nature and structure of power configuration in the presidency is increasingly becoming unfavourable to him.

Overview of the Dynamic Roles of the Office of the Vice President

Given that Nigeria copies the presidential form of government as practiced in the United States, it has been noticed that in recent years, Vice Presidents have played increasingly important roles in the Nigerian government, especially since after the military interregnum. While in the 1979-1983 regime of Alhaji Shehu Shagari, Vice President Alex Ekwueme played prominent roles, he was still considered an outsider. Between 1999 and 2003, Vice President Atiku Abubakar was the arrowhead of the government. However, during their second term, his boss, President Olusegun Obasanjo ensured he never went beyond being a spare tyre, and towards the end of the tenure, was completely made redundant. The trend continued under President Umaru Yar'Adua as Vice President Goodluck Jonathan was emasculated by the cabal to the point that he couldn't meet his sick principal and it took public outcry from the Nigerian citizens for him to take over the reins of governance at the demise of his boss in May 2010. From these instances, it could be seen that while the Vice Presidents were given opportunity to serve as top government representatives, playing advisory roles on a broad range of critical state issues, they were still unhappy in office as has been the case in history. According to Mondale (2007) with regards to the United States:

Since the start of our nation, the vice presidency has been an awkward office. Its occupants have, by and large, been notoriously unhappy. The vice presidency is the only public office in our government that falls under two branches: executive and

legislative. Yet over most of its history, despite that remarkable fact, neither branch wanted to see him. For example, when the first U.S. Vice President John Adams wanted to preside over the Senate the one duty, albeit optional, the Constitution assigns the vice president – the Senate shut down his ideas and suggestions. A frustrated Adams reportedly came to call the vice presidency ‘the most insignificant office that ever the invention of man contrived.’ (<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/the-role-the-modern-vice-president>, June 1, 2007).

According to Linz (1990), the presidential system of government reflects “profound suspicion of the personalization of power” (p. 54). It also imparts rigidity to the political process (p.55); and there are some cases where the vice presidents are nominated just to fill the space without the president meaning to hand over any functions to them (pp.65-66).

The vice presidency, according to Baumgartner (2006, p.2), is very important despite the cavalier manner the office had been treated over centuries. For instance, the vice president is one of the only two nationally elected officials in an entire country. It also has the constitutional function of assuming the presidency in the case of vacancy, and is also a viable springboard to the presidency for those who can. On the contrary, Helms (2020, p.336) disagrees with this last assertion, stating rather that the vice presidency is neither in theory nor in practice a natural springboard for the presidency except in the case of death or resignation of a president). However, according to Baumgartner and Case (2009), vice presidents are characterized as marginal institutions. Helms (2020) goes further to state that the office of the vice president cannot be considered a constitutive feature of presidential government at all, as some Presidents have either left the post vacant or abolished the office totally. In a few cases, vice presidents have been able to inherit the office just to complete the terms of their principal, as is the case in Nigeria when Goodluck Jonathan completed the term of President Yar’Adua at his death on 5th May, 2010.

Goldstein (2008), using the Jimmy Carter-Walter Mondale presidency, noted that Mondale was an effective Vice President because he had the vision, resources, political capital, opportunity, support, characteristics and positive staff interaction needed for a synergy to ensure a smooth presidency, while his

principal Jimmy Carter was ready to work with him for an effective administration. Further, he stated that:

The Mondale model envisioned the vice president as an across-the-board advisor who would have no on-going responsibility for any particular area or program but would serve as a presidential trouble-shooter. The job description thus had three interrelated components: (1) across-the-board advisor; (2) trouble-shooter (3) no line responsibilities (Goldstein, 2008, p.378).

For Uscinski (2012), while it is imperative to have a capable vice president in the case of a president's death, incapacitation, resignation or removal, the vice president, irrespective of not being elected as the president, should not be allowed to be chosen in the first place by just one person – the presidential candidate.

With regard to Nigeria as it relates to Vice President Yemi Osinbajo's situation, existing analyses on President Buhari's frequent absence and governance in Nigeria tend to suggest that those trips were unwarranted waste of funds and scarce resources, even in the face of crippling demands for frugal expense of resources (Adamu, 2002; Zeneli, 2014; Onomuakpokpo, 2016; Nwaeze, 2016; Okakwu, 2017; Onukwughu, 2018; *Punch*, 2019; *The Guardian* Editorial, 2019). Secondly, while contributors to presidential medical trips admitted that controversies seem to trail frequent medical travels by frontline public servants in Nigeria, particularly the President, they were however mute on whether his absence had paradoxically activated or paved way for Nigerians to experience proactive and good governance in the country. Having spent a total of 404 days (a year and 39 days) travelling to 33 countries on four continents in his first term in office (Alechenu, Akinkuotu & Aworinde, 2019), this paper thus becomes imperative as it reflects on the role of Osinbajo as acting president during those periods Buhari was absent from office between 2015 and 2019.

The Paradox of President Buhari's Absence in Office and Proactive Governance in Nigeria: Theoretical Expositions

The theoretical framework that guided the study is the Good Governance Theory (GGT), which emerged from a set of principles or policies first introduced by the World Bank as conditions for giving aid, grants and other assistance to developing countries (Ekundayo, 2017, p.154). The World

Bank in its 1989 report titled *Sub-Saharan Africa: From crisis to sustainable growth*, characterized the crisis confronting the region as a crisis of governance and showed the nexus between ineffectiveness of aid and governance deficits (Singh, 2003). Be that as it may, the theory has acquired more encompassing outlook in recent times. As a framework of analysis, the theory is a breakaway from the traditional dichotomous thinking that has long been dominant in the social sciences, that is, market versus planning, public sector versus private sector, political state versus civil society and nation-state versus international community (Keping & Fudan, 2018). GGT regards effective administration and governance as cooperation between two seemingly opposite sides. Some of the positive contributions/significance of the GGT to political studies therefore include the development of completely new techniques for public affairs management; the emphasis that administration is cooperation; the winsome argument that legitimate power comes not only from the state, but also from the civil society; and finally, that good governance is a new practical form of modern democracy.

From the foregoing therefore, the good governance theory sets some basic principles according to which a good government, whatever its form, must be run (Ekundayo, 2017), which include accountability, control, responsiveness, transparency, public participation, economy, efficiency, etc. However according to the World Bank prescriptions, good governance is characterized by “voice and accountability, political stability, government efficiency, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption” (Kaufmann, *et al.* 2005, p.2). Ekundayo (2017) extended the analyses to include an efficient public service, independent judicial system, legal framework to enforce contracts and responsible administration of public funds. Others include an independent public auditor accountable to a representative legislature, respect for the law and human rights at all tiers of government and a pluralistic institutional structure. Apart from the above, good governance is predicated on three segments of the society which have direct effect on governance as highlighted. The type of political regime, the process by which authority is exercised in the management of the economic and social resources with a view to development, and the capacity of governments to formulate policies and have them effectively implemented (World Bank, 1992, p.3).

In addition, IMF (2012) remarks that good governance encompasses observance of rule of law, improving efficiency and accountability of the

public sector, and tackling corruption as essential elements of a framework within which economies can prosper. UNDP (2007) summed up the basic ingredients and core principles of Good Governance Theory to include the existence and observance of the following: (i) Political participation; (ii) Rule of law; (iii) Transparency; (iv) Responsiveness; (v) Broad consensus; (vi) Equity and inclusiveness; (vii) Efficiency and effectiveness, and (viii) Accountability.

In applying the theory by virtue of its core principles listed above, it is worthy of note that most Nigerians believe that President Buhari's administration has been everything but satisfactory as virtually all the above enumerated indices of good governance are usually at their lowest ebb under his watch. On the *rule of law*, the President has continued to violate court orders, adamantly refusing to release the former National Security Adviser, Col. Sambo Dasuki, and the leader of Shiite Islamic Movement in Nigeria, Sheik Ibrahim El-Zakzaky, whom the Nigerian courts and that of ECOWAS had released on bail many times over. The President declared that "the rule of law must be subject to the supremacy of the nation's security and national interests" (Sote, 2018, p.1). Similarly, his apparent insensitivity to the plights of victims of herders' constant invasions of some communities as well as his inability to tackle headlong herders/farmers conflict in the North-Central and South-Eastern parts of the country has substantially reduced the legitimacy of his administration as one that lacks *responsiveness* to the plight of citizens. On *transparency and accountability*, the Transparency International has repeatedly "exposed Buhari's government as overtly corrupt" (Opejobi, 2017; *Premium Times*, 2019) as Nigeria has consistently ranked 146/180 and scored 26% even after four years of the administration in 2019 (Transparency International, 2019). Buhari's pattern of appointments into key positions has been variously criticised for lacking inclusiveness and to be lopsidedly in favour of the north and against the south, especially the south east. He unabashedly defended this by asking: "I hope you have a copy of the election results? The constituents, for example, gave me 97% of the vote cannot in all honesty be treated on some issues with constituencies that gave me 5%" (*Sahara Reporters*, July 25, 2015, para.5). This defence only goes to show how committed he is to flouting one of the major principles of the good governance, which is *equity and inclusiveness*.

The paradox, however, is that this general state of governance for which President Buhari has become popular among Nigerians often witnesses

a sharp decline, if not a total overturn, each time the President travelled outside the country and handed over the mantle of leadership to Osinbajo. The outstanding performances of Osinbajo as Acting President rescued the nation from economic and socio-political crises that had engulfed the Nigerian State. Indeed, the rapidity at which important directives and people-oriented actions/policies are taken by Osinbajo each time he bestrides the nation on acting capacity that made very many Nigerians to wish that he continued while his boss tarries abroad was a show of *efficiency and effectiveness*. These were further demonstrated by some proactive policy/decision making and general recuperation of the economy, especially the speed at which the value of Naira appreciated vis-à-vis the Dollar and Pound Sterling.

The *responsiveness* of Osinbajo's leadership as acting presidency has been demonstrated severally. In response to the persistent complaints and reports alleging wanton impunity and gross human rights violation by operatives of SARS, the Acting President on 14th August 2018 directed the Inspector General of Police to, with immediate effect, overhaul the management and activities of SARS and ensure that any unit that would emerge from the process, should be intelligence-driven and restricted to the prevention and detection of armed robbery and kidnapping, and apprehension of offenders linked to the stated offences (*The Guardian*, 2018). He further directed the National Human Rights Commission to set up a special panel that would conduct an investigation of the alleged unlawful activities of SARS to afford members of the general public the opportunity to present their grievances with a view to ensuring redress. Still on *responsiveness*, occasions of his *loco presidium* always sees the country calm, with neither Boko Haram nor herdsmen launching any attacks. The absence of Boko Haram and herdsmen attacks during these periods provoked Boluwatife (2018) to ask if "the murderous herdsmen also travelled to the UK with Buhari", insisting that "the presence of their patron (Buhari) emboldens them". With respect to the *rule of law*, Osinbajo, in line with the constitutional requirement, forwarded Justice Walter Onnoghen's name to the Senate for confirmation as substantive Chief Justice of Nigeria, less than 24 hours to the expiration of his three-month acting period, thereby saving the country from looming constitutional crisis. The controversial circumstances surrounding the eventual removal of Onnoghen (southerner and Christian) and his replacement with Tanko Mohammed (Northerner and Muslim) upon Buhari's resumption of office goes to suggest that it would not have been possible for Onnoghen to ascend to that

position in the first instance were Buhari to be in charge the moment the former was due.

Osinbajo was able to achieve *broad political consensus* that doused and forestalled what might have gone down the history of Nigeria as the second civil war following the ‘Kaduna Declaration’ of early June 2017. The ‘Kaduna Declaration’ declared “war” against all Igbos residing in the North, demanding they leave the area within three months. They also asked Northerners in the South-East to leave the area, warning that as from 1st October 2017 or face ‘visible actions’ (*Sahara Reporters*, 2017). Through his speeches and meetings with the concerned parties, especially Arewa leaders, Osinbajo was able to douse the tension, and 1st October 2017 came and went like any other day against the initial fears and trepidation that gripped the nation. In the same vein, he recognized the right of people to *political agitations and participation* when he met with anti-government protesters who marched to the Presidential Villa in Abuja, early February 2017, he conceded to them the right to be aggrieved using the now popular passage: “to those who are protesting, we hear you loud and clear. You deserve a decent life and we are working night and day to make life easier” (Adebowale, 2017, para.6).

It was a dramatization of *responsiveness* when, following the invasion and blockade of the National Assembly on 7th August, 2018 by the Department of State Services (DSS) under the directorship of Lawal Daura, Acting President Osinbajo immediately relieved him of his post after which he was arrested and detained by the Police. The ordinary citizens are not left out of Osinbajo’s dividends of good governance. *Accountability* and *transparency* were once again brought to bear when Acting President Osinbajo on 12th November, 2018 attended to the long-time cries of petty traders in Lagos State for business capital by launching the Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP) otherwise known as *TraderMoni* Scheme while President Muhammadu Buhari was in France for the Paris Peace Summit.

Methodology

Data for this study were collected using a mixed-methods approach comprising primary and secondary data. The primary data were generated using focus group discussions (FGDs) with some members of the academic staff in the Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Nigeria, Nsukka; a key informant interview (KII) with an aide to the Minister of Transportation, unarguably a key member of the ruling party in government since 2015; as

well as observation, appraisal and reference to documentary sources. The FGDs were designed to collect the subjective views of the participants involved and identify conflicting interests. The FGDs were conducted twice with different sets of academic staff of the Faculty with expertise in international relations, political economy, public administration and sociology on 11 September, 2020 and 21 September, 2020, respectively. Despite divergent opinions from these scholars, they tallied with ours in the sense that they agreed that the Vice President seemed to have the ability to stabilize the country whenever he had the opportunity to do so, unlike when his principal was around. In contrast, the KII, which took place in between the two FGDs (on 16 September, 2020), was not very helpful as the Ministerial aide was very defensive of the government he serves in and disagreed with all our objective posers concerning the effects of the President's various trips outside the shores of the country between 2015 and 2019. The use of documentary evidence to support our claims on the issue of President Buhari's continuous travels around the world, leaving Vice President Osinbajo to handle affairs of the nation, and the level of satisfaction or otherwise of the latter's actions, as well as the repercussions of those actions within the time frame was very useful as they assisted the researchers to glean information and data from already documented sources and activities of the subjects of the study – Buhari and Osinbajo. The justification for the use of these methods is that they were suited for contextual analysis and useful when the task is to glean, illuminate, interpret and extract valuable information in order to draw inference from available evidence. The opinions of experts and critical stakeholders in governance in Nigeria as expressed in the leading print and electronic media were equally elicited to validate and support data generated from documentary and observation methods. Therefore, we essentially relied on articles in journals and Nigerian newspapers, official publications of the Federal Government of Nigeria and non-governmental organisations, among others. The merit of secondary sources of data is that of economy and the fact that gathering of information does not require the co-operation of the subjects of discourse.

Buhari's Foreign Trips and Osinbajo's Proactive in Governance in Nigeria

Being proactive means taking the initiative by acting rather than reacting to events. Proactive governance therefore entails foresightedness and forecasting

ability of any administration by means of which it foresees crisis-prone policies/signs and takes actions to foreclose them. It is a style of leadership that would choose to invest one million Naira in order to avert a national emergency like flood and Boko Haram attacks than expending one trillion Naira to set up camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) arising from the flood and/or attacks. In other words, proactive governance thinks of the general welfare and overall security of the citizens first and as such is constantly poised to make and take pre-emptive policies and actions rather than waiting until the populace begin to cry out. It is therefore not surprising that Kumar (2015) described it as a governance model where the citizen does not go to the government, but where the government comes to the citizen.

Lack of proactive governance has been at the very heart of the scathing criticisms that Buhari's administration has faced since its inception. Lawal (2016, p.1) had noted that "most of the policies implemented under Buhari have been as reactions to current economic events rather than in anticipation of them. For example, the removal of the fuel subsidy and the 67.63% hike in the pump price of fuel in May 2016 was done in reaction to the lingering fuel scarcity". The lethargy and ineptitude that define the administration only come to light each time he is on a trip, with Vice President Osinbajo acting in his stead. The rapidity at which the Naira appreciates and important directives and people-oriented actions/policies are taken by Osinbajo each time he bestrides the nation on acting capacity has made very many Nigerians to wish that he continued while his boss tarries abroad. Even when Buhari's prolonged absence from Nigeria was becoming an issue of national concern, many Nigerians greeted it with indifference, while many others saw it as a good omen. For instance, Olatunji (cited in Olawoyin, 2017) noted that Nigerians were not feeling the President's absence, stressing that things had been far much better since he left the country; the economy went bad under his watch and he appeared to lack ideas on how to manage it, and so it was necessary for him to return. This sentiment was also echoed by Fick (2017) who noted that Osinbajo "stepped into the breach, displaying the personal qualities that his boss, an austere former general elected on a groundswell of optimism in 2015, has struggled to convey as the economic crisis has intensified".

Similarly, Akinremi (2016) had observed that since the return to democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999, all the presidents and their deputies had been going abroad for medical treatments, except Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, who always sits in the gap to cover the duties of his boss. Worthy of

note during Buhari's international trips is the apparent political tranquillity that often pervades his absence with Osinbajo in charge. All the known attacks by Boko Haram in North East and the Fulani herdsmen in the North Central have been recorded under the "able" watch of the retired Army General (President Buhari). Apart from being characterized by some perceived proactive policy/decision making and general recuperation of the economy, especially the value of Naira vis-à-vis the Dollar and Pound Sterling, Osinbajo's acting presidency has always seen the country calm, with neither Boko Haram nor herdsmen launching any attacks. The absence of Boko Haram and herdsmen attacks during these periods had once provoked Boluwatife (2018) to ask if "the murderous herdsmen also travelled to the UK with Buhari", insisting that "the presence of their patron (Buhari) emboldens them."

Buhari's 2015/2016 International Trips and Osinbajo's Joint Mandate Protection

Professor Yemi Osinbajo who forayed into politics as cleric and professor of law and became a vice president appeared to have stood with one leg between 2015 and 2016. Although there were several occasions President Buhari left the shores of Nigeria, the Vice President in his capacity as the acting president between 2015 and 2016 did not assert his position as much as was witnessed in the succeeding years (2017 and 2018). His task then was to protect the integrity of President Buhari and ensure that conduct of government businesses fall within the expectations of his principal. While it is possible for one to argue that the fewness of the days Buhari spent on each of those trips during the period may have played a role, it seems saner from Osinbajo's later moves to argue that he was gently watching both the personality of his boss (Buhari) and the general mood of Nigerians.

On the personality of his boss, it is worthy of note that Osinbajo thought it right to align his speeches and actions to those of Buhari. When the hue and cry over the Buhari government's alleged lop-sidedness in political appointments was rife, Osinbajo defended his boss. In an apparent criticism of the Nigeria's Federal Character Commission, he had declared:

Henceforth, employment and appointment into political offices in the country should be based on merit and not where anyone hails from. Where you come from should not be criteria. Let us de-emphasise this issue of federal character and place more emphasis

on merit. For instance, I take my health seriously, therefore, if I am ill, I should not just look for a medical doctor from my state but for the best, irrespective of his state of origin (Adebowale, 2017, para. 2).

Similarly, he was quoted as saying that the Niger Delta Avengers are fighting only for their pockets and therefore are not fit to be referred to as freedom fighters. For him, one cannot be blowing up pipelines, compounding the problem of the region and still claim to be fighting for freedom. In all these, one thread runs through, and it is that between 2015 and 2016, Osinbajo was a hardliner like his boss (Adebowale, 2017, para 2). Table 1 below summarises earlier presidential overseas trips of Buhari while Osinbajo was learning the rudiments of governance.

Table 1: List of Presidential foreign trips made by Buhari, 2015-2016

Country	Areas Visited	Date	Purpose
Niger	Niamey	3 June, 2015	Anti-Boko Haram Summit
Chad	N'Djamena	4 June, 2015	State Visit
Germany	Munich	7-8 June, 2015	42 nd G7 Summit
South Africa	Johannesburg	12-13 June, 2015	25 th African Union Summit
United States	Washington, DC	19-23 July, 2015	State Visit
Cameroon	Yaoundé	29-30 July, 2015	State Visit
Benin	Cotonou	2-3 Aug., 2015	Independence Celebrations
Ghana	Accra	7 Sept., 2015	State Visit
France	Paris	14-16 Sept, 2015	State Visit
United States	New York City	24-29 Sept., 2015	70 th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
India	New Delhi	26-30 Oct., 2015	3 rd India Africa Forum Summit

Sudan	Khartoum	30 Oct., 2015	State Visit
Iran	Tehran	22-24 Nov., 2015	3 rd Gas Exporting Countries Forum
Malta	Valletta	28-30 Nov., 2015	2015 Commonwealth Heads of Government Summit.
France	Paris	30 Nov - 1 Dec. 2015	Paris Conference of Parties
South Africa	Johannesburg	4-5 Dec., 2015	China Africa summit
Benin	Cotonou	8 Jan., 2016	11 th Summit of the Heads of State of the Niger Basin Authority
United Arab Emirates	Abu Dhabi	17-20 Jan., 2016	World Future Energy Summit
Ethiopia	Addis Ababa	26 Jan., 2016	26 th Summit of African Union Heads of State and Government
Kenya	Eldoret, Nairobi	27-29 Jan., 2016	State Visit
France	Strasbourg	2-4 Feb., 2016	Official Visit
United Kingdom	London	5-10 Feb., 2016	Vacation
Egypt	Sharm El Sheikh	18 Feb., 2016	Sharm el-Sheikh 'Africa 2016'
Saudi Arabia	Riyadh, Jeddah, Mecca, Medina	22-27 February, 2016	State Visit
Qatar	Doha	27-28 Feb., 2016	OPEC Meeting
Equatorial Guinea	Malabo	14 March, 2016	State Visit
United States	Washington, DC	30 Mar -3 rd Apr, 2016	4 th Nuclear Security Summit
China	Beijing	11-14 Apr, 2016	State Visit

United Kingdom	London	13-15 May, 2016	Anti-Corruption Summit
United Kingdom	London	6-19 June, 2016	Medical Visit
Chad	N'Djamena	8 Aug., 2016	Inauguration of Idris Deby
Kenya	Nairobi	27-28 Aug., 2016	Tokyo Conference on Africa
United States	New York City	11-15 Sept., 2016	71 st Session of the United Nations General Assembly
Germany	Berlin	13-16 Oct., 2016	State Visit
Morocco	Marrakesh	14-18 Nov., 2016	United Nations Climate Change Conference
Senegal	Dakar	5-7 Dec., 2016	3 rd Dakar Int'l Forum on Peace & Security in Africa
Gambia	Banjul	13 Dec., 2016	ECOWAS Summit

Source: Compiled by the researchers from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_international_presidential_trips_made_by_Muhammadu_Buhari

Buhari’s 2017 International Trips and Osinbajo’s Responsiveness in Governance

As President Buhari kept globetrotting in 2017 from Ghana through Gambia and Mali to the United Kingdom, Acting President Yemi Osinbajo was becoming more compassionate and responsive to the prevailing mood of the citizens. He was now ready to properly engage the young Niger Delta unemployed youths and was even ready to work with illegal refineries and convert them to modular refineries. In the same vein, when he met with anti-government protesters who marched to the Presidential Villa in Abuja, early February 2017, he conceded to them the right to be aggrieved using the now popular passage: “to those who are protesting, we hear you loud and clear. You deserve a decent life and we are working night and day to make life easier” (Adebowale, 2017, para.6).

Apart from the rescue of the Naira through proactive action, Osinbajo, within that period forwarded Justice Walter Onnoghen’s name to the Senate

for confirmation as substantive Chief Justice of Nigeria, less than 24 hours to the expiration of his three-month acting period, thereby saving the country from looming constitutional crisis. He also set up a presidential taskforce to address rising prices of foodstuff, signed seven bills passed by the National Assembly into law and dialogued with oil producing communities of the Niger Delta as well as parties involved in the Southern Kaduna crisis within the period (Nwaneri, 2017). Table 2 below summarises presidential overseas trips of Buhari while Osinbajo took some administrative steps as acting president.

Table 2: List of international Presidential trips made by Buhari in 2017

Country	Areas Visited	Date	Purpose
Ghana	Accra	7 January, 2017	Inauguration of Nana Akufo-Addo
Gambia	Banjul	13 January, 2017	ECOWAS mediation meeting
Mali	Bamako	13-14 January, 2017	27th Africa France Summit
UK	London	19 Jan-10 March, 2017	Medical Vacation
UK	London	7 May, 2017	Medical Check ups

Source: Compiled by the researchers from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_international_presidential_trips_made_by_Muhammadu_Buhari

Thus, Osinbajo brought into governance not just a show of compassion but a new approach to conflict management. Given that every part of Nigeria has its own story of perceived injustice; it was meet that they be properly engaged before making any inroads into a peaceful solution. For Adebowale (2017), while the deliverables from Osinbajo might have been sparse on ‘the ground’ but the perception of what he delivered within the period showed a lot of promise for good governance.

In particular, Osinbajo’s responses to emergency have remained remarkably prompt and timely. What might have gone down the history of Nigeria as the second civil war following the ‘Kaduna Declaration’ of early

June 2017 was tactically managed and forestalled by Osinbajo. Some Northern Nigeria youth groups, which included the Arewa Citizens Action for Change, Arewa Youth Consultative Forum, Arewa Youth Development Foundation, Arewa Students Forum and Northern Emancipation Network, in Kaduna issued what they called a 'Kaduna Declaration' in which they declared "war" against all Igbos residing in the North, demanding they leave the area within three months. They also asked Northerners in the South-East to leave the area, warning that as from 1st October 2017, which happens to be Nigeria's National Day, they would commence implementation of 'visible actions' to prove they are no longer part of a federal union that includes the Igbo (*Sahara Reporters*, 2017). The tension generated by the declaration of the northern youths worsened on Friday afternoon, when a prominent member of the Northern Elders' Forum, and former Vice Chancellor of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Prof. Ango Abdullahi, threw his weight behind the coalition.

Things came to a precarious head when Igbo leaders in the north, including the President General of the Igbo Community Welfare Association in Kaduna State, Chris Nnoli, the *Eze Ndigbo* of Kano, Boniface Ibekwe, the *Ezeigbo* I of Nasarawa State, Nathaniel Nduba, among others urged Igbo in the North to stay still, and even went ahead to ask for Prof. Ango Abdullahi's arrest (*Punch*, 2017). Pressures mounted as 1st October 2017 drew closer and closer. Osinbajo however did not allow grasses to grow under his feet as he swiftly took it upon himself to condemn the declaration, maintaining that it is common for nations with different ethnic nationalities to experience quarrels among themselves like in any marriage. According to him, agitations and quarrels can best be addressed when people give peace a chance and work in unity (*Punch*, 2017). Through his speeches and meetings with the concerned parties, especially Arewa leaders, Osinbajo was able to douse the tension, and 1st October 2017 came and went like any other day against the initial fears and trepidation that gripped the nation. Meanwhile, twenty days after the Northern Youths had issued the above ultimatum, Acting President Yemi Osinbajo issued a directive that all international oil companies operating in Nigeria should move their headquarters to their operational bases in the Niger Delta. The Federal Government threatened to deploy force should any company refuse to comply. Table 3 below summarises the major achievements of Osinbajo as Acting President while Buhari was in London for medical vacation in 2017.

Table 3: Summary of Osinbajo’s Proactive Policy Actions between January 19 and March 10, 2017 while Buhari was in UK for Medical Vacation

S/N	Date	Proactive Policy Actions of Osinbajo
1.	January 24, 2017	Osinbajo led Federal Government saved the poultry industry from collapse by embarking on plans on urgent relief to poultry farmers.
2.	January 27, 2017	Held a meeting with the executive director of the World Food Programme (WFP), Ms Ertharin Cousin, on modalities of making food available in Nigeria
3.	February 1, 2017	He also presided over the FEC meeting during which the Presidential Task Force on Food Security was mandated to reduce prices of food items in the country
4.	February 7, 2017	Saved Nigeria from another constitutional battle by sending the name of the acting Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Walter Onnoghen, to the Senate for confirmation.
5.	February 8, 2017	he chaired the FEC and gave approval of ₦21 billion for the construction of Ilorin-Omu Aran-Kabba Road, Section I.
6.	February 10-13, 2017	Osinbajo visited Yenagoa, the Bayelsa state capital in continuation of his interactive engagements with oil-producing communities in the Niger Delta region. He then went to Port Harcourt, Rivers State, to meet stakeholders of the oil producing communities. During the meeting, he rolled out the framework for the clean-up exercise of Ogoni land.
7.	February 15, 2017	He approved the award of ₦126 billion road projects spread across Kano, Bauchi, Adamawa, Kwara, Gombe, Enugu and Kaduna states.

8.	February 16, 2017	He presided over the first National Economic Council meeting of the year and directed the CBN to review the foreign exchange policy. The meeting also resolved that fresh \$250 million be injected into the Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF). The CBN subsequently released about \$500 million through the interbank market, where the 23 banks bought \$371m.
9.	February 17, 2017	Osinbajo signed seven bills into law. The bills were: Oaths (Amendment) Act 2017; Defence Space Administration Act 2017; Veterinary Surgeons (Amendment) Act 2017 and others.
	February 2017	Following an unscheduled visit to the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos, as part of the 60-day action plan for business reforms in the country, Osinbajo announced the sack of 10 non-performing directors of the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA). Same day, three new directors and a general manager were also appointed for the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN).
10.	February 22, 2017	Osinbajo chaired the FEC meeting during which N32 billion for the resuscitation and completion of the 50km dual carriage Kaduna eastern bypass highway was approved. The Council also approved \$39.9 for the construction of the Cameroon-Nigeria border link bridge at Ikot Efiem. Again, the council equally approved the Revised National Policy on Environment.

Source: Compiled by the researchers from: <https://www.naija.ng/1090692-38-days-power-8-osinbajo-acting-president-no-1-7-love.html#1090692>

Buhari’s 2018 International Trips and Osinbajo’s Human Rights Protection Initiatives

Astronomical sense and culture of impunity, especially on the part of security personnel has remained one of the glaring characteristics of Buhari’s administration. This “political culture of impunity translates to that attitudinal cum behavioural tendency among some politicians, especially those in power or close to those in power, which offers that megalomaniac sense of freedom,

if not license, to commit offense without punishment, retribution, reprisal or injurious consequences” (Udeogu & Ejiofor, 2016, p.3). Under President Buhari’s watch, invitations of key executive officers, especially security chiefs by the National Assembly have been repeatedly ignored and out rightly turned down. Like loose canons, the rank and file of the Nigerian armed forces, including the police and the DSS have been throwing their weights about in manners that undermine citizens’ constitutional and natural rights.

For instance, the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) for so long has been reportedly seen molesting and encroaching forcefully upon citizens’ rights. The increasing notoriety of the SARS’ human rights abuse led to the famous *EndSARS* campaign that took the front burners of national dailies at a time the abuse reached to its unbearable climax. Ironically, instead of addressing the issue, the same police were sent to clamp down on the *EndSARS* protesters/campaigners.

In response to the persistent complaints and reports alleging wanton impunity and gross human rights violation by operatives of SARS, the Acting President on 14th August 2018 directed the Inspector General of Police to, with immediate effect, overhaul the management and activities of SARS and ensure that any unit that would emerge from the process, should be intelligence-driven and restricted to the prevention and detection of armed robbery and kidnapping, and apprehension of offenders linked to the stated offences (*The Guardian*, 2018). He further directed the National Human Rights Commission to set up a special panel that would conduct an investigation of the alleged unlawful activities of SARS to afford members of the general public the opportunity to present their grievances with a view to ensuring redress. In summary, the directives have five (5) parts, namely:

- An immediate overhaul of the management and activities of SARS
- Ensure any Unit that will emerge from the process, will be intelligence-driven and restricted to the prevention and detection of armed robbery and kidnapping, and apprehension of offenders linked to the stated offences, and nothing more.
- Ensure that all operatives in the emerging Unit conduct their operations in strict adherence to the rule of law and with due regard to International Human Rights Law and the constitutionally guaranteed rights of suspects.
- The operatives should bear proper identification anytime they are on duty.

- National Human Rights Commission is to set up a Special Panel to conduct an investigation of the alleged unlawful activities of SARS.

Just one day after, the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Idris announced a number of measures to restructure and refocus the anti-robbery squad. Under the new arrangement, a new Commissioner of Police was appointed as the overall head of the FSARS nationwide. The police chief also ordered immediate “medical/psychological evaluation of all FSARS personnel” and “redesigning of new uniform with identity name tag for all FSARS personnel throughout the country”. He furthered declared that: “Henceforth, FSARS personnel will not perform ‘Stop and Search’ duties except on distress call to respond to armed robbery and kidnapping offences only” (*The Guardian*, 2018).

Similarly, following the invasion and blockade of the National Assembly on 7th August, 2018 by the Department of State Services (DSS) under the directorship of Lawal Daura, Acting President Osinbajo immediately relieved him of his post after which he was arrested and detained by the Police. The Acting President described the unauthorized invasion of the National Assembly complex as a gross violation of constitutional order, rule of law and all acceptable notions of law and order (*Daily Trust*, 2018). Already, the Acting President, Prof Yemi Osinbajo, had settled the rift between the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Department of State Services (DSS) which had, under Daura, stood against Ibrahim Magu and his agency from investigating or arresting top security chiefs, suspected to have been involved in large scale cash movements (Daniel, 2018). Apart from standing against the confirmation of Magu as the substantive chairman of the EFCC, Daura also discredited the EFCC boss and blocked his agency from arresting former heads of the DSS and the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) in November 2017. According to Daura, no other agency had any right to probe into the expenditure of the DSS, NIA and other security outfits, as doing so, was against the law establishing them. But Osinbajo cleared the way for all the officials of security agencies who had been fingered in the disappearance of about ₦80 billion in 2017 to be investigated and possibly charged to court (Daniel, 2018).

The ordinary citizens are not left out of Osinbajo’s dividends of good governance. While President Muhammadu Buhari was in Paris, France for the Paris Peace Summit, Acting President Osinbajo on 12th November attended to

the long-time cries of petty traders in Lagos State for business capital by launching the Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP) otherwise known as *TraderMoni* Scheme. The Vice President, who went round some markets in Lagos, was massively celebrated and praised by beneficiaries of the scheme who were mostly small-scale business women and trader in Ikotun, Igando, Ile Epo, Oshodi, etc. The “TraderMoni is a collateral-free loan of ₦10,000 to petty traders, repayable within a period of 6 months” (Okunloye, 2018). The scheme involved crediting traders with ₦10,000 as an initial loan payable in six months, and subsequent loaning of another ₦15,000 upon payment until a beneficiary reaches the maximum of being qualified for ₦50,000. Table 4 below summarises presidential overseas trips of Buhari in 2018 while Osinbajo was busy confronting domestic challenges.

Table 4: List of international presidential trips made by Buhari in 2018

Country	Areas Visited	Date	Purpose
United Kingdom	London	16-20 April, 2018	Attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
United States	Washington	30 April, 2018	Working visit.
United Kingdom	London	3-13 August, 2018	10 working days' vacation
France	Paris	10-13 Nov., 2018	Paris Peace Forum
United Kingdom	London	4-6 December	2 working days official visit

Source: Compiled by the researchers from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_international_presidential_trips_made_by_Muhammadu_Buhari

When one critically examines the general docile and insensitive attitude of President Muhammadu Buhari towards some fundamental administrative, governance, policy, and security issues in the country while he is around and

“actively” in charge, and contrasts it with the rather progressive and proactive governance impulses of Vice President Yemi Osinbajo while acting in *loco presidium* (in place of the President), we cannot but accept the paradox of Buhari-Osinbajo positions vis-à-vis governance in Nigeria.

Conclusion

While it is impossible to dismiss in entirety the worries and controversies that trail Buhari’s frequent trips, Nigerians did seem to heave deep sighs of relief and relish during his absence as emergent developments often showed that the country tended to fare better in his absence through the able leadership of Vice President Osinbajo, acting in *loco presidium*. Due to the leadership style of Osinbajo, Nigerians wished the duo could swap their position or evolve a constitutional arrangement where both could share proportionate powers. This could have averted collateral damages Buhari’s presence has inflicted on socio-economic and political development of the country. Findings indicate that it was the insights gained from Osinbajo’s proactive governance and the realization that Nigerians prefer his administrative styles to that of Buhari; and the possibility of Osinbajo becoming more relevant than him, that largely accounted for the recent schemes by the presidency to sideline Osinbajo in the mainstream politics in Nigeria. The implication of the acceptability of Osinbajo’s style of governance by Nigerians is that he stands a better chance to be popularly elected in the next round of presidential election come 2023. Therefore, Osinbajo’s present ordeals are orchestrated mechanisms by his principal and the presidential cabal to strip him of all powers and diminish his relevance. This is taken because Osinbajo’s continued execution of certain duties is perceived by the cabal as means of further endearing himself with the electorate, with glaring implications for the President and his cohorts. In the light of the above, this paper recommends strengthening the constitutional provision for the Vice President to automatically become the Acting President upon the transmission of a written declaration by the President to the National Assembly to the effect of undertaking a foreign trip or vacation and should not be allowed to become a subject of intense politicking as was the case within the period under study. Moreover, since Buhari/Osinbajo administration has demonstrated that an assistant could turn far better than the chief executive in governance, a change should be effected in the constitution, to assigning more roles to the assistants, since both are usually elected under one party, joint ticket and mandate.

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**FEDERALISM AND POLITICAL RESTRUCTURING IN NIGERIA:
THE PANACEA FOR MUTUAL CO-EXISTENCE AND
MANAGEMENT OF NATION'S RESOURCES**

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Abstract

Federalism connotes an arrangement in which political powers are constitutionally shared between the central government and the federating units. It is a device that enables each group in a plural society to look after its own internal affairs free from outside interference. In a true federalism, each entity has a right to exploit its resources for the welfare of its people and payment of commensurate taxes and other royalties to the federation. This is the true meaning of resource control. The paper argued that the central control of oil resources and the utilisation of the revenue derived there from to fast-track the development of the nation tends to favour the majority ethnic groups rather than the minority from which the oil is exploited. The conflict over the distribution of state resources and its control within communal territories aggravated the difficulties of political accommodation in Nigeria's federalism. This is evidenced in the various ethno-religious conflicts that pervade the nation. The paper concluded that states should exercise ownership over all resources in their domain, natural or otherwise, for the benefit of their people and they should pay taxes and other royalties to the federation as the practice of federations in North America and elsewhere. Requisite recommendations were provided for rethinking and restructuring of the nation's federalism for mutual co-existence and management of the nation's resources.

Keywords: Federalism, Politics, Restructuring, Ethnicity, Resource Control.

Introduction

In a federation, the federal and the regional governments both derive their powers directly from the constitution and are therefore independent of each other. Nonetheless, Nigeria's variant of federalism remains confusing, even mystifying. Our federalism is one of concentration of absolute powers at the centre. It is one that is particularly lacking in mutual respect, making it look like a master – servant relationship. This asymmetrical relationship explains why many of our governors are gadflies, running regularly to Abuja for 'federal grants' in the face of dwindling internally generated revenues. The federal government has become a leviathan, gaining more power almost in the same proportion that states are losing (Udombana, 2017).

Consequently, as Adeyeri (2010) has pointed out, Nigeria's federal system has oscillated between the excessive regionalism that marked the first Republic (1960 – 1966) and the excessive centralisation of the military, and relatively the post-military era. Contradictions in Nigeria's federal system such as the colonial factor, military rule, structural imbalance, over-centralisation of power in the central government, among others, have overtime perpetuated various perplexing issues and challenges within Nigeria federation. The contending issues include but not limited to resource control, revenue allocation, state creation, federal character question and leadership crisis. Moreso, from the pre-colonial to post-independence era and up to the present democratic dispensation, resource control has remained the most contentious issue among the tiers of government. Of note, like most federal system, Nigeria operates a system in which the federal government harnesses the natural resources and shares revenue with states and local governments. This is a deviation from an ideal federal constitution in which, the states or regions are the federating units and control resources located in their territories (Roberts and Oladeji, 2005; Atoyebi, 2013; Dickson & Asua, 2016; Fayose, 2017).

There seems to be a resurgence of debates on constitutional restructuring of Nigeria. The issue keeps returning everywhere like a snake that is never slain. Why is it important? Probably because a constitution is a foundation of a legal and political system and also because the fiscal federalism in Nigeria has not been able to contribute optimally to socio-economic development of the states. This supports the assertion of Fayose (2017) who posits that "Nigeria developed faster in the 50s and 60s when it was practicing confederal system of government, with the regions running its own affairs almost autonomously but a situation where a state cannot do

anything about its mineral resources without approval from the federal government, will not foster the development that we all yearn for". This paper examines the Nigerian federalism to identify the weak points of our historical experience, resource control, its meaning, agitation, and politics as well as its manifestation as one of the most highly contentious issues in Nigeria's federalism. Requisite recommendations were provided for rethinking and restructuring of the nation's federalism for mutual co-existence and management of the nation's resource. The paper concluded that states should exercise ownership over all resources in their domain, natural or otherwise, for the benefit of their people and they should pay taxes and other people and they should pay tax and other royalties to the federation as the practice of federations in North America and elsewhere.

The Concept of Federalism

The term "federalism" is derived from the transitive verb 'federate', meaning to join together in a federation, or cause various bodies to join together in a federation. Its verb, federating; means to associate, implying a coming together of states into a league or federal union. Therefore, federalism connotes an arrangement whereby political power within a country are shared between the central government and the federating units in such a way that each exists as a government separately and independently from the others operating directly on persons and property within its territorial area, with a will of its own apparatus for the conduct of its affairs, and with an authority in some matters exclusive of all the others" (Nwabueze, 1983:1). Similarly, Obidimma and Obidimma (2015:147) posit that federalism is "a system of government in which sovereignty is constitutionally divided between a central governing authority and constituent political units. Such power may be shared in various ways. Sometimes with a stronger centre, or with a weaker centre often referred to as confederation. Generally a federation is born by the coming together of otherwise independent states to form a central government to whom certain powers are given, while the states retain most of their powers. The coming together could be as a result of the need for defence and desired for independence from foreign powers, hope for economic advantage, some measure of political association between the various federating units prior to the creation of the union, geographical neighbourhood, and similarity of political institutions".

According to Akujuru and Enyioko (2015:3) “the origin of Nigerian federalism is traceable to British colonial rule. However, opinion varies on the basic reason for its introduction. Some scholars reckon federalism was introduced in Nigeria by the British for administrative convenience. Some are of the opinion that British imposed federalism on Nigeria in order to maintain some control on the country after independence. Others believed that the British colonialists adopted federalism in Nigeria to solve the problem of how to keep the large and ethnically diverse groups of people together. Regardless of the status of each of these arguments, all the viewpoints are useful in tracing the origin of federalism in Nigeria”.

Federalism is often regarded as the appropriate governmental principles for countries with huge ethno-cultural diversities. Nigeria, with over two hundred and fifty (250) ethnic groups inherited a federal system from Britain in 1960 and successive governments have attempted, with varying degrees of sincerity and commitment to operate federal institutions that can accommodate the country’s ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic diversities and nurture a sense of national unity. However, the leaders of these governments, at all levels, have failed to fulfill their obligations to offer good governance anchored on equitable political arrangements, transparent administrative practices and accountable public conduct. As one of the most effective framework for governing a pluralistic society, Nigeria adopted federalism to manage her multiethnic state. Despite that, instead of unity, cooperation and consensus, there has been apparent division, disagreement and dissension (Kayode, 2015). The reality is that today’s Nigeria is a unitary state masquerading as a federation. Otherwise:

- i. Why should the national government legislate exclusively, or even concurrently, on things like marriages tourism, policing, aspects of taxation, insurance and electricity, issues that clearly should be the responsibilities of states?
- ii. What is the rationale for diverting states of ownership of their natural resource?
- iii. Why should be Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) be the agency collecting Value Added Tax (VAT) from shop owners in a state?
- iv. Why should be establishment of electric power stations, electricity transmission and generation be the exclusive preserve of the federal government?

- v. Why should be Federal Ministry of Education and National Universities Commission (NUC) issue directives to state universities, or reaching collective agreements with labour unions that is binding on states?
- vi. Why should the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) regulate and operate on state roads, including state municipalities, when the federal government will not allow states to regulate traffic on federal trunk roads, even those rehabilitated by them? (Idombana, 2017)

In a federation, the federal and regional governments derive their powers directly from the constitution and are therefore independent of each other countries that practice federalism adopt federal constitution. Example of countries that adopt federalism include; USA, Brazil, Germany, Switzerland, Australia, Yugoslavia, India, Nigeria, among others. The federal constitution specifies the legislative powers of the central government and governments of component regions or states. In Nigeria for instance, the central government legislate on the exclusive list while the component governments called states make laws on the concurrent list of subjects. One of the fundamental features of a federal arrangement is the need for a supreme constitution which binds all government, persons and authorities. Other features of a true federalism are:

- i. Division of governmental powers between the central and components government of the regions or states.
- ii. The different powers are reserved for the component regions or states.
- iii. Existence of Supreme Court for judicial interpretation and review.
- iv. The constitution is rigid.
- v. Existence of bicameral legislature and absolute majority vote.
- vi. Adoption of a written constitution
- vii. Equality of status for both levels of government each of which has direct relationship with the people and some activities on which its decision are final.
- viii. Matters in exclusive lists are reserved for the central government
- ix. Constitutional repudiation of secession

The autonomy of each government, which necessarily presupposes its separate existence and its independence from the control of other government, is essential to the federal government. Autonomy of the state governments is

the defining principles of true federalism, its foundation or bedrock. The autonomy of the states demands that the federal government should not only keep within the limits of the powers assigned to it by the constitution but also that the exercise of such powers as limited should not in its practical effect impede, frustrate, stultify or otherwise unduly interfere with the state governments' management of their affairs or their meaningful functioning as a government, e.g. the management of their finances, the appointment and control of their staff, the award of contracts for the provision of services and projects, the exercise of other essential governmental functions such as law-making or the executive of laws so made – the principle of non-interference with the autonomy of the states, as it is called (Obidimma & Obidimma, 2015).

Federalism in the final analysis is a system meant to integrate people in a society who are diverse ethnically, culturally, geographically, and even religiously. Federalism is a system of government in which two co-equal supreme levels of government both act directly on the citizen through in their own laws under a written constitution. Each unit of government within a federation exists not as an appendage to another but as an autonomous entity capable of conducting its own will free from directive from any other government. It is a form of decentralisation of the financial, political and administrative resources of government (Abah, 2016). This system of government can be contrasted with the unitary system in which the components units are legally subordinate of the central government, and with the confederal system in which the central government is dependent upon the regional or state governments. It is therefore becomes imperative that once a government is in place, it must endeavour to adequately and resources among the diverse groups.

Resource control in Nigeria: Origin and Agitation

Resource control involves the access of communities and state governments to natural resources located within their boundaries and the freedom to develop and utilise these resources without reference from the federal government (Hedayo, 2010, p.14). In the view of Ofeimum (2005 cited Dickson & Asua, 2016, p.5) resource control is the principle that every federating unit must be empowered to be self-governing. It amounts to an expression of self-determination by the zone which places a collaborative duty on other parts of the country to assist the zone in the realisation of their

objectives. According to Afoyemi (2013, p.11) resource control is the way and manner the government revenue is shared among the various tiers of government – the federal, state and local governments, as well as how resources available are harness and determined. Similarly, Ya’u (2001, p.46) posits that resource control may be taken to mean the substantive power for the community to collect monetary and other benefits accruing from the exploration, exploitation and use of resource in their domain and deploy some to its developmental purposes. From the foregoing, it is crystal clear that resource producing areas ought to have control over resources located in their domain, with minimal interference from the federal government, as it is the practice in the United State of America (Okolo, 2010, p.166-171; 2015).

Resource control was one of the highlights of the Ijaws representation to the Willink Commission. Thus, it should be emphasised from the beginning that in Nigeria, States, majority as well as minority groups have on one occasion or the other in history agitated for resource control. However, the demand for resource control reached its crescendo as soon as the military government of General Yakubu Gowon created a twelve - state federal structure on May 27, 1967 from the former four regions. On the one hand, some of the states that were created e.g., the oil-rich rivers and eastern states as well as Lagos immediately demanded for the control of the natural resources located and extracted from their areas. On the other hand, major areas that were not granted statehood but were economically viable equally demanded for resource control out of frustration (Ekwuruke, 2005). Before this time, however, the struggles for the control of the nation’s resources have also, to some extent, been based on the regional cleavages. This, intertwined with political conflict, has sometimes led to political manipulation as and delineations with the aim of influencing wealth allocation (Dickson & Asua, 2016). Therefore, agitation by these regions or states as well as ethnic groups in the country has been recurrent events.

Resource control became a salient issue in federal – state relations in Obasanjo’s regime, with the littoral states (Cross River, Delta, Akwa Ibom, Edo, Bayelsa, Rivers, Ondo, and Ogun) claiming that the natural resources located offshore ought to be treated or regarded as located within their respective states. The claim by the littoral states was more so accentuated by Decree No. 106 of 1992 which abrogated the onshore/offshore dichotomy for the purpose of calculating the amount of revenue accruing directly from any

natural resources derived from any state pursuant to section 162(2) of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (Eminue, 2005)

Government sometimes acquires individuals, group or community properties for overriding public purposes. Lands may be compulsorily acquired for economic and social programmes, such as the construction of health centres, schools, roads among others. Section 44 (3) of the 1999 constitution, which is an exception to section 44 (1) provides:

Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this section the entire property in and control of the minerals, mineral oils and natural gas in, under or upon any land in Nigeria or in, under the upon the territorial waters and the exclusive economic zone of Nigeria shall vest in the government of the Federation and shall be managed in such manner as may be prescribed by the National Assembly:

Flowing from the above, it could be argued that the agitations for resource control by both the federal and state governments must have been pursuant to the provision of the sections of the constitution highlighted above. However, compulsory acquisition of properties must be seen as an exception, not the rule. It does not and should not, remove the fundamental premise that these properties hitherto belong to individuals, groups or communities. Indeed, in a true federalism, each entity has a right to exploit its resources for the welfare of this people and of course, to payment of commensurate taxes. This is the true meaning of resource control. Consequently, the forceful acquisition of natural resources by the federal government was a scan because it was done without consultation with or agreement of, the people and it deprives the people of their own means of subsistence (Udombana, 2017).

In recent times, states and some sections of the Nigerian state have on one occasion or the other agitated for resource control for a number of reasons. For example, the continued upheaval for resource control by the Niger Delta region is, perceived as one of the manifestations of the struggles to redress observed injustices and inequalities in fiscal relations among ethnic nationalities, regions and political units within the Nigerian federation. It is also perceived as a necessary fall-out of the degradation of their environment and the neglect of their conditions by the central government, which is seen as advancing the interests of the ethnic majorities to the detriment of the minorities. Despite these, the Niger Delta people suffered untold deprivation and disinheritance, leading to upheaval for resource control (Dickson & Asua, 2016). Often the law enjoins the payment of compensation to ameliorate the

injustice that could arise from forceful or compulsory acquisition of properties. Indeed, both municipal and international law mandates compensation to compulsory acquisition of property section 44 (i) (a) of the 1999 Constitution requires the payment of compensation in the case of compulsory acquisition of any interest in immovable property. Similarly, Article 21 (2) of the African Charter on Human and peoples' Rights which is now part of Nigeria's municipal law provides. In case of spoliation the dispossessed people shall have the right to lawful recovery of its property as well as to an adequate compensation.

However, privation is not compensation for ecological damage on account of mineral prospecting and extraction, as erroneously fiddled in many quarters. The principles of derivation are associated with ownership. It is a form of compensation for disposing the oil bearing states of the interest in their immovable properties and depriving them of their own means of subsistence. It simply means an acknowledgement that oil is derived for those states. The synonyms for the word derivation includes 'origin', 'root', 'source', 'beginning', 'seed', 'candle', 'descent'. As a verb, 'to derive' means to get or gain or obtain or receive or take or draw something. Deviation is a right to compensation, not charity on the part of a 'benevolent' central government of course, the form and manner of compensation depends on the nature of property forcefully acquired. Consequently, section 162(2) of the 1999 constitution, dealing with the formula for revenue allocation provides that:

the president, upon the receipt of advice from the revenue mobilisation allocation and fiscal commission, shall table before the National Assembly proposals for revenue allocation from the Federation Account, and in determining the formula, the National Assembly shall take into account, the allocation principles especially those of population equally of states internal revenue generation, land mass, terrain as well population density. Provided that the principles of derivation shall be constantly reflected in any approved formula as being not less than thirteen percent of the revenue accruing to the Federation Account directly from any natural resource.

The so-called thirteen (13) percent derivation is a fraud. It is one of the enshrined injustices in the 1999 constitution. Udombana (2017) noted that the ridiculous percentage was dictated by military fiat without any consultation with relevant stakeholders. It was not so at the beginning. Section 140 (1) of the 1963 Constitution provided that:

There shall be paid by the federation to each region a sum equal to fifty (50) percent of (a) the proceeds of any royalty received by the federation in respect of any minerals extracted from that Region” and (b) any mining rents derived by the federation from within that Region.

The section concludes with an observation that in a true federalism, the component states constitutionally control the resources, which are found within their geographical spread, and pay a certain percentage of revenue derived from such resources to the federal government. Practically, therefore, resource control rests on the component states or regions of the federation but in Nigeria, the reverse is the case. Federal government controls the resources. Thus, the violent conflict experienced in some parts of the country, particularly the Niger Delta region is as a result of the structure of the Nigerian federal and state as well as the nature of the control of natural resources. Our opinion, in keeping with principles of federalism, that states should exercise ownership over all resources in the domain, natural or otherwise, for the benefit of their people. They should pay taxes and other royalties to the federal government as the practice of federations in North America and other developed nations of the world.

Nigerian Federalism and Political Restructuring

The idea of Nigerian federal structure and its fiscal federalism has been enmeshed in contradictions, controversies and crises. The issue has become a national question as socio-cultural groups, with varying ideological leaning severally demonstrate interest and concern especially on the issue of resource control. As a national question, the seriousness of Nigerian federalism has translated into question of national unity, local government autonomy, self – determination and equitable distribution of resources, opportunities, rewards, and powers (Anifowose, 2004). Meanwhile, given the rising concern endangering the peaceful co-existence of the multi-ethnic nationalities that confederated, engendering the palpable need for Nigerian nation, some Marxist scholars, see the Nigerian federalism as presently unworkable; given the collaborative politics of emergence socio-cultural group, thus the situation itself canvases for the dissolution of the federal union. The issues of decentralisation of power and fiscal resources have ranked very highly in Nigeria federalism. In fact, one of the major issues in the federal restructuring is the imbalance in the distribution of resources and needs among the federating units and has thus become sensitive to the question of fiscal

federalism. As an issue in Nigeria, government, the function of resources allocation distribution and stabilisation of the polity (Okpata, 2007).

Also, according to Rotimi Ojomoyela (2018) “Yoruba Koya’ has joined others seeking the restructuring of Nigeria, saying true federalism and devolution of powers from the centre remained the panacea to the socio-political ills facing the nation.

The body, which also condemned the killings and destruction of farmland by suspected herdsmen, lamented the increasing youth unemployment, food, insecurity and infrastructural decay in the South-West.

The group enjoined Nigerians especially Yoruba, to support the agitation for the restructuring of the country and to reawaken the consciousness of the Yoruba people to the hidden agenda of some ethnic oligarchy to dominate and enslave the Yoruba nation.

In a statement in Ado-Ekiti by the National Organising Secretary of the group, Comrade Adeleye, said; Yoruba KOYA is made up of true sons and daughters of Yoruba who are united in the fight against misgovernance in all the six states of south-western Nigeria.

“The Yoruba nation is lagging in the political equation of the country and this situation has made the economy of the states in the south western states especially to be comatose with attending worrisome states of high insecurity youth unemployment, infrastructure decadence, corruption in public service, farmers/herdsmen clashes among others.

“The Pseudo federalism which centralised everything in the hand of the government at the centre has not engendered development in the federating units, rather it has brought infrastructural decadence and poor economic growth in Yoruba land”.

Tensions between the federating units and central government, between the constituent units themselves, and of various interests often fuel the demands for restructuring. Various interests insist on a voice and the correction of perceived structural defects. Demand for equity and justice in the allocation of political space from minorities and marginalised groups have all made for a consistent and perennial stream of agitations for restructuring, which suggests that the search for a national community has remained elusive in Nigeria. In fact, the destabilising effects of these agitations or even the potential for destabilisation have always constituted a question mark on the legitimacy of the political order in Nigeria (Abutudu, 2010). However, there are substantive issues that need to be addressed through the restructuring

process, but a lack of agreement on what should qualify for inclusive in the restructuring agenda has been a weighty obstacle on launching the process. Equally fundamental, therefore, are the procedural issues that have to do with representation in the restructuring process, and the structure of the restructuring process itself.

Meanwhile, in discussing Nigerian federalism, there are issues and challenges that have tended to weaken the existence of the federal structure and they include:

- i. The issue of evolving a fiscal structure that is conducive, rational, and equitable for the allocation of the country resources among the central government and federating units.
- ii. The need to evolve a strategic procedure for minimising inter-governmental and inter-ethnic tensions and curbing of ethnic militias.
- iii. Promotion of national unity through the inculcation of national consciousness for national development.

The issue of minimizing inter-ethnic tensions arising from all minorities ethnic rights in Nigeria has attracted abroad based approaches, proposed especially for securing minority rights in Nigeria. One of such approaches posits the restructuring of Nigerian federalism as presently constituted to evolve equal proposed a drastic based socialist revolutionary process. Meanwhile, the second approach essentially provides political economy solution to the minority right's question. The argument therefore, is that the class question will be virtually unavoidable even in one ethnic-based confederacy, largely because of the inevitable interface between ethnicity, class and political associations in the prevailing minority crises/conflict in Nigeria. Nevertheless, both approaches as presently constituted and operated; only differ in the restructuring mode of Nigerian system (Nanen, 1992).

Our Constitution contains contradictory principles. For instance, section 2(i) of the 1999 constitution provides: "Nigeria is one indivisible and indissoluble sovereign state to be known by the name of the federal Republic of Nigeria."

Thus, Nigeria is both a 'federation' and 'a republic'. Many commentators often interrogate the 'federal' element and ignore the 'republican' dimension. Yet the two words do not mean the same thing. Is

Nigeria truly a republic? As a political belief, the noun 'republic' connotes the notion that:

- i. Sovereignty rests with the people or their representatives rather than with a monarch or emperor;
- ii. There can be no exercise of political power, be it at the centre of periphery, except as determined by the people; and
- iii. No public resource ought to be deployed in maintaining institutions or offices that are not constituted from the exercise of people's sovereign will.

These features of republicanism raise the question, is a country that creates a constitutional role for unelected traditional rulers but who are maintained by tax payers a true republic? What role, if any, should our traditional rulers play under a true republican constitution? Raising these legitimate questions in no way diminish our traditional institutions, which have served as building blocks of unity in a diverse and often polarised polity. The United States is an example of republic. American political thought emphasises a pragmatic view of government. People exist before government exists. Government is an agency created to meet collective needs. The ruler rules only with the consent of the ruled. When this consent is removed then there is no legal sovereignty. This Lockean creed influenced the framing of the American Declaration of Independence, adopted on 4th July 1776. It provides that:

Government derive the just powers from the consent of the governed; and that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of the ends it is meant to serve –securing life, liberty, and happiness – then it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organising its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness.

Therefore, democracy becomes relevant only as a vehicle for conveying the peoples' sovereign will in defending democracy, Rousseau once wrote that "mankind is so wise and good that everyone deserves a share in government. That is a false, romantic, view of democracy. The true ground of democracy is that mankind is so fallen, even wicked, that no one can be trusted with an irresponsible power over his fellows". Plato also wrote; No

human being is capable of having irresponsible control of all human affairs without becoming filled with pride and injustice”.

The first challenge of republicanism in Nigeria is that the 1999 constitution itself is not republican, not having its origin from the sovereign will of the people. These dictatorial tendencies probably explain why the political class find it difficult to respect the sovereign rights of Nigerians to determine the country's political leadership through free and fair elections. It is an open secret that elections in Nigeria have historically been akin to organised crime, with multiple actors pursuing predetermined outcomes through common enterprise. When rigging answers to be name of election, it casts a big showdown on our republic (Udombana, 2017)). The main political challenge of the nation Nigeria is the application of federalism, true federalism is a system of government whereby the centre and federating units are economically autonomous and administratively responsible for most of their activities, i.e. a situation whereby there is devolution of constitutional responsibilities of power between the centre and sub units. In other word, the states, regions and the centre share words, the states, regions, and the centre share sovereignty. An ideal federal system should have independent revenue control mechanism or rather opportunity for the state/region to control/manage the resources from their areas (Dickson & Asua, 2016).

The structure of Nigerian federalism under the current democratic dispensation as determined by the 1999 constitution therefore supports the continued over centralisation of power and subordination of the states to the federal government. Thus, the federal government has continued to control inter-governmental fiscal relations at all levels through its agencies such as Revenue Mobilisation and Fiscal Commission. Hence, the federal government under Olusegun Obasanjo administration was able to unilaterally determine the revenue allocation formula and even went ahead at various times to withhold the allocation to some states (e.g. Lagos, Edo, and Anambra) without good reason. Beyond controlling inter-government fiscal relations, the federal government was also able to sack state governors through manipulation of its anti-graft agency, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the justice system (as was the case of Bayelsa, Delta State Plateau States) and declare state of emergency in some states without good reason or following due process (as was the case of Plateau, Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States). In practice, Nigeria's federalism is a mere gimmick as it ends at the pronouncement of the word federation.

It is on record that the All Progressive Congress (APC) said at a debate on ‘addressing the rising insecurity in Nigeria, what is the master plan? Organised by the centre Democracy and Development (CDD) on December 18th, 2014, that it APC would ensure true federalism and adequate community policing through the establishment of state –controlled police so as to curb the protracted security challenges in the country. Sad enough, now that it is the ruling party, APC is no longer talking about true federalism, and state-controlled police it canvassed while in the opposition (Fayose, 2017). He posits further that, under the present APC government of President Muhammadu Buhari, Nigeria is returning to full-blown unitary system of government because the federal government has turned itself into lord and master over other federating units in the country, using federal agencies to oppress even governors. The persistent call for resource control, for modification of the reverse allocation, for convening of sovereign National Conference and for restructuring of the Nigerian federation by Nigerians have been largely ignored by government. Even the widely shared opinions expressed in public discussions organised by the federal government in 1987 (political bureau), 1995 (constitutional conference) and 2014 (constitutional conference) have also been ignored as the reports of these confab are yet to see the light of day. The increase in the agitation of restructuring of the Nigerian federation is predicted and protection for minorities in the traditional sense of tribal minorities, as well as for greater territorial diffusion of economic and political power and to bring government nearer to the people and thereby instill in them greater responsibility for the success of government, and for development at a quickened pace. We hope that before long, the government will respond to the popular wish of Nigerians for restructuring the country along the line of true federalism with resource mobilisation and control going to the sub units of the federation.

In any country where there are divergences of language and nationality – particularly of language – a unitary constitution is always a source bitterness and hostility on the part linguistic or national minority of groups. Federalism and decentralisation was therefore advocated as a peace agreement as well as constitutional solution which would reduce conflict, build peace, and protect the interest of minority communities. Bermeo (2002) concluded that armed rebellions are three times more common among groups living in unitary than in federal states while these groups also experience lower levels of discrimination and grievance. Similarly, Gurr (1993) advocated that power

sharing arrangements and group autonomy can be a solution to deep –rooted ethnic conflicts and civil wars, while Hetcher (2000) also suggested that plural states such as India and Nigeria would probably have not survived without some form of decentralised governance. The extreme violence of separatist groups such as Boko Haram, Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Niger Delta militants, Odua People’s Congress (OPC) has become worrisome because normalcy and common law and other which many of us take for granted is simply not available to the people living under their influence. They have made the country extremely difficult to govern. People live under tension, government is under tension, there is tension in the land and the continued long-term existence of Nigeria is tentative, to say the least (Abah, 2016). This state of affairs calls for a final solution. That final solution consists in the determination of the Nigerian government and people to accept that people of the diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious groups in Nigeria desperately need a breath of fresh air and that the panacea is the restructuring of Nigeria along the lines of true federalism governed under a true democracy.

In addition, Ojomoyela (2018:3) posits that “Yoruba Policy Recommendations on the way forward.

- ✓ In the interim, the nation’s taxation policy should be reformed to give more authority to the states, especially over personal income tax, company income tax, capital gains tax and value added tax of all forms available within their territorial boundaries to enhance their financial independence from the federal government.
- ✓ The principle of true federalism should be fully applied. Federalism as being practiced in developed countries such as the United States, Australia and Canada will enhance unified, peaceful co-existence, political and socio-economic development. It will encourage the states to look inward and develop economic independence. The issue of resource control and dependence on revenue allocation from the federation account and other federal sources of revenue, such as revenues from excess crude oil, income from excise duties, etc. would be de-emphasised.
- ✓ There should be a proper balance in the sharing of governmental powers, functions and allocation of resources

between the federal government and the federating units to ensure that each of the federating units is equipped with every paraphernalia of government to be able to stand as an independent autonomous entity as is required for the practice of federalism.

- ✓ A review of the percentage of revenue allocation to oil bearing states as well as other resources and the setting up of a technical committee to work out the appropriate percentage. Communities that produce the national wealth be considered in the derivation percentages not just o the state government.
- ✓ Diversification of Nigerian economy by fast-tracking the development of the solid mineral sector.

Conclusion

It is obvious that the federal government exercise most of the governmental powers in Nigeria to the detriment of the constituent states. Apart from the overwhelming dominance on the items of legislation, the federal government is further power to make laws with respect to any matters incidental or supplementary to any matter mentioned elsewhere in the exclusive legislative list. From the foregoing, this paper concludes with an observation that in a true federalism, the sub states constitutionally control the resources, which are found within the geographical spread, and pay a certain percentage of revenue derived from the such resources to the federal government. For a proper functioning of the Nigerian federalism, there is need for a proper restructuring of the federal structure in Nigeria starting from a constitutional amendment that will inculcate the basic requirements of true federalism. Nigeria may also have to borrow leaf from the practices in operation in countries acclaimed as practicing true federalism, such as having separate constitutions for the federal government and the governments of the various thirty – six (36) states of the federation, upholding the provision for the supremacy of constitution in governmental practices and observing the federal character principle as enshrined in section 14(3) of the 1999 constitution. As this will encourage mutual co-existence and management of nation's resources.

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**POLITICAL PARTY PRIMARIES AND INTERNAL DEMOCRACY IN THE
BUILD UP TO THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS: A THORN IN THE
FLESH OF NIGERIA'S DEMOCRACY?**

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Abstract

Political party primaries represent a gateway to good governance and political legitimacy. The conduct of primaries not only encourages mutual obligation to support a candidate by party members, it also signifies a healthy condition of the practice of democracy. Where party primaries have fractured internal democracy, the capacity of parties to handle internal party schisms is minimal, if not completely obliterated. The overall collateral damage of sham party primaries is the gradual

erosion of political legitimacy, which in the long run, has the ability to reverse democratic gains. The build up to the 2019 elections in Nigeria was marred by flawed primaries and internal party contestations. Of particular importance to the understanding of the implications of faulty primaries to Nigeria's democracy are the conduct of the exercise by the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and other opposition parties, including the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). This paper examined the primaries of these political parties, with focus on governorship primaries in some states, and argued that the country's fledgling democracy is always raped during such primaries, leading to bad governance and crisis of political legitimacy among public officials who would finally hold positions of authority at the secondary election. In this case, party primaries have become albatross literally hung around the neck of democracy in Nigeria. At best, such sham rituals are cogs in the wheel of nurturing a virile democracy through free fair and credible process.

Keywords: internal democracy, political party primaries, democracy, institutionalization, election.

Introduction

What makes democracy desirable and elegant to elicit democratic sustenance through a thriving political legitimacy are internal democracy and a strong legitimacy base from within these best attributes that make any representative government sustainable and acceptable. Political party internal democracy is what makes the system of democratic rule, legitimate and cherishable to key players, critical actors and, to a larger extent, the electorate. Internal democracy is a function of competitive, free, fair and credible party primaries, which unify rather than divide party members. The history of party politics in Nigeria is replete with internal party squabbles and unhealthy political contests and contestations. At the height of political party intra-party disharmony is the blind quest for power. More importantly, the fact that the goal of politics in less institutionalized democracies, particularly to an average Nigerian politician, is directly linked with its material benefits suggests the most cogent explanation as to why incessant disagreement over who should bear the flag of a political party.

Undoubtedly, since the return of democracy in 1999, after a prolonged period of military authoritarian rule, never before has the issue of political party primaries divided party leadership and its rank and file as in the recent party primaries conducted by political parties in the build up to the 2019 general elections.

Surprisingly, the crisis of political party primaries severely hit the All Progressives Congress (APC), now the ruling party, to the point of undermining the edifice of its seeming track record of democratic credentials, which it achieved before it wrested power in 2015, than the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), now the biggest opposition party that hitherto controlled power for sixteen years since 1999.

Thus, in order to address the problematique of this paper conscientiously, it is important at the outset to state that our focus on the APC primaries is by no means subjective or a tacit authentication of the conduct of primaries in other political parties. After all, at the end of the 2019 party primaries INEC was reported to have dubbed their conduct as the most acrimonious in the history of Nigeria, with 392 court cases pending and 52 petitions being addressed (Mahmood Yakubu, cited in *Vanguard*, December 8, 2018). This is to suggest that there were infractions in the way political parties conducted their primaries in the build up to the 2019 general elections more than at any time in Nigeria's political history and the challenge was not peculiar to APC. Therefore, our focus on the APC is because of the rampant and lingering cases of contestations over the party's experience to the extent that it was initially barred from fielding candidates for all elections in Zamfara State and later allowed to contest the elections, which the Supreme Court finally annulled and runners-up declared winners by INEC. In Rivers State, a court voided the party's congresses that produced parallel candidates during its party primaries. In some other states, the party primaries have created permanent scars, which resulted in massive decamping of aggrieved party members to opposition parties, while still in some cases, the rupture generated by the defective party primaries created a scenario in which aggrieved party members, clandestinely or in the open, orchestrated anti-party advances of frightening proportions to the electoral success of their parties. In all, party primaries in the APC has come and gone, but it left an indelible dent in the country's hope of building grassroots democracy on the basis of which political legitimacy thrives.

The identified ironies of the APC's primaries raise some vital questions, central of which are: why did the party primaries of the APC were highly contested and divided party membership as was unknown in the history of the ruling party? Can the experience of party's primaries in some states in the federation be a reflection of the fragility of political parties as democratic institutions or of the system of democracy the country has been practising? Did the experience of the APC portend a healthy political environment for a country that has been striving to institutionalize democratic values of competitive participatory representative democracy? What are the plausible explanations for the tidal waves of contestations arising from compromised APC primaries and how did it affect, positively or negatively, the other competing political parties?

In order to address these questions, the paper is divided into six sections. Section one is the introduction. Section two examines the conceptual and theoretical issues on party primaries and internal democracy. The section also identifies two levels at which flawed party primaries torpedo the process of internal democracy, party supremacy and democratization process in general. Section three provides an overview of the trends in party primaries in Nigeria and argues that the conduct of credible, free and fair primaries is likely to overcome the difficulty in developing grassroots democracy and political participation in political parties. Section four highlights the dangers of faulty party primaries and their obvious implications on building a viable democratic ethos. Section five examines the lessons learned from compromised party primaries, particularly the ones conducted by the ruling APC, and what should be done to make such democratic rituals satisfactory, acceptable and credible for consolidating Nigeria's nascent democracy. Finally, section six concludes the paper. Therefore, in examining the central issues of the paper scientifically, given the fact that the issues raised in it and analyzed were at the moment ongoing, the paper utilizes documentary sources of data with content analysis as the main technique for studying documents and developing replicable and valid inferences.

Conceptual and Theoretical Issues in the Understanding of Party Primary Elections and Internal Democracy

Primary elections are important themes in the discourses of democratization yet not paid enough attention in the milieu of existing researches among scholars in the area of political development in the third waves of democracies. Their smooth conduct is essential to the development of democracy, particularly in developing democracies where the institutions of representative democracy are still work in progress. Defined as "an organization that seeks benefits derived from office by gaining representation in duly constituted elections" (Strom, cited in Mohammed, 2017, p.3), a political party is ideally the embodiment of democracy in practice. To qualify itself as truly an organization of like-minded individuals who share a common goal of acquiring power through competitive elections, a political party has to internalize democratic principles from within its organization through party primaries. Party primaries are process of internal democracy, the effective conduct of which is an indication of the commitment of political parties and their members to democratic culture. Central to the goal of any primary election is to yield to the expression of the dream of party members to participate on a level playing ground in

the selection of candidates for the various political offices in preparation for the general elections (Ikechukwu, 2015). In a way, being one of benchmarks for assessing democracy, a political party primary can be defined as that part of the electoral process in which political parties competitively select their candidates for election out of aspirants contesting for various public offices.

Internal democracy in political parties, also known as intra-party democracy refers to the inclusive nature of membership participation not only on matters of decision making but also on aspects of leadership and candidates' selection. Therefore, the concept of internal democracy is essentially participatory and, in practice, political parties are expected to institutionalize it in order to carry every member along without any form of discrimination. Ojukwu and Olaifa (2011) identify three key variables that are central to political party internal democracy. They are, first, guarantee of equal participation of all members and groups; second, the degree of political inclusiveness; and third, party institutionalization. Taken together, these variables put internal party democracy as one of the yardstick of democratic consolidation (Madubueze&Dike, 2018)

In order to put our framework of analyzing internal democracy in political party primaries in Nigeria's Fourth Republic into a broad context, this paper adopts a hybridization of two theories. This is in order to enable us discuss the empirical dimension of the subject of analysis scientifically. The theories are institutional theory of party system and oligarchy in modern democracy. In the former, Mainwaring and Torcal's (2005) seminal work compares the level of institutionalization of political parties in the developed and developing democracies. Central to their perspective on political parties is that in most institutionalized party system, political actors accord legitimacy to their parties because party organizations retain their supremacy. Therefore, in a situation whereby party organizations are subordinated to the interest of a few ambitious leaders they normally determine the direction of what the party will do, who will be nominated for what position and when. Consequently, institutionalization is dependent on the extent of political orientation of party leaders and their stakes in politics. This is to say that "the institutionalization of political parties is limited as long as a party is the personal instrument of a leader or a small coterie" (Mainwaring and Torcal, 2005:5).

Therefore, while Mainwaring and Torcal (2005) argue that institutionalization, defined roughly as the degree of inclusiveness of political parties to respect rules and rights of members to participate in the decision making and selection of candidates with a high degree of tolerance, compromise and understanding, is largely signifying the level of internal democracy a political party is practising. The theory essentially deals with party bureaucracy and power

relationship, which has reflected the scenario in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, particularly on issues of primary elections. This is because in a situation of oligarchy, which in our own context of analysis refers to the behaviour of chief executives or "god fathers" who monopolize every political space in a party organization, party primaries are mere rubber stamps exercises that are mainly designed to turn over effective power to a handful of selected individuals. The leaders, who, in Michel's words, become a "ruling oligarchy", can do all it takes when faced with the threat to their authority or office within the organization, to hold on to power even by installing their protégé, even at the expense of party's constitution in particular or the development of democracy in general. The action of such leaders, as Michel argues, will become very aggressive when faced with threats to their interests and "will not hesitate to undermine many democratic rights" to achieve their goal (1962:18). Thus, "instead of allowing their successors to be appointed by the choice of the rank and file, the leaders do well in their power to choose these successors for themselves, and fill up gaps in their own ranks directly or indirectly by the exercise of their own volition" (Michel, 1962, p.126).

In its reformulated version and as it is used within the context of party primaries and internal democracy in the build up to 2019 elections, Michel's theory of oligarchy not only explains the behaviour of political parties in Nigeria but also the relationship among their members. The state governors and party leaders circumvent rules and sometimes compel party activities to gravitate within their narrow political interests. In this way, "organization is, in fact, the source from which the conservative currents flow over plain of democracy, occasioning the plain unrecognizable" (Michel, 1962, p.62). Specifically, Michel's theory of oligarchy provides an explanation to the nature of the crisis of primaries, the conduct of which showcases what he called "grave oligarchical phenomenon, nepotism", expressed mainly because: "The choice of the candidate almost always depends upon a little clique, consisting of the local leaders and their assistants, which suggests suitable names to the rank and file. In many cases, the constituency comes to be regarded as *a family property*" (Emphasis mine, Michel, 1962, p.127).

The import of adopting two theories as the major constructs of understanding party politics and internal democracy is for the simple fact that the hybrid theory is about institutions and political behaviour of their drivers. For the degree of political party institutionalization is a mirror of the character and attitude of party leadership (Mainwaring & Torcal, 2005). Political parties compete for power, but in most cases, as is the practice in developing democracies, the nature of the competition sometimes defies known laid down rules or philosophical bases of democracy. What is more disheartening about the race for power in Nigerian politics is the fact that political party primaries have in recent times become the terrain of political breach of

democratic norms in which shoddy exercises produce candidates without grassroots acceptability.

Arising from the scenario of badly conducted political party primaries in Nigeria; two closely related observations stand obvious. First, the *process* of political party institutionalization is negatively affected by flawed primaries. Second, badly conducted primary elections impact negatively on the *political system* in the sense that they retard the process of institutionalizing democratic values at the grassroots level of political participation. Figure 1 and 2 diagrammatically illustrate the two-fold impact of compromised party primaries.

Figure 1: The Impact of Flawed Party Primaries on Party Strength

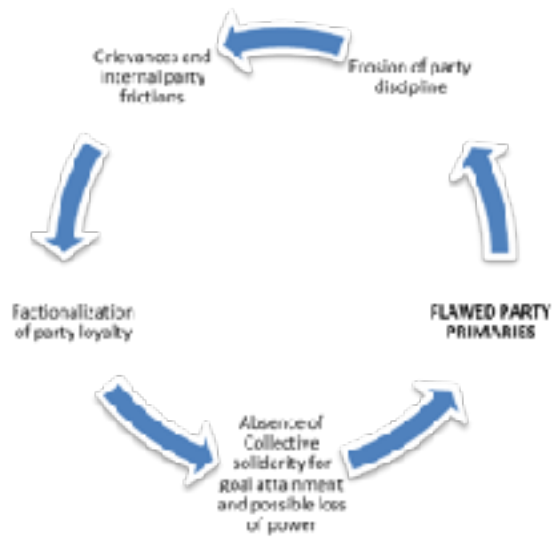


Figure 2: The Impact of Flawed Party Primaries on Political System.



As figure one illustrates, compromised or badly conducted political party primaries engender a spiral of impact on the institutionalization of democracy within a party organization. It leads to the erosion of party discipline because the grievances of the victims of oligarchs result in factionalization of the party, absence of collective goal and solidary and anti-party activities. The overall consequence of these tendencies may make or mar the party and may eventually leads to the possible loss of power to an opposition party. In a situation where a party is fractured as a result of poorly manipulated and conducted primaries, political legitimacy is unlikely to be assured, at least from the party organization. The circle continues until the 'hemorrhaging' party is brought to its knees, if adequate conflict resolution mechanisms are not in place to address the internal cracks within its organization. Thus, the figure 1 aptly shows the collateral damage of badly conducted primaries to the party itself, whether in control of power or not.

Figure 2 depicts the impact of flawed party primaries on the system of democracy and its institutionalization. Bearing in mind the occurrence of faulty primaries in a party or a combination of parties, not necessarily the ruling party, the figure illustrates the cyclical or boomerang effect of such conducts on the political system and on its efforts at building grassroots democratic culture. Clearly, the figure shows that a salient feature of flawed primary election is its effects on political legitimacy, which it erodes fast. It also corrodes democratic values and principles of accountability, responsive and responsible leadership that could lead to democratic reversals. The likelihood of democracy to bring forth a civilian dictatorship or a political dynasty, as a consequence of a faulty party primary is high. When party primaries have become a recurrent decimal in a political system, particularly when they are manifested horizontally and vertically, this eventually blossoms into a generalized crisis of credibility and possibly leading to democratic reversals. In short, the impact of unchecked badly conducted primaries result in denting the existing democratic credentials, if any, of developing democracies like Nigeria.

The history of Nigerian politics is replete with faulty party primaries whose outcome is stage-managed and pre-determined by a group of party oligarchs or an individual influential "god father", often the chief executive of states or a national government, even a group party "money bags", otherwise referred to as political entrepreneurs. This phenomenon prompted Dinnaye (2007, p.63) to conclude that: "Nigeria reflects a pathological feature of the African leadership structure – sit-tight syndrome suffered by incumbents". In a situation where the incumbents have exhausted their tenure in office, the obvious resort is for them to anoint a candidate for the next election. It is within this context that primary elections become the gateway to implanting protégé by other means. Onuoha (2004) captured the central explanation on why this state of affairs has become a recurrent decimal in Nigerian

politics. In his words, “the Nigerian politicians who had tasted political power found it difficult to relinquish power; and in other respects, including influencing the electoral machinery, they tried to make change of political power difficult if not impossible” (2004, p.37). Political notables who have become “god fathers” are those who insatiably control power, in the process, making it a dynasty of some sort. Their attraction to power and penchant for retaining it by all means, to use Ayoade’s words, lies in the fact that “their credibility can sway political support such that they can determine the electoral fortune of candidates... They are strong party men and can also determine the nomination process because they often wield much influence on party machine” (2008, p.85).

In a nutshell, two hypothetical statements are generated to guide our analysis. First, that badly conducted political party primaries engender hiccups, travails and tribulations to political parties because the situation thwarts the process of building party solidarity and comradeship. Second in their worst impact flawed party primaries have some collateral damages in the sense that they usually ruin electoral victory of political parties and destroys members’ *esprit de corps*. However, political parties that stand the chance of victory at the poll are likely to hit the rock and devastatingly their goal is likely to remain in ruin or unattainable.

Reflection on Internal Party Democracy and Political Party Primaries in Nigeria

The commonest means of selecting candidates for election into public offices in most countries of the world is only through a general election. It was the Progressive Era reformers that introduced the primary at the beginning of the 20th century “as another way to weaken the influence of political party machines in general elections” (Bello-Imam, 2008, p.92). Over the years, however many countries adopt the process of either direct or indirect primaries to select candidates for elective offices. Direct primary is a preliminary election whereby voters decide their party’s candidates, while indirect primary is that election, which allows voters to elect delegates who in turn choose the party’s candidates at a nominating convention. The former is what is being practised in almost all candidates for major elected offices in the United States of America (Hirano and Snyder Jr., 2014). In Nigeria, the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended) and the INEC Regulations for the Conduct of Political Party Primaries provide that primaries could either be through a direct method or indirect and regulations on how each can be conducted are adequately provided to guide political parties (see INEC, Regulation for the Conduct of Political Party Primaries, 2014, pp.4-10).

As the testing ground for parties and politicians to use reason and rationality to set the ball rolling on acceptable norms, primary elections and internal democracy are two concepts that cannot be separated because of their common pedigree. While it is the former that qualifies the latter, however it is the latter that serves as a barometer that gauges the degree of institutional sophistication of political parties. Thus, apart from building democracy at the grassroots level, political party primaries also lay the foundation of democracy with democrats and nurtures confidence in party members' ability to compete for political offices (Adekeye&Abdulrauf, 2017). This explains why INEC Regulation for the Conduct of Political Party Primaries states that: "A political party seeking to participate in any election organized by the Commission must conduct primaries, wherein all eligible members of the party must be given equal opportunity to participate in the primaries of the party for the purpose of selecting candidates for elective positions" (INEC, 2014, p. 4).

Indeed, if well managed and conventionally conducted, primary election stands to shield a party from those who use the umbrella of party bureaucracy to establish a political dynasty for themselves and their cronies because it "weakens the influence of political elites within the party, which will consequently aid the institutionalization of party" (Adekeye&Abdulrauf, 2017, p.2). Regrettably, in developing societies, the conduct of political party primaries have become an integral part of the wider concept of political corruption perpetrated by the political elites for their particularistic political interests.

Over the years, the political context in Nigeria has become very competitive not so much for the purpose of serving the general public, but for the lucrative domain of power. The scenario has always been the case in the past democratic experiments, though with sanity and moderate level of petition and outcries from the victims. Indeed, out of the two main types of party primaries – direct and indirect, political elites, before or during the conduct of party primaries, prefer what is today known as 'consensus' primaries than the two most commonly known modes. Consensus candidates are usually arrived at when aspirants have reached an agreement voluntarily or mediated by the leadership of their parties to allow one of them to contest election. In some cases, an aspirant voluntarily decides to withdraw from the race to give room for a relatively better, competent and popular aspirant to get the party's ticket in order to boost its chance in the secondary election. It was mostly through this process that political parties in the First Republic selected candidates who contested the 1954 and 1963 national and regional elections. Thus, consensus among aspirants averted intra-party conflict and ensured the presentation of a high-quality nominee in the First Republic. The idea is predicated on the general belief held by party members that they really need one party to produce an excellent nominee who would boost the party's chance of winning the secondary election.

The culture of political consensus during party primaries with its appeal to unifying party members rather than dividing them was also observed in the Second Republic. The primary election that produced President Shehu Shagari was a product of consensus. Of the six presidential aspirants of the defunct NPN who contested at the party's presidential primaries held in Casino Cinema in Yaba, Lagos ahead of the 1979 election, a Kano born politician, Alhaji Yusuf Maitama Sule was among the leading aspirants. Alhaji Maitama Sule went into a run-off election with Alhaji Shehu Shagari as the two highest scorers in the first voting involving other contestants, Mr. J.S Tarka, Dr. Sola Saraki, and Professor Iya Abubakar. The re-run was not conducted because Maitama Sule voluntarily conceded the ticket to Shagari (Dambatta, 2010). At the states level, the practice of consensus candidate usually brokered by the party leadership and accepted by all aspirants, was the chief method of political recruitment process at the primary level of election. Court cases over manipulated primaries were not known in the First and Second Republics because the process was controlled through the intervention of the party leadership, whose supremacy was assertive and respected by all political interests.

Thus, it can be said that the uproar over the conduct of political party primaries and the eventual court cases therefrom are products of the political proclivity of politicians to disrespect internal democracy and disregard party supremacy. The absence of the party supremacy since the return to civilian rule following the successful exit of military rule in 1999 is informed by the reduction of politics to a sector that produces instant riches, power and influence. To a greater extent, the weakening of the supremacy of political parties and their subordination to "godfathers" and chief executives has profoundly contributed to the current bastardization of political party primaries. If anything, these factors have significantly contributed to the spate of internal rancour and schism within party organizations to the extent that even the rules of power sharing principles of political parties are sacrificed for to fulfill the ego of political gladiators, mostly the chief executives who, against every odds and in defiance of politically coveted option of preserving internal democracy, put road blocks to successful conduct of political party primaries. Obasanjo's orchestrated third term agenda and the manipulation of his party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), to his advantage in 2003, deserted aspirants from the party's presidential primary election. It was the former Governor of Kano State, Muhammadu Abubakar Rimi, who fearlessly contested that year's PDP pre-conceived presidential primaries against the political insinuation of Obasanjo, who had closed-up every democratic space to pave way for his reelection. In 2011, the party manipulated its own developed zoning formula in favour of President Goodluck Jonathan, who by then had completed the late Umaru Musa Yar'adua's term in office. The party had upturned its primary election by declaring President Jonathan as the sole candidate to contest for that year's presidential election.

Borrowing a leaf from the scenario at the broader national politics, with increased frequency since the birth of the Fourth Republic, state governors who have carved a niche for themselves and formed a somewhat quasi political dynasty in their states, and in the absence of party supremacy and credible leadership, become political 'kingmakers'. They are not only the major financiers of their political parties in their domain of jurisdictions but also controllers of the party machinery. They determine who is to serve in what position in the party bureaucracy. With the powers conferred on the States' Electoral Management Bodies to conduct elections at the state levels, the state governors have been empowered to appoint the chairmen of their respective state electoral umpire. In this way, the state electoral body has become a ready-made tool in the hands of undemocratic state governors to manipulate local elections. This explains why the election of local government chairmen and councilors into the executive arm of local councils in Nigeria is replete with daunting story of total victory of the party that holds power in the state. The conduct of political primaries and secondary elections are bereft of any semblance of competitive, free, fair and credible conduct.

In essence, compromised internal democracy in Nigerian politics elicits horizontal and vertical conduct of flawed primaries. Vertically, compromised party primaries occur from local, state and the national levels and conversely, badly conducted party primaries are said to be horizontal when they are rooted from the national, state and local government areas. The aggregate impact of sham party primaries is the domination of political space by political quacks who assure accountability to their political "god fathers", the sole monopolizers of the political space, thereby engendering discomfort to a large group of party members and their supporters.

The APC is a party that benefited profoundly from the deficiencies of the PDP. Scholars Egboh and Aniche (2012), Kwasau(2017), Ibrahim and Abubakar(2017) and Lamidi, 2017) have chronicled the crisis of internal democracy in the PDP and, as such, the same exercise needs not to detain us. Ojukwu and Olaiya (2011, p.29) have identified the following as the challenges of internal democracy in the party as follows: poverty of party ideology; candidate selection; party funding; zoning formula; primaries and party unity; and party executive arrogance. Suffice it to say that of all these challenges, the most visible deficiency that served as cog in the wheel of the party's success in 2015, which was shrewdly capitalized on by the APC was the absence of internal democracy. This singular factor more than others had shattered the rank and file of the party and created a big question mark on internal party cohesion (Adekeye&Abdulrauf, 2017) It led the party to a massive defection of its members to the APC, a party that was formed in 2013, barely two years to the 2015 general elections. Therefore, it is an understatement to say that the APC which,

at the time of its creation, was armed to the teeth with the limitations of the then ruling party would spare time to learn a lesson from its major opposition. Undoubtedly, the party's 2014 convention held in Lagos, which produced Muhammadu Buhari and Yemi Osinbajo as presidential and vice presidential candidates of the party respectively, was one of the best experiences of Nigeria in the conduct of presidential primaries.

The constitution of the APC allows the conduct of party primaries using direct or indirect process. Each state chapter of the party is at liberty to choose either of the two methods, once it suits the purpose of the election and in line with the party's constitution. The conduct of the presidential primaries of the party in 2014 was not only hitch-free; it was also devoid of primordial considerations. It really symbolized democracy in action. The experience of the APC's party primaries in the build up to the 2019 general elections differed sharply from that the previous one conducted against the 2015 general elections. In states where incumbent governors would be concluding their terms in office, primaries turned out to be a travesty of democracy. There, governors abused consensus, either at the level of party convention or congress to elect party leaders or during substantive party primaries to select party candidates. Factionalization of the party members was the inevitable outcome of most of the primaries conducted. Part of the explanation to this trend in the development of party politics in the country was the extent of corruptibility of power by public office holders. Through the process of neo-patrimonial relationship and crass opportunism, which in recent times have been manifested in the practice of 'democracy' without democratic credentials, political party supremacy has been subordinated and relegated. Emboldened by the culture of absence of ideological framework of action, the APC is passing through a trajectory of organization that is inimical to the development of democracy.

Undoubtedly, the party is composed of an amalgam of politicians with varying political interests and orientation in Nigerian politics. Worse still, though the party conducted one of the most credible presidential primaries in Nigerian political history, it was half-baked prepared for power, regardless of its "change mantra" campaign. Still, on the issue of internal democracy at the state levels, there is a thin dividing line between the APC and PDP. This is not surprising because the permutation that produced the APC did not do much, if any, to change the character of the political elites in the merger party. The state governors that defected from the PDP to APC and the political elements that formed the merger, which produced the latter, are essentially wolves in sheep clothing. Their political attitude typified the enduring practice in Nigerian politics whereby the chief executive of the state suddenly becomes the alpha and omega in the determination of who would contest for what position before the conduct of primaries. To make matters even worse, the

crisis of party primaries in the APC could be envisaged, ab initio following the birth of the party, when it resolved that states governors are the party leaders of their respective states. This is to say that only in states where APC did not hold power can the party bureaucracy be left alone to direct the affairs of the party. This arrangement has created a serious discord in some states because most of the influential party members of the APC were not comfortable with the arrangement, which tacitly handed over the control of the party to state governors; hence they risked leaving the party to join the PDP. This was exactly the tragedy that befell Kano and Sokoto chapters of the party when the former governors of the states, Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau and AlhajiAttahiruBafarawa, dumped the APC for PDP in 2014.

The 2019 General Elections, Political Party Primaries and the Dilemmas of the Ruling All Progressives Congress (APC)

The preceding background attests to the fact that internal democracy at the state level for political parties is a matter of choice between the conventional approaches (direct or indirect process) and “consensus” among aspirants which entails compromise, agreement, trust and bargaining. Between the two extreme methods there exists another unconventional approach, which takes the form of selecting candidates by the chief executive of a state. The latter is based on the permission and permissiveness of the governor who is serving as the party leader, often with the support of the party bureaucracy. This phenomenon has set in motion serious political disputes in some states. In a special report by the United States Institute for Peace, USIP (2018) entitled: *Nigeria's 2019 Elections: Change and Continuity, and the Risks to Peace*, it was observed that there was a shift in the nature of political disputes, from interparty tensions to intraparty conflict in the build up to the 2019 general elections. The tensions were attributed to party primaries. In particular, the APC has been identified as one of the political parties that would trigger internal rivalries in many states (Verjee, Kwaja&Onubogu, 2019, p.4). In most of the states where party primaries eventually generated a lingering intra-party conflict, the main explanatory factor, as the USIP report added, was “the inability of the party [APC] to consolidate its internal party structure and effectively resolve internal rivalries”, emanated from the control of the party structure and nomination of aspirants by a few dominant power elites. It is within this type of building a political dynasty that one can understand the crisis of primaries in Zamfara, Imo, Ogun and Osun state, to mention a few.

The Zamfara Primary Election Saga

The Zamfara experience is a reminder to the decaying institution of party control of its structure and the vulnerability of the eroding system of party politics to suffer from the political interest of a few opportunistic state executives. The impact of subordinating party supremacy to those who are intoxicated with the exercise of power in Zamfara State has necessitated the emergence of factional groups within the party in the state. This was made possible when the incumbent governor of the state, Abdul’AzeezYari, decided to impose his anointed candidate on the party to succeed him as the governor. What played out in Zamfara is purely a “monopolistic godfatherism” displayed by Yari, who was hell bent on manipulating party primaries in favor of the aspirant of his choice, a commissioner for finance in Yari’s cabinet. Thus, two opposition camps were created in the state - the governor’s camp, which had MukhtarIdris as its gubernatorial aspirant and the factional camp of Senator KabiruMarafa, with the Senator himself as the gubernatorial aspirant of the party, which insisted that a level playing field be provided for all aspirants in the primaries.

The primaries were originally scheduled for Saturday, September 29, 2018, which was exactly eight days from the INEC’s deadline, but could not hold on that day. The exercise was nevertheless moved to Sunday, the next day, because neither materials for the election nor the electoral committee officials were available to conduct the primaries. Largely, because time was against the party to conclude the primaries, another date, which coincided with the independence anniversary day, October 1, was inevitably fixed. That day was marred by demonstration and protest by the supporters of Yari’s over the continued shifting of the primaries. Again, when the primaries were finally shifted to Tuesday, October 2, 2018, the materials for the exercise did not reach some wards because party thugs, alleged to be loyal to Yari, hijacked some of the materials. The situation was absolutely not conducive for peaceful conduct of election as violence escalated to the level of ballot boxes being snatched and voters intimidated (Ahmed, 2018).

The imbroglio resulted in clashes between the supporters of the two leading aspirants with further threats of violence and breach of law and order in the state. It was in the midst of that confusion that the governor’s camp conducted primaries, which the other camp did not participate. Instead, the other faction led by Marafa went ahead to hold parallel primaries. None of the two primaries was monitored by INEC, but the outcome of each produced a candidate. The electoral panel sent to the state by the party’s national leadership announced that it was unable to organize primaries in the state. In its bid to settle the political impasse between the two camps, the National Working Committee (NWC) of the APC led by its chairman, intervened in what could be described as better late than never by suspending the state executive of the party to allow for a rancour-free primaries. This decision did not go well with

Abdul’AzeezYari’s camp. Therefore, to avoid violence in the face of lingering tension in the state, primaries were not conducted.

Matters over party primaries in Zamfara got to a head when INEC barred the APC from partaking in the 2019 elections, following the party’s failure to hold primaries before the deadline fixed by the Commission. INEC’s decision was in line with Section 87 of the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended) which clearly states that failure to conduct party primaries within the time stipulated (between August 8 and October 7, 2018) in the time-table of election released by the Commission means that a party has forfeited candidates for the Governorship, National Assembly and State Assembly elections. The APC challenged INEC’s decision and debunked the claim that the party did not hold primaries. The national chairman of the APC, Adams Oshiomhole, argued that though party members disagreed over the conduct of primaries in Zamfara State, it nevertheless agreed on a consensus list before the end of the deadline fixed by the Commission. Meanwhile, both camps went to court over the primaries. Simultaneously, two court judgements on the matter were passed. On the one hand, there was a judgement from a State High Court in Gusau which clearly said that the APC conducted primaries in Zamfara State, contrary to the position of INEC, on the other hand, another judgement from a Federal High Court in Abuja ruled that the party did not conduct valid primaries, as a result, it is ineligible to field candidate for the election.

Zamfara’s case is a clear testimony to the fact that where internal democracy is compromised, the action has its spiralling effects, with unimaginable collateral damages to the unity of a political party. On January 30, 2019, INEC did not leave anyone guessing about the fate of the APC candidates in Zamfara State when it barred the party from contesting the 2019 elections. The electoral umpire announced its approved final list of candidates for the governorship, State Assembly and FCT Area Council elections, pointing out that there were 1,066 for the Governorship elections, 14,583 for the State Assembly elections and 806 for FCT Area Council elections broken down in 105 Chairmen candidates and 701 Councillorship candidates (INEC Press Release, January 30, 2018). In the case of Zamfara, INEC maintained its original position that the APC did not conduct primaries and therefore “is not eligible to field candidates for the 2019 elections.

It should be noted that in this logjam INEC had consistently reaffirmed its commitment to abide by the verdict of the court. INEC’s commitment to obeying all court judgements compelled it go back and forth, depending on the update of the court judgement on the issue. Therefore, the electoral umpire could not act in a situation whereby two contradictory judgements by two courts of competent

jurisdiction were passed on the same day (INEC Press Release, January 30, 2019). The Commission's dilemma stems from the desire to uphold the law, otherwise its decision to bar APC from contesting the election would have been a thing of the past.

Undoubtedly, the political topsy-turvy on Zamfara primaries did not end with the two contradictory court judgements. Barely two days to two strands of elections scheduled for February 23 and March 9, 2019, the Court of Appeal sitting in Abuja set aside the judgement of the Federal High Court, Abuja, for what it called "lack or want of jurisdiction on the part of the lower court". Again, the judgment compelled INEC to eat its words and consequently announced, in compliance with the order that APC could participate in the 2019 elections. Hence, the Commission restored the party to the ballot in the National Assembly, Governorship and State House of Assembly elections (*Sahara Reporters*, February 22, 2019). Eventually, it seemed the court had salvage the situation for the APC but subsequent development on the matter proved to the contrary. Nonetheless, with the court verdict and 'clearance' of the APC for the election, polls were conducted as scheduled on February 23, and March 9, 2019, respectively. MukhtarIdris polled 534,541 votes to defeat his closest opponent, Bello Matawalle of the PDP who scored 189,452 votes, while Governor Abdul'AzeezYari was declared winner of Zamfara West Senatorial election with 153,626 votes, while Lawal Hassan of the PDP scored 69, 293 votes.

With the outcome of the 2019 election results in Zamfara State, it seemed that all was put to rest as far as the court cases on the party primaries in the APC were concerned. Regrettably, it was not yet *Uhuru* for the party as the Supreme Court nullified APC candidates' election in the state on May 24, 2019. The court did not stop at that, it went further to declare PDP winner of the elections in the state, noting that all votes cast for the APC should be considered as "wasted votes" and that all political parties with the second highest votes in the elections and the required spread are elected to the various elections (*Solacebase*, May 24, 2019). Similarly, the court awarded the cost of N10 million against APC in favour of the KabiruMarafa faction of the party and other respondents on the suit. Thus, leveraging on her commitment to obeying all court judgements, INEC, once again, complied with the Supreme Court verdict and declared the victory of the PDP's candidate, Bello Matawalle as winner of the March 9, 2019 election.

APC's Woes in Some States in the Federation

Zamfara State was not the only state in the epicenter of the political battle that engulfed the APC during the party's state primaries. A similar experience resulted in the banning of candidates of the APC in Rivers State. There, two parallel party

congresses were held, which both produced party leaders and all went ahead to conduct parallel primaries in the state. The former governor of the state, Rotimi Amaechi, controlled the recognized party structure against Senator Mr. Magnus Abe, whose resort to legal action yielded fruit with the Supreme Court judgement, backing the High Court order nullifying the APC congress which produced Mr. Ojukaye Amachree, an ally of Mr. Amaechi, as the substantive chairman of the party in the state.

The political tango that consumed the party was akin to the fight for political hegemony by the two political juggernauts in Rivers State; two political personalities with two political factions within the APC producing two candidates, Mr. Tonye Cole and Senator Magnus Abe, emerging from parallel governorship primaries conducted by both factions of the party in the state. The former belonged to and emerged from the Rotimi Amaechi-led, which conducted indirect primary, while the latter faction adopted direct governorship primary across different local government areas in the state, which produced Abe as the governorship candidate for the party. Even before the primaries, Mr. Dumo Lulu-Briggs, who was also a governorship aspirant on the platform of the APC, accused Amaechi of imposing his preferred aspirant, Cole, on the party. Contestations were high about the sanctity of each primaries conducted in the state leading to the High Court nullification of all the primaries, and by implication barring the APC from fielding candidates for governorship, Senate, House of Representatives and House of Assembly elections. Thus, without any out of court settlement of the APC crisis in Rivers State, the party, has once again, lost the opportunity to contest the 2019 elections.

The action of the Imo State governor, Rochas Okorocha when he considered the whole of the APC's electoral constituency in the state as, to use Michel's words, a "family property" (1962:127) by trying to impose his in-law, Uche Nwosu, as the governorship candidate of the party is a clear manifestation of the role of the oligarchs and their style of primaries. This also explains why one of the central areas of disputes that irked the sensibilities of the aggrieved APC members in these states is the disrespect to the constitution of the party, which include the illegal substitution of aspirants who emerged victorious, non-compliance with the registered list of voters during indirect primaries and vote buying, among other notable irregularities.

In fact, the situation for the APC was very hazy before the 2019 election in some states that it controlled power and those that it stood the chance of winning. Again, the party was factionalized in Delta State where a Federal High Court in Asaba had temporarily barred the party, a day to the deadline by INEC, from presenting candidates. In Ebonyi State, there was a serious irregularity, which affected the credibility of the APC primaries in the state. Though the National

Secretariat of the party upheld the elections conducted on September 30, 2018, and presented the party's governorship candidate, the primaries were not credible. In fact, the contention was over the Ezza South and Ikwo Local Government Areas' delegate list. It was contended that the list brought by the National Working Committee Chairman, Senator DamingoObande, was different from the list used during the presidential primaries of the party held on September 28, 2018. In other words, as one of the gubernatorial aspirants of the APC in the state, Bannered Odoh argued, the credibility of the governorship primaries was affected by the failure of the NWC to use the original list of delegates from the two local government areas (Interview with *Punch*, October 28, 2018, p.10).

In Ogun State, it was the political interest of the governor of the state, Senator Ibikunle Amosun, who clearly threw his weight on Adekunle Akinlade, a member of the House of Representatives for governorship that created a problem for the party. The governor who vowed that Akindale would succeed him faced his Waterloo when the National Chairman of the APC, Adams Oshiomhole, submitted the name of DapoAbiodun to INEC. Unlike in Zamfara, Rivers and Delta states, primary elections were held in Ogun State within the stipulated deadline, it was, however, marred by irregularities in favour of the governor's anointed aspirant. At a point, it was the secretary to the government of Ogun State who was announcing the results of the primaries until it occurred to him that he had no power to do so before he finally handed over the assignment to the Chairman of the party (Interview, *Punch*. October 28, 2018). In other words, as the 2019 election approached and the need to conduct primaries arose, some governors were reluctant to let go of the political space they have a grip on, a situation that lays bare the inherent contradictions that has been trailing political parties in the country.

In short, if the experience of the actions of Amosun in Ogun State is anything to go by, the pronouncement of the sitting governor is what can be translated to mean consensus. In fact, Governor Amosun went to the extent of proclaiming himself as the next Senator through consensus. He wanted the incumbent senator from his Senatorial Zone, Senator Tejuoso, to step aside so that at the end of his tenure as governor of Ogun State, he (Amosun) would proceed to the Senate. Through his pronouncement, Amosun went to the extent of announcing the next Speaker of the state House of Assembly, the Deputy Speaker and the eight seats of the Assembly, saying that seven out of this number would not return, and only one would return (Oshiomhole, cited in *Punch*, November 3, 2018). Clearly, unlike in the past democratic experiments, consensus, as Ikechukwu (2015) observes, has become a means of convincing aspirants, sometimes by force, to step aside for another aspirant, especially a strong contender or a weak but an influential party member.

Suffice it to say that the APC's national leadership has not squarely addressed its challenges as a political party, particularly its lack of sound management of internal party squabbles since its formation. What is apparent with the party is the fact that its membership in states with influential ministers, governors or strong party juggernauts are divided, mainly factionalized as a result of the struggle for the control of the party in their states. Thus, the struggle for political hegemony and control of the party machinery in states have engendered conflict of varying proportion, particularly in states where the governors are finishing their eight-year term in office like Zamfara State. Hence, a political party that controls power in a state is more prone to primary election crisis because of the high stakes involved in the struggle for power and the possibility of being re-elected in the next election. This explains why the APC had been bedevilled by high level of crisis in their primaries, compared to the PDP in the build up to the 2019 elections. However, this is not to suggest that the two biggest parties were the only ones that experienced turbulence in their primaries. Other newly registered political parties that did not have elected public officers also experienced monumental party primary crisis. The magnitude of the political crisis differs from one party to the other, but the nature of political division in each party, its varying political interests and the character of its key players involved essentially determined it. It is in this connection that one can understand the lingering feud of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) over its presidential primaries.

The SDP, which was an offshoot of the PDP's breakaway political personalities was caught up in internal wrangling following its October 6, 2018 presidential party primaries that saw Donald Duke polling 812, while Jerry Gana polled 611. Accordingly, Duke was declared winner of the primaries, however Gana who was dissatisfied with the outcome of the election proceeded to court requesting to be declared winner on grounds of party's failure to consider its zoning and rotation formula embedded in its constitution. The formula states that both the chairman and the flag bearer of the party should not come from the same zone. This was however the case, contrary to the provision of article 15 (3) of the SDP constitution, because OluFalaé who is the chairman of the party hails from the south, likewise Donald Duke, who is the party's flag bearer.

On December 14, 2018, a Federal High Court sitting in Abuja sacked Duke and declared Jerry Gana winner of the party's primaries in line with the constitution of the party. The court also ordered Duke to stop parading himself as the party's flag bearer for the presidential election. By this time the party was divided along supporters of the Duke and Gana. The division became more apparent when the chairman of the party appealed to party members not to attend the unveiling of Gana's campaign programme slated for December 29, 2019, but in defiance of this plea members of the National Working Committee of the SDP joined Gana to unveil

the party's campaign programme (*Leadership*, Wednesday, January 16, 2019: 27). Later, the last straw that broke the camel's back in compounding the party's crisis was the Court of Appeal verdict in Abuja on January 24, 2019, which set aside the judgement of Abuja High Court which declared Jerry Gana as the presidential candidate of the SDP, restoring the results of the October 6, 2018 presidential primaries.

Lessons Learned and Wake Up call for Political Parties Ahead of the 2023 Primaries

It is important to note that the Zamfara experience of the APC was not the only case study in the political party imbroglio that greeted political party primaries in the build up to the 2019 general elections. However, the Zamfara case is an exceptional experience that was made possible because internal democracy and party supremacy was assaulted the most. Clearly, it depicts lack of party organization with institutionalized channels of conflict resolution mechanisms. Ordinarily, where political interests intersect and ego supersedes reason, compromise and tolerance, are not likely to be created. This is the collateral damage of individual actions and interest as against the collective goal, as demonstrated in Yari's monopolization of his state's political space.

Similarly, electoral violence in the state was in sight given the underlying chain of reactions emanating from the frequent cancellation of the party primaries in the state and the failure of the rival factions to sheath their swords and allow for peaceful conduct of primaries. All efforts made to curtail violence, including the peace agreement reached in a meeting with all the governorship aspirants in attendance organized at the instance of Zamfara State Police Headquarters on September 30, 2018, was to no avail. The internal cohesion of the party in the state was tested, so was the unity, discipline, solidarity and sense of common cause. For example, like in Ogun State where Governor Amosun accused the national chairman of the APC of colluding with what he described as the "Lagos cabals" to manipulate the primaries in favor of DapoAbiodun, after the cancellation of the botched primaries in Zamfara State by the NWC of the APC, Governor Yari also accused the national chairman of his party of having personal interest in the state elections. Yari showered derogatory remarks on Oshiomhole that left no one in doubt that the spirit of camaraderie and party discipline in the APC has ashamedly fallen. In fact, the sour relationship between the state chapter of the party and its national leadership reached a climax when Governor Yari vociferously declared that the committee set up by the national chairman of his party should not step its feet in the state. In Yari's words:

I want to say it categorically; they should never step into Zamfara for one minute.... I, Abdul'azeezYari, governor of Zamfara State, head of government and security, I am saying that the committee sent by Oshiomhole to come and do a dirty job should not dare come into Zamfara State. We are ready to be taken to the graveyard tomorrow. It is fight to finish (Quoted in Ahmed Online, 2018).

Statements such as these are not only horrendous but also inciting in a nation that has been trying to lay a foundation of a viable democracy on the pillars of the rule of law and political party discipline. The governor did not stop there, even the INEC Chairman who announced that APC in Zamfara State would not participate in the 2019 elections on grounds of not conducting primaries was not spared by Yari's improper conduct. During the grand finale of his campaign rallies in his hometown, TalataMafara, held on Friday February 8 2019, Yari swore that unless his candidates are enlisted to contest the 2019 elections there would not be elections in Zamfara State and the entire country (*AR News*, February 10, 2019).

It is noteworthy that the Zamfara State experience is a big reminder that there is no alternative to peaceful, credible and fairly conducted party primaries in the institutionalization of democratic practice. As INEC Chairman, MahmoodYakubu, aptly averred:

It is clear that properly conducted party primaries are cardinal to the proper internal functioning of political parties, the electoral process and our democratic system at large. Therefore, political parties must take very seriously the conduct of primaries according to all extant rules, including the monitoring of the processes by INEC to avoid a repeat of the Zamfara experience (Text of Press Conference, Saturday May 25, 2019).

It is also important to point out that in most of the crisis-ridden state party primaries, there were lapses created by the National Working Committee of the APC. Whereas in Zamfara State, the NCW was firm on its earlier stand that primaries did not hold, it was a different issue altogether in Ebonyi State where the party constitution was not respected in the conduct of the exercise. Worst still, in Lagos, the NWC delegation to the state said election did not hold in the state governorship primary. Later, the National Secretariat of the party in Abuja made a U-turn on the same day to say Sanwo-Olu had won the election. Meanwhile, in a situation whereby the national organ of the APC was on several instances accused of partisanship on matters of state

primaries, party loyalty and discipline is likely to suffer, if not completely eroded. For example, following the INEC verdict, which allowed, in compliance with the court ruling, Zamfara State APC to contest for the 2019 elections, the party's aspirant in the flawed primaries, Senator KabiruMarafa unequivocally said:

There is a limit to loyalty. My loyalty first and foremost is to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, because we must have Nigeria before we can have the Senate. So, my loyalty is first to my God and to my people, APC is not a religion... So, even if it means APC loses in Zamfara State, I don't give a damn. After all, the crisis that we are in today started with the APC itself (quoted in *Daily advent.com*, 30 January, 2019).

Thus, in reality, party primaries in the build up to the 2019 general elections in some states have rendered the APC vulnerable to internal frictions, accusations and counter accusations which inevitably led to anti-party activities perpetrated by state executives and leading party members. One of the most shocking anti-party activities involving an APC member was the action of Wakkalla, who served as deputy governor to Governor Abdul'azeezYari. Wakkalla's relationship with Yari turned sour when he declared his intention to join the race for governorship in the state. Upon the Supreme Court verdict, which annulled the election of APC candidates in Zamfara State, Matawalle, the PDP governor-elect of the state, appointed Ibrahim Wakkalla as chairman of his transition committee, a position which the latter served with delight as a member the APC. In Ogun State, AdekunleAkinlade and a host of other prominent APC members dumped the party and defected to Allied People's Party (APM) at the behest of the embattled Governor Amosun. By the time the APC presidential campaign team visited Ogun State for electioneering campaign, the state chapter of the party was already deeply enmeshed in the crisis of party primaries. The fallout of the divided loyalty arising from the state primaries was publicly manifested when the national chairman of the APC, Adams Oshiomhole took to the stage to present the flag bearer of the party, DapoAbiodun. The aggrieved APM supporters who attended the rally in large numbers at the M.K.O Abiola International Stadium went wild, shouted and hurled various objects at Oshiomhole, regardless of the fact that President Muhammadu Buhari, Vice President and many other notable national party stalwarts were in attendance (*Sahara Reporters*, February 11, 2019).

The awkwardness of the behaviour of the APC members did not stop in Ogun State as governor of Imo State, Rochas Okorocha, was at loggerheads with the national chairman of the party over the state's primary election, which produced Senator Hope Uzodinma as the governorship candidate of the party, as against Uche Nwosu. Okorocha not only described the party primaries in the state as a robbery,

accusing Oshiomhole of masterminding what he called the ‘injustice’ meted out on aspirants, but also went a step further by calling for the arrest of the chairman of the APC primary election committee in Imo State, Ahmed Gulak. The latter was said to have left the state at the peak of the primary election crisis alleging that he and three other members of the 12-member committee were targeted for kidnapping. Therefore, the result of the primaries in Imo State was later announced from the National Headquarters of the APC in Abuja, which pronounced Uzodinma as the winner (*Daily Post*, October 3, 2018). This singular action led to an avalanche of anti-party activities. Okorochoa and his supporters backed the governorship candidate of the Action Alliance (AA) in the state. The same was the case in Ondo State where Akeredolu openly declared his support to candidates who defected to AA after losing out in the APC primaries.

The anti-party activities of the aggrieved governors of the states who were not favoured by party primaries went awry towards the general elections in January, a political group within the APC under the auspices of Ondo State Youth Alliance (OSYA) in Ondo State called for the expulsion of the governors of Ondo and Imo States, RotimiAkeredolu and RochasOkorochoa respectively, from the party over their relationship with the Action Alliance (AA), a party which had adopted the presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) (*Leadership*, January 16, 2019:23). As was expected, on Friday March 1, 2019, the APC National Working Committee announced the suspension of Okorochoa and Amosun, alongside the Director General of Voice of Nigeria, Osita Okechukwu and Minister of Niger Delta, UsaniUsani, for anti-party activities. The trail of suspension of party members after the 2019 general elections was also recorded in Zamfara State when Senator Marafa, the immediate deputy governor of the state, Ibrahim Wakkalla and a member of the House of Representatives, representing Kaura Namoda/ BirninMagaji constituency were expelled by the state chapter of the APC, certainly Yari’s faction, on account of anti-party activities, barely five days after the swearing-in of the state governor, Matawalle. Simultaneously, Marafa’s faction of the APC in the state also announced the expulsion of the former governor and the deputy national chairman of the party (North), Lawal Shu’aibu, for what it called scuttling the party’s chances in the state.

Although it is normal for those who lost out in the party primaries to complain, but in most cases, as the experience of the APC and some political parties in Nigeria in the build up to the 2019 elections suggest, there was no smoke without fire. Similarly, though crisis is a tradition in political parties especially when elections are closer, but the confusion that arose in the APC as a result of faulty handling of primaries suggests the absence of adequate conflict resolution mechanism. This can be observed from the exchange of words between the national chairman and the aggrieved members of the party. Party discipline was so precarious to the level where

unguarded utterances of the aggrieved prominent party members would make someone to confuse the personalities involved with motor park touts. For example, the APC national chairman accused Okorochoa of building a political dynasty in Imo State. In his immediate reaction to his suspension from APC, Okorochoa retorted by saying that he has also suspended Oshiomhole from the party, adding that the national chairman of the party was not only joking but also did not have such powers to suspend him. In Zamfara State, the embattled Senator Marafa had even gone to the extent of advising President Muhammadu Buhari to suspend his February 3, 2019 planned campaign visit to the state, which according to him, would amount to dignifying Governor Yari. To add salt to the injury of the APC, Marafa warned that if the party did not pay heed to his plea he and his supporters would not attend the APC presidential campaign rally in the state.

Comparatively, the experience of the APC with the primary elections would easily bring home the point that political parties in Nigeria are basically the same. Both in terms of their behaviour of circumventing the rules of the political game as contained in the country's enabling electoral laws and those created by themselves as enshrined in their respective constitutions; political parties do not always respect internal democracy. The latter is usually thrown to the back seat when the interest of some individual party members is at stake. Their appeal for democracy, rule of law and peaceful democratic change are mainly smokescreen designed to feather their nest or justify an existing order that serves their narrow political interests. Thus, whether one views the crisis of party primaries from the PDP or the party that came after it, that is, the APC, the overall question of electoral integrity is subjective. Party supremacy is usually relegated to the background and internal democracy is not always safeguarded. Therefore, the Zamfara experience of the Supreme Court ruling against the APC served as a guinea pig to other politically volatile states with high degree of subordination of party supremacy and circumvention of internal democracy.

In other words, the experience of party primaries in the APC is indicative of the erosion and weak institutional bases of party organizations in the country largely due to poor management of the divergent interests of members. For the APC, the crisis of primaries was compounded by the style of its national leadership, which the immediate past national chairman of the party, Chief John Odigie-Oyegun, called "agbero style of engagement" (*Daily Trust*, Monday June 3, 2019, p.14). Oshiomhole has sadly employed aggressive, rather than democratic participatory means of resolving the party's intractable political interests in most of the state primaries conducted. He was accused of highhandedness, with little regard for procedure; disrespect of the party's constitution, and partiality in handling group and factional interest to a point where some party comrades accused him of destabilizing the party ahead of the 2019 general elections. Therefore, at the end of the party primaries and

far away from the general elections, which saw APC's control of states in the country decimated, some governors and leaders of the party had called for the resignation of the party chairman. As a member of Rivers Unity House, one of the pro-APC groups put it thus:

I think the reasonable thing to do is for the APC as a party to ask Oshiomhole to vacate the seat. If we insist on understanding or characterizing the Next Level slogan of the APC, the kind of attitude that Adams Oshiomhole exhibited cannot be in tandem with the President's vision for Nigeria (Quoted in *Punch News*, June 1, 2019).

In fact, the party is divided between those who want Oshiomhole sacked and those that want him to retain his office. This dilemma has also been deeply entrenched among members of the National Working Committee of the party as calls for the resignation of the party chairman, following the controversies that surrounded some of the primaries conducted became, intensified. What has really made matters difficult for Oshiomhole to be removed as chairman of the party may not be unconnected with Article 21d (vi) of the party's constitution, which says:

Each organ of the party shall have power to remove a party officer or officers as the case may be from office at that level for failing to discharge his/her responsibilities, neglect and dereliction of duty or misconduct during his/her tenure of office through a vote of no confidence passed against such officer/officers by a two-thirds majority of members of the appropriate organ and voting subject to such officers' right to fair hearing (APC Constitution, undated).

In any case, with his background as labour aristocrat, Oshiomhole could hardly draw a line of distinction between labour activism, which requires dogmatism, and party politics, which always extols the virtues of carrying members along on the triad pillars of accommodation, compromise and bargaining. It is his failure to grasp the necessity of keeping the party one at the time when its unity was dearly needed to face the opposition parties in elections that were profoundly challenging that informed some of his nauseating utterances, particularly against the aggrieved party members and those among them who finally decided to defect to another party. For example, in a swift reaction to the 15 senators and 37 House of Representative members who left the APC prior to the 2019 general elections, Oshiomhole said he would not miss a sleep one minute over their defection because they are "big

masquerades with very little or no electoral value”! (*The Cable* July 24, 2018). Utterances like this one have become a regular feature of the national ruling party which is supposed to mend cracks with party members at any costs. It is little wonder that Oshiomhole, who met the party leading in about 26 out of 36 states in the Nigerian federation has, at the end of the general elections, saw it losing 6 states; Bauchi, Benue, Adamawa, Oyo, Imo and Zamfara. Some of these states were lost to the leading opposition party, the PDP, as the direct result of fraud in party primaries. The crisis of APC’s leadership reached the peak when the deputy national chairman of the party asked Oshiomhole to resign for his lack of leadership capability. The point to note is that the vote of confidence passed on Oshiomhole by 28 chairmen of the APC on June 6, 2019, after their meeting with the NWC, does not completely eliminate the allegation of ineptness labelled against Oshiomhole’s party stewardship.

At another level, one of the takeaway home points from primaries that directly serve as a thorn in the flesh of democracy is the role of the judiciary in complicating issues through multiple rulings on court cases pertaining primaries before it. Either through the use of technicalities of law or procrastination of ruling, the judiciary has further created confusion on primaries. In Zamfara State, within a spate of a week, there were two different court pronouncements coming from a High Court in the state and an Abuja High Court, which issued different orders concerning INEC’s decision to exclude the APC from participating in the general elections. Though the final instructive and commendable ruling has also portrayed the institution of the judiciary as the last home of the common man for courageously instilling discipline in the case of Zamfara and Rivers States, such display of justice has not been made in the case of Kano PDP’s primary election, which was alleged, did not hold and petition over its outcome had since been made by one of the party’s governorship aspirants, Ibrahim Al-Amin.

Another lesson of flawed party primaries is their capacity to instill a dilemma in the minds of people with integrity to join politics. Credible people with high level of integrity find it awful to operate under a political dynasty that does not provide justice but only promote the cavalier attitude of a few “god fathers” who promote undemocratic tendencies as they wish. In a country that requires crops of compatriots with progressive minds to turn around its past and current political dents for institutionalization of democracy, political oligarchs with their penchant for compromising leadership selection and recruitment, a function that has been exclusively a party affair, scares people with uprightness venturing into the murky waters of politics. Those who have the skills to engage in politics could hardly be persuaded to join it and aspire for public office essentially because its trajectories are not only bumpy but also unpredictable considering the fact that it has become a domain where clientelism and neo-patrimonial relationship need to be established

within a party organization for one to succeed. The control of party machinery by the oligarchs is one of the reasons why Nigeria's state elections are more violent than the national ones (*The Economist*, March 9, 2019) and it is partly one of the reasons why the number of inconclusive elections in the 2019 general election are very high in states where primaries were not conducted smoothly.

Conclusion

In general, it can be said that unlike in the past experiments with democracy, the Fourth Republic has further exposed the fragility of political parties in Nigeria, particularly the ruling parties. As the 2019 general elections were coming closer and the demand for the conduct of primary elections to fulfill the requirements of fielding candidates became obvious, selection of candidates was governed by the interests of the state governors and, in some cases the proclivities of leadership of political organizations. With particular reference to the ruling APC in some states, crisis emanating from compromised party primaries and clientelist networks predominated the conduct of elections. This phenomenon had negatively affected the greater electoral success of the party in these states. Thus, it can be averred that political parties in Nigeria, particularly the APC, which has been badly hit by contrived primaries, found themselves sinking in the sea of internal crisis. The situation not only trailed the party and eventually consumed it, even in elections that they stood the chance of winning in a landslide, but also would prompt one to wonder if the party can withstand its enormous challenges ahead of the next general elections. For the APC, the post-election trauma of the primary elections has only created a situation of easy condition that made party discipline difficult, if not impossible to thrive.

Thus, *esprit de corps*, unity of purpose and democratic process of candidate selection are fundamentally guided by the degree of party institutionalization and the party's ability to conscientiously, both in theory and practice, conduct credible, acceptable and free primary elections. In the absence of adequate conflict management machinery to settle expected and unexpected disputes, anti-party activities will continue to creep in with dire collateral damages. Similarly, in the face of a serious threat to internal democracy usually posed by "god fathers", irate APC members would continue to create a lee-way of ruining the party clandestinely or in the open, as some aggrieved governors or their victims in some states had done.

For APC to reclaim its lost victory in some crisis-ridden states, or even win more in 2023, it requires a constructive process of political orientation and change of attitude through adherence to the rule of law, justice and fair play in the way primaries are conducted. The existing power relations in which oligarchs have field

days have to be checked when party supremacy is given prominence. As it is today, the process of conflict resolution in the APC can only be made comprehensive when it is embedded in the spirit of reconciliation that extols the virtues of “No victor; No vanquish”. Meanwhile, APC’s appeal to the people is galvanizing around the popularity of President Muhammadu Buhari not its leadership structure, a situation that could easily jeopardize the party’s future unless an all-inclusive dialogue with its members is carried out with a view to solving the party’s challenges, through what I may call a “surgical operation”. Through this process, aggrieved members can easily sheath their swords, adhere to due process and restore and strict adherence to the party’s constitution is guaranteed. The need for an overhaul of the party leadership at the national, state, local government and ward levels where the inferno of rogue primaries thwarted its electoral victory is urgently required. For any party to thrive and achieve greater heights in electoral outcome it must cultivate the culture of internal democracy and allow party supremacy to reign otherwise, the oligarchs whose narrow conception of democracy is informed by power, influence and wealth will hijack the party. Therefore, Getting rid of the proverbial arrow that penetrated the flesh of democracy requires a “surgical operation” that would set parties free from the ‘oligarchs’, thereby institutionalizing the practice of internal democracy and party supremacy, and the flourishing of the rule of law, justice and fair play in the way primaries are conducted.

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**GOVERNANCE AND SECURITY CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA: AN
ASSESSMENT OF PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI
ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE TO HERDSMEN/FARMERS
CRISIS IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study assessed the President Muhammadu Buhari Administration's response to Herdsmen/Farmers crisis in Nigeria. Secondary and primary sources of data employed for the study using content analysis tool. It contended that though one of the major responsibilities of any government is the protection of lives and properties of its citizens, however, insecurity has posed a major challenge to governance in Nigeria. It observed that the security challenges in Nigeria since 1999 has been the herdsmen/ farmers crisis which has caused untold hardship to the nation leading to loss of lives and property. Thus, the 2015 Global Terrorist Index asserted that the Fulani herders are the fourth deadliest militant group in the world. Though Buhari administration has making some frantic efforts to curtail the herdsmen/ farmers crisis, but there has been a general perception that the administration's efforts have not yielded the desired results. The finding indicated that the problem is more complex than what appears on the surface. It was also discovered that the military and other security personnel who were involved in the crisis are not only versed in conventional war strategies but some of them are non-Fulanis whereas the herdsmen usually employed unconventional strategy of gorilla-like approach. Further finding also suggested the politicisation of the herdsmen/farmers crisis which have divided the people along ethnic, religion and political lines in Nigeria. It is therefore recommended inter alia that the issue of indigenes/settler and other divisive tendencies in the country should be addressed while clearly demarcated routes should also be developed for the herdsmen to take care of their cattle.

Keywords: crisis, farmers, herdsmen, governance

Introduction

Nigeria as a nation state is under a severe internal socio-economic and security threat. At a more general level, the threat has special economic, political and environmental dimensions. Each of these dimensions has greatly affected the nation's stability and can be traced to the Fulani-herdsmen and farmers clash, ethnic militant armies, ethnic and religious conflicts, poverty, the boko-haram insurgency, armed robbery, corruption, economic sabotage and environmental degradation. Nigeria is currently been threatened by Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis and therefore, considered to be a major potential threat affecting Nigeria's socio-economic as well as political atmosphere. The herdsmen/farmers crisis is posing a serious obstacle to the economic and social development of the affected part of the country in particular and the nation at large. Fulani herdsmen and farmers have become a major threat to the national security and development of Nigeria due to the fact that its increased operation has caused diversion and removed government attention on some key areas of the economy, as huge amount of human and material resources are channelled into curbing the menace (Babagana, Madaki, Ibrahim Adamu & Guja, 2019). Violent conflict and crisis in Nigeria, like other parts of the world, have created a rift in human relations, caused serious threat to Nigeria's attempt at nation-building.

Crisis is inevitable as long as people live together, especially in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious community like Nigeria. However violence leaves people with various forms of retardation and underdevelopment resulting from the destruction of lives, farmland and properties. The menace of violent crises has been on the increase in Nigeria, especially since the country returned to democratic rule in 1999. For instance, Olusegun Obsanjo administration of 1999 to 2007 inherited the Niger-Delta militancy. This also continued under the Late Umar Yar'adua/Goodluck Jonathan administration from 2007 to 2015. Each of these administrations has adopted different approaches towards resolving the various crises that had plagued the country during their reins.

Though the herdsmen/farmers crisis is not a new phenomenon in the history of Nigeria national crisis, the crisis has gained greater momentum in recent years. President Goodluck Jonathan administration attempted to solve the herders/farmers crisis by recovering and improving the hitherto existing grazing routes which had been encroached upon by farmers. A sum of one hundred billion naira was said to have been released by the Central Bank of

Nigeria to the thirty-six states of the federation in this regard (International Crisis Group, 2017). Unfortunately no routes were recovered not to talk of improving the routes.

On assumption of office on 29th May, 2015, President Muhammadu Buhari assured the nation in his inaugural speech that he was going to tackle the issue of security challenges. The, but the crisis seemed to have become more pronounced in the countdown to the 2019 General Elections. The Buhari administration efforts towards addressing the inherited herders/farmers crisis have manifested in a three step approach. These three steps are the short, middle and a long term measures to curb the crisis. The short term measure included plan to introduce grazing areas (RUGA) in parts of the country pending the time a more permanent solution could be developed. This has been rejected by most of the states in the South and Central parts of the country. However, the crisis between the two groups continued unabated and the security agents seem to be incapable of curtailing the crisis.

The paper therefore examined the approach of the Buhari administration towards resolving the farmers and herders crisis in Nigeria. It also identified the genesis, causes and consequences of the farmers-herders crisis with a view to clarifying the alleged political colouration and complacency of Buhari administration towards resolving the crisis. In achieving this objective, the remaining sections of the paper have been divided into six sections. The first section section is on conceptual clarification, section two focuses on the theoretical frameworks, section three dealt with causes of the farmers and herdsmen conflict in Nigeria, section four discusses the consequences of the herdsmen-farmers conflict, section five examines President Buhari Administration's response to the herdsmen/farmers' crisis while section six concludes with some extant recommendations. It relied heavily on secondary source of data for its appropriateness.

Conceptual Clarification

For avoidance of ambiguity, some concepts used in this work are clarified within the context they have been applied.

Governance

Governance is a generic word which defines how a people, an organisation or group are administered. This could be by the norms of the society or the use of law and order. Governance, according to the World Bank

Report (1989) (cited in Beetseh, 2018, p.100) “is the exercise of political power in the management of a nation’s affairs.” Similarly, the United Nations (UN) viewed “governance as the formal and informal arrangements that determine how public decisions are made and how public actions are carried out from the perspective of maintaining a country’s constitutional values” (Yagboyaju & Akinola, 2019, p.2). It signifies the way and manner through which society arranges and administers the rules that direct policy making and execution. As a corollary, governance presumes a power configuration with its own ordered categories, integrating the economic, social, cultural, and political strains within the society, and hence extending an intrinsic drive which absorbs the receding tide and currents of pressures toward guaranteeing serene and effectual solutions to lifetime problems challenging the society and its people. For the purpose of this study, governance is conceived as the mechanism by which the Nigerian people and resources are managed by the ruling elites.

Insecurity

The concept of insecurity denotes diverse meanings including absence of safety, danger, hazard, uncertainty, absence of protection and non-existence of safety. Beland (2005) considered insecurity as a state of fear or anxiety owing to dearth or lack of protection. Achumba, Ighomereho & Akpan-Robaro (2013) defines insecurity from two viewpoints. First, insecurity is the state of being exposed or subject to danger or menace of danger, where danger is the state of being vulnerable to harm or injury. Second, insecurity is the state of being opened to threat or apprehension, where apprehension is a unclear hostile emotion that is felt in anticipation of some calamity. These definitions of insecurity underline a key point that those affected by insecurity are not only unsure or unsuspecting of what would transpire but they are also exposed to the intimidations and dangers when they happen. In the context of this paper insecurity is viewed as a violation of peace and security, whether religious, historical, ethno-regional, civil, social, economic, and political that cause persistent conflicts like that of farmers-herders conflicts and leads to vicious damage of lives and property.

The Herdsmen

The herdsmen are Fulani migrant ethnic population who are scattered throughout many parts of Africa, from Lake Chad in the East to the Atlantic

Coast. According to Iro, (1994, p.22), Fulani herdsmen or Fulani pastoralists are nomadic or semi-nomadic Fulani people whose primary occupation is raising livestock. They are largely located in the Sahel and semi-arid parts of West Africa but due to relatively recent changes in climate patterns many herdsmen have moved further south into the savannah and tropical forest belt of West Africa. The herdsmen are found in countries such as Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Guinea, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Cameroon. The Fulani are the major breeders of cattle in Nigeria and own over 90% of Nigeria's livestock population (Alhassan, 2013, p.129). Thus, we have referred to herdsmen in this paper as the pastoral Fulani cattle rearers who are found with their cattle in most parts of the Nigerian state in search of grazing and water for their cattle. They move across the country seasonally in search of grasses and water for their cattle.

Herdsmen/Farmers Conflict

The phrase herdsmen/farmers conflict is typically used to refer to conflict between herding and farming groups of people. The conflict is not a recent development, but it has been on for long. However, what is new is the frequency of occurrence, the sophisticated weapon currently being used, the easy availability of such weapons as well as the political and religious colouration the crisis now wears. The Fulani herdsmen and farmers clashes have pitched Nigerians with their diversity against each other in parts of the country. The conflict has had devastating effects on inter-group relationships in the country, especially in the North central and Southern parts of the country leading to new trends in the polarisation of communities.

As earlier mentioned, since the return to democratic rule in Nigeria, crisis of varying dimensions and magnitudes have ravaged the country. The most deadly has remained the Boko-Haram insurgency. Unfortunately, the herdsmen/farmers crisis is becoming more deadly than the previous ones. In the opinion of Brimah, Bolaji and Ibikunle (2014, p.224) "the major sources of crisis cum insecurity in Nigeria is injustice, exploitation, domination, misplacement of priority, biases in social administration by the leaders and likes." This position was anchored on the social-conflict paradigm which sees society as an arena of inequality that generates conflict and change. Conflicts that take place within a society are normally due to lots of varying factors. In the same vein, works of several conflict scholars such as Alhassan (2013), Basil and Ekpeyemi (2016 cited in Idowu, 2016), Solagberu and Oluwasegun

(2010) among others have revealed that several explanations can be offered for these variety of conflicts.

Theoretical Frameworks

The herdsmen/farmers crisis can be explained using lots of conflict theories. Economic theory, human needs theory and relational theory were found to be relevant to navigate this paper's discussion. Proponents of the economic theory believe that behind every conflict, pecuniary benefit/interest is involved. The contest for control of resources among or by different groups often lead to conflict. In the extant case, land is involved. Both the farmers and the herdsmen depend on land and its resources for their survival and any obstacle that stands in its way will be vehemently resisted, hence the persistent crisis between the two groups in parts of Nigeria.

Human needs theory is another theory that can be used to explain the crisis between the herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria. According to this theory, man has some basic needs such as physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs. Any attempt to deny one access or hinders access to one or more of these needs could lead to crisis. However, because of its aptness to the topic, relational conflict theory is adopted in this work.

Relational theories generally attempt to provide explanations for violent conflicts between groups by exploring sociological, political, economic and historical relationships between such groups (Faleti, 2000, p.54). Within the princint of the relational theory is the political economy paragdim. In their explanations, Coser and Maoz (1982 cited in Faleti, 2000, p. 54) opined that "in situations where multiple groups share a common resource that is fixed in nature, the chances that each will attempt to eliminate, neutralise or injure the other or monopolise such a resource is as high as the tendency to enter into negative relationship."

The crisis between the herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria is largely over grazing land and water for the herds and farmland belonging to the farmers. However, the situation has been compounded by the refusal of the successive governments in the country to find solution to the problem. Perhaps the structure and organisation of the state coupled with other factors have escalated the problem to the level it has attained in Nigeria today. Thus as a result of the need for use of land, which is a fix resource the two groups have been having problems over it. Unfortunately, successive governments have not been able to address the problem decisively.

Causes of the Farmers and Herdsmen Conflict in Nigeria

Conflict between farmers and herdsmen in the use of agricultural land are becoming fiercer and increasingly widespread in Nigeria, largely due to 'intensification and extensification' of production activities that are necessitated by increasing human population (Gefu & Kolawole 2005; Fasona & Omojola 2005 cited in Solagberu & Oluwasegun, 2010, p.1). The recent escalation of the crisis can thus be attributed to several factors. According to these scholars, population increase, desertification as well as other natural and man made factors have increased the rate of occurrence as well as its consequences. Studies conducted by Basil and Ekpeyemi (2016 cited in Idowu, 2016) have shown that, serious conflicts erupt between Fulani herdsmen and farmers over vast expanse of arable agricultural farmlands thereby posing serious threat to food security as well as democratic governance of the country. Similarly, The International Crisis Group (2017) reports asserted that:

Familiar problems which can be held responsible for the escalation of the crisis are; land and water use, obstruction of traditional migration routes, livestock theft and crop damage. Others are drought and desertification which have degraded pastures, dried up many natural water sources across Nigeria's far-northern Sahelian belt and forced large numbers of herders to migrate south in search of grassland and water for their herds.

In the report of his field work on herders/farmers crisis in Yobe state of Nigeria, Alhassan (2013, p.134) listed the followings as the major causes of the crisis:

- vii. destruction of crops by cattle and other properties (reservoirs, irrigational facilities and infrastructure) by the herdsmen themselves as claimed by farmers he interviewed
- viii. burning of rangelands, fadama and blockage of stock routes and water points by crop encroachment according to the herdsmen he interviewed.
- ix. increasing rate of cattle theft which is often accompanied by violence

- x. antagonistic perceptions and beliefs among farmers and herdsmen could compound conflict situation, especially due to failing institutions and fierce competition for resources.

These reasons are not peculiar to Yobe state. Closely related to the above reasons, Inagawa, Ega and Erhabor (1999 cited in Alhassan, 2013, p.134) listed the followings as the key underlying causes of farmer-herdsmen conflict in Nigeria:

- x. decline in internal discipline and social cohesion, as the adherence to the traditional rules regarding grazing periods, and the authority of the traditional rulers is breaking down. This is exacerbated by increase rent seeking of the formal and traditional authorities in managing resource access.
- xi. soil fertility on the traditional trek routes of the herdsmen becomes favourite cropping sites for farmers because of their improved fertility resulting from the concentration of animal manure from the trekking herds in these areas is another source of conflict. This is aggravated by the fragmented nature of the crop plot which makes prevention of animals straying in the crop plots difficult for the herders
- xii. inadequacy of grazing resources, as increasing crop cultivation (and increasing commercialisation of the crop-residues) and poor management of the existing grazing reserves have resulted in a significant reduction in available livestock feed resources, in particular in the Northern states.
- xiii. the regulation that 20% of the fadama would need to be set aside for grazing was not adopted by the concerned authority.

The International Crisis Group (2017) in its report added drought and desertification, loss of grazing reserves, change in pastoralism and farming practices, rural banditry, and cattle rustling, escalating conflicts across Northern Nigeria, erosion of traditional mechanism as causes of the escalating conflicts between the farmers and the herdsmen in parts of Nigeria. The worst hit states of Nigeria are Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa Kaduna and parts of Niger and Kogi states.

Aside the foregoing, study however observed some salient issues that have not been identified as the part of the main causes of the crisis. If they are

identified and addressed they may reduce, if not totally eradicate, not only the herdsmen/farmers crisis, but virtually all social conflicts in Nigeria. Some of these issues are enumerated below.

i. Colonially Designed Segregation and Divisions among Nigerians: one of the negative legacies brought about by colonial administration was the creation of artificial boundaries that divided hitherto homogenous groups. This forms the bedrock of ethnic violence in Nigeria as the policy of divide and rule placed some ethnic groups at vantage position over others (Godwin, 2013). Over the years Nigerians have become intolerant of one another. The case with the Fulani herdsmen is worst because as itinerant herders they move from one place to the other, particularly in the Middle Belt and Southern Nigeria with no place to call their own. Even the colonial grazing routes have been overtaken by farmers making land resources extremely difficult to access by the Fulani herders. One of the immediate measures proposed by the Buhari administration was to establish cattle ranches in all states of the federation. It is on record that while most states in the North have accepted and made available parcels of land for this purpose, most states in the North Central and Southern Nigeria are said to be opposed to this plan. The President Jonathan that preceded the Buhari administration was said to have released a sum of N100 million naira to each state of the federation to build cattle ranches for the use of the herdsmen and their cattle (*Vanguard Newspaper Online*, July 25, 2018). Unfortunately, no single ranch has been constructed and the money has not been accounted for. (International Crisis Group, 2017). What else can be the reason for the rejection of this proposal? It is believed that if there is tolerance among Nigerians, the mutual benefits that accrue from living happily together outweighs its disadvantages.

ii. The Role of the Nigerian Elites. This study agrees absolutely with Mashud, Adelabu and Adeoti (2016, p.174) that “most of the conflicts in Nigeria are triggered off by the elites and policy-makers in their struggle for scarce national resources.” They also quoted Albert (2001, p.10 cited in Mashud, Adelabu and Adeoti (2016) to have added that “the institutional frameworks, for the prevention and management of conflicts as enshrined in the constitution, are themselves overburdened by avoidable conflicts.” These, they say included the different arms of government at all levels, such that they are not in a position to positively and effectively respond to conflict situations.

Nigerian elites take pleasure and usually capitalises on primordial sentiments among the masses to ventilate their interests. They fan ember of ethnicity and religion differences to achieve their objectives. The only time these elites clash is when their interest is threatened by the unity of the masses. And the will always prevent this to happen.

Unlike in the case of the Boko-Haram insurgency, the herdsmen/farmers crisis reveals that under the Buhari administration, the affected state governments and the federal government are not on the same page. This is especially true of Benue state. The not-too-robust relationship between these institutions alluded to the politicisation of the crisis in this state. According to a report from a United Kingdom-based organisation, some governors and the opposition party in Nigeria are fuelling the crisis between the herdsmen and farmers across Nigeria (Amnesty International, 2018). The Bridge Centre reported that “there are possibilities that Chieftains of the opposition especially the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) are supporting killers in their desperation to get at the government of All Progressives Party (APC).” The Centre supported its claim with an instance of one Gana who was identified to be allegedly responsible for scores of deaths, including many that were initially attributed to herdsmen (Ibeh, 2018).

iii. Politicisation of the Herders/Farmers Crisis: the Centre for Social Justice, Equity and Transparency, also alluded to the politicisation of the herders/farmers crisis in Nigeria. Through its Executive Secretary, Isaac Ikpa, it opined that “... some politicians and unpatriotic Nigerians have turned it into a political game of chess with the sole aim of scoring political gains at the detriment of peace and economic stability in Nigeria” (*Vanguard Newspaper Online*, July 25, 2018). Thus, this allegation may not be far from the truth. The attitude of the Nigerian politicians, especially their desperation to win political power has always led to heightened tension in the country, especially when elections are at hand. They could also go to any extent to realize their objective no matter whose ox is geod. A former president has once said election was ‘ a do or die’ affairs and so it was as that year’s election was described by both local and international observers as the worst in the history of elections in Nigeria.

iv. Illpreparedness of the Security Agencies and Poor Response: Nigeria is regarded as one of the least policed states in the world (*Daily Post*, August 11,

2017) This is in addition to associated problems of inadequate training, insufficient modern equipment to fight crimes and corruption associated with their acquisition as reflected in the 'dasukigate' case. Intelligence gathering is also very poor and inadequate. Both the farmers and the herdsman have accused the security outfits of poor response to distress calls. Under the Buhari administration, the security response has been particularly questionable.

In February 2016, following public outcry over attacks by herders that killed scores of people in ten farming villages in the Agatu Local Government Area of Benue state, Buhari administration ordered an investigation into the killings. Till date nothing has been heard about the outcome of the investigation. On 24 April 2016, the Federal government through Information and Culture Minister, Lai Mohammed, stated that the government was working "silently" and promised towards ending the violence in few weeks (Isacc, n.d). Again, there was no follow up to that pledge. In April 2016, President Buhari ordered the police and military to "take all necessary action to stop the carnage" after widespread condemnation of an attack on Ukpabi Nimbo in Enugu state. After the directive, more farmer/herder clashes have erupted and hundreds have died too.

On 15 July 2016, the Chief of Defence Staff, General Gabriel Olonisakin muted the idea of "Operation Accord" to stop the violence. Nothing more was heard of that campaign. Following clashes in Southern Kaduna in late 2016, which killed between 200 to 800 people, the army deployed troops to the area, despite this attacks have continued (International Crisis Group, 2017, p.11)

In a nutshell, though, the response of the administration to attacks by the herdsman/farmers attacks have been not too impressive and positive. However, it will be unfair to assume that this attitude of the Nigerian security agencies and their poor response challenge is peculiar to the Buhari administration. It could be recalled that under Goodluck Jonathan administration, the the Boko-Haram insurgency also became intractable; whereby security agents could not foil the kidnap of the Chibok girls and could not prevent the occupation of about 14 local government areas in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states respectively. The challenge therefore appears to remain in the security architecture of Nigeria regardless of the administration.

Consequences of the Herdsmen-Farmers Conflict

An accurate account of the death toll resulting from herdsmen-farmers violence in Nigeria is difficult to come by due to the lack of a dedicated database. Therefore, most of the evidence comes from newspaper reports of various incidents involving the herdsmen and farmers in settled communities.

i. Loss of Civilian Lives and Properties: some sources claim that the conflicts have resulted in the loss of over 60,000 lives since 2001, making it deadlier than the notorious Boko Haram uprising. A British Broadcasting Corporation's report claimed that over 50,000 deaths were caused by the crisis between 2001 and 2004 alone. Of these deaths, women and children accounted for almost 35,000 (Nwosu, 2017). Some accounts even traced the violent confrontations to as far back as the 1990s or earlier. One study estimated the economic cost of the herdsmen-farmer conflicts in only the four states of Benue, Kaduna, Nassarawa and Plateau at about \$14 billion annually. Current figures are likely to be higher, especially with the spread of the conflict to other states (Nwosu, 2017, p.6).

No doubt, the herdsmen/farmers conflict has wrecked monumental havoc in Nigeria, most especially in the states in the North Central part of the country. The states with the highest level of occurrence and effect are Plateau, Nasarawa and Benue. Among these states, Benue state appears to be worst hit/affected. According to IFRA-The Nigeria Watch Project (2014):

the majority of incidents of violent death in the North Central region occurred in Benue, Plateau, and Nasarawa states. Of the total of 1,150 violent deaths recorded, Benue, Plateau, and Nasarawa states account for 679, 168 and 146 deaths respectively. Most of the violent deaths (786 of 1,150) resulted from clashes between herdsmen and farmers, representing more than two-thirds (68%) of the total number of deaths in the region.

Thus, the government has spent huge amount of money on the renovation of buildings, and infrastructures that has been destroyed by this conflict. Also, huge amount of funds from the country's budget has been spent on the compensation of families who have lost their loved ones to the Fulani-herdsmen and farmers crisis. Also, huge amount of money is being spent on the acquisition weapons, ammunition in other to equip the military to handle the situation on ground.

In Benue state alone, over 160,000 people have been displaced. To cater for them, the state has established three Internally Displaced Persons' camps. According to the state's Chairman of State Emergency Management Agency, millions of naira is being spent by the state government to maintain these camps and the people (*The Nation Newspaper*, February 9, 2018. p.7).

Though, there is the dearth of quantitative evaluation of the catastrophic attacks, available statistics has it in recent months, many people had been killed while the crisis has also led to the destruction of arable farmland and valuable properties worth several billions of naira. For instance, Part of the communal violence leading up to the 2019 election in Kajuru, Kaduna state, the government stated 130 Fulani were killed; 11 Adara were also killed; Miyetti Allah said 66 Fulani were buried and 65 remain missing (Busari, 2019a; Busari 2019b). In Agatu LGA of Benue State, 17 people were killed in an attack by Fulani herdsmen on Ebete (Oko, 2019); while ten people were confirmed killed in Nandu-Gbok village of Sanga LGA of Kaduna state after an attack by suspected Fulani herdsmen (Tauna, 2012). Residents suspect it is in revenge for an earlier attack where they say at least 11 cows and 28 sheep belonging to Fulani were slaughtered in the same area before the election. 12 Christians killed during the wedding with five people captured including the bride and groom in Tegina Kabata, Shiroro County, Niger state (*Morning Star News*, April 29, 2020).

ii. Negative Impacts on Sustainable Economic and Educational development: The crisis has dire consequences for sustainable economic and educational development in the regions of attack in particular and Nigeria in general. In the regions where the Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis is pervasive and properties destroyed potentially and in real terms, drag their economic fortune back by several steps. Beside the properties destroyed, economic life in those regions is automatically grounded to a halt. People are no longer free to go about their farming, economic and educational activities for fear of being killed. This is made worse as several thousands of people have migrated swiftly to other parts of Nigeria. The overall implication for sustainable development is that the farming, economic and educational activities are fast deteriorating. The murderous campaigns and vicious onslaughts on individuals and institutions provide highly unfavorable business environment for internal and foreign investment, which is a major factor in the achievement of sustainable development.

iii. Suspension of Farming Activities: Another major challenge posed by herdsman and farmers clash is that farming activities in some parts of Nigeria have been put to a halt. Farmers within this region find it hard to go to their farms as well as to get enough food crops to the market thereby, increasing prices of commodities in the market.

iv. Loss of Military and Security Personnel and Created Religious and Ethnic Divisions: The country has lost several military and security men to this conflict. All these have affected Nigeria's political, economic and social life. Thus, the crisis has cost Nigeria lots in terms of human, material and other resources. Apart from these losses, the crisis has also created or exacerbated religion and ethnic cleavages which has affected Nigeria's stride at nation-building. The country is currently more divided than before as epitomized in series of security challenges that have confronted the country since 1999. Thus, the crisis has affected the country on all fronts; socially, politically and economically.

President Buhari Administration Response to the Herdsmen/Farmers' Crisis and the Attendant Political Undertone

Like the Boko-haram insurgency and the Niger-Delta militancy, the Buhari administration inherited the herdsman/farmers crisis on assumption of office. As a matter of priority, the president, on assumption of office, directed his Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to formulate 'a comprehensive livestock development plan including measures to curb farmer-herders clashes.' The ministry submitted its report recommending short, medium and long term strategies, including development of grazing reserves and stock routes. President Muhammadu Buhari (*Premium Times*, 25 January, 2016). The proposed creation of grazing reserves does not go down well with the Governors of most states in the North Central and Southern States. They considered this as given undue favour to the herdsman. Unfortunately even the existing grazing land created by the colonial authorities have been over taken by the farmers given the herders no choice but to move southwards in search of pastures for their cattle. This inevitably brings the two groups into conflict.

When the crisis escalated, the administration reacted by deploying the normal police and later the military to the crisis states like Kaduna, Benue,

Nasarawa, Taraba and Niger states. In addition the following actions were taken by the administration to arrest the situation:

- i. The federal government has improved security measures in the trouble states in recent weeks by beefing security strength with the deployment of extra Special Forces from the Defence Headquarters.
- ii. Establishment of three special military intervention forces in the troubled zones.
- iii. About 1300 airforce personnel/officers have been deployed to the herdsmen/farmers crisis (*News Agency of Nigeria, 2018*)
- iv. The president has visited victims of the crisis in Plateau, Nassarawa and Benue states to sympathise with them and pledged government readiness to protect their lives and properties
- v. The federal government has also partnered state governments in the affected states, particularly in Benue state to fund the Internally Displace Persons (IDPs) camps.

However, to most Nigerians and even friends of Nigeria, the handling of the crisis have left much to be desired. Thus, for an administration that was able to engage and degraded Boko-Haram insurgence substantially within three years, the herdsmen/farmers crisis should have been subdued and the senseless killings stopped summarily. Among many others, Nwosu (2017, p.7) asserted that “the administration’s actions and inactions in the face of continued confrontations have subjected it to much dissension by Nigerians.” He further contended that:

One of the most prominent attacks allegedly perpetrated by Fulani herdsmen in the Buhari era was the Agatu Massacre in Benue State. In February 2016, about 300 Agatu indigenes in four communities were massacred, while some 7,000 were displaced. Some reports suggest about 500 deaths in ten Agatu communities at the hands of suspected herdsmen in early 2016. These killings were accompanied by the destruction of houses and other property as well as allegations of rape. According to a leader of the Fulani, the attacks were reprisals against the Agatu people for killing a prominent Fulani man and stealing his cattle in 2013.

Similarly, it has been observed that the inability of the security agents to arrest the situation coupled with non-prosecution of any of the arrested

herdsmen created the impression that the administration has tacitly supported the herdsmen, perhaps because they are President Buhari's kinsmen. For example, in an interview granted the newsmen, the member representing Agatu in the Benue State House of Assembly, Mr. Sule Audu, accused the military of allowing the Fulani herdsmen to occupy the sacked communities, while their cattle, numbering over 100,000, freely grazed on their farmlands (Nwosu, 2017).

Possibly, the most perplexing question surrounding the conflicts is how cattle herdsmen end up with sophisticated weapons like the AK-47 (semi) automatic gun. In the opinion of Nwosu (2017, p. 6) and also as observed by some concerned Nigerians, "the spectre of a fully armed Fulani herdsman is new." The use of sophisticated weapons by the herders in the life of Buhari administration is another source of criticism. It has been observed that Fulani herdsmen carry only sticks and cutlasses and not guns as presently the case. In addition, the pronouncement of leaders of the herdsmen, Miyatti Allah and Gan Allah that their actions are retaliatory is also worrisome and disheartening. Nigerians consider comparison of the lives of human to that of cows by these people as not only selfish and derogatory, but evil and callous.

It is little wonder that in some quarters, it is believed that the crisis is political in nature because the crisis appeared to become more intense towards election periods (Ogbete, Attama and Okoh (2018, p.44). Also, there have been conflicting suggestions towards resolving the crisis by the federal government which appeared to be political. It was observed that the same politicians and other citizens that advocated for cattle ranching during electioneering campaigns towards the 2019 General Elections which federal government also subscribed to, later turned around to denounce proposal based on the opinions of opposition of some Nigerians to the policy.

Thus, it has also been observed that after the General Elections, the clash between the farmers and the herdsmen drastically reduced. One wonders what then has changed that has had such drastic effect on the crisis. In the same vein, it is yet to be seen what caused the sudden face-off between hitherto friendly people at the twilight of elections. In essence, it can be deduced that "at present, politics, tongue and faith crept in at some communities at which the herders and farmers belong to different tribes and religions" (Ogbete, Attama & Okoh, 2018, p.46).

However, the president has denied any complexity in the crisis. Addressing leaders of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) from the 19

Northern States on 20th December 2018, President Buhari stated it is unfair for any person to make pronouncement that his administration is unconcerned about the crisis. According to president, it is unimaginable for anyone to rationalise that the affected areas where he had substantial votes during the 2015 presidential election would for any consideration had cause to do harm by an act of omission to the same people. He further wondered why the herdsmen should be carrying guns and noted that perhaps the guns carriers are not Nigerian herdsmen. They may be soldiers who must have escaped from Libya illegally and pass through the porous Nigeria borders.

In all, while it is true that the Buhari administration has made several attempts to address the problems of the herdsmen/farmers crisis, many citizens, especially from the affected areas, still consider the federal government's efforts to be inadequate. Thus, Nigerians expect a more frontal attack like the way the Boko-Haram was engaged.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study examined the Buhari administration's response to the herdsmen/farmers crisis in Nigeria and the impacts of the response on curbing the crisis. It relied on documentary tools extensively. The study revealed that the problem is more complex than what appears on the surface. It was discovered that the challenge of climatic and agricultural conditions, colonially designed segregation and divisions among the people aggravated the herders/farmers conflict in Nigeria. However, Nigeria elites' politicisation of the herders/farmers crisis like any other issue in the Nigeria that divides the people along ethnic, religious and political line and the illpreparedness of the security agencies and their poor response to the conflict underlie the Buhari administration's inadequate response to the crisis. It is therefore recommended *inter alia* that the issue of indigenes/settler and other divisive tendencies in the country should be addressed while clearly demarcated routes should also be developed for the herdsmen to take care of their cattle. In addition, security should also be adequately motivated and well equipped to tackle menace of herders/farmers and similar crises in future.

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DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT: EXPLORING THE MISSING LINKS

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Abstract

Democracy and development are two concepts that precipitate one another. Representative governments where there is freedom of speech, periodic elections, freedom of association, accountability, rule of law and the likes beget development. Meaningful development can only take place where the rule of law is observed. A country bedevilled by arbitrariness and great insensitivity cannot be said to be representative of the people because such polity is faced with tension, strife, political violence, marginalization, exclusion, deprivation and all forms of insecurity. The political leadership in Nigeria over the years has failed to deliver on the basic dividends of democracy thus reducing the nation to a Hobbesian State of Nature where survival and stomach infrastructure becomes a necessary consequence. Consequently, the political culture is largely at the participant and parochial levels of participation. Today we are faced with the challenge of vote buying as an average Nigerian is concerned more with what gets into his/her pockets for survival rather than what benefits the larger populace. Hence, playing the game according to the rule is farfetched. This paper, using documentary methods of data generation, interrogates democracy and development in relation to exploring the lacuna. The study used the Marxian theory of Political Economy as the tool for analysis. The study also proffered solutions to identified problems.

Keywords: Democracy, Development, Political Economy, rule of law, accountability.

Introduction

With the advent of democracy in 1999, Nigerians felt relieved from draconian laws of the military which truncated the first, second and third

republics. Thus, the populace was again in high hopes when democracy returned. We looked forward to seeing greater opportunities for infrastructural development and rule of law in governance than what we had experienced during the military regime. There was also the dream of inclusion and leadership accountability from the political leadership. The expectations were high and jubilations exceptional.

As years progressed, the expectations and high hopes were taking a nose dive for obvious reasons of lack of accountability and failure to deliver on the campaign promises by those elected into political positions. With each passing term, it became obvious that the expectations are not met not for lack of resources but for insincerity, corruption and bad governance. Gradually, it became clear that most of the leadership of the nation is more concerned with their personal development and enrichment even to the detriment of the country. To ensure their continuous stay in leadership positions, they make several promises and weep up sentiments during the electioneering. Some of these promises are never fulfilled while others are started halfway and abandoned only to be used as a campaign promise or party manifesto in the next elections.

From the above, one would be wondering what truly is the motivation of our leaders who have on several occasions displayed gross ineptitude with respect to delivering on the campaign promises. Most if not all of their campaign promises are developmental in nature. For instance, the 'second Niger Bridge' has been used as a party manifesto for about three periods of campaign. Today, there are indications that the work would be done but I am sure that it would again be repeated during the campaign for the next general elections. This explains why at a time like this, certain very basic things like good road, pipe borne water, power, food, and shelter are still used as party manifestos. From the above, one would be asking why our democracy is development-shy. I say so because certain parts of the country are yet to have any form of government presence yet democracy is 19 years and 7 months old as at the time of writing this. The paper therefore, examines democracy and development in respect to exploring the missing link.

Democracy

The term democracy has become a house-hold name in many countries of the world, including Nigeria. This is premised on the fact that it has become one of the most widely practised forms of governance in the modern world.

Democracy as a form of government is fashionable because it among other things gives the people the opportunity to be part of the governance of the state. This flows from the traditional definition of democracy by Abraham Lincoln as “the government of the people, by the people and for the people.” Following its people-oriented nature, it is expected that any democratic government should be people oriented both in theory and practice.

Certain factors or indicators are essential in any democratic government: freedom of speech, rule of law, representative government, development, separation of power, active participation of the citizenry before, during and after elections. These factors are geared towards providing a better living condition for the people. For instance, the theory of rule of law holds that the constitution is supreme and should be the guiding principle for all the citizens including political office holders. This implies that the constitution, which by its very nature should be for the good of the people, must necessarily be followed by all to avoid the tendency of any form of arbitrary rule or authoritarian system of governance where the leader does whatever he/she wills, as he/she wills, because he/she wills.

Again, democracy is representative in nature. The representative aspect of democracy is to ensure that the demands and needs of the people are at least heard and attended to. The representatives are therefore in government to speak for the people bringing to the table their aspirations and demands in line with the constitutions of the nation. For instance, cases of bad road, total or partial eclipse with respect to power generation and lack of portable water for the people are brought to the central government where allocations and provisions are made to see that the needs of the people are met. This is so important because the primary responsibility of any responsible government is to protect the lives and property of the people, and provide their basic and other forms of needs like power, water, shelter, road, employment, etc. of the people. Democracy therefore is a system of government that is people oriented.

In addition, periodic elections give every qualified citizen of the nation an opportunity to seek to be elected into any political office of his/her choice. Usually, most if not all those who seek to be elected into political offices give the impression that they are going there to better the lives of the people. In Nigeria for instance, we have had several slogans during campaigns like ‘Fresh Air’ ‘Change’ ‘Make Nigeria Work Again’ etc. The Nigerian situation is that in most cases, these candidates end up transforming the lives of the people

as they promised they would. This is not to say that the past governments in Nigeria have not done anything remarkable for the people. Far from that. The reality however is that they live very little impact on lives of the common man on the street.

Development

The term development, all things being equal, should be a form of accompaniment of any democratic government. It has been described as the process of economic and social transformation that is based on complied cultural and environmental factors and their interactions. Development is multi-dimensional because it covers and occurs in every aspect of human existence. We have human development, cultural development, environmental development, educational development, health development, social development, and economic development.

Human development is the process of enlarging people's freedoms and opportunities and improving their well-being. Human development is about the real freedom ordinary people have to decide who to be, what to do, and how to live as developed by economist Mahbub ul Haq. From the above, it becomes clear that freedom is a necessary condition for human development. Freedom from both internal and external aggression, freedom to choose their life's dreams and aspirations. This freedom is meant to guide the people, the common man, in deciding who to be, what to be and how to pursue such dreams.

Human development is propelled by factors like education, equal opportunity, power, good roads, affordable housing scheme, functional and affordable health facilities, potable water, employment opportunity, security, and other recreational facilities. These factors ensure that individuals are given the platform to make their choices and excel in them. For instance, if the education sector were effective and functional, the citizenry would have the platform to be properly equipped both in theory and practice for the challenges of life. A good Engineering Department would most likely, all things being equal, give students the enabling environment to excel in the field of engineering. But in situations, like the one prevalent in Nigeria, where the education sector is paid lip-service, laboratories are nothing but empty halls with little or no equipment and marching technocrats, lecture halls are overcrowded and without public address systems, students lack the environment and resources to excel.

Similarly, in the face of insecurity as has become the norm in Nigeria, human development at best remains a theory. This is premised on the fact that other factors like power, education, pipe borne water, industries/factories etc cannot thrive in the face of insecurity. Investors, technocrats, experts and even voluntary workers in most cases find it difficult to operate in insecure environments and where all these opportunities are lacking, human development would be greatly and negatively influenced and dwarfed. In the North East for instance, investors would be unwilling to invest in the region because of the unfortunate incidents of Boko Haram menace. Consequently, those living in the region are denied the opportunities that come with such investments like employment and other social benefits. Human development is propelled by science and technology fuelled by power, security, good road and so on. However, these factors are lacking in Nigeria or at best very inadequate.

Capital Development/Infrastructural Development are another form of development that is based on the capital, physical and structural aspect of the community or country. Factors like good road, good house, power, pipe-borne water, hospitals, and other social amenities account for the infrastructural development of any nation. Capital development is based on the economic activities of the nation. Just like human development, infrastructural development is enhanced by factors like equal opportunity and security.

Theoretical Perspective

We shall hinge our study on the Marxist theory of neo-colonial states. This tool of analysis comparatively analyses the post-colonial political economy of African States that predicates the state security and violence within these states. Even though Karl Marx is the major protagonist of this theory, he never called it Marxist theory of neo-colonial states but advanced its qualities to include:

- ❖ The post-colonial state is purely an instrument of class domination.
- ❖ The primitive accumulation with the state power is done by domestic power and certain external forces.
- ❖ The post-colonial states are rentier states parceled out in Patron-Client chains to those who use the state power for selfish ends.

Some Marxist theorists like Miliband, Ake, Lenin and Ekekwe have in their various studies included to the advancement of the post-colonial theory of the state. Miliband (1977, p.109) for instance, posits that the post-colonial states are dependent on the foreign forces that colonized them and thus the state is both the source of economic power and an instrument of accumulation of economic power as the state is the major means of production. Ake, on his part, observed that it is the economic factor which is the most decisive of all the other elements (social structure, political structure and belief system) of the society and which largely determines the character of the others. Albeit not to say that, the economic structure is autonomous and strictly determines the others. All the social structures are interdependent and relate in complex ways. However, it is the economic factor, which provides the axis around which all the movement takes place, and imparts certain orderliness to the interaction (Ake, 1981, pp.3-4). Consequently, the economic contact between the western capitalists and the African leaders led to the subsequent interaction of other aspects of social life that followed. Thus, by following the dynamics of the economic system, we see how it leads to the transformation of existing social structures and how it leads to the emergence of new social structures, particularly in African petit-bourgeoisie whose interest soon put it in opposition to the colonial system and overthrow of the colonial political system. The economic system which generated the changes is itself not overthrown. So, we have indigenous leaders who are in political office but with little economic base. By implication, the new rulers try to use the only tool they have, political power to create an economic base in order to strengthen their economic power. Thus, the political is influencing and even transforming economic structures and social structures despite the fact that the state is seen as the product of class struggle in the society. Meaning that the state emerged to mediate between antagonistic classes in order to maintain law and order in such a way that none of the groups will be consumed in fruitless struggle over the ownership of the means of production (Lenin, 1984, pp.10-11). The neo-colonial states are parts and parcels of the class struggle it

was supposed to moderate. Thus, the post-colonial states rather than maintain or moderate economic relations, became an instrument of domination, exploitation and intimidation of the subjects (Ekekwe, 1986, p.12 in Ezeibe, 2011).

Invariably therefore, the leaders rather than allow market forces to determine economic activities intervene in almost every productive process. Their interest become high and above the states interest as they struggle to fill-in their pockets first before thinking about national development. This also comes into play when there is need for the development of a particular area and that is incompatible with the will of the leader(s) as the interest of leader(s) is considered primarily. We do not need to talk of times when contracts are awarded and contractors are made to pay some percentages to the awardees making it highly impossible to deliver good quality job because the contractors after paying huge amount as awardees' cut is left little or near insufficient amount to execute the contract. In this scenario, we have sub-standard projects and/or better still unfinished or abandoned projects leading to underdevelopment. We also have a country that is one of the highest oil producers but is incapable of refining crude oil into petrol, kerosene, gas and other finished products for domestic consumption. Rather than export finished products, exports crude oil and imports finished products. What a paradox? This demonstrates that the nature of any state plays an important role in the economic development as any economic development can only take place if the state is a developmental state and this is bound by the vision and dreams of the leaders.

The Lacuna between Democracy and Development:

Every country is naturally endowed with human and natural resources for its development and survival. Though, the level of development and survival depend on the ability of the leaders to direct and redirect these resources for the greatest good of the populace. Then, the begging question is: has the human and natural resources available to the Nigerian state translated the fledgling democracy into an all-inclusive system of governance that promotes socio-economic development, eradicate poverty and enhance science and technology that will metamorphose into development? What is the quality of the leaders? Do they have visions and dreams that can elicit development? How are the representatives chosen? Is it through free and fair election? Do

they really have the mandate of the people? A visionless and/or dreamless leader(s) may not be able to translate human and natural resources to meaningful development. Such leaders may be overwhelmed by very little achievement in such a way that improvement and advancement may not be taken seriously. Again, such leader(s) may not take advantage of the resources that give them an edge over and above others. Let us use the twelve categories of competitiveness as enunciated by the World Economic Forum in its Global Competitiveness Report of 2017 to 2018 to examine the missing link of Nigeria's democracy and development:

Institutions: the interplay between public and private stakeholders determines the institutional field of the polity. How does the economy utilise the natural endowment? The policies and programmes of the country greatly affect the quality of the institutions of a country which in turn influence the competitiveness and growth. It affects investment decisions and the structure of production and indeed influences the pattern of benefit distribution and cost development strategies and policies. The pattern of public expenditure shows the level or extent of government's supportiveness to the private sector. How does public investment in infrastructure like transport, power, water, telecommunication etc look like? Does it directly support and promote the productivity of the private sector investments? How much task are the private stakeholders charged? Are they charged over or is it the highest marginal rate of corporate taxation used as a proxy for government disposition towards the private sector? Sound and sustainable development of an economy depends on if the private institutions are good. It is therefore expedient to ensure accountability and reporting standards that are transparent so as to forestall fraud and mismanagement that can promote good governance that can encourage investor-consumer confidence.

Infrastructure: An effective functioning of any country's economy is dependent on efficient and extensive infrastructure. When there is a high-quality and good road network, goods and services will be facilitated to the market as well as workers moved to their place of work. Many scholars have observed road transport infrastructure as a significant economic promoter as well as the backbone of economic development activities for many industrialized countries (Pradhan and Bagchi, 2013; Lakshmanan 2011; Smith, 1880; Weber, 1928). A good number of researchers also favour the connection

between transport infrastructure investments (infrastructure investment can be referred to as efforts committed (monetary and non-monetary) for the construction of new road networks and improvement of existing road networks) and a society's political, social and economic development (Achetzhanoy and Lustoy 2013; Rashidi and Samimi, 2012; Rowstow, 1962). Definitely road infrastructure investment encompasses major political, economic and social processes enhance the riches and power of a country, expand market and minimize trade barriers leading to increase in productivity outputs and enhances mobility and quality of life for the populace (Kustepeli et al, 2012; Njoh, 2012). Road transportation infrastructure investment has since been seen as a subset or a part of the capita representing the primary foundation that bolsters all production works.

As a matter of fact, for those of us who live in Nigeria, it is no longer a story that a journey of one hour can take like four hours due to bad road network such as pot holes in the roads, you see vehicles that breakdown on the road causing traffic jam leading to go slow. We can just say that the roads incredibly lack maintenance that hampers movement from one location to the other.

Infrastructure investment can directly affect development in such a way that it can enhance connection of city to city, community to community, movement of goods and services facilitate infrastructural development such as schools, trading clusters and hospitals. It can also indirectly create jobs, stimulate individual and community creativity as well as stimulate investment activities, transform socio-cultural norms and create social and dynamics.

Uninterrupted power supply promotes business and enhances productivity. Even though Nigeria has abundant supply of natural resources like coal, hydro, natural gas, crude oil, etc., the country yet is bedeviled by electricity problem which adversely affects the cost of goods and services. The cost of goods and services are high because industries have to generate their power themselves. For instance, a fabric which ordinarily would have been sown with ₦2,000 only now sows for ₦15,000 to ₦20,000 because of epileptic or near lack of power supply making the fashion designers to resort to the use of generating set. Almost all business sectors or even private homes resort to the use of generating set leading to high cost of gas and petrol. A report of the survey of twenty business centres in Enugu metropolis shows that the cost of power generation affects the cost of production of goods and services because these business centres have to run generating sets from

morning to night every day to ensure that they deliver effectively to their customers. Nigeria only uses four sources (crude oil, coal, natural gas and hydro) in processed forms while two others (wood fuel and solar) used in their crude forms for heating, cooking and lighting. The demand for electricity in Nigeria outweighs the supply.

Nigeria has an installed generation capacity of 8,644 megawatts of which 6,905 megawatts is government owned. According to Yinka (2018), the World Bank says countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have annual outages from 50 hours to 4,600 hours. There are 8,760 hours in a year, so that's more than half for some like Nigeria. We can then appreciate the heavy cost outages add on a per dollar basis for electricity. Imagine countries like Nigeria where back-up diesel generators are used to supplement or completely support daily life, the cost of electricity can be as much as three times higher than it would be if the grid were reliable. The table below shows electricity access and average outage in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Electricity Access/Average outage/Grid capacity and Backup Generator in SS Africa

Country	Electricity access %	Average outage hours per year	Grid capacity (GW)	Backup generator %
Angola	32	760	1.7	8
Cameroun	56.8	790	1.6	1
Cote d'Ivoire	61.9	230	1.8	6
DR Congo	13.5	830	2.6	46
Ethiopia	27.2	570	2.4	1
Ghana	78.3	790	2.8	12
Kenya	36	420	2.2	7
Mozambique	21.9	80	2.6	1
Niger	15	1,400	0.18	20

Nigeria	56.4	4,600	10.5	22
Senegal	61	130	0.96	1
South Africa	86	50	46	2.5
Tanzania	18.9	670	1.2	12
Zambia	27.9	180	2.3	3
Zimbabwe	32.3	280	2.1	5

Source: Quarz Africa 2018

According to Quarz Africa, the authors of the above estimated that Nigeria, with its high frequency of blackouts, has a “mean net cost of electricity” from diesel generators of around \$1.6 billion per year. While Senegal, a smaller country with more stable electricity has a mean net cost of above \$4 million per year. Moreover, countries’ grid capacity is significantly supplemented by backup generators. Three-quarters of SSA firms experience power outages reportedly losing an average of 8.3 percent of the annual sales as a result. That notwithstanding, the health hazards associated with the use of generators can never be over-emphasized. There is increase of air emission pollutants including Co₂, carbon monoxide, sulfur oxides, nitrogen oxides and fine particulate matter which significantly affect climate change and human health.

Household electrification rate in Sub- Saharan Africa is the lowest in the world, around 42% in 2016. Total installed capacity of electricity in the region was 96 giga watts in 2015, compared with 325 GW in India and 1,519 GW in China, according to the US Energy Information Administration in Yinka (2018). South Africa accounts for nearly half of the region’s generation capacity Nigeria, which has a population four times the size of South Africa’s, has only about a quarter of the installed generation capacity of South Africa. There is also a big gap between electricity access in urban households (71%) and rural households amounting to 22%.

By implication, the level of actual electricity consumption in Africa and Nigeria in particular is low. Between 2010 and 2014, average annual consumption per capita in sub-Saharan Africa was equivalent to just 4% of consumption per capita in the United States (Yinka, 2018). <https://qz.com/>

[africa/1271252/world-bank-recommendations-on-electricity-in-sub-saharan-africa/](https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/Nigeria-population/)

In terms of access to clean drinking water, 68.5% have improved means of access while 31.5% still struggle to get clean water. Similarly, when examining the access of sanitation facilities, only 29% of the entire population of Nigeria has improved sanitation access as compared to the 71% that are still struggling. <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/Nigeria-population/>

Information can also flow effectively to allow easy communication for better growth of the business. In a situation where there is lack of service or a community or place is not connected to the communication network, it will definitely affect productivity. Imagine the era when there were no phones and people have to travel miles to deliver information or that there is no network service in one's phone, it means that that person will be in total black-out. Business will be slow and sales decrease. Relatively, information flow has enhanced communication and business today that one can stay in one location and with a simple press or touch of a button, business transaction will take place.

Macroeconomic Environment: Any country with high interest and inflation rate may not boast of stable economy that can promote competitiveness because of the burden of interest rate burden that may lead to economic deficit. The question is: what form of growth can be achieved with an interest rate of 14 percent and inflation rate of 11.40 percent? Your guess is as good as mine because it will be difficult for the economy to be stable.

Health and Primary Education: Any country that invests in health and education has prepared for an effective and efficient economy that is sustained by productivity healthy for competition. People give in their best when they are physically and mentally stable. A sick person cannot function effectively as such worker will always be absenting himself/herself from work. According to World Population Review (2019), the life expectancy in Nigeria is, unfortunately, the lowest in all of West Africa. The average life expectancy is around 54.5 years of age according to WHO data, with men living an average of 53.7 years and women living an average of 55.4 years. This very low number can be attributed to the fact that the country has a lot of health issues. The AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) epidemic is a key player in low life expectancy. Nigeria has also fallen victim to a high child and maternal rate and the widespread growth of the polio virus. In fact, one out of

every five children that are born in Nigeria will die before they reach the age of five due to the many health risks in Nigeria.

While pregnancy is obviously not a disease, a lot of expectant mothers in Nigeria die from pregnancy complications every year. The woman's chances of death during pregnancy or child birth are 1 in 13. To worsen the situation, many people in Nigeria do not seek professional medical attention as they feel that "healers" will help them live longer; not knowing that professional doctors will give them a much longer life.

Moreover, a country without technical know-how, correct, appropriate and adequate education cannot compete effectively in the global market. Good health and basic education is germane for an efficient and effective economic growth. A scenario where doctors are incessantly on strike because of government's inability to keep to their own side of the bargain scuttles the progress of effectiveness and efficiency. This in effect affect the health sector as doctors and nurses lack the fundamental knowledge to work which explains why our leaders run to overseas to get treated leaving the poor masses to the mercy of the half-baked graduates called doctors and nurses. Invariably any country without adequate health and education system lacks the strength to compete in the global market because as the saying goes "a healthy nation is a wealthy nation". What about on-the-job training to improve workers efficiency? Refresher training is key to economic development and growth since the average number of years spent in school in Nigeria is approximately nine (9) years with a national literacy rate of 59.6%.

High Education and Training: The Nigerian tertiary institutions are poor funded leading to lack of educational infrastructure. UNESCO recommended 26 percent of nation's total budget, yet this has not crossed 10 percent since 1991. Lecturers are always on strike due to government's insincerity and lack of goodwill draws back the economic growth of the country because graduates pass out of school without adequate knowledge of the discipline they studied due to truncations in the programme precipitated by strike leading to graduates with theory that does not match with practice. For any country to experience a high level of technology, theory must match with practice.

Goods Market Efficiency: Market efficiency is driven by healthy market competition and business productivity by making sure that efficient firms produce the goods that are demanded progress. When a country produces what

it does not eat and eat what it does not produce, it has settled for subservient and depended position because it cannot satisfy the demands of her customer/consumer whose taste cannot be met. But the reverse is the case when a country is able to produce those goods and services as demanded by the consumers with the high-tech associated with it as high taste leads to innovation because the firms continue to strive to satisfy the consumers as well as try to compete with the global market. By implication, the goods and services offered or supplied in such a country, is customer-oriented that encourages innovation and improvement.

Labour Market Efficiency: Efficient labour market demands that market forces are allowed and as such total flexibility is required to ensure that workers have the freedom of labour mobility as well as gender empowerment. In addition, to the freedom of enjoying proper incentives which will motivate the workers to give in their best at a very minimal cost so as to maximise profit and yet allow creativity innovation and fulfilment. More importantly, meritocracy should not be slaughtered at the altar of mediocrity. Round pegs should be allowed to be in round holes and vice versa. Political or social interference should not disrupt the labour market rather market forces should take the lead.

Financial Market Development: Every country has investors, entrepreneurs and multinational companies who engage in one business or the other. Therefore, resources generated and saved by these, should be re-invested into the economic system of the polity rather than the situation where resources are appropriated and expropriated leading to under-development of the host financial market. Resources saved should be allowed to circulate within the country in such a way that the banking sector having enough reserves, can grant loan and credit facilities to growing entrepreneurs with a clear, transparent and fair distribution. The banking system should be conducted in such a way that the customers will have trust and confidence on them to the extent that the investors can really feel protected. By implication therefore, there should be clear policies, rules and regulations guiding the financial system to the level that customers are a way of interests attached to credit facilities to avoid over charge and undue advantage over the customer and investor.

Technological Readiness: This refers to the preparedness of a nation to adopt existing technologies to promote the productivity of its industries. Is the technology adaptive? Does the country have an indigenous technology to be able to compete in the global market? If it is foreign direct investment, has the technology been transferred? An adopted technology without subsequent transfer poses problem as the maintenance of such technology becomes difficult retarding development. Every technology needs consequent technical know-how and if it is lacking, the progress will be thwarted.

Market Size: A progressive business is that which can dispose off its goods and produce more. A good turnover opens the windows of development. When goods produced are not sold, the producer may not be able to produce more. Hitherto globalisation, countries restrict import and small countries suffer as they could not sell off their goods easily. But now with trade liberalisation, countries can now export their goods to other countries freely though young domestic industries suffer as their goods have to compete with much more sophisticated goods. Sometimes people abandon these locally made goods which are looked down upon as substandard. However, a country with high-tech can effectively benefit from this trend because they have ready market to supply their goods and services.

Business Sophistication: This can be seen as the quality of a country's overall business networks and the quality of individual firms' operations and strategies. Business networks are crucial for efficiency in the business. Quantity and quality have to be assured as well as network of buyers.

Innovation: The injection of new ideas, skills and methods are germane for efficient and progressive economies. Industries must improve and be open to innovation and progress. An improved method in the process of production will indeed enhanced quality and productivity.

All these pillars of competitiveness are all interrelated and support each other. In fact, any weakness in one affects the others. The categories can also be divided into different stages thus:

- Factor-driven
- Efficiency-driven
- Innovation-driven

Nigeria's economy has not transitioned from factor-driven stage to efficiency-driven. It is still at the level of transition which explains why it is difficult for the country to effectively compete in the global economy.

Conclusion/Recommendation:

This paper examined democracy and development trying to locate the missing link in Nigeria's situation. Using pillars of competitiveness as yardstick, the paper observed that Nigeria's economy is still at the factor-driven stage which is yet a transitory level in which case, the country has remained weak in the global economy. As a result of this, Nigeria needs to step up by improving on infrastructural development that can pave way for efficiency and innovation so as to enable the country compete effectively in the global economy. No country develops without giving room for a favourable playing ground for the actors and stakeholders in the polity.

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SECURITY AGENCIES AND CHALLENGES OF ELECTION SECURITY IN NIGERIA: LESSONS FROM GHANA

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Abstract

The study examined the nexus between security agencies and challenges of election security in Nigeria. Anchored on the Marxist theory of the state, documentary method and qualitative content analysis, the study ascertained that deployment and control of security personnel, especially the police during elections is done by the Inspector-General of Police, mostly in favour of pre-determined interests. The study further observed that security personnel have paradoxically become a central element of election insecurity, on account of their deployment and partisan roles in election administration, the scenario which primarily derives from low autonomization of the Nigerian state. Drawing from Ghana's experience in election administration, the study posits that all security personnel on election duty are to come under the control and command of the head of electoral commission rather than the Inspector-General of Police or even the President, who, at that point, is an interested party. Among others, the study recommends the amendment of the Electoral Act and other legal documents to ensure that the head of electoral commission in Nigeria assumes the control and command of security personnel on the day of election.

Keywords: Election, security agencies, election security, election administration, election duties

Introduction

Potentials for violence in election period come from political, economic and social dimensions of a society. The security plan for any election, especially in developing economies, therefore, takes into

consideration the specific roles of security personnel who safeguard voters, candidates, officials of Election Management Body (EMB), observers, and other actors involved in elections on the one hand, and ensure the safety of both sensitive and non-sensitive election materials and other technologies used during elections to prevent manipulation on the other. However, although security personnel have a crucial responsibility to provide proper security during elections, this largely depends on whether they are functionally autonomous of political struggles and class interests in the society. If they are not, then they are less likely to be operationally effective to uphold the constitution and guarantee the credibility of elections. They may even intimidate or dissuade citizens from participating freely in electoral process. Election duties of security personnel are thus an outcome of an inter-play of several political and socio-economic factors.

The role of security agencies in electoral process varies from one country to another, depending on their political history, legal tradition, and socio-cultural background. While legal provisions are relatively extensive and precise in some countries, in others, they are rather general, even succinct and supplemented by specific regulations enacted during election periods (Hounkpe & Gueye, 2010). In countries of the northern hemisphere, election are a routine and do not entail restrictions on movements or involvement of armed security personnel who could serve the purpose of either checkmating election fraudsters and hoodlums or subverting the electoral process through collusion (Olurode & Hammanga, 2013). On the contrary, election environments are not secured in most African countries and other emerging economies. Thus, deployment and visible presence of fierce looking armed security personnel has become a necessity.

In Nigeria, protection of voters, election materials and officials, and the preservation of lawful and orderly electoral processes are necessary for free, fair and credible elections. In line with the provisions of the Police Act, the Criminal Code (1990), the Police Service Commission (PSC) guidelines (2003) and the Electoral Act (2010), security agencies, particularly the police, are saddled with the constitutional responsibility of providing proper security during elections to enable citizens elect their leaders under a peaceful atmosphere devoid of fraud, fear, coercion, intimidation and violence (Oyadiran & Toyin, 2015). While the Police Service Commission guidelines highlight the scope for police involvement in the electoral process, the Electoral Act clearly defines what constitutes electoral offences before, during

and after elections, and assigns the role of maintaining internal security during elections to the police.

Although the provisions of the above-stated legal frameworks and allied documents are inarguably elaborate and comprehensive enough to ensure that the police effectively and professionally carry out their electoral functions, reports of actual performance of security agencies during elections indicate rather unfortunately that the police have not only failed to adequately perform their election duties, but have themselves become a central element of the security challenges associated with the conduct of elections in Nigeria (CLEEN, 2010; Onwudiwe & Berwind-Dart, 2010). As a consequence, election insecurity has become an enduring feature of election administration in Nigeria. The extant analyses on election security such as Ajala and Muller (2019), Cummings (2019), Mou (2018), USAID (2013) among others adequately capture the partisan role of security personnel in election administration, as well as the factors and challenges in the deployment of security personnel on election duties (Olurode & Hammanga, 2013), but fall short of systematic examination of the nexus between deployment and control of security personnel during elections and election security. Against this backdrop, this study examines the roles of security agencies and how they grapple with the challenges of election security in Nigeria. The remainder of the study is structured as follows: 'Theoretical Perspective' provides the theoretical basis of the paper. 'Conceptual Clarifications' conceptualizes the key concepts in the paper: security agencies and election security. 'Security Agencies and Elections in Nigeria' discusses both the election duties and complicity of the security agencies during elections in Nigeria. 'Deployment of Security Personnel and the Conduct of Elections in Nigeria' captures how deployment and control of police on election day by the Inspector-General of Police in Nigeria compromise their election duties. 'Security Agencies and Election Security: Lessons from Ghana' concludes the paper by drawing from Ghana's experience in deployment and control of security agencies on election day.

Theoretical Perspective

This study is anchored on the Marxist theory of the state. Marxist theorists posit that, as the product as well as a manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms, the state arose from the conflict between classes, and as a rule, the state of the most powerful and

economically dominant class that also becomes the politically dominant class and thus acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed (Lenin, 1984; Jakubowski, 1973).

The classical Marxist theory of the state has been further developed and applied in the analysis of the peculiarity of the neo-colonial state by scholars such as Alavi (1973), Ekekwe (1985), Ake (1985) and Ibeanu (1998) and others. The major contention of these scholars is that the post-colonial state is a creation of imperialism, and as such, has followed a developmental trajectory dictated by the interest of imperialism and its local allies. For Ekekwe (1985), for instance, the post-colonial state rests on the foundation of the colonial state whose major pre-occupation was to create conditions under which accumulation of capital by the foreign bourgeoisie in alliance with the ruling elite would take place through the exploitation of local human and other natural resources. Therefore, the post-colonial state that now emerged, though ostensibly independent and sovereign, was no less a creation of imperialism than the colonial state (Ekekwe, 1985).

One basic feature of the post-colonial state, as articulated by Ake (1985), is its limited autonomy. This means that the state is institutionally constituted in such a way that it enjoys limited independence from the social classes, particularly the hegemonic social class, and so, is immersed in the class struggles that go on in the society. The post-colonial state is also constituted in such a way that it mainly caters for a narrow range of interests: the interest of the rapacious political elite in comprador and subordinate relationship with foreign capital. This lack of relative autonomy is one reason why the post-colonial state in Nigeria is incapable of mediating and moderating political struggles (Ake, 1985).

For Ibeanu (1998), political leaders of post-colonial states, due to the peculiar features of these states and their quest for economic survival, engage in brazen manipulation of the electoral process and clientele politics which heighten the struggle for state power. With respect to Nigeria, Ibeanu (1998, p. 9) maintained that the abiding assault on electoral democracy should be located in the character of the Nigerian state as institutions that have continued to undermine democracy are genealogically inscribed in it.

Based on the analysis of Alavi (1973); Ake (1985); Ekekwe (1985) and Ibeanu (1998) the central propositions of the Marxist theory of the state, as it relates to this study, could be synthesised as follows:

- Arbitrary use of the state power to pursue private welfare converts politics into warfare rather than a process of discussion and orderly transfer of political power.
- Absolutist nature of the state weakens the institutional mechanisms for moderating political competitions.
- Limited autonomy of the state adversely affects the legitimacy of institutions involved in electoral administration and transfer of political power.

The use of the state for appropriation of surplus is a defining character of the Nigeria state. It is indeed a primary instrument of accumulation. Thus, state institutions and agencies, policy making and implementation have served the purpose of fostering and advancing the interests of the dominant social forces as against the pursuit of common interests (Ake, 2001; Ekekwe, 1985).

As a facilitator of the capitalist development process, the Nigerian state is a major owner of the means of production. Buoyed by the expanded oil revenues, the State dominates all aspects of the national political economy (Jega, 2000). This has made the Nigerian state the biggest spender of resources, which, in most cases, it allocates to sectional/private interests. This has also made the struggle for state power in Nigeria a do-or-die affair. As noted by Joseph (1991, p. 56), the expansion of petroleum production and the resultant increased revenues heightened “the centrality of the state as the locus of the struggle for resources for personal advancement and group security.” Under this circumstance, access to the state is seen as a legitimate platform for primitive accumulation and personal enrichment. Ake (1996, p. 23) captures the immensity and the ubiquity of state power under this situation when he observed that “the state is everywhere and its power appears boundless. There is hardly any aspect of life in which the state does not exercise power and control. That makes the capture of state power singularly important.”

This character of the Nigerian state thus, encourages clientele politics. Within this context, politics means more than competition for political power but assumes the character of a desperate struggle “for positions in the bureaucracy or for access to those who have influence over government decisions” (Leeds, 1981, p. 353). State power does not only represent the license to wealth, it is also “the means to security and the only guarantor of general well-being” (Ake, 2001, p. 7). Due to its profitability for primitive accumulation, the struggle for state power is reduced to warfare by factions of

the governing elite. It is within the context of the dominant role of the state in political economy that one can explain the desperation of Nigeria's governing elite for state power as evident in the brazen use of security agencies to supervise the manipulation of electoral process.

The dominant role of the Nigerian state in the political economy is compounded by grievances associated with the 'winner take all' syndrome which characterize party politics in Nigeria. This has ensured that losers have limited or no access to state resources. Thus, for many candidates and their supporters, losing an election implies loss of access to state resources; and since state resources is an important asset in the struggle for power, losing an election carries with it the risk of being continuously kept out of power. Unable to mobilize the masses for support due to legitimacy crisis, the dominant ruling class in Nigeria hijack and utilize the security agencies and other institutions of the state to achieve the purpose. The arbitrary use of the state power to pursue private interests thus converts politics into warfare rather than an orderly transfer of political power. This explains the partisan roles and complicity of the security agencies during elections in Nigeria. The study is qualitative and analytical with data drawn from documentary evidence.

Conceptual Clarifications

This section offers operational definitions of two key terms, namely: security agencies and election security which constitute the conceptual framework of this paper in relation to their contextual application. This is with a view to illuminating the terms and fostering a shared understanding.

Table 1: Conceptual Framework

Term	Operational Definition
Security Agency	Permanent government organization that administers specific functions with a view to protecting lives, properties and Nigeria's interest. Security agencies in Nigeria include: State Security Service, Nigeria Federal Road Safety Commission, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence, the Nigerian Police, among others.

Election Security	Protection of election stakeholders, information, facilities, and events against death, damage, or destruction. Broadly, four types of election security exist, namely: physical security, personal security, information, and electoral events (cited in USAID, 2010).
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Source: Author's conceptions.

Security Agencies and Elections in Nigeria

Security agencies have a duty to ensure that security of lives and property is guaranteed and that there is peace and order before, during and after elections in Nigeria. While other law enforcement agencies such as the military and the Civil Defence are, to a reasonable extent, involved in maintaining law and order during elections, the responsibility of providing security and ensuring peaceful atmosphere during elections in Nigeria is carried by the police. They are indeed indispensable in ensuring the credibility of elections.

The Nigerian Police are primarily saddled with the constitutional responsibility of internal security, including the maintenance of law and order, in line with the provisions of the Police Act. Although elections are not specifically mentioned by the Act, responsibilities ascribed to the police are expected to be performed at all times. Section 4 of the Police Act bestows on the Nigerian police the following responsibilities: protecting lives and properties; detecting and preventing crimes; apprehending and prosecuting offenders; preserving law and order; enforcing law and regulations. To a very large extent, therefore, the success or failure of any elections is dependent on the conduct and performance of police.

In addition to the Police Act, a number of other legal documents assign various functions to police during elections. These legal documents include: the Criminal Code (1990), the Police Service Commission (PSC) guidelines (2003) and the Electoral Act (2010).

The Police Service Commission guidelines offer the most elaborate scope for police involvement in the electoral process, and particularly hinge the success of elections in the country on the conduct of police officers on

election duty. Included in the guideline are seven basic functions that the police ought to play. These functions are:

1. safeguarding the security of persons and their property during the campaign period and voting;
2. ensuring the safety of electoral officers before, during and after elections;
3. providing security for candidates during the campaigns and elections;
4. ensuring and preserving a free, fair, safe and lawful atmosphere for campaigning by all parties and candidates without discrimination, maintaining peaceful conditions, law and order around the polling and counting centres;
5. providing security for electoral officials at voting and counting;
6. ensuring the security of election materials at voting and counting centres and during their transportation thereto (PSC 2003, pp. 9-11).

Like Police Service Commission guidelines, the Electoral Act clearly defines what constitutes electoral offences and assigns the role of maintaining internal security during elections to the police. The electoral offences, as contained in part VIII of the Electoral Act, 2010 are: obstruction of registration of voters, destruction or forging of nomination papers, disorderly behaviour at political meetings, improper use of voters cards, improper use of vehicles, impersonation and voting when not qualified, dereliction of duty, bribery and corruption, voting by unregistered person, disorderly conduct of elections, undue influence, among others.

An important element of the Electoral Act is that it deals with offences before and after actual voting (CLEEN Foundation, 2010). This is very important because security issues during elections are critical in Nigeria not only during voting but also in the course of campaign and after voting has ended. It is noteworthy, for instance, that the build-up to general elections in Nigeria is characterized more often than not by political violence, including assassination of prominent political figures, attempted murder of political opponents and disruptions of campaign events (TMG, 2003).

In addition, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) publishes periodic guidelines for every election. Though not directed at the police, the guidelines vest the responsibility of ensuring order at the polling station on the Presiding Officer and compel police personnel serving at the polling station to take orders from the Presiding Officer (CLEEN Foundation, 2010; Oyadiran & Toyin, 2015).

The foregoing legal documents are comprehensive enough to ensure that the security agencies, particularly the police, effectively and professionally carry out their election functions. The reports of actual performance of security agencies during elections indicate rather unfortunately that the police have not only failed to provide adequate security during elections but have themselves become a central element of the security problems associated with the history of elections in Nigeria. Most of the organisations which monitored previous elections generally reported that the security forces, particularly the police were out to collaborate with and protect the ruling party (Human Rights Watch, 2004; TMG, 2003; EC 2007, International Republican Institute/National Democratic Institute, 2019; Commonwealth, 2008, 2019). For instance, the 2003 election, as captured in the report of the Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), witnessed the complicit role of the security forces. According to the JDPC (2003 as cited in Odoemene, 2012, p. 61):

In most of the polling stations the security forces did nothing to prevent hijacking of ballot papers by political thugs ... Rigging was peacefully done in the form of ballot box stuffing by mainly PDP party agents collaborating with polling officials ... the ruling party ... with the connivance of some INEC officials and the security officers, unleashed fearsome intimidation against its opponents and succeeded in carrying out massive rigging of elections.

One major disturbing aspect of the complicity of the security forces during elections in Nigeria is aiding and abetting election malpractices. An assessment of election security in Nigeria's democracy since the outset of constitutional rule in 1999 clearly shows that the public is wary of the security personnel, particularly the police because they have turned into small gods aiding and abetting electoral irregularities in the country (Chukwuma, 2001; Idowu, 2010, National Democratic Institute, 2012). Truly, the authority and power of the security personnel as well as their access to firearms have been used to intimidate the population and in extreme situations, to disrupt constitutionally protected rights and activities such as opposition campaigns or rallies (Alemika, 2003 as cited in Oni, Chidozie & Agbude, 2013). Furthermore, security agencies were variously reported to have been overtly forceful in disbanding legally constituted gatherings and engaging in running

battles with civil society organizations and party oppositions, curtailing their constitutional right to demonstration, lawful assembly and balloting in the build-up to general elections in Nigeria since 2003 (INEC, 2011; Jega, 2012; Cummings, 2019; Ajala & Muller, 2019).

The systematic and reciprocal suspicion of the Police by the citizens seriously complicates their involvement in the electoral process. They are perceived by key stakeholders as biased in favour of those in power or some powerful interests. This atmosphere has made the engagement between the police and the entire security forces in the country and majority of stakeholders potentially explosive. This is further compounded by poor skills and irrationality by which the police carry out their assigned functions which often result in loss of life, injuries and destruction of property (Idowu, 2010).

Political neutrality is one of the tenets of election security and administration. The security personnel at election venue have the utmost responsibility of maintaining law and order, and securing voters and candidates in the process of elections. They are also supposed to ensure the safety of ballot papers and boxes. The contrary, however, appears to be the case in Nigeria since the rebirth of civil rule in 1999. As observed by Oni, Chidozie and Agbude (2013), police were not neutral in the 2011 general election in Lagos, Ogun and Oyo states; they were seen supporting candidates in their nefarious act of rigging. They showed open display of unconstitutional support for rigging, victimization and intimidation activities. Corroborating this, National Democratic Institute (2012) posits that there were expression of police bias, denial of permits for campaign events and outright intimidation of candidates and their supporters. Jega (2012) also notes that misuse of security orderlies by politicians, especially incumbents, attacks on opponents, attacks on members of the public, violence at campaigns, intimidation of voters, snatching of election materials, kidnapping and assassination of political opponents characterised the 2011 electoral process despite that the election was acclaimed as the best that Nigeria ever had. Since the 1999 elections, security agencies, particularly the police, have been accused of being involved in the various forms of election rigging in Nigeria. The police are partisan in their election functions. They lack operational independence from the executive and are therefore vulnerable to executive interference. They are also often used by political actors to perpetuate electoral fraud, coerce voters and intimidate opponents (Nwagu, 2011).

In the 2007 general elections held in April, the National Human Rights Commission monitored the conduct of security personnel in each of the six (6) geopolitical zones and the Federal Capital Territory. In the main, the report, as cited in Shankyula (2013), indicates that in a number of states, some security personnel were indifferent to various electoral offences like multiple voting, under aged voting, impersonation and snatching of ballot boxes. For instance, a police officer watched helplessly while ballot boxes were being stuffed by a party in Rivers State. In Ibadan, Oyo State, men and women of the Nigeria Police Force were reported to have colluded with party agents and electoral officers to rig election and intimidate voters. In one of the polling stations in Anambra State, it was reported also that one Festus Eze of the Nigerian Police Force was seen thumb printing ballot papers in favour of one of the political parties (Shankyula, 2013).

Regarding the constitutional roles of security agencies during elections in Nigeria, corruption and political influence on the security personnel are seen to undermine the effectiveness of the security agents in the provision of security for elections. Chronic corruption within the police organisation makes the police highly susceptible to compromise and bribe-taking from wealthy politicians to influence the outcomes of voting in favour of pre-determined candidates (Oni, Chidozie & Agbude, 2013). For instance, a particular case was noted in Borno State where, as reported by Mu'azu (2007), the police colluded with the ruling party and supervised electoral fraud by agents of the party in the 2007 elections. Similarly, in Edo State, electoral violence was carried out by 'big men' (state officials) with their police escort and hired thugs in Etsako East, Benin, Ikpoba-Okha and Akoko Edo, leading to loss of lives and properties (Abutudu & Obakhedo, 2007). In the same vein, reports from other states overwhelmingly point to the politicization of the police and how this compromised security and the credibility of elections.

Meanwhile, although the areas in which the police have been considered to have failed in election security are diverse and many, the most frequently cited allegations of police complicity and electoral misconduct, as captured by the report of the Electoral Reform Committee (ERC) set up by the Yar'Adua Administration include: 'partisanship and discrimination against the opposition party; functional ineffectiveness to prevent and contain electoral crime; and complicity in fraud through brutality, intimidation, vote snatching, among others' (ERC Report 2008, p.174). The report of the European Union Election Observation Mission (2007) equally highlights the various

dimensions of partisanship of security agents which include: arbitrary arrest and detention of opposition supporters before and during elections without charges; banning of rallies and campaigns mounted by the opposition; and inability to checkmate flagrant impunity of violations committed by the members of the ruling party.

Furthermore, it was also reported that security personnel were blatantly involved in deliberate orchestration of election-related violence as a strategy of achieving electoral victory. For instance, prior to any general elections in Nigeria, leaders and members of opposition political parties were reported to have been officially harassed by security agencies. International Crisis Group (2007) observes that in the week before the 2007 elections, opposition figures were intimidated and arrested with a view to frightening their supporters and halting their campaigns. The point being made is that the performance of security personnel in relation to their statutory role of ensuring law and order and guaranteeing a credible process of election in Nigeria has been poor and unsatisfactory. The situation progressively keeps getting worse up to a point that the presence of security men at the polling station could hardly be taken to be for the protection of the votes of the masses.

Deployment of Security Personnel and the Conduct of Elections in Nigeria

Electoral process and bureaucracy are cumbersome, complex and expensive in Nigeria. Election environments are volatile as well. Organization of elections thus constitutes an ordeal for election managers, political parties and their candidates, the electorates and other important stakeholders. The situation arises due to a number of factors which, among others, include: the must-win-at-all-cost attitude of Nigerian politicians, lack of trust among stakeholders, the winner-takes-all political system being practised, and poor performance of the elected political leaders (Olurode & Hammanga, 2013).

Given the Nigerian environment, the dominant perspective is that free, fair and credible elections are possible only if security personnel, including the military are massively deployed. What fuel this perspective are the overwhelming violence, thuggery and sundry electoral malpractices that had featured consistently and prominently in the conduct of previous elections in Nigeria. In fact, some analysts are of the view that generally, violence, intimidation and electoral malpractices are enduring features of elections in Nigeria (Olurode, 2013). Flowing from the above standpoint is the conclusion

that only an adequate deployment of security personnel on the day of elections can secure the election environment.

Inarguably, deployment of security personnel on election day is important. In Nigeria, security personnel are deployed on the day of elections by the Inspector-General of Police/Commissioner of Police. Given that Police is answerable to the executive arm of government, and by implication the party in power, such postings are seen to be authorized from the highest political and strategic level to ensure that the police facilitate the victory of either the ruling party or pre-determined candidates. According to Olurode and Hammanga (2013), deployment of security personnel in Nigeria is influenced by several factors which include: power, class and a plethora of social networks. Persistent allegations of underground purchases of deployment are rampant. Security personnel on patrol duties (or those posted to check point), as well as those who are on other assignments are seen to offer inducements to influence their postings. On account of this, there had been cases where security personnel on election duties were found to have colluded to undermine the electoral processes. There were also instances of professional misconduct by security personnel during elections in Nigeria. There were other instances where police and other security operatives openly interfered with the secrecy of the ballot. For instance, it was reported that voters were influenced by police personnel to mark their ballot papers in the open. Police were also widely accused of failing to do enough to protect voters from violence and safeguard the integrity of the process. In Gombe Local Government INEC office during the 2007 elections, for example, it was reported that three police officers watched while PDP agents intimidated an INEC official into changing a result sheet. PDP cabinet member of the state government assaulted a candidate of the ANPP, while in a police-station in Deba, Gombe State and the police simply watched (Oyadiran & Olorungbemi, 2013). The issue, however, is not that the police do not understand the role they ought to play during elections. The issue rather is that police in Nigeria have merely turned puppets in the hands of moneybags and bigwig politicians and in effect, manipulated at the highest political level to ensure that the police supervise the victory of pre-determined candidates. In sum, deployment and control of security personnel, especially the police during elections in Nigeria is done by the Inspector-General of Police/Commissioner of Police. Desperate politicians have exploited this to manipulate the security personnel to for their

personal interests. This indeed has undermined the credibility of elections in Nigeria.

Security Agencies and Electoral Security: Lessons from Ghana

Ghana's elections, like in Nigeria, have always been conducted with security personnel detailed to secure voters, candidates, election materials and officials. At every polling station, there is always at least one security officer to provide security and to maintain law and order. Polling stations noted for violence could even be assigned more than one security officer. The military has always been involved in elections in Ghana. But military officials are not stationed at polling stations but rather patrol their assigned districts and are called in to stations where security officials stationed at polling stations find that they could not handle security challenges at those stations (Aning & Lartey, 2013).

In Ghana, the police are by law to provide security at all public places and so the electoral laws allow them to be at polling stations on election days. The presence of security personnel prevents voter intimidation. However, on election days in Ghana, all security personnel posted for election duties are under the control and command of the head of the electoral commission and the zonal electoral commissioners who also effect their postings. During their election assignments, the policemen would not be under the command or control of the Commissioner of Police, Inspector-General of Police or even the President, who, at that point, is considered partisan. According to a key informant in the Police Headquarter, Accra (cited in Nwosu, 2016):

no security agent posted for election duties is allowed to carry arms in Ghana. People are free to vote without fear or intimidation from any quarter including the state. This is easier to achieve since everything is done transparently. If an area is suspected to be a flashpoint, armed mobile policemen would be stationed at the divisional headquarters. And, even at that, they can move only with the clear directive of the head of the electoral commission.

Ghana's security bodies include: the military, police, prisons, immigration, and fire service (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009). Under Ghana's electoral laws, police personnel and other security bodies are required to perform three main functions which include: escorting election materials to the polling station;

keeping order at the polling station; and arresting election offenders on the instructions of the Presiding Officer (Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2005). Except the Bureau of National Investigations (BNI) which is located within the presidency, all the agencies are coordinated by the National Security Council (NSC). The Inspector-General of Police (IGP) heads the National Elections Security Taskforce (NESTF), an *ad hoc* body comprising all the key security agencies that are responsible for all security matters relating to the management of elections. The NESTF was established by the Ghanaian government to coordinate measures to help maintain peace, law and order before, during and after every election. Specifically, the NESTF is to:

- a. provide security at printing houses where the ballot papers were being printed;
- b. provide security for the transportation of sensitive election materials;
- c. provide security at the polling centres;
- d. provide security at the collation centres;
- e. escort election material on polling day to polling stations; and
- f. escort material on polling day to collation centres (Commonwealth Observer Group, 2008, p. 18).

The professional role of the security bodies during the previous elections in Ghana were reported to have witnessed minimal incidences of shooting, ballot box snatching, vandalism of property, and other acts of violence (African Union, 2012; CODEO, 2012). The strategies mounted by the security apparatus, achieved the overall intended goal of peaceful and credible elections. Although other key players such as the EC, political parties, election observers, media, civil society groups, and the general public contributed to the peaceful outcome of the elections, the vigilance, non-partisanship and professional conduct of Ghana's security forces was exceptional. According to a key informant in the Police Headquarter, Accra (as cited in Nwosu, 2016):

Security, particularly in the 2012 elections was structured in three tiers: polling station security, patrol teams, and a rapid deployment force. Other security-related activities were underpinned by the installation of a dedicated communications network intended to provide assistance and protection for the security personnel who were deployed on voting day. Throughout the entire country, the police were able to identify more than one thousand flashpoints where violence and other

disturbances might erupt... Arrangements in these areas involved increasing security presence to protect the ballot on voting day. They also depended on the evaluation of the level of threat in the area. Patrol teams were upgraded and mobilized to monitor volatile areas, while the rapid deployment force was put on standby to curtail any disturbances by individuals or groups.

The strategic and operational roles played by the security forces during elections in Ghana can be categorized into five main areas: constituency and media mapping; public order regulation; protection of key public installations; securing of conflict zones; and public education (Prempeh, 2008).

Constituency and media mapping is an exercise conducted by the police to ascertain the vulnerability of communities and media platforms to violence. Conducted in every election period, the process received particular attention in the 2012 elections. According to a key informant in the Police Headquarters, Accra (cited in Nwosu, 2016) :

Outlets and networks owned by known politicians were identified and political programs aired on them monitored because such media organizations tend to be partisan and provocative in their reportage. The police held regular dialogue sessions with such groups on the need to educate the electorate on peaceful conduct before, during, and after elections and to avoid broadcasting or publishing provocative or abusive content during the period. Such engagements proved useful, as evidenced in the reduced level of insults during political discussions on various media platforms.

It further explained that during elections in Ghana, police ensured security was adequate for political parties and candidates during the campaign period. Working in cooperation with the parties and other stakeholders, they enforced Public Order Act 1994 (Act 491) as the basis for regulating the conduct of political activities in the country. In particular, no two major political events could be held within the same venue at the same time. This was done to prevent clashes between political groups that could snowball into large-scale violence.

The presidential campaigns of the various political parties were coordinated so that no more than one campaign team and its supporters was allowed to remain in one region or district. Similar regulations were applied at the parliamentary level, except that the localized nature of the parliamentary elections placed more responsibility at the district command levels of the police force. The police assigned a security detail to each of the parties throughout the campaign period and made arrangements to secure rally grounds for each political activity (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009).

Special security arrangements were also made to protect critical installations. Printing houses for producing ballots, for instance, received special protection from the security agencies. All election materials were transported under close security protection to and from the EC offices and various destinations, such as polling stations, collation centres, and police stations in the regions and districts. The carrying of these materials across difficult terrain or to remote areas involved the use of security escorts, including military support. On the polling day, about 30,000 security personnel were deployed to protect about 26,000 polling stations during the voting (cited in Nwosu, 2016).

The foregoing analysis has shown that in Ghana, the vigilance and professional conduct of Ghana's security personnel has witnessed minimal incidences of ballot box snatching, vandalism of property, and other acts of electoral violence. In Ghana, therefore, election security does not pose a formidable challenge. Politicians generally respect electoral institutions and laws and act with less impunity, electoral bureaucracies could also be better trusted and security personnel act professionally. More fundamentally, the police command, during elections, comes under the control of the Chief Electoral Officer. This is why election officials could transport election materials from one point to the other without fear of the materials being snatched by hoodlums or election officials being abducted. Thus, the strategies mounted by security agencies in Ghana have, to a reasonable extent, achieved the overall intended goal of peaceful and credible elections.

This indeed is a big lesson for Nigeria, where the conduct of security personnel in relation to their statutory role of providing adequate security during elections has remained abysmally low and unsatisfactory. In Nigeria, it is common for security personnel to connive with candidates or political parties to rig elections or perpetrate acts of violence. This has profoundly and

consistently undermined the credibility of election, as a process of ensuring smooth and orderly transfer of political power in Nigeria.

Conclusions

The study examined the nexus between security agencies and challenges of election security in Nigeria. The study argued that security personnel have paradoxically become a central element of election insecurity, on account of their deployment and partisan roles in election administration. Security agencies are not functionally autonomous of political struggles and class interests. They operate in a partisan way to foster and advance private interests. Unable to rise above partisan cleavages to guarantee public security during elections, voting is often susceptible to fraud such that the entire electoral process is flawed. Security personnel in Nigeria have, therefore, remained operationally ineffective and publicly unaccountable in a manner that undermines both the credibility of elections and democratic ethos. This is unlike in Ghana, where election security does not pose a formidable challenge because security personnel on election duty come under the control of the Chief Electoral Officer. On account of this, the vigilance as well as the strategic and professional conduct of security personnel has engendered minimal acts of electoral violence. The study thus underscores the fact that to provide adequate security during elections in Nigeria, security agencies need to be operationally and functionally autonomous. Therefore, there is a connection between deployment and control of security personnel during elections by the Inspector-General of Police and partisan roles of security agencies in election administration in Nigeria. Given this unpleasant scenario, there is urgent need to amend the Electoral Act and other legal documents to ensure that the head of the EMB in Nigeria assumes the control and command of security personnel on election duty, like in Ghana, so as to achieve the overall intended goal of peaceful and credible elections.

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- THE ROADMAP TO THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS:
CHALLENGES OF LEGISLATION AND THE FUTURE OF
ELECTORAL DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The importance of an acceptable legislation to the credibility and sustenance of electoral democracy is indisputable. It strengthens the electoral system and builds public confidence in the electoral process. One of the critical challenges that confronts the conduct of the 2019 general elections in Nigeria is the failure of the executive and the legislature to agree in approving the required legislation that can guarantee the credibility of the election. Several unsuccessful attempts have been made to amend the 2010 electoral act as the President variously declined assent to the Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2018. The question therefore is; what is the implication of the challenges of the legislation on the prospects of electoral democracy in Nigeria? The study adopted the qualitative method, which among others depended on documentary evidence such as published texts, learned academic journals, official publications, newspapers and magazines, and the internet. The data were analysed using content analysis and adopted the rational choice theory as its theoretical framework. The study discovered that the sustenance of the success of the 2015 General Elections is predicated on the ability of the legislature, the executive and other actors to agree on an acceptable legislation to guide the conduct of the 2019 General Elections and future elections. It recommended timely review of electoral acts in line with modern trends and development for the purpose of continual improvement in the Nigeria's electoral process as a mean of sustaining the Nigeria's electoral democracy.

Keywords: electoral democracy, general elections, legislation, Nigeria, roadmap

Introduction

Election, particularly a credible, free and fair one has become a key element in the measurement of the buoyancy or otherwise of a democracy. To achieve this feat, the imperative of the existence of an acceptable legal framework is indisputable. The sustainability of a democracy and every other human institution for that matter is the need to evolve certain codes of conducts that can stand the test of time and determine the general modes of operation of such institution. The legitimacy of the outcome of an election is predicated upon the appropriateness in the observance and strict adherence to the extant laws and legal codes under which it was conducted.

The need to explain people's perception on the credibility or otherwise of an election is germane. For instance, Norris, Garnett & Grömping (2019, p.2) noted that "perceptions of electoral integrity, and thus confidence in the fairness, honesty and legitimacy of electoral procedures and outcomes, matter for liberal democracies." The perceptions of the people on electoral credibility and other associated issues that portend the capacity to guarantee credible election and electoral process influence people's trust in political parties, legislatures and governments, ensures democratic satisfaction, and encourages voter turnout (Ibeanu, 2006; Norris, Garnett, & Grömping, 2019).

Electoral democracy is synonymous with representative democracy, which means "a form of government where the powers of the sovereignty are delegated to a body of men elected from time to time, who exercise them for the benefit of the whole nation" (Bouvier, 1856). This privileges the legislature as cardinal to the emergence and survival of a democracy, since they are the direct representatives of their various constituents. The processes leading to the elections are germane as they count greatly to the possibility or otherwise in ensuring the credibility, legitimacy and acceptability of the elections. The continual inability of many countries practicing multi-party electoral system to conduct credible elections has accentuated the assertion

that multi-party elections in Africa have been reduced to a mere political ritual. For instance, Crespo in Peter (2017) asserted that hegemonic parties conduct regular multi – party election in order to avoid the label of one – party system and to preserve certain democratic legitimacy.

The challenges confronting political succession in Africa have hitherto hampered the attainment of the ideals of democracy. To this end, Hague & Harrop (2001, p.24) submit that, “the difficulties facing new democracies can be grouped into two related clusters: the political problems associated with an illiberal inheritance and the economic problems caused by the combination of limited development and extreme inequality.”

As a core indicator of democracy, regular free, fair and credible elections is germane for the sustainability of electoral democracy. The 2019 General Elections made the sixth successive election in the Nigeria’s Fourth Republic and the 20th year of the continual survival of democracy. Therefore, it is important to interrogate the roadmap to the 2019 general elections, particularly the challenges of the enabling laws and the prospects of democracy in Nigeria. This study therefore undertook an examination of the implications of the roadmap to the 2019 particularly the challenges of legislation and its implication(s) for the outcome of the 2019 General Elections on one hand and the prospects of electoral democracy in Nigeria on the other hand. In the nutshell, how did the challenges of legislation in the build-up to the 2019 General Elections impact on the future of electoral democracy in Nigeria.

To achieve the foregoing objectives, the study adopted the qualitative method of research. The data were *inter alia* sourced from published documents such as textbooks, the internet, official publications such as those of National Assembly and African Election.

Apart from this introduction, other sections of this paper included the theoretical explanation, the road map to the 2019 general elections, the

challenges of legislation, the future of electoral democracy in Nigeria, and conclusion and recommendations.

Theoretical Explanation

The paper adopted the rational choice theory to explain the relationship between legislation and the future of electoral democracy in Nigeria. Though the theory was initially developed and used in economics, it has become increasingly relevant in other social sciences as its utility is no longer in doubt. According to “the rational choice” theory, political process is determined by individuals who make rational decisions, pursuing their own interests and maximising their own expected utility. “‘Rational behaviour’ is behaviour that is suitable for the realisation of specific goals, given the limitations imposed by the situation” (Wittek, 2013: 688). He further states that the “key elements of all rational choice explanations are individual preferences, beliefs, and constraints” (Wittek, 2013, p.688). The rational choice theory is predicated on three key assumptions namely: (1) individuals have selfish preferences, (2) they maximise their own utility, and (3) they act independently based on full information.

In neoclassical economics, the assumption is on full rationality, which among others maintains that “individuals are fully informed about all their decision alternatives, the probabilities of their outcomes, and their consequences, and there are no cognitive limitations in the perception or processing of this information” (Wittek, 2013, p.688). In a pure economics terms, individuals judging from the rational choice theory base their ‘decisions on cost-benefit calculations and choose the alternative that generates the highest expected utility.’

Drawing on the argument of the rational choice theory, it is imperative to note that political actors take decisions putting into cognisance the implication(s) of such decisions on their personal interest. For instance,

McFaul (1997) asserted that the Russian transition to electoral democracy, where all major political actors have agreed to a new, though minimal, established rules of political contest in which popular elections were accepted as the only valid method to political power. Although it is agreeable that popular election has become the most credible means of changing leadership in the Nigerian political system, there are concerns over the acceptability or otherwise of the legal framework that drives the electoral process in the country. This necessitates the need for regular amendments of the electoral act in order to take care of emerging developments. This assumption necessitated the move of the Nigerian National Assembly amend the 2010 Electoral Act to give legality to among other things the use of smart card reader and electronic transmission of results.

Many political actors are involved in the business of ensuring the existence of a legislation that can drive the electoral process. Usually, the National Assembly, which is naturally responsible for law-making, the executive headed by the president who needed to sign the bill(s) passed by the National Assembly in order to give it the force of law, and the judiciary, who steps in to interpret any ambiguity that may have occurred in the law and punish offenders. As part of its responsibility, the National Assembly in 2010 enacted an Electoral Act, which repeal the 2006 Electoral Act to drive the electoral process of Nigeria and was assented to by the President of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. The Electoral Act passed through amendment in 2015 and was assented to by the President, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. As a way of continual engineering of the electoral apparatus, the Electoral Act 2010 was amended preparatory to the 2019 general elections but was not assented to by President Muhammadu Buhari, making the election management body to conduct the 2019 general elections based on the 2015 amendment of the 2010 Electoral Act.

Based on the varied actions of the two presidents with respect to the 2015 and 2018/2019 amendments, it is plausible to agree with McFaul (1997)'s "rational choice" argument that "the greater the consensus concerning

the perception of the balance of power between major actors, the more likely a new set of rules can be accepted by all. This played out in the refusal of the president of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari to sign the 2018 amended copy of the Electoral Act, 2010. Political process is naturally determined by individuals who make rational decisions, pursuing their own interests and maximising their own expected utility. This scenario defines the utility of the rational choice theory in the explanation of the challenges of legislation in the road map for the 2019 General Elections and the implications for the future of electoral democracy in Nigeria.

The Roadmap to the 2019 General Elections

The 2019 General Elections have come and gone but not without some reflections. An interrogation of the processes that led to the election is important for the continual improvement of the Nigeria's electoral process. The 2019 General Elections were the first major to be conducted under the All Progressive Congress (APC) led federal government. This is instructive to note, particularly in view of the hegemonic hold of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) of the Nigeria's political space from 1999 to 2015. For instance, Bogaards (2008, p.115) submits that "a dominant party system exists when one party wins an absolute majority in parliament over at least three consecutive elections and captures the presidency."

In the build up to the 2019 General Elections, the Nigerian political climate witnessed certain developments, some of them contributed negatively to the conduct of the said elections. The inability of the Nigerian National Assembly and the executive to agree on the 2018 Electoral Act Amendment bill was partly occasioned by the political climate and development that were antithetical to their harmonious coexistence.

The Emergence of Divided Government

The theoretical basis that underpins this presupposes the possibility of elite consensus for the adoption of an acceptable legal framework that will guide the electoral process. Svobik (2015) asserted that the accumulation of too much power in the hands of an incumbent executive appears to present a persistent threat to democratic stability. To this end, Pérez-Liñán, Schmidt, and Vairo (2019, p.621) submitted that “the president’s hegemony over other branches of government – but not the president’s formal constitutional powers – represents a major threat to democratic stability.” In an empirical analysis using evidences from 18 countries spanning between 1925 and 2016, they asserted that “greater direct control of the executive over other branches expands the risk of democratic breakdown” (Pérez-Liñán, Schmidt & Vairo, 2019, p.621)

A divided government according to Sodaro (2008, p.140) exists when “the executive branch is controlled by one political party and the legislature is controlled by the opposition political party or parties.” When the president in a presidential system of government is from a different political party with majority of the legislators, gridlock, that is inability to agree on legislation may result. The Nigeria’s experience in the build up to the 2019 General Elections presented a different scenario. The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the Federal House of Representatives, earlier elected on the platform of the All Progressive Congress (APC) defected to the opposition People’s Democratic Party (PDP) along side a few other legislators. The move to amend the Electoral Act, 2010 proved abortive as the President of the Federal Republic declined assent to the Amendment Bill, 2018 of the Electoral Act. This scenario signalled the inability of the key stakeholders to agree on the amendment of the Electoral Act that would have probably engendered credibility of the elections.

Elites agreement is germane for the emergence and survival of democracy. It is noteworthy that “whatever the attitudes of the masses may be, democracy may not come about in the first place, or survive in the longer run, unless the country’s key elites agree to govern by agreement” (Sodaro, 2008,

p.224). This is not always the case when the executive and the leadership of the National Assembly are not from the same political party. The mid-term election in the United States of America that gave Democrats the control of the House of Representatives, with a Republican President has occasioned government's shutdown as the two organs of the government have failed to reach agreement over salient matters.

Escalating Insecurity

The spate of insecurity engulfing almost all the geo-political zones of the country was to be a deciding factor in the 2019 General Elections. The most devastating dimension of insurgency in Nigeria is the recurrent unleash of terror by the Islamic militant group generally referred to as Boko Haram (meaning western education is sacrilege) in most parts of northern Nigeria. What has often made the war against this group difficult is the ideological dimension underlying the operation of the group and the appealing of the ideology to the people who are predominantly Muslims. It is acclaimed to be a religious war, whose emphasis is on the complete annihilation of western education, philosophy, and ideology; and the institutionalisation of Arabic and Islamic education in at least twelve states in northern Nigeria.

Boko Haram activities, according to the Africa Desk Factsheet (2014), has sustained itself financially majorly through ransom kidnappings, bank robberies and other illegal activities. The military has also been severally ambushed and striped of their arms by the insurgents group. There are allegations that some national and international collaborators are behind the financing of the activities of the dreaded insurgent group.

Unlike the Niger Delta Militants, which is obviously a legitimate struggle for the control of the resources domiciled in their region and the struggle for the protection of their environment, the Islamic fundamentalists prosecuting the Boko Haram agenda have no genuine reason except the

struggle for the establishment of another government that is religious inclined within the broader Nigeria's secular state. Nigerian flags were burned and strange flags hoisted in some places. This is treasonable and an act of rebellion against the authority of the Nigerian state and a test of the capacity of the Nigerian government to exert its sovereignty and maintain her territorial integrity

Originating in the north-eastern part of Nigeria, the Boko Haram insurgency has been ongoing for the past ten years, rapidly spreading to other parts of the country as well as to a large portion of the Lake Chad Basin (Assanvo, Abatan, & Sawado, 2016). The devastating consequences of the activities of Boko Haram is alarming. The *modus operandi* of this terrorist group includes among other things, attacks on churches, their clergy, and their faithful through suicide bombings, gun attacks, kidnappings and rape (Kpughe, 2017). At a later of their operation, mosques (the Muslims' worship centre) were attacked during prayers with the suicide bombers pretending to be fellow worshippers. Several deaths have occurred as a result of this strategy of the dreaded terrorist group.

The activities of Boko Haram has led to the death of more than 51,567 people and the displacement of about 2,400,000 people across the North – Eastern part of Nigeria between 2010 and 2016 when the activities of the group became widespread (IOM, 2016; The Telegraph, 2015; Africa Check, 2014; IDMC, 2018; Campbell, 2018; Council on Foreign Relations, 2018). As Nigerians were about having a sigh of relief from the devastating activities of the Boko Haram, herders/farmers' crisis began in basically central region of the country. The disaster of this is the impending food crisis in Nigeria. This has accentuated the economic adversity of the country.

The upsurge of Fulani Herdsmen attacks on local farmers that have led to massive destruction of lives, properties and farmlands is possibly part of the negative consequences of the massive movement of small arms and light weapons across the borders of Nigeria and her neighbours. This monumental inflow of arms and other military hardware through the Nigeria's vast and

porous land borders and the unsecured sea borders will continue to pose threat to domestic security of the country.

In 2017 alone, an estimated number of 549 people lost their lives to the activities of Fulani Herdsmen with thousands of internally displaced persons. This has not abated. It is almost a daily occurrence in many parts of Nigeria at the moment. Between January and April, 2018, 901 people were killed in the North – Central Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria by Fulani Herdsmen (Chima, Okoh, & Shiklam, 2018).

An attack of the herders on Jos, Plateau state on Saturday 23rd June led to the death of about 200 people including women and children. However, the herders' group popularly known as *Miyetti Allah*, has said that the massacre was retaliatory for the loss of 300 cows (Nanlong, Duru, Omonobi, & Una, 2018; Vanguard, 2018; Opejobi, 2018; Ajijah, 2018; Maina, 2018; Okeke, 2018). The irony is that in the Nigerian history, herdsmen are known to carry shepherd staff with which they control their cows. How have they become heavily armed? Who is responsible for the arms and ammunition used by these herdsmen and other militia and insurgent groups in Nigeria? The earlier these questions are answered, the better in addressing the rapidly increasing carnage in Nigeria.

Beyond the Jos carnage, violence has engulfed almost all parts of the country. It also manifested in the killing of scores of people, the displacement of about 7,000 people following an inter-communal crisis involving Ebonyi State in the South East Geopolitical Zone and Cross River State in the South-South Geopolitical Zone (Okutu, 2018). No region in Nigeria is free of violent necessitated by the wanton availability of small arms and light weapons. For instance, “the increased availability of illegal small arm and light weapons in Nigeria estimated to be in the range of 3 million is also attributed as a factor to the rise and proliferation of violent social formations” (Duruji, 2014, p.335). The aggregation of these challenges, that is; Boko Haram insurgency in the North – East Geopolitical Zone, the re-emerging Niger Delta crisis in the South-South Geopolitical Zone, herders-farmers crisis in the North-Central

Geopolitical Zone, the escalating kidnappings, communal crises, and armed robbery in the South-East and South-South Geopolitical Zones are all offshoots of the burgeoning small arms trafficking into Nigeria (Peter & Asogwa, 2010; Peterside, 2018) and factors that should ordinarily determined the outcome of the 2019 General Elections.

These escalating crises are reflections of the level of poverty in Nigeria. For instance, the projection by the World Poverty Clock compiled by Brookings Institute poverty index indicated that Nigeria has overtaken India as the country with the largest number of people living in extreme poverty, with an estimated 87 million Nigerians, or around half of the country's population, thought to be living on less than \$1.90 a day (Adebayo, 2018; Eweniyi, 2017). These are key indicators of a failed state. There is a gradual erosion of the state's ability to maintain internal security following daily blood letting and accelerated poverty coupled with the extremely high cost of living.

Several other factors such as the outcome of the isolated elections conducted in Ekiti and Osun states, which threw up major issues regarding the commodification of electorates and the unprecedented violent conflicts particularly in the supplementary election in Osun state. Other issues were the conduct of party primaries, which necessiated confusion on whether direct or indirect primary should be conducted, the inappropriateness of the conduct of party primaries occasioning the invalidation of the All Progressive Party's primaries in Rivers and Zamfara States, the inability to pass the 2018 amendment bill to the Electoral Act into law and the degree of preparedness of the election management body constituted critical pre-election challenges. These challenges confronted the conduct of the 2019 General Elections. The capacity of the federal government to handle these factors were to be determining factors in the emergence of victors in the 2019 General Elections.

The Challenges of Legislation

Legislations are critical to the effective running of any organised system. There have been a number of challenges confronting the conduct of elections in Nigeria. In the built-up to the 2019 elections, efforts were made to enact a law to guide the process. The National Assembly made frantic efforts to amend the 2010 Electoral Act. This was met with several resistance as all efforts to secure the president's assent failed. The initial amendment to the Electoral Act was transmitted to the President in February, 2018 but vetoed by the President. The bill was reintroduced, passed through all the processes, passed by the joint session of the two chambers of the National Assembly and transmitted to the President on Monday June, 2018, yet without the approval and assent of the President. The disagreement between the two main organs of the government responsible for the impossibility of ensuring the enactment of the Electoral Act. This frustrated the process of having an acceptable legal framework targeted at ensuring the credibility of the 2019 General Elections. This agrees with McFaul (1997)'s "rational choice" argument that "the greater the consensus concerning the perception of the balance of power between major actors, the more likely a new set of rules can be accepted by all.

For instance, the explanatory memorandum of the 2018 amendment of the 2010 Electoral Act states that:

This Bill seeks to amend the Electoral Act No. 6, 2010 to restrict the qualification for elective office to relevant provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, recognise the use of Smart Card Readers and other technological devices in elections, provide a sequence of elections and political party primaries, a time line for the submission of list of candidates, criteria for substitution of candidates, limit of campaign expenses, and address the omission of names of candidates or logo of political parties.

These provisions are germane and targeted at the continual improvement of the electoral system and ensure the legitimisation of the electoral outcome.

Also, the turn-over rate in every election into the legislature constitutes a major challenge to legislation that can drive credible electoral process. The turn-over rate according to Atenaga (2018) brings with it unnecessary shuffling of members where those in power bring in their new helmsmen on board for their own personal interest. The bandwagon effect of the 2015 General Elections, where a good number of freshers found their way into the National Assembly and decided to do the bidding of the people that back rolled them constitute a major challenge to legislation in Nigeria.

Inexperience adds to the challenges confronting legislation targeted at the credibility of elections in a democracy. Both chambers witness an influx of majorly new set of members as freshmen and greenhorns arrive the chambers devoid of legislative experiences (Fashagba, Davis, & Oshewolo, 2014). The implication of this is the continual delay in legislative processes as the newly elected members will have to learn the entire processes anew before making meaningful contributions. This probably explains the inability of the National Assembly to conclude works on the amendment to the Electoral Act early enough.

The emerging trend, where former governors who had completed their second tenure retire into the Senate by picking up a career in legislature (Fashagba, Davis, & Oshewolo, 2014:111-112) is probably unhealthy for robust legislation. For instance, the Nigerian Senate currently has about 20 former governors as Senators, while the in-coming Ninth Assembly will be playing host to about 15 ex-governors. This phenomenon appears not augur well for our nation as majority in that category are no longer active and are devoid of important contribution to the nation with the exception of few of them.

The negative impact of decades of military rule on the psychic of Nigerians has continued to interfere in the robustness of the Nigeria's National

Assembly in the law-making process. It is often traditional for the military to suspend all democratic institutions at every point of its incursion into the democratic terrain of the country. The modification of the legislature and the judiciary by the current rulers is antithetical to effective legislation. The implication is that these organs of government (the legislature and the judiciary) are either compelled to implement the will of the executive or shown the way out. This stems from the facts that the executive arm has remained regardless of military or civilian regime, hence those in the executive arm tend to have their will implemented always. For instance, president Buhari declined assent to the Electoral Bill, 2010 Amendment transmitted to him by both houses for the four times before the general elections with the argument that it will cause crisis in the country. The corrections of the areas of objections by the president notwithstanding, assent to the bill was declined. This corroborates the rational choice assumption upon which this work is predicated. It is plausible to argue that Mr. President, based on advice from people around him denied assent to the bill because of its possibility of thwarting their permutation of 'electoral victory'. The scenario that played out may tacitly be a justification for the popular slogan that there is no rule of law in Nigeria but what we have is the rule of men.

Executive recklessness that is exhibited towards the legislative arm in Nigeria portends the capacity to hoodwinking the National Assembly into making laws that will only be favourable to the elites. The invasion of the National Assembly by members of the Department of State Security Service (DSSS) and the prevention of assembly men and women from entering the chambers and their offices are tacit invitation of anarchy and a deliberate ploy of the executive to shipwreck the law making organ of the government. This played out massively in the Nigeria's 8th Assembly. The ensuing bickering impeded the robustness of the government and the possibility of formulating and executing progressive legislations that can be of benefit to the masses.

Perception of the people also contributes to the robustness or otherwise of legislation in Nigeria. The members of the National Assembly have

imprinted negative impression on the minds of Nigerian people. Their status in the society and their roles in sharpening and redirecting Nigerian democracy notwithstanding, many Nigerians still see some of them as a bunch of rascals who fight for no just cause as against a body of honourable men who were elected to express the will of the greater majority through law making. This loss of public confidence and sympathy will not augur well for Nigerian democracy. In reality, the assembly men and women represent the will and conscience of the people going by the architecture of the Nigerian government patterned after the order of representativeness. The loss of confidence of the representative on their elected officers automatically makes the legislatures vulnerable and unable to assert themselves in the making of robust laws that can occasion a change of status quo. The invasion of the National Assembly by hoodlums on the invitation of a serving senator and the carting away of their symbol of authority explains the demonstration of rascality, arrogance and lack of civility that are unhealthy for effective legislation.

Also, critical to the delay and sometimes confusion in the law-making process in Nigeria is the large number of legislators that constitute this arm of government due to the bicameral nature. Power sharing between the upper and lower chamber is the hallmark of Nigeria's legislature as provided for by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, and the provision of concurrence power of both houses in the making of decision on most issues on which the National Assembly has powers (Fashagba, Davis, & Oshewolo, 2014). This may delay consensus on critical matters and consequently results in the delay of legislations. In agreement with the rational choice theory, lack of elite agreement on the policy could hamper the possibility or otherwise of passing bills. This was evident in the scenario that played out in the 2018 amendment of the Electoral Act, 2010, as some serving legislators vehemently defended the action of Mr. President because of the perceived negative consequences of the act on their electoral interest.

Future of Electoral Democracy in Nigeria

The African Elections Database (n.d.) viewed electoral democracy as “nations with governments elected through generally legitimate, free, and fair elections that reflect the will of the people, a freely operating political opposition, and a climate that encourages respect of both political rights and civil liberties.” There is no gainsaying the fact that Nigeria has adopted electoral democracy as the pattern of political succession. The 2019 General Elections made the 6th successive general elections in Nigeria’s Fourth Republic. It is the longest time span in the practice of democracy in post-independence Nigeria. Sodaro (2008, p.186) asserted that “democracy is a system of government that consists of certain core values, the rule of law, popular sovereignty, guaranteed rights and liberties, and the economic well-being of the populace.” These empirical indicators of democracy are worth considering in view of the possibility or otherwise of sustaining democracy in Nigeria.

The report of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) asserts that “the democratic ideal in and of itself seeks to guarantee equality and basic freedoms; to empower ordinary people; to resolve disagreements through peaceful dialogue; to respect difference; and to bring about political and social renewal without convulsions” (cited in Beetham, Carvalho, Landman, & Weir, 2008, p.17). The future of Nigeria’s democracy is bleak. The circumstances that led to the conduct of the 2019 General Elections justify the continuity of impunity and a transition from one regime of hegemonic political party to the other. It justifies the assumption of Crespo (2004) who in his study of party competition in Mexico opines that:

A hegemonic party like PRI, insofar as it tried to avoid becoming a one party system in order to preserve a certain democratic legitimacy, had to honour democratic rituals. It was obliged to adopt institutions and procedures typical of a democracy even though in reality these institutions and procedures lost their original function

It appears, with respect to the experiences of the 2019 General Elections that there is a transition from one group of political elites to the other. It presents a movement from one dominant political party to the other. As Bogaards (2008, p.115) noted, “a dominant party system exists when one party wins an absolute majority in parliament over at least three consecutive elections and captures the presidency.” The conduct and outcome of the 2019 General Elections negate the basic elements and empirical indicators of democracy as the process was subverted through unprecedented violence and wanton destruction of life and property.

Conclusion and Recommendations

There is no gainsaying the fact that several factors contributed to the success or otherwise of the 2019 general elections. A good number of them were pre-election matters. Very cardinal in that regard is the inability of the critical stakeholders representing the executive and the legislature to agree on an acceptable legal framework to guide the conduct of the elections. The stalemate that greeted the 2018 amendment bill of the 2010 Electoral Acts contributed to the inability of the Election Management Body to embrace certain electronic devices that would have probably helped to clean up the electoral system and make the outcome credible and transparent.

The inability of the two organs of the government to agree on the legal framework was predicated on the emergence of a divided government following the defection of the leaders of the National Assembly from the governing APC to the opposition PDP. The natural suspicion was that the new law, which was aimed at legitimising electronic system such as the Smart Card Reader, online transmission of results, among others has the capacity to weed out the candidates of the governing party going by their awful performance in the past four years. Nigeria’s economic profile plummeted within the period, insecurity became wide spread with the increase in the activities of Boko Haram terrorists, the farmers/herders crisis, the gale of kidnapping and the

general deterioration of the economy making Nigeria the poorest country in the world, were to be determining factors in the emergence of winners of the 2019 general elections if a transparent, free, fair and credible elections were to be allowed.

The rational choice theory came on board as the president could not agree with the National Assembly to assent to the electoral act amendment bill, 2018. This agrees with the assumption of the theory that the ability of the elites to agree is germane to the fashioning of legal framework that will drive the system. It also agree with Sodaro's (2008, p.224) assertion that "whatever the attitudes of the masses may be, democracy may not come about in the first place, or survive in the longer run, unless the country's key elites agree to govern by agreement."

The study recommended a renegotiation of the Nigeria's pattern of political succession and the nature of her democracy. This will help to have an established legal code that will determine how elections are conducted with minimal rancour and disagreement among elites.

It also suggested timely review of electoral acts in line with modern trends and development for the purpose of continual improvement in the Nigeria's electoral process as a mean of sustaining the Nigeria's electoral democracy.

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THE NIGERIAN STATE AND THE CRISIS OF DEVELOPMENT: THE WAY FORWARD

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Abstract

The study attempted a critical examination of the various factors inhibiting development in Nigeria with a view to identifying the various ways of tackling the menace. The study relied on secondary source of data and adopted elite theory as the theoretical framework. It observed that Nigeria is endowed with natural resources and various commitments have been engendered towards development since independence. Thus, it is expected that Nigerians should enjoy fundamental basic needs and necessities of life. It further observed that development is essential for a state to realise its purposes and serves as harbinger of good life and the Nigerian state has largely demonstrated commitment to development since independence. This it has done through the various agendas, plans and policies of government. It contended that development presupposes improvement in socio-economic and political sectors. Hence, every state irrespective of status and size strives continually to attain, maintain and sustain a substantial level of development to enable her citizens enjoy qualitative life. The finding showed that many Nigerians have continued to wallow in poverty, in spite of country's endowment in natural resources which are capable of engendering sustainable development. The study concluded that every state needs pragmatic and holistic approach to engender meaningful development.

Keywords: crisis, development, policy, resource, state

Introduction

Development is essential to humanity. Every human society needs reasonable level of development for its survival. Nations strive to attain high level of development to enable them perform effectively and efficiently, their assigned and traditional roles. Nigerian state is one of the globally recognised countries of the world, particularly within the shore of African continent, this is because Nigeria is heavily populated and ranked number one in Africa in terms of population. Also, Nigeria is greatly and abundantly blessed with natural resources, which has made her to continue to play big brother's role to other African countries. In terms of ethnic groups, culture and languages, the

country has more than required. Spatially, Nigeria is a gargantuan entity. All of these combined together made people to see Nigeria as ‘Giant’ of Africa.

Aside these unbeatable features and ascribed appellation, it is also to be noted that Nigeria, in her quest for development had formulated, adopted and implemented various development policies, reforms, plans and programmes at different levels of government. These ranges from National Development Plans (1962 - 1985), Rolling Plans (1990 - 1998), Operation Feed the Nation, Green Revolution Programme, Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Family Support Programme, National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Peoples Bank of Nigeria (PBN), Community Bank (CB), Integrated Community Development Project, National Economic Empowerments and Development Strategy (NEEDS), State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS), Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), Vision 2010, Nigeria 20:2020 to Seven Point Agenda (Paul, etal, 2014; Ibieta & Ekkhosuehi, 2013). With all these, it is logically expected that Nigeria should have attained an enviable height and joined the league of developed states. Also, it is morally expected that Nigerians should have been enjoying qualitative life and fundamental basic needs and necessities of life.

Ironically, Nigeria is comfortably a developing country with high level of poverty. Most Nigerians are still wallowing in penury. There is high rate of unemployment, low income, poor standard of living etc. (Igwe, 2012; Akinola & Adesopo, 2014). Flowing from the foregoing, it is apparent that Nigeria as a state has failed to justify her various attempts at ensuring and assuring qualitative and basic necessities of life for the citizens. In view of this, the study is set to examine the various factors that have been hindering development and how such problems could be tackled for sustainable development.

Conceptual Clarification

Development

Development is a slippery word and elastic in nature. It is not amenable to easy definition. This is because various scholars have defined it from different perspectives. But for the purpose of this paper, few of these definitions will be explored. Agagu (2004) viewed development as the ability of a community to indigenously tame nature and manipulate the resources at its disposal to ensure a good standard of living, thus eliminating abject poverty

and creating a well deserved respect for itself among the comity of nations. Olaleye (2004) described development as the improvement of the economy, often regarded as national economic management of a desirable increase in the gross national output and the equitable distribution of the output among the entire populace, the attainment of relatively stability in general price level, high productivity and full employment as well as the maintenance of a healthy balance of payments situation.

Development has also been perceived as a product of human efforts. This is based on the fact that the success of turning resources and materials to finished product for the purpose of good life lies with human beings (Hyden, 1994). Flowing from the definitions is the idea that development is a conscious attempt by the state to ensure qualitative life and improve standard of living of the citizenry through policies and programmes. Significantly, for individuals to fully realise his potentials and fulfill his purposes, the state must not only be functional but also be effective and productive. This is because the possibility of raising standard of living apparently depends on the good will and capacity of the state. Olaleye (2004) as rightly opined that no nation is fully developed. He conceived development as a continuum which every nation must tread. It is therefore expected that state must see development as its basic duty.

State

State refers to a group of people, occupying a definite territory, living under a government and incorporating sovereignty (Ebienfa, 2009). Anifowose (1999) defines state as the most inclusive organisation which has formal institutions for regulating the most significant external relationship of men within its scope. He described state as the basic political unit, a grouping of individuals who are organised in a defined territory for the pursuit of secular common welfare, the maintenance of law and order and the carrying out of external relations with other groups similarly organised. State is characterised by territory, population, government, sovereignty, rationalism and the sense of nation identity (Ajayi, 1997). State basically exists for the good of men. It is created to protect, preserve secure and provide for the citizenry. If state functions effectively, individuals are sure of enrichment and fulfillment of life, because state came into existence for the purpose of making citizens realise their ambition.

Theoretical Framework

Elite theory is employed in the analysis of this study. Elite theory is a philosophical explanation of the role of the leadership in governance as it affects public policies in general and the development policies in particular. Elite theory holds that politics is best understood through the generalisation that nearly all political power is held by a relatively small and wealthy group of people sharing similar values and interests and mostly coming from relatively similar privileged backgrounds (Higley & Burton, 2006). Bottomore (1993) views elites as a particular set of people, who direct the affairs of the state and possibly replace themselves with their children. They occupy all segments of decision making process, which enables them to exert a significant power over the policy decisions of corporations and government.

The level of success or otherwise recorded in the development programmes is a function of elites' initiatives and caprices. The elite theory postulates that public policy reflects the values and preferences of the elite rather than demands of the masses. The elite consist of those few individuals who wield powers and hold leading positions in the strategic aspects of society. The majority, nay the masses, only obeyed and are guided, controlled and governed by the few (Bottomore, 1993; Ikelegbe, 1994). It is on the basis of the authoritative position of the elite that informs elites' reflection of policy and programmes and their unending involvement in government contracts and projects. Most of the development programmes are designed and implemented by the elites.

Robbinson et al (n.d) have described elites as a distinct group within a society which enjoys privileged status and exercises decisive control over the organisation of society. They claimed that elites are not, by virtue of their position alone, negative forces for development. According to them, historically there are examples of elites who contributed to the provision of national and global public goods. For instance Leekwan Yew in Singapore, Nelson Mandela in South Africa and Bill Gates in the United States, etc. they changed the direction of development in ways that were contingent on their position as elites and in ways that favoured the advancement of their societies. They insist that whether the welfare impact of elites is positive or negative is determined by how the actor or elite group executes its influence.

The position of elites gives them the opportunity to have control over the productive assets and institutions, which enables them to influence both the allocation of resources and the allocation of authority. The ownership of

resources enables elites to impact growth and development. Elite can choose to redistribute resources in ways that increase employment, economic efficiency and reduce inequality. Their control over resources gives them the ability to make decisions over production and technology.

Elites as owners of factors of production have influence over what is produced and how it is produced. They act as entrepreneurs and innovators. Therefore, if elites can be induced to adopt developmental behavior, it can have positive impact on development (Robbinson et al, n.d).

The bottom line here is the fact that elites can serve as agents and catalysts for development if they are willing to do so. The laws and policies that emanate from the state reflect the interest of the ruling and dominant class (Elites). Elite will continue to exist in every environment alongside with state. And their persistence ensures that they will always play a key role in development outcomes.

Unfortunately, the objectives of elites in Nigeria are regularly more altruistic. Elite theory is relevant to this study because it explains the influence of the elite on formulation and implementation of development policies and how the elites have used their authoritative positions and powers to divert funds meant for national development to private use and maneuver the whole development process to suite their selfish interest. The study used this theory to analyse how the Nigerian elites have politicised development process and hindered its effective delivery. If the source of development policies and programmes is traceable to the elite, then the theory is apt at explaining the conspiratorial relationship among the elite in their relentless attempt at manipulating and politicising development projects to their favour at the expense of masses.

The Nigerian State and Development

The entity called Nigeria came into existence in 1914 via colonial fiat (Ebienfa, 2009). It got her independence in 1960. Nigeria currently operates Federal and Presidential System of Government, namely, Federal, State and Local Governments. In terms of economy, Nigeria is Africa's second largest economy, with highest production of oil and gas reserves in the world and the largest in Africa. (Stavriana, 2016). Nigeria has the ninth largest gas reserves in the world and the largest in Africa. The country is the biggest beneficiary of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Africa with many Public and Private Partnerships (PPPs) in the development of infrastructure (Stavriana, 2016). To

be specific, Nigeria has the world's 10th largest oil reserves. It is to be noted at this juncture that aside these oil and gas, Nigeria is also blessed with other natural resources that have international market value. Expectedly, with these enviable records, Nigeria should have been able to provide basic necessities of life for its citizens and compete globally in the provision of infrastructure. But Nigeria has remained a limping giant in the arena of development in spite of all attempts by the past and successive government to develop the country.

To be sure, Nigeria in her quest for development had initiated and implemented various development Plans between 1962 and 1985. These ; First National Development Plan 1962- 1968; Second National Development Plan 1970-1974; Third National Development Plan 1975-1980; Fourth National Development Plan 1981-1985. Aside these Plans, there were also four rolling plans which ranged from 1990-1992; 1991-1993; 1992-1995 to 1994-1996. (Owolabi, 2003). These rolling plans were put in place to achieve increase in real income, even distribution

of national income, reduction in employment and underemployment levels, increase in the supply of skilled labour, balanced sectorial development, dependency on local resources in economic development and practice of economic stability. Other development policies were; Nigerian Indigenisation policy (1972), National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) 1972, Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) 1975, Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Act (1977), Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) (1986), The Directorate for Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRI) 1986, Peoples Bank of Nigeria (PBN) 1987, Trade and Financial Liberalisation Policy 1989, Community Bank (CB) 1990, Better Life Programme for Rural Women (BLP) 1987, Banks of Industry (BOI) 2000, Small and Medium Industries Equity Investment Scheme (SMIEIS) 2000/2001, Family Support Programme (FSP) 1994, National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) 2001, National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) 2004, National Integrated Industrial Development (NIID) 2007, The Seven Point Agenda, 2007, The Transformation Agenda, Industrial Park Development Strategy (IPDS) 2009, etc. (Ojonemi & Ogwu, 2013; Akinola and Adesopo, 2014; Ojonemi, et al, 2014).

As a matter of emphasis, this litany of development policies and programmes suggests better improvement in economy and radical transformation of socio-political environment of Nigeria. But a wide gap still exists between these policies and development. This became evident when

Akinola (2012), Igwe (2012) and Ibietan and Ekhosuehi, (2013) observed that these policies and programmes could not achieve much despite huge amount of money committed to them by the various regimes. Agagu (2004) noted that over four years decades of various development agenda in Nigeria, only little could be shown for this. In similar vein, Olaleye (2004) expressed dissatisfaction with Nigerian economy. According to him, the Nigerian economy has in the last 40 years been exposed to negative forces of inflation, deflation, recession, unemployment and several other financial turmoil.

Also, at the international level, Nigeria has been consistently rated low by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Index (HDI) which shows that Nigeria still lags behind in terms of development. The rating is shown below. See table 1.

Table 1: Showing Human Development Index Value of Nigeria, 2003 – 2017

YEAR	HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX (HDI) VALUE	REMARK
2003	0.443	Low
2004	0.462	Low
2005	0.465	Low
2006	0.475	Low
2007	0.479	Low
2008	0.485	Low
2009	0.490	Low
2010	0.484	Low
2011	0.494	Low
2012	0.512	Low
2013	0.519	Low
2014	0.524	Low
2015	0.527	Low
2016	0.530	Low

2017	0.532	Low
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Source: UNDP, 2018

Note: HDI Interpretation

HDI value above 0.800 = Very High Human Development

HDI value between 0.700 and 0.799 = High Human Development

HDI value between 0.550 and 0.699 = Medium Human Development

HDI value between 0.000 and 0.549 = Low Human Development

From the table, it is observed that Nigeria’s HDI value demonstrated a consistent increase since 2003, except in 2010, where it recorded decrease in value. Despite this consistent increase, Nigeria has continued to be ranked as a country with low Human Development. This implies that the consistent rise in Human Development shows little or no significant effect on the country’s development as quality of life of its citizen remains poor.

This ugly trend has led some scholars to argue that Nigerian state has failed in its basic assignment and has therefore lost the right to be addressed as a competent state. One of the scholars, Adetoye (2004) describes Nigeria as a successor to the exploitative, authoritarian and oppressive colonial state whose main objective was to plunder the resources of the territory. He said Nigeria is a soft state that easily yields itself to the manipulation of every individual or group of individuals that controls it at any particular time. Okoba (2003) and Igwe (2012) described Nigerian state as cruel, irresponsible, weak, dependent and oppressive.

Ajayi (2007) also argued that Nigerian state is a product of imposition and relics which emerged from the above the society and not from within it. He maintained that this external orientation make Nigeria to be externally dependent and its goals and values becomes externally inspired and determined. At this point, one is forced to ask the following questions; “were the various policies and programmes initiated and implemented by the governments out of context? Was the Nigerian state too weak to handle those programmes? Why has it been so difficult for Nigeria to impact meaningfully on its citizens in spite of the abundant human and material resources? These questions and others will be answered in the next section of this article.

Challenges of Development in Nigeria

It can be reasonably argued that most development policies and programmes experimented by Nigerian governments in the recent past were good packages but the implementation. Some of the problems are discussed below.

Elite and leadership problem. The major problem of development in Nigeria is bad leadership. Leadership is central to development as development strategies, plans, policies and agenda are products of leadership and are executed by the leaders. Leaders in Nigeria, particularly political leaderships are not development oriented, they do not possess the strong political will to generate meaningful and sustainable development. They promote group and personal interests above public interest. Elites in Nigeria are not really agents of development but agents of self aggrandisement and primitive accumulation. Mimiko (1998) has argued that the custodians of Nigerian state are hardly patriotic and incorruptible. The state has become a mere instrument of primitive accumulation in their hands. As noted in the theoretical framework of this paper, the elites in other countries have used their position to favour the advancement of their societies, so, the development of Nigeria depends on the determination of elite group to make and execute decisions concerning real and genuine development.

Failure of Nigeria's Bureaucracy. The importance of bureaucracy to any government cannot be overemphasised. This is because it assists the government to execute policies and programmes. The success of any government decision lies with its bureaucracy. Unfortunately, Nigeria bureaucracy is corrupt and inefficient (Adetoye, 2004). According to Adetoye, the nature of Nigerian state has made it possible for public servants to perpetrate corrupt practices. Most of the public servants lack executive capacity to implement development programmes. Akinola (2012) observed that development policies and programmes could not achieve much as a result of ineptitude attitude of the implementing Ministries and Agencies.

Infrastructure Deficit. Inadequate infrastructure also constrains Nigeria's development. There are no required infrastructures to drive development in Nigeria. No country can develop without functional infrastructures. Most infrastructures in Nigeria are not functional due to lack of maintenance. For instance, roads are in poor condition, electricity supply is epileptic, water quality is alarmingly poor. Stavriana (2016) noted that while there are many

opportunities for companies looking to do business in Nigeria, there are challenges of poor power supply, weak infrastructure and the likes.

Security and Constant Conflict Challenges. Security challenges, incessant conflicts, attacks and killings across the nation, particularly in the recent time constitute a barrier to meaningful development. Communal clashes, religious crisis, Boko Haram attacks, herdsmen attacks, militia attacks, kidnapping etc. are cable of frighten away investors, particularly, foreign investors, as no reasonable person would want to invest in crisis prone society. Corruption is the most challenging crisis affecting Nigeria's development. This is because it is a common phenomenon found in every sector of the economy. Igwe (2012) observed that both initiators and implementers of development programmes are corrupt. Mimiko (1998) posited that a very good plan supervised by thoroughly corrupt officials can hardly do a thorough job. Corruption and development are two parallel lines that should never meet.

Short duration of development policies and programmes. Policy span is often very short in Nigeria. For instance, NEEDS were designed for 2003 – 2007, most of the policies were designed to last for minimum of three and maximum of five years. Reform and policy period should be long enough to achieve its targets.

Also, lack of continuity in government policies and programmes has accounted for multitude of development policies and programmes without result.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study revealed that development is important and needed by every independent state. The efforts of the Nigerian state to ensure development through policies and programmes are still in doldrums. The litany of development reforms and plans has been an exercise in futility. The article indicated that infrastructures are not only grossly inadequate to meet the development need of the present but there are no strong policy initiatives to promote and sustain the existing infrastructural facilities to meet future needs. In as much as development is a continuous process, government is encouraged to continue to embrace meaningful initiatives capable of generating meaningful and sustainable development.

Based on the findings of this article, it is acknowledged that there are still opportunities available to government to institutionalise viable and

effective strategies towards ensuring appropriate, sustainable and meaningful development. In order to achieve this, the following steps are canvassed and recommended. True and committed leadership is urgently needed in Nigeria. Candidates with clear visions and strategies for achieving such visions, strong commitment and determination for development should be elected into political and leadership positions. A country that desires development needs transformational leadership. This is lacking in Nigeria. A competent and development oriented leaders as obtainable in advanced countries are required in Nigeria to drive the vehicle of development.

Furthermore, enabling environment is fundamental to development. The required infrastructures for development initiatives to thrive cannot be compromised. The basic and essential facilities such as regular and stable electricity supply, good roads functional communication system should be provided. Added to the foregoing is adequate security. Investments can only flourish in a secured environment. Entrepreneurs need protection, foreign investors and experts need protection, professionals Engineers and field Agents need protection. Therefore, the environment must be saved for smooth engagement and operation. In addition to these, provision of credit, technical or managerial advice, the use of local organisation and association is fundamental to development. The idea of “small is beautiful” as advocated by Hyden (1994) is needed for the development of Nigeria. Small scale industries and private initiatives should be encouraged as parts of drivers of development.

Also, continuity as a policy must be promoted in governance process. Since government is adjudged as a continuous process, policies, programmes and projects of government should also be seen as continuous process. The idea of mounting new projects by new government over the existing similar projects need to be discouraged and discarded so as to reduce or eliminate abandonment of projects. Most projects are usually abandoned for no tangible reason, some abandonment are usually motivated politically. This negative attitude should be expunged from our policy to allow effective and sustainable development.

Another compelling option is genuine fight against corruption. Corruption has been found to be responsible for underdevelopment in Nigeria. There is urgent need to genuinely punish corruption at all governmental levels. Anybody, irrespective of political affiliation ethnic background or position, caught in the act should be made to face the music as this will serve as

deterrence to others. The two institutions created for this purpose, i.e. the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices and other related Offences Commission (ICPC) should be made effective and truly independent so as to genuinely perform their duties. Still on the fight against corruption, the Judiciary must be adequately funded, independent and its capacity fully strengthened and enhanced to genuinely and effectively dispense justice. The judiciary must be able to discharge its responsibilities without fear or favour as this tends to guarantee development.

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ECONOMIC MELTDOWN AND THE NIGERIAN OIL-DEPENDENT ECONOMY

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Abstract

This study interrogated the relationship existing between economic deprivation, tax invasion and the Nigerian oil-based economy. The study employed secondary data method to investigate the subject-matter. The dependency theoretical framework was adopted to strengthen the analysis that is hitherto shrouded in clumsiness and subjectivism. It observed that oil and its by-products are linked to socio-economic and political affairs of the Nigerian state. However, it argued that since the discovery of oil in Nigeria, the economy has not reflected optimally considering the volume of resources being generated from the petroleum proceeds. This because the political leaders unleashed unfavorable economic policies capable of under-developing or stunting growth in the sector. The findings showed that lack of financial accountability and tax invasion malaise, impacted negatively on the economy had been identified as the root cause of unemployment, loss of job, poor technology, non-diversification initiative and brain drain. Other findings, indicated inter alia, undue political interference, nepotism and overseas partnership or collaboration as major factor hindering the Nigerian economy. Therefore, efforts should be directed towards the institutionalization of an effective economic control devoid of politicization to withstand or absorb any form of political interference with the capacity that could retard prospects in the economy.

Keywords: economy, technology, industrialization, non-diversification, tax-evasion

Introduction

In the medieval, men searched for the elixir of life to enable them attain gift or state of utopianism cum the philosopher's stone to turn metals into gold. Not even the modern medical science can guarantee immortality. Nonetheless, oil became crucial substance that even the pertinence of philosopher's stone was dwarfed due to the value attached to it by mankind given to its numerous importance; the Babylonians used it as mortar, where as the Byzantine as fire, the Indians as war paint. In the 18th century, it was used as lubricant in France and assisted in lightening the lamps in 19th century coupled with the discovery of the streets' illumination by this substance. There was little or no scientific/commercial exploration, but crudely harnessed until 1920s when United States, Canada and Germany simultaneously drilled oil from the earth. Edward L. Drake pioneered the first stage of scientific drilling near the well at Titus-Ville in Pennsylvania. Throughout the period in question, the invention pushed oil price steadily low and 1929, the collapse of the Wall Street accelerated the decline. In 1930, the demand for oil fell for the first time in United States. Subsequently, oil discoveries were made in the Middle East; some were found in the Persian Gulf and Venezuela where as in Africa, France found massive reserves in Algeria, Libya and on the side of Sahara, Nigeria became a major exporter.

Petroleum is critical in the lives of men and activities of countries. This is demonstrated through the diverse usage to which petroleum and its by-products are exploited; this substance (petroleum) can be used in powering machines or industrial equipments, where as the by-product such as Liquefied Gas (LNG) can serve as input in petro-chemical industry. However, the functions performed by oil and its related products account to the global high values and un-relentlessness in monitoring its prizes especially by the OPEC

members visa-a-verse, developing countries that rely heavily on the substance to execute infrastructural projects. The major oil producing countries had entrenched themselves into the global political economy as critical elements by deciding the outcome of various international events. Okolie (2015) argues that oil performs countless roles in the world economy since its advent as a source for energy in running the industrial system; it has brought together countries with diverse socio-cultural and political inclinations. It played the role of political weapon during the Israeli-Arab War. It was employed as economic weapon in 1973-1974 period oil embargoes.

In the past, before oil turned to a globally presumed substance of great economic value, the regions of North American and Western European axis had begun massive search and productively engagement, advancing towards mastery of destiny through the natural and unnatural explorations. There had been no time of indolence or unproductiveness, guided by the quest to create bountiful harvest amongst the aforementioned regions mostly on industrialization, manufacturing and planetary studies. Some good efforts were directed towards economic activities which cultivated the attitude of self reliance in agricultural system cum sophisticated management of the internally generated resources. The long period of military dictatorship, eroded this seemingly societal norms that found relevance or influence on the British colonial authority.

Nwangwu, (2000) drew analysis of the post independence economic wellbeing of the three regions in Nigeria prior to the oil boom/commercialization. To him, the Eastern Region could run an efficient economy from resources generated internally which equally underwent series of processes or refinement for export purposes. To the government of eastern region headed by M.I. Okpara, economic progress is associated to human capital with the capacity to manage the resources efficiently and productively. Pertinent from the above background of the government in reference is the assumption that a strong and productive economy would ever be linked to the quality or desired man power. This assumption was corroborated when

Ifesinachi, (2008) described the Eastern Nigerian Economy between 1956 and 1965; as the heart of an emerging African indigenous economy.

However, evaluating from another perspective, economic meltdown set in when the loss of production and consumption activities become too challenging for any possible solution in addressing the condition within a possible expected period of time. As the intensity of this situation increases, so would loss of confidence on the part of the external political economy forces to come for palliative and / or capital solvency. Loss of confidence and inadequacy of policy to tackle the effects of the economic problematic condition of production and consumption, sometimes could not reduce the rate of unemployment which in most cases prevalent in developing states, rise to a two digit rating. Poverty and health challenges have been identified as the areas in which recession of the economy would have instant impacts irrespective of regional or continental divide. The high rate of unemployment is unconditionally controlled or checkmated via the governmental intervention. A down in flow of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is an indication that economic meltdown is probably setting in even when it cannot be primarily linked to recession (Amadeo, 2009).

An economic recession is usually characterized by high unemployment, falling average incomes, increased inequality, low level of literacy, and higher government borrowing. In addition, in a situation fairly described as economic meltdown, between 2008 and 2012, negative consequences such as high inflation rate, increase in crime rate, and strained family relationship are very common. The commonest newspapers and other news outfits would mainly make negative headlines ranging from unemployment, criminal/robbery incidents to official looting of government treasury (Anikwe 2017).

Due to the instability of oil prices, globalization and forces of demand and supply of oil, Nigerian government has taken further steps towards harnessing its revenue from other sources. Among these sources is taxation which has not been fully integrated into the financial system. Taxation is

essential revenue generating mechanisms that equally assist in addressing the issue of dull economy. In Nigeria, taxation system was operated prior the intervention of the colonial rule (Samuel & Tyokoso 2014). In a related view, Oriakhi (2013) states that revenue from taxes contributed reasonably to the running of the centre government during and after the amalgamation in 1914 till the current order. However, the citizens had not been so comfortable with taxes, yet are expected to share in the burden of maintaining certain public systems for all and sundry (Afuberoh & Okoye 2014). Taxes are not only imposed for revenue enhancement but equally for the working of the entire economic system in addressing challenges ranging from micro to macro sectors of an economy (Oriakhi, 2013). Similarly, Ola (2005) affirms that taxes would also serve as instrument for correcting inflation/deflation, balance of trade/payment deficit, redistribution of income etc. It is widely believed that taxes are a form of encouraging internally instigated economic growth and development since it has to accommodate the people's desire and cooperation.

Nonetheless, scholarly contributions to economic meltdown and the Nigerian oil tied economy has been globally discoursed owing to the fact that non diversification of the economy since Nigeria commercialized her oil produce, is accounted as the major economic setback. Scholars like Ake (2003), Okolie (2015) and Udeh (2018) separately decried the unyielding direction taken by successive military and civilian governments of Nigeria, of not expanding the economy by tapping other minerals. This current economic anomaly galvanized coherently the views of Udenigwe (2010) and Izuchukwu (1999) which criticize the attitude of the Nigerian government's refusal to encourage multiple foreign exchange earning items guaranteed through fiscal federalism and decentralization of power.

Indeed these interrogations are instructive and expository, but endemic in deconstructed realism, which manifested on the poor level of comprehension of the subsisting condition of economic meltdown tap rooted in the Nigerian government insensitivity and politicization. The need to

deviate from this entanglement, gave the impetus close the gap through a vigorous efforts of the extant study. It is against this background that this paper problematizes lack of government political commitment and the economic blueprint to harness the oil resources together with the taxes from multinational corporations into a contemporary/advanced Nigerian economy, in addition, interrogating the relationship between political leadership and material poverty even in the midst of abundance of natural resources in Nigeria context. This paper equally developed the following analytical themes: theoretical framework,

Theoretical Framework

The dependency theory was employed to serve as an instrument for understanding/explaining the economic underdevelopment/backwardness which lay emphasis in the putative and agonizing constraints imposed by the global political and economic order. This analytical framework was firstly propounded in the late 1950s by Raul Prebisch, a nationale of Argentina. Nevertheless, dependency theory gained currency and wider acceptability within 1960s and 1970s.

The approach holds that underdevelopment or nil-development emanated from the peripheral condition of the affected states in the global economic system. Obviously, the disadvantaged/underdeveloped societies could only offer crude services, cheap labour and unrefined/raw materials to the global economic market. These unprocessed materials are sold to the advanced capitalist economies at cheap prices, which then process them with their advanced technology into finished products.

The underdeveloped societies mostly in Africa, Latin America and parts of Asia, end up buying the finished products at exorbitant prices, depleting the capital they would otherwise channeled to developing national productive initiative. The result is a vicious parameter which sustains and/or

perpetuates the dichotomy of the global economy between the wealthy axis and the poor peripheral area. However, moderate dependency scholars among them are the Brazilian sociologist; Fernando Henrique Cardoso and German American economic historian; Andre Gunder Frank argue that the most effective option to be free from the western capitalist dependency is the creation of non-capitalist socialist national economy.

Dependency theorists assert that so-called third world countries were not always poor, but became impoverished through colonial domination and forced incorporation into the global economy by expansionist first world powers (Asobie 2007). The third-world economies were geared towards the necessity of the first-world interests contrary to the needs, values and desire of the less developed societies that had painful experience of colonization, enslavement and psychological defeatism. Ifesinachi (2008) and Okolie (2018) differently contended that dependency theory sustains unequal relationship/exchange which has continued long after formal colonization ended. Thus, the immediate obstacles to autonomous development are perceived from the external contrary to the propagated notion of internal mishandling of issues rationalizing the domination and control of the global economy by the rich industrial countries of Western Europe, North America and today, Japan, China and India of Asia.

The above contention had been validated to a reasonable extent when we investigated the Nigerian oil exporting activities since the discovery and exportation of the substance in 1950s till date. Okolie (2018) reveals that due to massive dependency on foreign technology, the federal government of Nigeria does not have concrete figure or quantity of oil that goes out from the country's natural deposit. This scenario remains unchanged and/or intractable considering the low capacity of Nigerian-state in determining the criticality of her economic resources especially in its natural state generally termed raw/unprocessed. This ill-equipped concept adopted helplessly by the government in question has contributed hugely to the endless technology over-dependency

on the western method of exploring the oil and fabrication of machineries needed for exploration.

However, the capacity either innate or acquired through learning process to rule peoples' destiny which had been termed development mostly by the Caucasian was not reasonably sustained in Africa, compelling the states in this region of the world to give up their originality and strive to learn via acculturation, conscious/unconscious imitation and subservience to strange values, the patterns of life which was firstly politically imposed. Rodney (1972) posits that African methodology and conceptualization on life in general was remarkably futuristic before the unnecessary intervention of the Europeans in 15th century when the foundation for the evolutionary advancement of Africans was dislodged followed by a compulsive acceptance and recognition of western capitalists' socio-economic and political approaches as the gate-way to prosperity. This treacherous displacement of the African supposed inclined values discouraged indigenous method of economic enterprises resulting to the earliest embraced the western dictated attitude towards livelihood. Since the discovery of crude oil in Nigeria, coupled with the post colonial unequal exchange/consumption, no Nigerian government; civil or military could determine what happens in the oil sector in view of quantity and quality (Okolie 2015).

The above assertion could be linked to the dependency theory's assumption that the deliberate division among the states of the world along the concept of developed, underdeveloped, wealthy, poor, industrialized, non-industrialized, democratic, undemocratic and/or modernized society is technically to have two major societies, namely; accomplished and non-accomplished. To this instrument of analysis, there was a carefully articulated agenda/conspiracy to deny African region cum others, the initiative/forces needed to inspire wealth, industrialization and transformative institutions. Hence numerous transformative projects do not survive in Nigeria especially the country's oil resources which more or less are run and control by the western powers of North America and Europe. Nigeria-state has been

generating wealth from the oil exploration, but cannot diversify her economy in order to realize equally capital-resources from other sources due to the western influence and control of the means to achieve economy multiple ventures.

Proponents of dependency theory accused the western imperialists of double standard of failure to integrate into Africans, Latin Americans and parts of Asia the ingenuity or practice to embrace production with less emphasis on consumption. Nigerians are comfortable with consumption of goods/services from oversea even when the resources generated from the oil sector are sufficient to establish research centers as basic foundation for national/ domestic manufacturing of goods instead of relying heavily on direction/ dictation by international market values (Mbah 2011). Any little shake-up in the price value of oil exportation for example, causes huge challenge to Nigerian government to an extent of causing economic recession, threatening the entire socio-economic and political systems of the country.

This approach presumed that the end of colonization in most of the affected regions that came due to global protests and condemnation of imperialism/colonialism did not receive the needed support from the perpetrators, resulting to planted landmines against the success and progress of indigenous governments. Ake (2003) refers to this condition as incompleteness of imperialistic dismantling which remains the bane of African distressed economy. To him, this contradicts the organic pattern of encouraging development in a sub-system when the actual factors responsible for economic transformation had been weeded off for endless imperialistic control. Technology which is the basic foundation for economic growth and development was deliberately domesticated within the western axis and several attempts to resolve this clash of interest or strategic monopoly between the peripheral and satellite states were helplessly unresolved rather collapsed into the status-quo; the existing dichotomists' preference of producing and consuming global arrangement.

In 1976, the federal military government of Nigeria promulgated a decree which nationalized most of the foreign investments in attempt to allow Nigerians play critical role in various economic activities including the oil industry. This promulgation introduced into the international oil market, the African petroleum (AP). The African petroleum since its inception could neither offer nor determine reasonable and effective impacts of Nigerians in their own oil exploration. With the lack of technological base, emanating from Nigeria's research institutes, it would be a difficult task for Nigerians to depend solely on themselves in regards to policy formulation and implementation on oil exploitation (Okonkwo 2000).

Indeed, the aforementioned theoretical instrument explains the relentless dependency relationship existing between the wealthy capitalist countries and the poor consuming regions of Africa, Latin America and parts of Asia that predisposes the later to a hapless condition of poverty, insufficient technology, unemployment, and high level of illiteracy or in a nut-shell socio-economic and political dependency. The potency of dependency theory is anchored on its conceptual and analytical perspective which reveals the links between the underdevelopment of Africa, Latin America etc and dependency of western technology and prescriptions coming from global financial institutions that cannot adequately transform the above regions with history of poverty and unproductiveness.

Overview of Economic Meltdown

Economic recession is a universal phenomenon that had impacted on countries at various level of hardship depending on number of socio-political factors at a given period. Notably, the political history/background of Nigerian state is a critical factor to examine when attempting to study or evaluate the consequences of recession to the country especially the most recent situation in which the government announced budgetary deficit emanating from the reduction in oil price. Okani (2014) did not support the

thesis of economic neo-liberalism which persistently opposes government involvement in running the economic system/commercialism. To him, politics and economy cannot be detached either way due to the umbilical cord connecting the duo in terms of theory and practice. For instance, a good policy begets a good economy. It is within the political authority to legislate favourable economic legislations as anti-recession strategy contrary to this, economic woes many times, proves insurmountable.

The Nigerian case together with other developing countries' economic underdevelopment status can be linked to the aforementioned which is a clear point of economic backwardness instigated by wrong policy. Since the discovery of oil in Nigeria and the exportation of the substance in commercial quantity from 1960 to the present, under the civilian and military rule, the world is yet to perceive any concrete steps towards economy diversification to open other sources for economic activities. The government of Nigeria from the above arrangements failed to plan for a possibility of sudden economic fluctuation or in terms of oil prices not favourable to the country. A country that exports oil in commercial quantity should cope with domestic consumption without hiccups arising from multiple factors ranging from; oil workers down-tool, technical monopoly, and nepotism to policy politicization. The managers of Nigerian oil industry have refused to shun politics in carrying out their official duties. The president of the country equally is the minister of petroleum with no competence to man the ministry and its subsidiaries. This is an indication that government is bent on controlling resources generated from the sector even with the poorly and regrettable situation surrounding the ministry down to retail outfits nation-wide. The unpopular policy not to deregulate the oil sector in actuality by political rulers has left many in doubt if the aim/objective is to impoverish the masses and possibly eradicate middle class accountability/transparency (Udenigwe 2010). Hence, Ibeanu (2010) would not accept the defense of the neo-liberalists in their postulation market forces create certain economic conditions not in line with the neo-liberalism assumption. These scholars however, affirm that disconnect between right policy and execution of necessary economic policies

is critically responsible for the distressed economy witnessed in Nigeria from 2015 till date.

The down ward fluctuation oil prices in 2016/2017 affected the prices of goods and services in Nigeria and weakened the capacity of public/private establishments from meet up their financial obligations meant to off-set salaries, allowances, pension and other welfare/incentive packages. Onwuka (2016) captured what he described as deficiency of physiological needs arising from the employers' anti-welfare commitment. Most of the workers in the public and private sectors, excluded are the multinational corporations workers, are in dire need to attend to pressing needs which they have not been attending caused by low remuneration, poor condition of service, irregular payment of salaries or wages, improper dismissal/termination from service, all is located at the door step of economic meltdown. From this quarter, the government of Nigeria lacks the structural/institutional framework to coordinate the activities of both public/private sectors of the economy in order to realize the crucial elements livelihood that had been elusive in certain areas of the global economic system with greater emphasis on developing countries like Nigeria. To Udeh (2014), economic hardship in Nigeria has been linked to institutional failure and misapplication of rules guiding government's establishment manifesting into politicization and circumvention of basic standard of conduct. Hitherto, the Nigerian government neglects the importance of instituting a national policy on development to cushion the effect of economic recession caused by imbalance international trade/transaction, of which this articulated measure serves to the western capitalist countries, as a fall back in case of an eventual economic crisis situation. It has since been imbibed in the economic system approach and practice to formulate notable mechanisms through which a sudden or unexpected meltdown would be countered and the impacts made to less severe. Putting necessary counter strategies in-place to forestall devastating effect of economic meltdown has been factored into the national development policy of most western industrialized countries. Corroborating the above argument, Okolie (2015), Davison (2005) and Anezichukwu (2014) argued that there had not been

tangible and effective national developmental policy articulated and directed towards the enhancement or protectiveness of the economy possibly caused by misplaced/ill-intended socio-economic and political exigencies. This deformation ceaselessly entrapped regions of Africa, parts of Asia and Latin America to the western formula/formulated policy of addressing the unforeseen crisis in the economy. It has equally ended up in seeking capital and technical assistance from the wealthy countries of Western Europe and North America, which evidently predisposed these weak regions into poverty and underdevelopment. Economic meltdown which Nigerian state entangled once again since 2015 manifested into unemployment, food insecurity and lack of quality health care. The entire ills that saddled the country cannot be separated from politically motivated actions/inactions.

An executive bill with the National Assembly to restrict government workers from accessing the overseas' medical treatment with public funds has not been passed into law due to political exigency and anti-public accountability rule. Aniekwe (2017) decried the high patronage of civil/public servants on medical trips abroad as a contributory factor to the economic recession currently militating against Nigerian economy. He argued there-in that the resources plunged into such hospital facilities abroad to access treatment are equally adequate to establish similar clinic-centers within Nigeria, in so doing, achieve several objectives, ranging from shooting up the government revenue, creating jobs to health workers and attraction to foreign direct investment (FDI). Instead of depriving Nigerian citizens and other nationals within the country this opportunity of having direct contact with foreign investors by neglecting the establishment of world-class medical centers for instance, efforts should be directed towards creating projects or facilities that would checkmate inflation. Despite the horrible state of medical facilities in Nigeria which perhaps accounts to low patronage and lack of confidence concerning treatment in Nigeria, most of these perpetrators; foreign medical treatment, indulge in the act to have access to public wealth in the form of allowances, ester codes and logistics. All this are avenues/means to acquire public wealth through illegal method with the connivance of certain

government institutions and personnel. The law meant to prevent such official rascality is already weakened by errant politicization and nepotism.

The crude oil scam has come to stay and remains irreconcilable with what the law says in section 80, sub-sections 1, 2, 3 and 4, that: (i) all revenues or other moneys raised or received by the federation (not being revenues or other moneys payable under this constitution or any act of the national assembly into any other public fund of the federation established for a specific purpose) shall be paid into and from one consolidated revenue fund of the federation. (2) No moneys shall be withdrawn from the consolidated revenue fund of the federation except to meet expenditure that is charged upon the fund by this constitution or where the issue of those moneys has been authorized by an Appropriation Act, Supplementary Appropriation Act or an act passed in pursuance of section 81 this constitution. (3) No moneys shall be withdrawn from any public fund of the federation, other than the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the federation, unless the issue of those moneys has been authorized by an act of national assembly. (4) No moneys shall be withdrawn from the Consolidated Revenue Fund or any other public fund of the federation, except in the manner prescribed by the national assembly (Constitution of Nigeria 1999 Amended: 83).

The organization of petroleum exporting countries (OPEC) assigned their members periodic quota of crude oil for international sale or supply. The governments of Nigeria and probably her collaborators in the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) have been over-shooting the said official quota which turned as economic sabotage to the country and to the entire region of Africa given to billions of dollars the top officials fleeced off into their private bank accounts abroad. Between 1999 and 2002, the NNPC officials allegedly diverted over \$4.6 billion amounting to #502.2 billion into their private accounts. Ironically, the anti-corruption agencies; EFCC, ICPC, Code of Conduct Bureau etc did not do much to investigate or charge the supposed culprits, rather key ministries and parastatals of federal government

of Nigeria are in the illegal act of stealing from public owned wealth (Sun Newspaper 2007).

The excess crude oil quota manipulation of OPEC was informed by the objective to acquire extra revenue for the respective governments even when most cases turned to defeat this goal. This racket had been perpetrated by the government officials, NNPC officials and oil business tycoons with vested interest which is contrary to the common welfare of the people. Going by the NNPC released data between 1999 and 2002; Nigerian government produced and sold 316, 445,301 barrels of crude oil in excess of the OPEC official quota. With this position, additional revenue of \$4.5 billion (#502.2 billion) pegged under #111.60k to a dollar. This source equally states that NNPC on behalf of Nigerian government produced some 46,384,745 in excess of its 403,390,000 OPEC quota for the second half in the year in question. By 2000, the excess production shut up 80.6 million barrels. The next year (2001) with the OPEC quota minimally reduced, the excess production jacked to 135.2 million barrels. As at September 2002, Nigeria had already exceeded her OPEC official quota by 54, 252,271 barrels (Sun Newspaper 2008).

Nonetheless, the agencies and institutions charged with ensuring accountability and transparency over the functionality of state owned corporations/parastatals, have fallen short of expectation, hence the perceived difficulty in accounting for the extra revenue from the excess crude oil racket. With the crude oil deal and non implementation of budget under the guise of drop in oil revenue, we identify political conspiracy within the circle of the national assembly and the executive arm of government. During a logjam between the House of Representative and President Obasanjo concerning an alleged uneconomic policy of running a government that endorsed bloated recurrent expenditure against capital projects in which the former threatened the later by issuing impeachment notice, there was public outcry due to disillusionment/anxiety that emanated from discord that entangled the branches of government. Indeed, the Nigerian economy suffered greatly in the

hands of politicians who were chasing shadow instead of substance on how to revitalize the age-long ailing economic system (Akintoye 2007).

Shehu shagari administration 1979 – 1983, during the middle of the said administration, announced an economic policy of contraction named “austerity measure”. From its blueprint, the policy was directed towards curtailing material wastages in order inject energy into the economy. Apart from its primary objective, the Nigerian citizens were equally expected to sacrifice their comfort zones and/or meal tickets for the supposed economic revitalization/transformation. This instigated crisis as government employees were the first to be endangered by this concept through the salary/emolument reduction which eventually threw them into poor bargaining power. Meanwhile, Shagari’s ministers, NPN party chieftains and other government top-shots were swimming in wealth, showcasing wealth in Nigeria and abroad. Yet government officially announced recession within this period without any convincing commitment, action or structural design indicating readiness to combat economic hardship.

Kotango (2012) indeed apportions blame on African leaders based on what he perceived as self inflicted hardship through unnecessary politicization of economic matters. He cited the Zimbabwe case as worthy to study; where political considerations over-rule economic white paper, by so doing, putting into great danger any form of economic recovery package. Still on Zimbabwe, the seizure of white-farmers lands by the government received global condemnation critically on the assumption that politics should be separated from the economy especially in relation to production which is basically an economic affair. The Mugabe doctrine arose the fear of unsuspected foreign investors of what may likely become of their fate in the event the government decides to adopt the same measure akin to the white farmers. At a time, Zimbabwe’s economic crunch was rated highest in the world under these assumptions; unnecessary political intervention on economic matters, very low productive capacity, lack of technical support in

developmental projects and deliberate isolation from socio-economic and political issues.

Tax Evasion and its Political Dimension

We approach tax evasion as having to do with a deliberate and conscious act of violating the tax legislation on intention to avoid the payment of taxes as demanded by law guiding the citizens and non citizens within the tax jurisdiction. Whereas tax avoidance is an intended means whereby the supposed taxpayer seek to subtract or make less every of his liability to tax with a motive not to break the tax law. However, avoidance of tax is a ploy meant to be free from tax-payment, whereas tax evasion is considered an illegal act of being free from tax-payment.

Olawuyi (2003) cautioned the danger inherent in the two sides; avoiding and evading taxes in an economic system that ought to accountable to revenues generated from all forms of taxes. From this end, no economy survives in terms of meltdown/recession in the absence of a suitably regulated tax system of administration and implementation. This remains the backbone of most of the Western-European and North American countries where the tax systems are functional and accountable thus, cannot be avoided or evaded. The remarkable regions given to their progress on gross domestic product (GDP), gross national product (GNP), net national product (NNP) and national income (NI-Y) had built a sustainable economic system with the capacity that would forestall possible recession or threat to the economy.

To implement social and economic welfares to be specific, Nigerian government like other countries needs huge capital-resources to embark on welfares, of which non taxation system would contribute negatively to this aspiration/desire. Without iota of doubt, tax evasion and avoidance has incontestably posed a serious challenge to Nigerian economy since the departure of the British Colonists. The major impact of tax evasion and

avoidance to Nigerian economy is the reduction/limitation of money generated from taxation thereby, limiting governmental ability to live up to her obligations to the citizens (Federal Internal Revenue Service 2012).

The challenge of evading or avoiding tax obligation cannot be over-emphasized especially in an economy that does not have the capacity to embark on exportation of manufactured goods to other countries in order to earn foreign exchange cum solid base of foreign-reserve. The Nigerian economy according to Ajakpuru-aja (2009) suffers the above contention instigated by the anomalous economic system where taxation of all kinds have received poor attention considering the non-accountable disposition of the agencies responsible for revenue generating. With this anomaly, government treasury would be insufficient to provide incentives to industries and investment managers to encourage or boost industrialization. The implication of Nigerian government inconsiderate or inability to offer industrial/investment incentives to investors would amount to stagnated economy when compared to the economies in which various industrial considerations are granted. Up-till 2018 fiscal year, allowances normally granted by government for the purpose of research development and capital investment had been withdrawn, amounting to negative consequences to Nigerian economy (Authority Newspaper 2018). In a spontaneous reaction to the aforementioned, Ojiakor (2019) ascribed the role of research, especially when it involves issues of developing an economy through plan-B; diversification/turnaround of a particular economic system, as the concern and action within the purview of private sector with the government creating an enabling environment. He cited the western developed economies; USA, France, Germany, Italy, Israel and Russia as good examples of situation where economic success is tap rooted and driven by private sector. Further in this analysis, he pointed the activities of American multinational corporation; Exxon Mobil that has been in the business of oil exploration in Nigeria with little or no control from the USA government over its research matters, market value, administration and/or policy change. Yet, the government would not fail to intervene on the corporation's issue when necessary. This is what

informs the concept of protectionism or bailout policy which had been variously demonstrated by successive governments in Nigeria. The thirty-six states of the Nigerian federation, between 2015 and 2016, enjoyed the bailout fund from the federal government to tackle some financial deficit bordering on recurrent expenditure. However, the fund came from the excess crude account which the past administration mapped out for capital projects (Authority Newspaper 2018).

The taxes accrue to the federation account from the multinational corporations in mining and other business operations are not reasonably accounted due to number of challenges; lack of technical competence that would determine real state of the activity, connivance between the Nigerian oil workers and their oversea counterparts against the interest of the people, absence of nationally created technology as a measure for counter-assessment of other international devices. In other words, tax evasion in Nigeria is project for two parties. Without the mutual cooperation among the expatriates and the Nigerian oil workers in relation to proper accountability of the revenue accrue from the oil industry, it would be difficult to ascertain the actual figure of tax incurred. Umezurike (2019) in obliging with the above argument, stressed on the seemingly international conspiracy of the western capitalist economy towards the less developed countries capitalizing on the latter's dependency on the former's technology backbone for exploiting, exploration, grading and pumping of the substance into the international route for sale. The Nigerian government with little or no capacity to control these stages of the substance process of actual value is left in darkness, thereby having no accurate statistics of the tax incurred by these multinational corporations.

Politics in Nigeria has taken a merchandise dimension, crippling the economic system via political exigencies. This is what can be described as the concept of spoils of office African perspective. The political office occupants in Nigeria favour undue process in awarding contract projects thereby defeating the anticipated benefits. Obi (2008) regretted the sorrowful condition surrounding the Lagos wharfs where imported goods are confiscated

charged for demurrage due to overstay even when the authority concerned has failed in setting up an adequate clearing patterning to ensure a smooth clearing exercise. Rather, we perceived double standard on the part of the personnel of Nigerian customs who allegedly collect kick-backs from certain good importers or government functionaries to facilitate their clearing.

Various petitions to revitalize and make functional other wharfs in Nigerian have meant nothing to government. The Port-Harcot, Warri, Calabar and Onitsha wharfs are overdue for reconstruction for full capacity in the activity of clearing and forwarding. With this approach, the endless congestion in Lagos wharfs will end and inhuman treatments meted on private individuals that import through it would equally become a thing of past.

However, the political undertone given to government refusal to exploit other wharfs in Igbo region and oil rich region could be categorically located to what has been interpreted as a deliberate policy of infrastructural denial. This must have compelled Nwakwo (2004) to accuse Nigerian government of insincerity and ploy to destroy the economic potentials of the Igbo population that majorly in commercial activities/importation of foreign goods. On that stand point, there had been written/unwritten policy to discourage the Igbo merchants from accessing their imported goods from the wharfs closer to them, rather, certain individuals in power had made it almost impossible for these other berthing ground to be functional. The conspiracy against this diversification process has been identified as one among other factors that tends to cripple Nigerian economy resulting to recession. A country's population of about 200 million people with vast areas of international water ways, multiple wharfs and naturally conducive atmospheric condition, must never be sane in restricting her vessels oversea operation to a single entry point. This is likened to economic suffocation or blockade mostly seen in war situation to undermine possible advantage of the enemy.

Diversification and Economic Prosperity

The impact of technology especially when domestically enabled cannot be overemphasized in reviewing the state of the Nigerian non-diversified economy which since its identification as a social problem, has received no concrete attention or blueprint to address the issue. Globally, mono economic adventure has ceased to ameliorate various challenges arising from micro and macro factors of the economy. Diversification is rather equated to a multiplication of solution or approach to tackle the nagging problem of recession mostly when such situation would not guarantee restriction to a particular formula. But the Nigerian case even though has been variously interrogated and ventured by successive governments cum non governmental bodies, remains the same and the condition speedily deteriorating thereby exposing the citizens to severe economic hardship. Hence, Anezichukwu (2014) assessed these measures adopted by the government of Nigeria to cushion the effect of economic hardship orchestrated by the monolithic concept and practice of economic activity as lacking the basic requirement. The handlers of Nigerian economy and its attendant variables according this source, failed to recognize that; the impact of globalization on the global economy does not create any opportunity for an economy to thrive outside the dictations of the rudiment principles of wealth creation and productive whole circle. However, the message of the globalists does not over-rule the circumstances which could warrant reductionist and/or radical perspective in constructing an economy, outside the box, but in so doing, the adventurist may have to pay the prize. This scenario occurred during the Asian Tigers' economic experimentation/adventurism when certain principles were neglected for local peculiarities. Obviously, politics and economics are intertwining to an extent that the insulation line is remarkably obscure; making it very practicable for statement to fit in economic matters when considered critical for prosperity.

Notable statesmen of south-eastern Asia and China, waking up from retarded economic growth and unproductiveness in 1970s, objected to the

global economic-prescription informed by free market economy originated from the Keynesian school as too formalistic and unfriendly to developing economies. There was a unity of purpose demonstrated within the concerned region which brought about domesticated approach to the issue of economic growth and development. Numerous globally issued socio-economic and political directives were rejected including the capital punishment to financial crime offenders as well as illicit drugs culprits. China and Malaysia to be specific, said no to lesser punishment to economic crime offenders as attempts were made by the international community to prevail on the duo governments to set aside any form of punishment that involves pronouncement of death on the accused/culprit (Jinadu 1980). From this end, it requires political will to pursue economic values that are subjected to the desire of the people. Most of the globalists' principles are frictional to Africa, Latin America and Asia regions of the world. The ethical reorientation embarked upon by Mao Tesung in republic of China remains a model to those still nursing the ambition to be self reliant and economically free from the imperialistic influence or control. We saw that the economic diversification in China and some of her neighbours in the region, did not materialize through the control of Bretton Wood Institutions, Paris Club, G7, London Club or other international agencies, but rather, their fate was decided internally and empirically. There was a national policy on production; initiated and executed to a logical conclusion by the government of China in 1978. This policy recognizes the nuclear family setting as the most critical element in productive activities and the bank loan incentive was made accessible to this unit of the society. The same approach was replicated in Singapore where indigenous culture was adopted in study and practice of technology.

The Nigerian non-diversified economy is the root cause of the challenge to industrial weak base. A good number of industries began operation and collapsed after a period of time due to low capacity as regards to the outright dependency on foreign technology in which the promoters oppose its domestication in oversea for absolute control and maximization of profit. The Ajaokuta Steel project in Nigeria collapsed when the Russian government

and its Nigerian counterpart failed to implement the memorandum of understanding (MOU) which highlighted majorly on technology transfer and mutual operational aid (Okolie 2015). With a full functional capacity of the steel project, Nigerian government would have created another major source for revenue and job creation away from dependent solely on petro-dollar. Both the Ajaokuta and Delta steel projects, which were initiated for economic reason, died prematurely with no concrete step yet to resuscitate the vision that would serve essentially in diversifying the Nigerian economy.

Apparently, Nigerian oil revenue is too meager to finance the budget and operate the economy which is import dependent. The public and private sectors of the economy are dependent to the oversea finished products where productive whole circle is nurtured. No wonder, Anezichukwu (2014) expressed displeasure over the issue of per-capita income of Nigerian workers compared to their foreign counterparts mostly those in the oil producing countries. Looking at his position, we would appreciate the fact that the Nigerian per-capita income is the least among the crude oil producing/exporting countries. Reasons have been variously adduced. However, most cogent among them is the non-diversified Nigerian economy which is financed through a single source unlike other oil based economies that have been diversified and tailored along indigenously conceived pattern of technology.

Bretton-Wood institutions jointly cautioned Nigerian government in 2003 over the attitude of operating a huge government which incurs budget deficit in the financial year. Running a bloated government translates into huge recurrent expenditure which naturally causes limitation or reduces the financial-capital ought to be directed towards building capital projects for the development of physical infrastructural to encourage/facilitate industrialization which in-turn creates jobs, goods and services for human consumption and satisfaction. Obviously, Nigeria as an OPEC member-state enjoys the least per-capita income in comparison with other countries within the organization. The incessant economic recession has been mostly linked to

the politicization of supposed economic blueprints by successive governments. The Table 1 below states unequivocally the average per-capita income of Nigerians compared to their counterparts in the twelve OPEC member states.

Table 1: The Average Per-capita Income of Nigerians Compared to their Counterparts in the Twelve OPEC Member States.

S/N	Country	A r e a , Kilometers	GDP	GDP, Per-Capita	Population
1	Nigeria	923,768	\$262.61	\$2,334	200,962
2	Iran	1,648,195	\$514.06	\$11,66	82,820,7
3	Algeria	2,381,741	\$207.96	\$6,669	42,679,0
4	Iraq	438,317	\$310.28	\$5,716	40,412,2
5	Venezuela	916,445	\$481.29	\$13,84	32,779,8
6	Saudi Arabia	2,149,690	\$711.05	\$24.93	25,731,776
7	Angola	1,246,700	\$114.40	\$6,979	31,787,5
8	Libya	1,759,540	\$65.36	\$14,00	6,569,86
9	United Arab Emirate	83,600	\$348.59	\$24.17	9,682,08
10	Kuwait	17,818	\$160.91	\$52.72	4,248,97
11	Qatar	11,586	\$171.48	\$72,02	2,743,90
12	Gabon	267,668	\$184.03	\$7.44	2,109,09

Source: OPEC Statistical Data/Profile in Conjunction with World Population Review 2018

Per-capita income is determined by the level and standard of production couple with other economic variables involve in the process of consumption, exchange, distribution, material acquirement, recycling capacity

and productive activities. Nigerian per-capita income as at August 2018 stood at \$179, the lowest among the OPEC members. During the preceding years of 1999 – 2002, the per-capita income of an average Nigerian was \$1500. With the emergence of the current administration, there has an intensified blame-tactics which centered on dwindled oil revenue justifying the government's inability to embark on statutory obligations; capital projects, job creation, establishment of research institutions and recurrent expenditure. Nigeria compared to other countries in the OPEC group is worst hit in terms of per-capita indices that determines the standard of living of average citizen.

Obi Emeka Anthony et al (2008) accounted that Nigerian economic came as a result of elites' attitude towards the common wealth of the state which they resolve to privatize and loot in a most hopeless manner. The government failed to approach governance with sense of responsibility, hence cannot see the need to reduce her reckless spending on fruitless venture. This source joined position with a former governor of central bank of Nigeria, who queried the need to plunge 25 percent of annual budget into the services and running the national assembly, in the same vein, faults the unreasonable executive unconstitutional access to the country's treasury, political patronage through the award of contracts and inflation of figure in a bid to loot public wealth. The situation in Nigerian economy is such that the masses cannot afford basic necessities of life. Educational sector has equally failed including the health in which ordinary people no longer access due to non availability and high cost. With these anomalies, Nigerian economic system tended to record positive growth during the Goodluck Jonathan's administration due to the efficiency of the managers of economy. The government at that period was eager to transform the economy to a better stand-point. It is on record; there was no senseless tax waiver during the Goodluck Jonathan's administration compared to Olusegun Obasanjo's administration that awarded #186 million to Dangote group of companies between year 2000 and 2007 on importation waiver/tax holiday to the detriment of Nigerian economy. Governments encourage tax evasion by exempting certain organizations from fulfilling tax obligations as required by the law (Agbapuwu 2000).

Nigeria with land space close to 1000 square kilometers, is naturally endowed with various mineral resources that are still of high cost value globally. The country has often been described as land of all valuables to mankind including the human capital aspect. However, the puzzle there remains the concentration on petroleum products. Prior to discovery of crude oil in 1958 at Oluibiri in the present state of Rivers, various other crops and farming activities were relied upon in running Nigerian economy between 1950s and 1960s. Yet, a favourable balance of trade was maintained between Nigeria and her oversea trading partners. With less input/demand of technology in harnessing these produce; palm oil, palm kernel, timber, coco, rubber, cotton, wool, groundnut among others, there was sufficient revenue accrue to the governments from the itemized above.

Unequivocally, the contemporary Nigerian state is destined to carter for itself in terms of equitable distribution of natural resources to her regions or the 36 states structure. Therefore, the concentration on a particular substance as the only source of earning foreign reserve and/or medium of exchange could be mischievous on the part of the government that failed to exploit other resources left unharnessed despite their universal economic value. Acemoglu & Robinson (2013) oppose any economic system or arrangement that would not factor into consideration the importance of productive whole circle as a primary base to sundry economic engagements. This source went further to alley the fear which a country with no capacity to tap materials and produce goods for global consumption would always fall to. Firstly, any country under such condition, cannot determine her economic blueprint giving direction on her production and attitude towards exchange, distribution and consumption. Cited therein, the circumstances to instigated the 1688 political revolution that altered the classic institutions in England which metamorphosed into industrial revolution; productive whole circle. The first century to the fifth, has been classified as Stone Age, from the 5th to 15th century is referred to as Middle Age and the 15th century era till current is perceived as modern civilization. In all the epochs however, there has been a common feature of event, production.

Nigerian state was the world largest producer of palm/vegetable cooking oil until Malaysia in 1980s overtook her position and currently the first in the world. Nigerian emphasis shifted away from productive whole circle to petro-dollar through western controlled technology and manpower. Hardly to mention any substance or material of economic value that is not naturally deposited in Nigerian soil. The Table 2 below indicates various mineral deposits in different locations in Nigeria.

Table 2: Various Mineral Deposits in Different Locations in Nigeria.

ABUJA	MINERAL DEPOSITS
	Marble
	Clay
	Tantalite
	Cassiterite
	Gold
	Lead/Zinc
	Dolomite
ABIA STATE	Gold
	Salt
	Limestone
	Lead/Zinc
	Crude Oil
ADAMAWA STATE	Kaolin
	Bentonite
	Gypsum

	Magnesite
AKWA IBOM STATE	Lead/Zinc
	Clay
	Limestone
	Uranium
	Salt
	Lignite
	Crude oil
ANAMBRA STATE	Lead/Zinc
	Clay
	Limestone
	Iron-ore
	Lignite
	Salt
	Glass-sand
	Phosphate
	Gypsum
	Crude Oil
BAYELSA STATE	Clay
	Limestone
	Gypsum
	Uranium
	Manganese
	Lignite

	Lead/Zinc
	Crude Oil
BENUE STATE	Lead/Zinc
	Limestone
	Iron-ore
	Coal
	Clay
	Marble
	Barytes
	Gemstones
	Gypsum
BORNO STATE	Diatomite
	Clay
	Limestone
	Kaolin
	Bentonite
	Gypsum
CROSS RIVER STATE	Limestone
	Uranium
	Manganese
	Lignite
	Lead/Zinc
	Salt
	Crude Oil

DELTA STATE	Marble
	Glass-Sand
	Lignite
	Iron-ore
	Kaolin
	Crude Oil
EBONYI STATE	Limestone
	Lead/Zinc
	Gold
	Diamond
	Salt
	Iron-ore
	Kaolin
	Glass-Sand
	Gemstone
EDO STATE	Marble
	Lignite
	Clay
	Limestone
	Iron-ore
	Gypsum
	Bitumen
	Crude Oil
EKITI STATE	Kaolin

	Feldspar
	Tatium
	Granite
	Syenite
ENUGU STATE	Coal
	Limestone
	Lead/Zinc
	Uranium
	Gold
	Liquefied Gas
	Crude Oil Trace
GOMBE STATE	Gemstone
	Gypsum
IMO STATE	Lead/Zinc
	Limestone
	Lignite
	Phosphate
	Marcasite
	Gypsum
	Salt
	Crude Oil
JIGAWAA STATE	Butytes
KADUNA STATE	Sapphire
	Kaolin

	Gold
	Clay
	Serpentine
	Asbestos
	Amethyst
	Graphite (partially investigated)
	Kainite
	Belemnite
	Mica (traces)
	Aquamarine
	Ruby
	Rock Crystal
	Topaz
	Flopper
	Tourmaline

Source: <https://www.naijaquest.com>. 2018

With the contents of the above Table 2, the Nigerian geographical formation is entirely grounded under various mineral and natural resources. Mineral resources are mostly found in the earth crust, and these substances have economic value. They are catalysts for development and economy boost. Ubesie (1996) captured this succinctly when he states that Nigeria is not economically self reliant due to her politicization of the resources accrue from crude oil, denying her the import and capacity to harness other mineral deposits which are yearning to be converted into use for economic growth and

development. Restriction to petro-dollar investment is tantamount to self defeatist project. In comparative analysis, countries with vast deposits of mineral and natural resources including petroleum ensure that no stone is left unturned in pursuing the immediate and/or long term need of those substances. However, we rather seen a strategic approach adopted by some of the western developed economies on refusal to explore their crude oil mines for future alternative. Even though they do not harness their own crude, they import from the less developed countries always in a hurry to export to earn revenue to service domestic financial obligations.

Calvert (1986) has argued that this is the major challenge to most developing economies especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America that he classified as New States. He stressed that what tied the economy of these regions to the western imperialistic states is their inability to carve strategic importance of conserving the economic values and converting same to finished product before exportation in order to determine prices of those goods. To him, recycling poverty has been wittingly/unwittingly encouraged by leaders from these regions given to the primary purpose of serving as the gateway to the expatriates' ambition of sourcing for raw materials to service home industries. Ake (1996) regrets that unequal exchange between the developed capitalist world and its developing counterpart had not created a wider gap in which no mechanism nor is structure adequately to resolve it for Africans to decide what to produce and consume. If this unbalanced situation remains unresolved, the great fear is that the government of Nigeria for instance cannot determine the destiny of Nigerians in the oil industry owing to the fact that the technology, expertise and/or manpower required would not be affordable. Political will and technology are the two cardinal instruments needed to be harnessed to diversify Nigerian economy.

Conclusion/Recommendation

Evaluating the Nigerian economic indices as they impact on the economy generally, especially the recession which raised its ugly head once again after the emergence of the sitting president in 2015, coupled with the wider belief that the previous administration was emphatically on a road map towards economic transformation, this paper examined the impacts of technological non-advancement on the part of the less developed countries on one hand; with Nigeria a case in point and inability to diversify the Nigerian economy on the other hand. Authoritatively, diversification is the only approach left to put the Nigerian economy in the right perspective, having commercialized, privatized and domesticated the market to an extent, the other option to expand to productive horizon for optimal economic system, has not received reasonable attention. This was the case of the Nigerian first republican economic existentialism where the three dominant nation-tribes, stopped at nothing in harnessing resources on the basis of comparative advantage. The magic which followed this concept has ever been reverberating serving as references to budding economists and policy makers within Nigeria and beyond.

This study found sole dependency on foreign technology and lack of political will as factors responsible for endless economic recession engulfing Nigerian state with no solution yet to come. Without aggressive implementation of economic transformative agenda, articulated by Goodluck Jonathan administration, it would be absolutely and practically difficult to entrench and transform the Nigerian manufacturing system into a productive whole circle affair, that could possibly turn around production to full fledged activity. Transfer technology has proven misleading since no country would transfer its magic-power to another thereby ceases to be the master in charge. This is the problem with the Nigerian Petroleum Corporation and construction/maintenance of the oil refineries in Nigeria. Even in road construction and electricity generating mechanism. Nigerian state relies on western technology without any atom of domestic inputs. Without doubt, government of Nigeria lacks the expertise to determine the level or quantity of

crude oil being carted away by the imperial powers through their technical competence and control of the machineries.

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ANTI-CORRUPTION RHETORIC OF THE BUHARI ADMINISTRATION AND NIGERIA'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE

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Abstract

There is no doubt that rampant corruption has had devastating consequences for Nigeria's image within the international community with several governments often warning their investors of the high risk of doing business in the country. Ostensibly to reverse this image of being 'fantastically corrupt', the President Muhammadu Buhari embarked on diplomatic shuttle denouncing the corrupt tendencies of his countrymen and women and promising to deal ruthlessly with past corrupt public officers, especially from the immediate past administration. It has however been argued that the selective anti-corruption fight being waged by the administration, the couching of his anti-corruption rhetoric which portrays Nigerians as innately corrupt, as well as the brazen institutionalization of nepotism exhibited under his administration have done greater collective damage to both the national prestige and Nigeria's international image than the real and imagined acts of corruption of the previous administration. This paper examines the impact of the anti-corruption rhetoric of the Buhari administration on Nigeria's national prestige and her international image, including investor confidence in the country. Data for the paper are derived mainly from documents and the data is analyzed using logical inductive method. It adopts the theory of the post-colonial state as its framework of analysis. The paper argues that image making is an essential part of a nation's foreign policy and that the continued portrayal of the citizens as innately corrupt is bound to be counter-productive. The paper recommends that effective anti-corruption strategy must involve the decentralization of currently over centralized institutions which have become cesspools of corruption, and cutting down on the cost of governance rather than engaging in self-destructive rhetoric.

Keywords: Corruption, national prestige, foreign policy, rhetoric, Buhari administration.

Introduction

The outcomes of a positive perception of a nation are respect, influence and prestige. Whereas, an adverse perception of a country's image infers that such a country lacks respect, influence and prestige in the international system. Scholar like Egwemi, (2010); Bamiduro and Aremu (2012); Ojo and Aghedo, (2013) & Chidozie et al, (2014) are of the opinion that Nigeria's prestige is at its lowest ebb. Nigerians are perceived in general terms as criminally minded and they blamed this on the behaviour of a few Nigerians and the negative stereotyping by some foreign media. These have wider ramifications and consequences on the image of the country and have become a badge of dishonesty, dishonour and disrespect; this is an outright humiliation of a nation of almost 180 million people. Majority of Nigerians are industrious, God-fearing and law-abiding people. They posited that the positivity in Nigeria far exceed the negativities. But a tiny minority is being used to define the image of the country and the government connivance is giving fillips to this stereotyping. Boma et al (2016) further confirmed in their study on Nigeria image that majority of Nigerians agreed that her image globally is negative.

President Buhari is the chief diplomat of the Nigeria and relationship between him and other leaders are instruments of prestige, for he is the representative of Nigeria. The respect received by him is given or received by Nigeria. Though scholars have noted that despots tend to identify their personal glory with the interest of the nation in foreign policy, this identification is a serious weakness, for it leads to a policy of prestige for its own sake, neglectful of the national interest at stake and of the power available to support them. It is, then, a necessary and important task to see to it that the mental picture other people form of one's country at least represents faithfully the actual situation (Morgenthau, 2006 pp.854-5).

On assumption of office on 29 May 2015, President Buhari made tackling of corruption a focal point of his administration and in many fora he re-emphasized the fight against corruption as a pillar of his foreign policy thrust. While Nigeria has a long way to go in the fight against corruption. The government has made some achievements, between May 2015 and 2019, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission in Nigeria successfully recovered US \$2.9 billion in stolen assets. Recently, the Supreme Court affirmed an interim forfeiture of about US\$7.8 million linked to a former first lady of Nigeria. Another anti-corruption improvement is in the implementation of a new public accounting system, which helps reduce inefficiencies and

corruption in government agencies. According to president Buhari, the Nigerian government saves about US\$78 million monthly due to the implementation of this new accounting system-Single Treasury Account (TSA) (CISLAC Nigeria, 2019). However, TSA is one of the signature achievements of the past government, the current government has not established any institution to fight corruption. World Bank has noted that corruption in procurement is responsible for approximately 70% of corruption crimes and call for the appointment of a National Procurement Council to ensure transparency, is being ignored by the government. Recently the Chief Justice of the Federation, Justice Walter Onnoghen was convicted and asked to forfeit his undeclared assets by the Code of Conduct Tribunal, whose Chairman is accused of taking a bribe of #10m, but unlike the Chief Justice, is still doing his job. Indeed, there is widespread belief that his conviction was more of a witch-hunt than a corruption fight: due process was not followed in his suspension and prosecution.

Meanwhile, the government is still being labelled as being corrupt. In 2017, the President withdrew \$1 billion from the Excess Crude Account (ECA) without any formal consultation from the appropriate bodies. When confronted, he played the "Boko Haram" card like his predecessor; an explanation that many did not buy. Like they did not buy the pillaging of \$2.1 billion by the former National Security Adviser (NSA), Sambo Dasuki. In November, 2018, the Minister of Finance reported that the revenue accrued to the account (ECA) had depleted to only \$631 million from \$2.31 billion in three weeks, though the government said it was used for Paris Club Refund. Despite the President having said in 2012, "If anybody says he's subsidizing anything, he's a fraud. Who's subsidizing who?" The Federal Government subsidy on fuel has risen to N2.4 billion daily in 2018, the government has also secretly and illegally diverted N378 billion from NLNG dividend funds to fund fuel subsidy and N305 billion is set aside for same payment in 2019. Transparency International estimates that Security Votes (these secretive, unaccounted-for, cash expenditures) have add up to over \$670 million (N241.2 billion²) annually (Udo, 2019 and Punch Newspapers Editorial, January 18, 2019). Nigeria global image crisis is still alarming, ordinary citizens are often made to suffer personality pillage, inhumane treatments and abuse of fundamental human rights at embassies and abroad. Transparency International (TI) ranking of Nigeria has worsen since 2016.

Indeed, the apogee of the president's anti-corruption rhetoric was his response to a statement made by the former British Prime Minister, Rt. Hon David Cameron that "Nigeria is fantastically corrupt" and the president in an interview with SKY news, when asked if Nigeria is fantastically corrupt, answered "YES". In 2016 he also told the UK's *Daily Telegraph* that Nigerians' penchant for criminality in Europe and US has made them unworthy of acceptance in these countries and in April 2018 he declared Nigerian youths lazy, doing nothing, always expecting government to do everything for them (Adetayo & Ogundele, 2016 & Akinterinwa, 2018).

Carr (1945, p.71) emphasized:

That theories designed to discredit an enemy or potential enemy are one of the commonest forms of purposeful thinking. To depict one's enemies or one's prospective victims as inferior beings in the sight of God has been a familiar technique at any rate since the days of Old Testament. Racial theories, ancient and modern, belong to this category; for the rule of one people or class over another is always justified by a belief in the mental and moral inferiority of the ruled, such as sexual abnormality and offences are commonly imputed to the discredited race. Sexual depravity is imputed by Americans to Negro; by white South Africans to Kaffir, by Anglo-Indians to Hindu; and Nazi German to Jew.

Should we see the vituperation of PM Cameron in the light of the above statement by Edward Hallett Carr and that President Buhari was wrong to cue into that narrative? To what extent may President Buhari anti-corruption rhetoric not have yielded any positive result? The objective of this paper is to examine how true the aspersion that Nigeria is fantastically corrupt is; how true the acceptance of this aspersion by Mr President corrects; does it impinge on Nigeria national prestige and how true is the anti-corruption fight. Apart from introduction and conclusion/recommendation, the paper has three other parts: theoretical perception, brief discourse on some concepts and president Buhari's anti-corruption rhetoric and its implications.

Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical framework used for this paper is the post-colonial theory. The theory will give us insight to the imagery that shaped the narrative

of PM David Cameroon that Nigeria ‘is fantastically corrupt’ and the response given ‘yes’ by President Buhari. It also gives us the counter-imagery to the prism where the Prime Minister is coming from. Key theme of Post-colonialism is the Western perceptions of non-Westerners as others who are inferior to them.

The genealogy of postcolonial discourse acquired much currency since the publication of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978); the work of forerunners like Albert Memmi (1965) and Frantz Fanon (1965, 1967) among others has also influenced the field. The arguments about representation advanced here derive from the work of postcolonial scholars like Said, Mohanty, and Spivak among others, who emphasized the “relationship between Western representation and knowledge on the one hand, and Western material and political power on the other” (Moore-Gilbert 1997: 34), and how these are underwritten by constructions of race, class, and gender. This scholarship reveals how pseudoscientific racist and gendered constructions of the other, inscribe the cultural authority and dominance of the West under colonial rule and in the postcolonial present, Spivak cited in Chowdhry & Nair (2002 p.15) noted that representation is not only a matter of speaking about but also of speaking for. Which implies a particular way of speaking and writing about those others that renders them marginal, insignificant, and invisible.

Post-colonial scholars contended that white Europeans are classified as endowed with higher civilizational attributes than Asians, Africans, and Native Americans, and constructed whiteness as inherently superior which continues to influence contemporary global politics. It draws attention to how the racialised hierarchy of Europe and its others was often also a gender hierarchy in which Asians, Africans, and indigenous Americans were feminized in contrast to a masculinized European identity. Once again science was used to justify this comparison: it was claimed that women’s low brain weight and deficient brain structures were analogous to those of the lower races, and their inferior intellectualities explained on this basis. Women, it was observed, shared with Negroes a narrow, childlike and delicate skull, so different from the more robust and rounded heads characteristic of males of ‘superior’ races...in short, lower races represented the ‘female’ type of the human species, and females the ‘lower race’ of gender (Stepan cited in Loomba, 1998, pp.160-161).

Indeed, post-colonial scholars like Chowdhry and Nair (2002) rejected the construction of liberal human rights discourse which privileges the West

and genders certain erasures about Third World others; which becomes the central focus of liberal critiques, they ignore Western complicity in the perpetuation of these abuses. A liken case is corruption which involves dual parties (the perpetrator and the custodian), the West being the custodian. Post-colonial paradigm also questions the privilege given to international human rights NGOs as promoters of human rights norms and principles, without scrutinising states' authoritative and creative reinvention of the human rights agenda and local initiatives to engage it. Governments appointed human rights commissions, which despite not addressing human rights violations can provide some legitimacy to a government being accused of violations. This can be juxtaposed with the issue of fight against corruption, where states will establish corruption agencies and use it to fight corruption selectively or suppress opposition, as Nigeria is being accused of. More so, countries like Russia, China, and North Korea which are highly corrupt are not being defined by corruption as Nigeria is being portrayed.

Postcolonial theory is attentive to these material histories, and in fact relates these histories to the question of resistance and agency. Therefore, the significance of counter-narratives, and the marginalized's 'recovery of self,' in forms of resistance and agency, constitute the main focus of its analysis. Such a move entails, the political necessity of taking a stand, of strategically indispensablign a position from the perspective of those who were and are oppressed and continue to writhe in various ways from an uneven, capitalist, patriarchal, and neo-colonial world order. In interfacing these blend of theories to the subject of our study it becomes imperative that the narrative of PM David Cameron may have been premised on the racial view of Nigeria. Therefore, just as Obama (2018, p.285) noted 'if you don't get out there and define yourself, you'll be quickly and inaccurately defined by others', Nigeria has to define herself.

This paper relied on documentary method of data collection, which is a way of collecting data by reviewing existing documents. Documents were derived from books, journals, speeches and interviews granted by the President, Newspapers etc. It is most suitable for the paper because the data required for the study are already in the public domain. What is needed is to refine, interpret, evaluate and analyze them. The paper also used content analysis, rooted on systematic logical deductions. It refers to methods for analyzing and/ or retrieving meaningful information from documents and

other contents. It is a technique of making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages (Holsti, 1969).

National Prestige, Chief Diplomat/Nigeria Foreign Policy and Corruption

To interrogate and seek answers to questions like to what extent does President Buhari's acceptance that Nigeria is 'fantastically' corrupt correct, how effective is his fight against corruption and what is the implication of his acceptance that Nigeria is fantastically corrupt, there is need to clarify the under listed concepts and their policy implications.

National Prestige

Scholars asserted that while classical realist gave prominence to glory, reputation and prestige as important motivations of human behaviour in international relations, these were neglected by Waltz's structural paradigm which negated the psychological role played by prestige in International Relations. Meanwhile, with the advent of constructivism with central issue on identity and interest through social interactions with other actors, and their understanding of who they are, which in turn signals their interest, prestige again became a factor in International Relations (Markey 1999, 130-1, Eyre and Suchman 1996 & Mcglinchey, 2017 p.37). Meanwhile, "Prestige is the reputation for power. Its purpose is to impress other states with the power one's nation actually possesses, or with the power it believes, or wants others nations to believe, it possesses (Morgenthau 2006, p.84).

O'Neill (2003) declared that past instances show that there are two models of prestige: *specific* and *reflexive* prestige. Specific prestige involves prestige for a certain desirable trait, an identifiable innate quality, here prestige involves others' beliefs about the trait. If reputation is defined as a general belief in one's quality, then prestige is a reputation for having a reputation, it is a publicly recognized fact, one can have reputation without prestige but cannot have prestige without reputation, and this is a meaningful distinction. Example: students at a certain university might feel they are getting a poor education, but they all hold back from saying this out and each continues to think that the rest think highly of it. The university will then have high prestige but a low reputation. *Reflexive prestige* on the other hand could be called "influence," but this word has its own difficulties, it is actually a successful assertiveness or demand for deference. Dossil (2014), contended that prestige is reputation for (international) power, prestige of a state is

produced at the international level through interactions with other states. Though some despots tend to identify their personal glory with interests of the nation: they tend to pursue international prestige as a way of reinforcing their image as strong and powerful leaders. This is foolhardy egocentricity, like Mussolini's, it is ultimately doomed to fail. Morgenthau warned that nations must take care not to confound ephemeral fluctuations of public opinion with the lasting foundation of national power and prestige (Morgenthau 2006, p.85).

A country's standing in the international system although is dependent on her perception being positive or negative, a good image results in respect, influence and prestige and a bad or negative perception of a country's image implies that such a country lacks respect, influence and prestige in the international system (Egwemi, 2010, p.131). Does national prestige matter? National Prestige matters because it yields power. It has two distinctive features: a known event and a publicly known event. For a known event, each group member knows it has happened. For a publicly known event, each group member knows it has happened *and* knows the others know. Each of us may hear some news individually without being sure that others have heard it. If the news is announced at a meeting where all are and listening, it becomes publicly known. Public knowledge of an event enhances prestige or diminishes it, just like President Buhari publicly accepted that Nigeria is fantastically corrupt, which may diminish Nigeria's national prestige.

Chief Diplomat/Foreign Policy

Every elected president is necessarily the chief diplomat of his or her country while the Foreign Minister is only acting on the basis of the president's delegated authority. It took about six months before President Buhari appointed his Foreign Minister and other ministers (Akinterinwa, 2018). The President as chief diplomat presides over the diplomacy of his nation: home and abroad. Diplomacy is defined as the conduct of relationship between sovereign states through the medium of officials based at home or abroad. It also means a peaceful conduct of relations between mainly states, and is the most important instrument of foreign policy (Berridge & James, 2003, p.69, and Igwe, 2007, p.119).

Nigeria constitution says that the President shall be the Commander in Chief of the armed forces of Nigeria, he has exclusive power in foreign affairs, including a unilateral power to initiate war, negotiating treaties, nominates ambassadors, receives foreign dignitaries, appoint diplomats, instructed them,

and recalled them. While the president must receive the support of Senate to confirm some of these public officials and ratify treaties, the president may circumvent Senate using executive agreements instead of formal treaties (1999 constitution, Sec.5:1&5; 147:1-6; Second Schedule, Part 1:2, 17-20, 26-27, 30-31, 38 &42). The president is directly involved in Summit Diplomacy which is the interactions of Heads of State or government on matters concerning their countries (Igwe, 2007).

Meanwhile, Morgenthau, (2006, p.152-3) wrote that of all the factors that made-up national power of a nation, the most important...is the quality of diplomacy...it combines different factors into an integrated whole, gives them direction and weight, and awakens their potentialities by giving them the breath of actual power...diplomacy is for national power in peace time what military strategy and tactics are for military leaders in war. It is the brain of national power as national moral is the soul. In Nigeria the behavioural dispositions of the various heads of state had robbed off on her foreign policy, and domestic politics as well as her international image. Amongst Nigeria's presidents, scholars asserted that President Obasanjo, who came to power as elected president on May 29, 1999, when Nigeria was a pariah state in the comity of nations, used summit, shuttle and other diplomatic media to bolster Nigeria image and prestige.

There is no unanimity among scholars on a definite meaning of foreign policy but there is a settlement that it is a compass which states use to navigate international boondocks. No wonder Omenma (2015), observed that it is the exclusive preserves of sovereign state and one of the defining characteristics of statehood. In giving insight to the concept of foreign policy, Okolie (2015, p.6) defined it as, "the totality of the acts, strategies and manipulations of a given state in her process of internationalising domestic resolves". Webber & Smith (2002) opined that the composition of foreign policy are the goal sought, value set, decision made and actions taken by states. It constitutes an attempt to design, manage and control the foreign relations of national societies. This invariably means that foreign policy is the actions a government takes to deals with defence, security, international relations and international economic relations. As a necessarily calculated and goal-oriented activity, foreign policy is purposive.

Meanwhile, Africa has been the centrepiece of Nigeria's foreign policy with emphasis on the emancipation, development and unity of Africans both within and outside the continent. Nigeria's foreign policy objectives are

promoting and protecting Nigeria's national interest, promoting African integration and support African unity, promoting international cooperation for the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations and also eliminating discrimination of all sorts. It also includes respect for international law and treaties obligations, the peaceful settlement of international disputes via negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication and also to promote a just world economic order (Fawole, 2003:38 cited in Oviasogie & Shodipo, 2013 and Ezirim, 2010).

Indeed, Nigeria foreign policy since independent has had its low-slung and lofty moment but the preponderance is on the later. It has experienced a well-defined, articulate, coherent and explicit policy for Africa that was not tainted with fear or deference to any bloc or country. In an address to the OAU in Addis Ababa in 1975, Gen. Murtala Mohammed gave notice of the direction that Africa was going to take in the new era, with Nigeria's leadership. Part of his speech read thus: Africa has come of age, it is no longer in the orbit of any continental power. It should no longer take orders from any country however powerful. The fortunes of Africa are in our hands to make or mar... on the Angolan crisis between UNITA and MPLA, Nigeria recognized and supported the MPLA government as against the American support for UNITA. In the same manner the British Petroleum (BP) and Barclay Bank were nationalised because of British Government's recognition of and clandestine sale of oil to the government of Former Rhodesia. Also Nigeria was a frontline state in the fight for independence in Africa and against Apartheid in South Africa.

In addition, General Ibrahim Babangida foreign policy was "issue-based reflecting a package of objectives and goals tied to the nation's security and the well-being of Nigerians generally" (Adeniran, 2008:343-364 cited in Oviasogie & Shodipo, 2013). Thus, he initiated the Technical Aid Corps (TAC) programme, the Concert of Medium Powers initiative and Economic Diplomacy as foreign policy thrusts, and the leadership of ECOWAS (1986-1988), when ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Citizens took effect (Oviasogie & Shodipo, 2013) . Next Nigeria through her leadership of Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) restored Liberia and Sierra Leone statehood after their destruction by multiply rebel groups. Nigeria's participation in UN peacekeeping is also unparalleled, she has participated in over fifteen (15) peace missions and spent over 10 billion dollars on peace-building around the world (Ezibe, 2015 & Ade-Ibijola (2013) cited in Ajayi et al 2016). O'Neill (2003) & Morgenthau (2006) agreed

that what confers and determinants prestige are taking moral, responsible actions, particular helping foreign parties in need; Foreign aid; acting as a mediator in a foreign conflict, or respecting another state's sovereignty; independence or assertiveness - insisting on one's sovereignty in the face of a large power; and sending forces to a military engagement. Nigeria has distinguished herself in these areas and these are things that exemplified prestige, as the fore going shows, including Nigerian Technical Aid Corps, which she uses to assist countries that lack skilled manpower.

Scholar are of the opinion that Nigeria's reputation of late is at its lowest ebb. They described Nigerians as criminally minded and blamed the behaviour of few Nigerians whose activities undermine the country, they also attributed this image deficit to the negative stereotyping of the country by some foreign media; as an insignia of dishonesty, dishonour and disrespect; this is an outright humiliation of a nation of almost 180 million people. Other issues are corruption, terrorism and insurgency. They also acknowledged that Nigerians are industrious, God-fearing and law abiding and have shown prowess in soccer, UN peacekeeping and decorations of officers for meritorious service; resourceful and enterprising; and youthful interest in education. But a tiny minority is destroying the image of the country and the governance ineptitude is adding salt to the injury (Bamiduro and Aremu, 2012:11; Akinboye, 2013 & Ojo and Aghedo (2013:85-8) cited in Chidozie et al 2014).

Waltz (1979, p.127) declared that the fate of each state depends on its responses to what other states do. President Obama noted that you should not allow yourself to play games dictated by others, if you do you lose because it is their game (Pfeiffer, 2018, p.274). Morgenthau (2006, p.94) contended that nations which as members of the international society must in the main rely upon their own power for the protection of their existence and power position. Prestige of a nation is not determined by the success or failure of a particular move at a particular moment in history; to the contrary it reflects the sum total of a nation's qualities and actions, of its successes and failure, of its historical memories and aspirations, it is like a credit of a bank with a large, proven resources and a record of successes; its known power is big enough for its prestige to survive any reversal. The same is true of nations. In like manner Nigeria should not allow her low-sung trifles to define her Prestige, therefore, the president should not kotow to western negative narrative of Nigeria rather Nigeria's true strength should be projected.

Corruption

Corruption has no even meaning. This is because anything regarded as corruption depends on the actors, the profiteers, initiators, how and where it takes place. It correspondingly depends on the existing regulations guiding certain actions. The World Bank and IMF define corruption as “the abuse of public office for private gains”. Transparency International (TI) defines it as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain” at three levels: petty (management level), grand (leadership level) and political (systemic level). To Myint (2000), corruption is the use of public office for private gain, or the use of official position, rank, or status by an officer for his own personal benefit. From this definition, examples of corrupt behaviour include: (a) bribery, (b) extortion, (c) fraud, (d) embezzlement, (e) nepotism, (f) cronyism, (g) appropriation of public assets and property for private use, and (h) influence peddling (as cited in Alemu, 2012, p.34).

Some corrupt activities such as fraud and embezzlement can be undertaken by a single official without the involvement of another person. Other activities, such as bribery, extortion, and influence peddling, involve two parties, namely, the giver and taker. Implicit in these definitions is that corruption is more of a public sector affair than private sector. Corruption can now be defined as all those activities or in-activeness done by an official (especially public) which are contrary to the law or the established mores of the society or state. Implicit in this definition is that it could be actively or passively committed and could be against a legal rational law or the moral standard behaviour of a society, it could be for gain or to undermine the system.

Egunjobi & Adenike (2013), claimed that three factors are clear on corruption: one, a consensus that corruption is universal; two, corruption now plays a more central role in politics than at any other time; and three, corruption can be a major clog in the wheel of economic development and in building a modern country. This was further pointed out by the former UN Secretary General Kofi Anan who noted that, this evil phenomenon (corruption) is found in all countries—big and small, rich and poor—but it is in the developing world that its effects are most destructive. According to Bull and Newell (2003, p.1), prior to the 1990s, political scientists had tended to think of corruption as something largely confined to the developing countries, where economic hardship means that norms of “due process” tend

to be less deeply rooted than they are in the wealthier liberal democracies. However, from the late 1980s, they were forced to abandon this assumption. The high-profile cases of Felipe González in Spain; Neil Hamilton in Britain; Bettino Craxi in Italy; Helmut Kohl in Germany and Edith Cresson of the European Commission provide examples of some of the most well-known politicians caught up in a wave of scandals that seemed to touch an ever-increasing number of democratic countries and institutions as the subsequent decade progressed (Adesina, 2016).

Hossain (2016) declared that Corruption is worse in countries where institutions such as the legislature and the judiciary are weak; neither rule of law nor adherence to formal rules are rigorously observed; political patronage is the standard practice; the independence and professionalism of the public sector has been eroded; and civil society lacks the means to bring public pressure against corruption in the government. To Samuel Huntington (1968), where political and economic opportunities are scarce, corruption occurs as people use wealth to buy power and pursue wealth.

Nevertheless, there are two contending view among scholars on the effect of corruption, some contend that corruption is detrimental to individuals and the society, hence, the need for its containment. Akinlabi et al, 2011; Alemu, 2012; Sunkanmi & Isola 2014 & Hossain, 2016 asserted that corruption has negative effects on development and reduces the potential effect of capital expenditure in Nigeria; as corruption increases the amount spent on capital expenditure increases, but its desired impact is not achieved. For instance, surveys of private firms in Latin America found that corruption negatively affects sales, investments, and employment growth, thereby reducing firm competitiveness without producing any positive effects. Furthermore, other authors have actually found that corruption can be positive as it facilitates transactions in countries with too many regulations (Leff, 1964; Huntington, 1968; Egger and Winner, 2005, cited in Hossain, 2016). One possible explanation for the inconsistency in these studies is that not all foreign investors are equal, and therefore are not equally affected by corruption abroad (Cuervo-Cazurra, 2006).

President Buhari's Anti-Corruption Rhetoric and Nigeria's National Prestige

At this juncture it is appropriate having clarified concepts germane to this paper to interrogate the appropriateness of President Buhari, Nigeria Chief Diplomat, acceptance that Nigeria is fantastically corrupt, the extent he has fought corruption and their foreign policy implication.

Aristotle defined rhetoric as availing oneself of any means of persuasion, that it is the counterpart of dialectic. Hence not everyone is capable of formal logic, they therefore use concepts that are available to everyone (in this case corruption) while attempting to persuade people. It is not simple about using beautiful phrases, but reading situations and seeing how elements of them could be deployed most effectively in order to win over an audience (Aristotle cited in Toye, 2018 p.15). Kenneth Burke cited also in Toye (2018, p.71) noted identification as the new feature of rhetoric, politicians frequently suggest that their party stands for an in-group (that of hardworking, corrupt-free individuals that the people will want to identify with) which embodies almost everyone in the country and that their opponent represent an extreme or contemptible out-group (as corrupt and transgressors of national values).

On May 11, 2016 at the corruption summit in London, the President asserted that

On assumption of office on 29 May 2015, we identified as our main focus three key priority programmes. They are, combating insecurity, tackling corruption and job creation through restructuring the declining national economy. Our starting point as an Administration was to amply demonstrate zero tolerance for corrupt practices...the endemic and systemic nature of corruption in our country demanded our strong resolve to fight it... Our Government's dogged commitment to tackling corruption is also evident in the freedom and support granted to national anti-corruption agencies to enable them to carry out their respective mandates without interference or hindrance from any quarter including the government.

President Buhari re-emphasized the fight against corruption as a pillar of his foreign policy thrust, in his addresses to the UN general assembly especially in 2016 and 2017 where he declared that fighting corruption remains a cardinal pillar of his administration because Corruption freezes development, he is pleased that their efforts in fighting corruption are yielding

positive results including significant stolen assets recoveries. The recovered funds are being channelled towards the development of critical infrastructure and the implementation of social inclusion programmes for our people. We are also strengthening the capacity of government entities to institutionalize reforms to ensure transparency and good governance.

The President came to power in 2015 on the matrix of an incorruptible person who has zero tolerance for corruption. Maclean & Egbejule (2019) observed:

Mai Gaskiya – Mr Honesty – has long been the ascetic-looking Buhari’s nickname, and his personal reputation as a lone squeaky-clean man in a sea of corrupt Nigerian politicians has survived his first term. “This is the only president no British prime minister can call a thief,” said Adams Oshiomhole, chairman of Buhari’s APC party, referring to the time David Cameron was caught on camera on the eve of anti-graft summit telling the Queen that Nigeria was “fantastically corrupt”.

The above narrative is not matched by reality on ground, scholars have pooh-pooh the Mr Honesty persona of President Buhari; Onya & Elemanya (2016, pp.83-4) refuted the notion that the president is not corrupt listing litany of corrupt activities associated to the president: as Minister of Petroleum-\$2.8b got missing; as Military Head of State-53 suitcases “filled with cash” with his ADC when currency was being changed in 1984; as Petroleum Trust Fund Chairman (PTF)-mismanagement of N25,758,532.448; the President’s Certificate Forgery; President Buhari harbouring corrupt ministers in his Cabinet and the confessional statement made by Hon Abdulmumin (PhD) of APC, Former Chairman of Appropriation Committee on how the leadership of the House of Representatives shared #10.65b, thus President Buhari has no moral pedigree to fight corruption because he, Buhari is corrupt.

Another is the criticism that the President’s anti-corruption war is one-sided and that he is not sincere and holistic in the fight against corruption as virtually all the people and corporate organizations investigated are all of the opposition party – PDP, and his other perceived enemies. Worse still, none of the cases so far investigated and charged to court has been clinically concluded. And the president turns the other side when it concerns his party members. Examples are the ex-secretary to the federation, who the senate

indicted for diverting ₦270m (\$746,000), it took month of pressure for him to be fired and two years for his trial to begin and he now heads the president campaign in Adamawa state. Comrade Adams Oshiomhole, the APC National Chairman was interrogated by the DSS for collecting \$50m to subvert party primaries, he also has cases in court for fraud committed while he was Governor of Edo state. The Governor of Kano state, a member of the President's party, was caught on camera collecting bribes in dollars and the president has only to say that he is a responsible man and wondered why the Governor did not send someone to collect the money for him.

Indeed, what the president has failed to understand is that corruption is institutional and not inherent in human nature. Bagshaw (2004) cited in Onya & Elemanya (2016) noted causes of corruption in Nigeria as: Low Public Sector Remunerations; Secrecy in Government Offices; Bad Procurement Practices, and immunity of Public Officials; inherent Flaws in the Structure of the Nigerian Economy; Absence of Functional Governmental System and over concentration of resources. Corruption is worse in countries where institutions like the legislature and judiciary are weak; rule of law not observed; political patronage is standard practice; where political opportunities are scarce, people use wealth to buy power, and where economic opportunities are few, political power is used to pursue wealth (Huntington 1968, Hossain, 2016).

Meanwhile, in one of the President's address to the UN he claimed that the fight against corruption is yielding positive result but this claim is not marched by the perception of Nigeria. The Transparency International (IT) rating of Nigeria's corruption status has worsened since 2015. In 2014-16 Nigeria was rated 136 but in 2017-18 IT rated Nigeria 148. IT noted that corruption is higher in countries where there are media and Press repression. "What many consider as the great corruption is stealing of money but what to me is the great corruption is when people are deprived of justice, when you do things without regard for the rule of law" (Symington, 12/02/2019, 10:29 AM & Olawoyin, 2018). This statement by United States Ambassador to Nigeria speaks volume. Corruption is not only stealing of money or embezzling public funds, it includes non-rule of law, lack of Press Freedom, nepotism etc. and President Buhari government has in many occasion refused to obey court ruling like the case of the former Security Adviser to former President Jonathan, Col. Sambo Dasuki, Islamic movement in Nigeria (MIN) leader El-Zakzaky, they have been in detention since 2015 and many others; the

president has also been accused of favouring his region in appointment and siting of projects.

Indeed, the apogee of the President's anti-corruption rhetoric was at a dinner in the Queen of England Palace where the former British PM, Rt. Hon David Cameron said that "Nigeria is fantastically corrupt" and the president in an interview with SKY news, when asked if Nigeria is fantastically corrupt, answered "YES". In 2016 he also told the UK'S *Daily Telegraph* that Nigerians' penchant for criminality in Europe and US has made them unworthy of acceptance in these countries. The President in April 2018 declared that Nigerian youths are lazy, doing nothing, always expecting government to do everything for them. The president as the chief diplomat of the country any insult he gives or receives is for the country. Though Morgenthau wrote that despots tend to identify their personal glory with that of the nation, (Morgenthau, 2006 p.91 & Adetayo & Ogundele, 2016). Does the President know that he speaks for Nigeria and that Nigeria national interest and prestige are at stake? Ikheloa contradicted this assertion, averring, 'as someone who has lived in the West continuously for decades....

We must not perpetuate that racist narrative that we are a nation of thieving losers. Nigerians all over the world add real value to the nations they inhabit. I cannot imagine what would happen to the healthcare, education and research infrastructure of the West if we were all to go home. We also carry the hotel industry on our heads. Nigerians all over the world add real value to the nations they inhabit. Yes, our siblings are in trouble in Europe and North Africa...as writers and thinkers...use your immense gifts to affirm and support, not to humiliate those that are already humiliated. Our rulers are collectively the devil' (@ikhide tweet, April 27, 2019, 7:45pm).

Momodu (2019) was clear when he declared that every country had and still has terribly corrupt leaders but none would recklessly reduce its citizens to corrupt people. North Korea, Russia, China are among the most corrupt nations in the world but none is projecting or defining herself with corruption. O'Neill (2003) insisted that attainment or loosing of prestige is dependent its public knowledge. Public knowledge of an event enhances or diminishes prestige, because everybody knows and knows that others know also. For Nigerian president, the chief diplomat of the country to publicly and

rhetorically agree that Nigeria is fantastically corrupt; said that Nigerian youths are lazy and are not being accepted in Europe and US because they are criminals/drug barons and languishing in various jails in US and Europe, whilst the was saying the foregoing, he was de-projecting Nigeria's prestige. When these are said and done the president is just agreeing with the Western pseudo-Scientific narratives that biologically the black race are in-capacity of being civilized; are criminal, un-intelligent, and sexual abusers (Gould 1981 cited in Chowdhry & Nair, 2002).

Meanwhile, this representation is not Nigeria. Umeokonkwo (2016, <https://www.inc-usa.org/wp-content/>), refuted the narrative:

You...opinions of former British Prime Minister, David Cameron...20 unpopular facts about Nigeria. Do not listen to any leader who says Nigerians are criminals, no matter who he is, or his height and position. We're not a nation of scammers, drugs & corruption, but a people with a verifiable track record of greatness. 60% of Nigerians in the US have college degrees, far above the American national average of 30%...CNN, BBC, Aljezeera and western media will not tell you about. Nigerians... 2016 at Howard University history was made...96 graduating Doctor of Pharmacy candidates, 43 of them were Nigerians and 27 awards given, 16 went to Nigerians... 180,000,000 Nigerians, only less than 250,000 of this figure have traceable criminal records-0.14% of our entire national population in the last 20 years: nothing close to 1%...the Imafidon family: the smartest family in the United Kingdom... In Ivy League schools in Europe and America, Nigerians outperform their peers....The designer of Chevrolet Volt, Jelani Aliyu, is a super-talented Nigerian ...the World's fastest super computer was designed by a world renowned inventor and scientist, Philip Emeagwali, whose patent was awarded in 2015....South Africa couldn't have ended apartheid and achieved Black rule if not for the leadership role Nigeria played...of the three South African Presidents Nelson Mandela (60s) and Thabo Mbeki (70s) lived in Nigeria before becoming President of South Africa...gave financial and human support, boycotted the Olympics and our politicians, musicians and activists campaigned relentlessly. Nigeria spent over \$3 Billion and lost hundreds of soldiers to end the wars in both Liberia and

Sierra Leone...coup in São Tomé and Príncipe in 2003, Nigeria restored the elected President back to power.... If you don't blow your trumpet, no one will blow it for you. VIVA NAIJA!!!

Meanwhile, Abati (2016) argued that though the president gaffed robbed many Nigerians on the wrong side, however, that Nigerians are corrupt from cradles to grave, buttressing this by saying that if you have a baby delivered in a Nigerian hospital. You cannot escape the nurses, matrons and the security men at the gate who upon hearing that your wife had been delivered of a baby would start greeting you: we are going to celebrate the child. This diagnosis is fallacious, it does not hold water because Nigerians celebrate the birth of a new born, with gift being given and received, the same when one is bereaved. Saying that this is corruption is just like saying that tips given in USA or tips drop in a hotel room for persons going to clean the room is corruption. However, Abati further noted that the narrative signals that Britain is not pleased with the projected long-term impact of President Buhari's anti-corruption rhetoric, and there may well be a lot that they know that they are not talking about in the open but that Prime Minister David Cameron should show enough commitment to ridding Britain of stolen wealth (this assertion is germane because corruption is two ways, including the custodian of corrupt proceeds), to take concrete steps to help fight international corruption.

Akinterinwa, (2018), contended though PMB administration took the battle against corruption, very seriously, however, it has been so selectively done that it has had little or no impact on foreign policy. Mr. Uwajeh, a member of the Special Investigation Panel on the Recovery of Public Property (SIPRPP), was sacked from the panel because he refused to engage in a one-sided investigation aimed at prosecuting the opposition elements while protecting the corrupt members of the ruling party (Daily Sun, May 23, 2018, p.4). Akinterinwa further pointed out that Nigerian foreign policy has been reactive and lacks any ideological focus and posed the following questions: who is bothered about black dignity? What does Nigeria hosting the biggest black population means? Maltreatment and protection of Nigerians in international relations are foreign policy questions that are raised but without answers. When the president visited White House he never discussed as a sovereign president. He was just thanking, appreciating his host for the good things done for Nigeria.

Postcolonial analysis of human rights posits that national governments establish official and government-appointed human rights commissions, which they use to violate human rights and give legitimacy to a government being accused of the same (Nair, 2002 p.257). This is precisely the case with Nigeria National Agencies fighting corruption: Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and others, which many scholars are in agreement that rather than fighting corruption that these agencies are being used to persecute the opposition. Nigerian has also gone down from IT ranking of 136 in 2014-16 to 148 in 2017-18. These institutions and other mechanism for fighting corruption: Treasury Single Account (TSA), Biometric Verification Number (BVN) E-payment etc. were built by previous administration, the President Buhari administration has built none. Corruption is institutional and no attempt is being made on institutional reform.

Indeed, deduction from what scholars asserted on corruption on Nigeria and Nigerians, there is an agreement that only few Nigerians, not up to 1% are corrupt, thus Nigeria is not fantastically corrupt and that corruption is institutional, not inherent in individual or race. More so, it was also noted that the fight against corruption is not holistic and its rhetoric is having negative effect on Nigeria national prestige.

Conclusion/Recommendation

Nigeria national prestige globally is at its lowest ebb, this is necessitated by the perception that Nigerians are corrupt and criminal minded. This is not correct rather Nigerians are hardworking, which they have proven all over the world. Waltz (1979, p. 130) argued that one creates states in one's image; when the former British Prime Minister, David Cameron said that Nigeria is fantastically corrupt, he was just rationalizing what the post-colonial theorist confirmed as the Western believed that others- Nigeria inclusive are inferior and are not capable of being upright. Moreover, scholars are in agreement that corruption in Nigeria is being perpetuated by marginally few Nigerians.

There is also consensus amongst scholar that the fight against corruption by President Buhari is not holistic, rather it is perceived as a tool to fight and intimidate the opposition. Besides the government has been variously accused of nepotism and lack of rule of law, which are part corrupt practices. The global corruption watch dog, Transparency International (TI) in

its 2017-18 ranking shows that Nigeria's corruption ranking instead of improving, has worsen. Anti-corruption agencies-EFCC, ICPC, and Code of Conduct Bureau are seen as attack dogs of the government.

The President's rhetoric on corruption in Nigeria and ratings by global corruption agencies should not define the national prestige of Nigeria. Nigerians are hardworking and are top-notchers in various rare fields of endeavours all over the world. Nigeria should counter-represent the image of Nigeria portrayed by the West as corrupt, but by showcasing the contributions Nigeria and Nigerians have made globally. And tell the West that as recipient of corrupt proceeds, they are corrupt as the person that corruptly enriched himself.

Obama (2018, p.307) narrated their life in White House:

While we stay rent-free in the residence and had our utilities and staffing paid for, we nonetheless covered all other living expenses, which seem to add up quickly, especially given the fancy-hotel quality of everything. We got an itemised bill each month for every food item and roll of toilet paper. We paid for every guest who come for an overnight stay or joined us for a meal.

In Nigeria the reverse is the case, once you are in executive position in government, everything around you is free no matter the number. Therefore we make the following recommendations: corruption should be fought institutionally-

1. There should be specific travels and the number of travels by government officials (President and Governors inclusive) that government would fund, others will be funded by the official.
2. Specific official engagements and numbers should be funded by government, other by the individual involved.
3. What is eaten in the official resident of official by his family, guest etc. should be funded by him/her.
4. Government institutions like NNPC and others should be privatised and office of the Accountant General of the Federation should be separated from the office of the Accountant General of the federal government.
5. Government should remove subsidy on petroleum products and dual Forex rate, and should workout palliatives that shall directly benefit end users ie rather than cheap Forex for manufacturers, in its place you have tax holiday or waiver and on petroleum products- mass transportation.

6. Government should always appoint a seasoned expert to man the ministry of foreign affairs, according to Bull (2002, p.163). Experts play a constructive and creative role, by helping to ensure that interest of the state triumph over the passion of the leader, not the passion of the leader over interest. You do not appoint an Engineer or an Accountant to man the ministry of health or to be the Attorney General. Foreign affairs is a specialised area. The same of the person who will in charge of Diaspora affairs.
7. There should be a well-co-ordinated agenda to project and tell Nigeria true story, knowing that whatever is said about Nigeria is not only about Nigerians but the black race.
8. And Nigeria should have a data base of all Nigerians in diaspora and pencilled the top ones among them to be in the Nigeria delegation whenever there is a visit to their country of resident. Like the President visit to the World Court in Hague, whose President is a Nigerian.

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INVESTIGATING CHALLENGES OF URBAN GOVERNMENT IN HANDLING URBAN POPULATION GROWTH IN NIGERIA: FOCUS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

This paper investigates the problem of urban government in handling urban population growth in Nigeria using Anambra State as the focus of the study. The fact is that most of the countries of the developing world are just on the threshold of their industrial take-off and Nigeria is not an exception. Hence, the continuing rapid urbanization is inevitable in developing countries and this pose a serious challenge to the urban government on the management of the population growth. This study examines issues of drive, implication and solution to the challenges of population growth as a result of rural-urban migration in Nigeria. Fresh research conducted by the United Nations' Department of Economic and Social Affairs indicates at least a third of population growth in the next thirty years will be in India, China and Nigeria. Without adequate housing, cities are swiftly transforming from thriving economic hubs into sprawling capitals of deprivation. In view of the emerging nature of this research work, the survey research design was used. The result of the analysis identified the following as challenges of urban government in handling urban population growth: inadequate accommodation for the urban population; problem of increase in the number of destitute; the problem of provision of infrastructural facilities/social amenities; Controlling of refuse dumps etc. The paper therefore recommends that the government should embark on low-cost housing. The state government should stop interfering in the constitutional functions of local government.

Keywords: Management; Population; Urban Government

Introduction

The pattern, trend, and characteristics of urbanization in Nigeria have been alarming. Alhaji & Lawal (2017) noted that the towns and cities have grown phenomenally with pace of urbanization in Nigeria showing

extraordinarily high rates of 5%–10% per annum. Moretti (2014) pointed out that in Nigeria, urban centres or cities are springing up and people are migrating from the rural areas to urban areas. And they have different reasons for migrating from rural areas to urban centres; these reasons may include among others lack of employment opportunities, lack of infrastructural facilities, educational institution etc. In many areas, the population has increased faster than the capacity of planners to provide houses and infrastructure and of local businesses to provide jobs. According to Afolayan (1995), rural areas can be easily identified by various criteria, apart from population. Such criteria include the level of infrastructural development i.e. road networks, educational institutions, water supply, electricity, health facilities, communication, etc. Other criteria used include Occupation, Housing, Extent of community planning etc. Ezeah (2005) argued that rural areas refer to geographical areas that lie outside the densely built-up environment of towns, cities and the sub-urban villages and whose inhabitants are engaged primarily in agriculture as well as the most basic of rudimentary form of secondary and tertiary activities. Ele, (2006) noted that rural area, which is the opposite of an urban area, refers to the country side whose population engages mainly in primary production activities like agriculture, fishing, and rearing of livestock. Nyagba, (2009) noted that about 90 percent of the rural labour workforce engages directly or indirectly in agriculture.

A distinguish characteristics of the city is that it is thickly populated with most of the people living in rented accommodation, while many people in the city engage in or, look for wage employment, others resort to self employment, doing various odd jobs to survive.

Urban governance refers to how government (local, regional and national) and stakeholders decide how to plan, finance and manage urban areas. It involves a continuous process of negotiation and contestation over the allocation of social and material resources and political power. It is, therefore, profoundly political, influenced by the creation and operation of political institutions, government capacity to make and implement decisions and the extent to which these decisions recognise and respond to the interests of the poor. It encompasses a host of economic and social forces, institutions and relationships. These include labour markets, goods and services; household, kin and social relationships; and basic infrastructure, land, services and public safety (Devas et al., 2004: 1).

Urban governance refers to how government and stakeholders decide on how to plan, finance and manage urban areas. It involves a continuous process of negotiation and contestation over the resources and allocation of it in provision of social and infrastructural facilities. Usually, urban centres assume increasing significance with the increasing rate of nation's development, for it is in these centres that a nation's capability is largely demonstrated. The fact is that most of the countries of the developing world are just on the threshold of their industrial take-off, the developments in the western world that urbanization and industrialization goes together, indicates the simple fact that continuing rapid urbanization is inevitable in developing countries.

In the words of Sorenson (2004), Madu (2006) rural-urban migration results from the search for perceived or real opportunities as a consequence of rural-urban inequality in wealth. Harris & Todaro (1970) argued that this inequality and/or urban bias in development according to research findings over the years results from the overwhelming concentration of wealth, assets, purchasing capacity, economic activities, and variety of services in the urban centres as well as the continued neglect and degradation of rural environments or areas.

As of now, the cities have been growing both through natural increase and through stampede from rural areas in Nigeria. The cause of the phenomenon has been described as the push factors in the rural areas and the pull factors in the urban centres. The dimension of the forces produced by these factors in many Nigeria communities has made "push and pull" to become understatement which could be replaced by "propulsive" and "magnetic". This fact is simply as a result of bias in the development of the society. Hence, the rural areas are beset by propulsive forces which send the youths in particular running post haste to the cities which have the magnetic factors that engulf the rural areas in their irresistible field without considering the capacity of the urban centre to accommodate the influx.

Urban life is generally characterized by anonymity of the individual, norm conflicts, rapid social change, increased mobility of the population and emphasize on materialism. Urban life tends to encourage individualism and a sharp decline in intimate communication as everybody always concentrates on his or her business.

The problem that stimulates this present research interest is rate at which our youths (young boys and girls) are moving from rural areas to urban

centres is very alarming. Also, the employment opportunities in the urban centres cannot accommodate exodus of people from rural areas.

Following this therefore, it has implication on Nigerian economy. Agriculture has been neglected by our youths, thus unemployment and social vices are on increase. This calls for deep inquiry to unravel the causes, true implication and solution to the rural-urban migration.

Scope

This paper investigates the problem of urban government in handling urban population growth in Nigeria using Anambra State as the focus of the study. Emphasis would be on the local government in Anambra state. 2. Local state from each senatorial zone. We have three senatorial zones in Anambra state. Therefore, we will select 1 urban local government and 1 rural local government from each senatorial zone.

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopted urban bias theory as its framework of analysis. Urban bias refers to a political economy argument according to which economic development is hampered by groups who, by their central location in urban areas, are able to pressure governments to protect their interests. Among the leading scholars to claim urban bias are Michael Lipton (1977) and Robert H. Bates (1981)

One of the most original and provocative books about economic development written during the past 25 years is Michael Lipton's *Why Poor People Stay Poor: Urban Bias in World Development*. This book deals with systematic distortions of the resource allocation of less developed countries. The central idea is that the most important class conflict in the Third World is not the conflict between labour and capital or between domestic and foreign interests; it is the conflict between country and town.

Groups often said to have an 'urban bias' include governments, political parties, labor unions, students, laws, civil servants and manufacturers. These interests are portrayed as often not reflecting the comparative economic advantage of the country, usually a less-industrialized country whose comparative advantage is considered to be export agriculture.

According to Lipton, urban areas are favoured by the politicians at the expense of the countryside. This takes on a variety of forms: the infrastructure is concentrated in the cities, the countryside is taxed more harshly and the

price policy turns relative prices in favour of urban pursuits. Also too many resources are spent on cities, both from the point of view of efficiency and from the point of view of equality. The fundamental reason why the countryside is discriminated against is political: the countryside is poor because it is politically powerless. The consequence is that the growth of developing countries has been both slower and less equitable than it could otherwise have been. His constructive message is that as a rule you have to develop agriculture across a broad range before you start dealing with the remaining sector of the economy. It is only through the development of small-scale agriculture that per capita income can be brought to such a level that the citizens can abstain from as much consumption as is needed to start the industrialization process without inflicting pain and without having to squeeze agriculture. This is not in opposition to industrialization: the latter requires a transfer of resources from agriculture, but this is much more easily accomplished when the agricultural sector is well developed. Nweke (2012) noted that the bias in favour of city areas has created a disparity between country and city with respect to consumption, wage and productivity levels. Such disparities translate into a higher standard of living from urban dweller and draw migrant from rural areas.

Research Methodology

This study examines issues of drive, implication and solution to the problem of rural-urban migration in Nigeria. It investigates the problem of urban government in handling urban population growth in Nigeria using Anambra State as the focus of the study. In view of the emerging nature of this research work, the survey research design will be used. This study will explore both the primary and secondary sources of data collection. The primary data sources shall be collected through questionnaire. A total of 1200 respondents were selected for questionnaire administration in six (6) delineated local government from three senatorial zones in Anambra state and 200 respondents for each local governments.

Data Presentation and Analysis

An analysis was run through a statistical package named 'SPSS', using the chi-square test to analyze the hypothesis stated in chapter one. Therefore, this chapter presents the hypothesis used, the estimated results, with the ultimate aim of establishing; the impact of the rural-urban migration on socio-

The questions extracted from the questionnaire and used for our analysis are presented below;

SECTION B: Challenges of urban government in handling urban population growth.

S/n	Question	SA	A	N	D	SD	t-value	P-value	Decision
6	Inadequate accommodation for the urban population	659 (54.9%)	438 (36.5%)	28 (2.3%)	28 (2.3%)	47 (3.9%)	-2.753	0.050	significant
7	Problem of controlling the increase in crime rate	686 (57.2%)	457 (38.1%)	29 (2.4%)	28 (2.3%)	0 (0.0%)	-2.568	0.062	Not significant
8	Problem of increase in the number of destitute	229 (19.1%)	714 (59.5%)	200 (16.7%)	57 (4.8%)	0 (0.0%)	-2.857	0.046	significant
9	The problem of provision of infrastructural facilities/ social amenities	457 (38.1%)	629 (52.4%)	28 (2.3%)	57 (4.8%)	29 (2.4%)	-2.840	0.047	significant
10	Controlling of refuse dumps	285 (23.8%)	659 (54.9%)	28 (2.3%)	171 (14.3%)	57 (4.8%)	-3.153	0.034	significant
11	The problem of controlling traffic jam (congestion)	571 (47.6%)	457 (38.1%)	0 (0.0%)	86 (7.2%)	86 (7.2%)	-3.147	0.035	significant

Source: Field work 2018

The result of the analysis presented in section B, identified the following as challenges of urban government in handling urban population growth: inadequate accommodation for the urban population; problem of increase in the number of destitute; the problem of provision of infrastructural facilities/social amenities; Controlling of refuse dumps; and the problem of controlling traffic jam (congestion). This is because responses on the corresponding questions were found to be significant at 95% confidence level.

The essence of government is to do for the people that which the people cannot do for themselves. Therefore, governance does not occur for its own sake, there are particular objects, tangible or intangible, that are governed. Governance can be considered as 'collective practices addressing societal problems. In an urban context these 'problems' are the collective issues that have always impacted on the lives of residents. It is imperative to note that whenever large groups of people live in close proximity to each other, the issue of how to govern who can do what where, how to ensure

access to water and sanitation and solid waste disposal, and how to ensure there is a well-functioning transport system becomes eminent. The most basic object of urban governance is land allocation and land use management, which essentially is about who can do what where. This has to do with the issue of housing. The second most basic object of urban governance is the provision and management of basic infrastructure/services, such as water, sanitation, and waste management. A third key object of governance can be considered as the movement/accessibility system, which is essentially about how people and goods can get around from one part of the settlement to another.

UNICEF (2015) stated that access to safe water supply is a basic human need which must be satisfied with adequate quantities that comply with minimum health standards. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), almost 137 million people in urban populations across the world have no access to safe drinking water, and more than 600 million urban dwellers do not have adequate sanitation. Despite the fact that Nigeria is blessed with abundant water resources, many urban areas including state capitals continue to face acute shortages of safe drinking water. There is a huge gap between demand and supply of safe, potable water as a result of urbanization because the majority of water agencies/boards cannot cope. Over the years, the argument has been that water supply was a social service, and subsidies were required to ensure access to water by the poor. However, in practice, this has led to a situation where lack of maintenance and underinvestment have deprived many poor households access to water and/or forced the poor to purchase water at exorbitant prices from water vendors. Anambra state is a good example of state with its capital and other urban centers lack access to portable water supply. The resident depends on private/commercial water supply for their water needs.

World Bank (2008); Olotuah & Bobadoye (2009); Oladunjoye (2005); Jiboye (2009). Argued that the challenge of housing, the increasing urban population, particularly the poor is becoming more critical in the urban areas of LDCs where an explosive expansion of the urban population due to a high population growth rate and massive rural-urban drift has compounded the housing situation. Nigeria has been no exception to this trend as it has one of the highest urban growth rates in the world.

Oladunjoye (2005) noted that not only is the country experiencing one of the fastest rates of urbanization in the world, its experience has also been unique in scale, pervasiveness and historical antecedents. This process has

resulted in a very dense network of urban centres. Olotuah & Bobadoye (2009); Okupe (2002) are of the view that the proportion of the Nigerian population living in urban centres has therefore increased phenomenally over the years; while only 7% of Nigerians lived in urban centres in the 1930s, and 10% in 1950, by 1970, 1980 and 1990, 20%, 27% and 35% lived in the cities respectively. Over 40% of Nigerians now live in urban centres of varying sizes.

UN 2007 Report on Nigeria indicates that the annual urban population growth rate is 5.8 percent, while the national population growth rate is 2.8 percent. This urbanization rate has resulted in a total urban population of 62.66 million or 43 percent of the total population.

Olotuah & Ajenifujah (2009) FGN (2004) The incidence of this population in urban centres has created severe housing problems, resulting in overcrowding, inadequate dwellings, deplorable urban environment, degrading public infrastructure, and to an extreme, “outright homelessness” in most of the city centres. The explosive rates of growth have not only progressively complicated and exacerbated inter-related problems of human settlements and environment, but have also greatly accelerated poverty.

Izueke & Eme (2013) Poor urban planning in the face of Rapid urbanization is therefore regarded as one of the major problems confronting many urban areas in Nigeria. They noted that the deficiencies in infrastructure provision and waste management, environmental problems in Onitsha also arise from the inability of public sector authorities like the Onitsha Town Planning Authority and the Onitsha Local Government councils to enforce regulations governing land development, industrial emissions etc.

Booth & Unsworth (2014) contended that a number of approaches developed to navigate the politicised nature of development may be applicable to urban contexts. These include drivers of change, political economy analysis, problem-driven iterative adaption, flexible and adaptive programming and political settlements analysis. These approaches highlight the importance of supporting locally-led solutions to locally-defined problems, and underline that reforms, policies and programmes are more likely to be effective when actors and communities view them as legitimate.

William (2016) stated that there is no single, universally-applicable model of urban governance institutions and decision-making models reflect local context and history. However, effective urban governance involves: the

city-national interface, municipal capacity, the role of the private sector, and political systems and institutions.

He stated that effective urban governance depends on four core elements:

- *The city-national interface*: Effective urban governance depends not only on local institutions and actors, but also on the framework set by national governments that links the city and broader regional and national development. However, in many contexts, inadequate institutional frameworks have impeded effective urban governance.
- *Municipal capacity*: Expanding municipal capacity to plan, manage and finance urban growth is a fundamental component of effective urban governance. It is important that each level of government has sufficient capacity to ensure that physical and socio-economic planning processes are well-coordinated, legally enforced, inclusive and cross-sectoral. However, many municipalities lack the skills, capacity and resources to meet their obligations.
- *The role of the private sector*: The private sector is a key stakeholder in both urban and economic development. In addition to providing jobs, it can also be engaged in the design, construction and maintenance of infrastructure (for example through PPPs) and in-service provision. However, where the private sector has contributed to improvements, it has often been at the expense of universal coverage, with low-income areas excluded.
- *Political systems and institutions*: Urban governance is profoundly political, influenced by the creation and operation of political institutions, government capacity to make and implement decisions and the extent to which these decisions recognise and respond to the interests of the poor. The most vulnerable are often excluded or ignored in decision-making processes. There are large gaps between poor and better-off urban residents' access to social, economic and political opportunities, and in their ability to participate in, and leverage, the benefits of urban living.

Poor urban planning in the face of Rapid urbanization is therefore regarded as one of the major problems confronting many urban areas in Nigeria with special reference to Onitsha Urban area. The filth and infrastructural degradation that have over taken Onitsha is as a result of poor

urban planning. The failure of land sub-division and servicing programmes to keep pace with rapid urban growth has led to wide spread illegal and informal developments, hence the growth of squatter settlements or slum areas, for instance, the housing clusters at Okpoko, Fegge, Woliwo, Odoapku, etc. (Izueke & Eme 2013:42).

Housing needs in Nigeria increase by the day, whereas the vast majority of the population lacks the wherewithal to make effective demand on housing. The private sector, which is the major supplier of housing in Nigeria, faces a number of problems inhibiting it from meeting the ever-increasing needs. The public sector has fared badly in housing provision. A major reason for the debacle in past public sector programmes in housing is traceable to inadequate knowledge of the nature, scope and dimension of the housing problems in both the rural and urban areas of the country, and to the myopic and narrow concept of the housing needs of the Nigerian populace (Olotuah & Ajenifujah 2009:87).

Conclusion

Managing cities and urban growth is one of the major challenges of the twenty-first century. If managed well, cities can act as engines of growth and provide inhabitants with better job opportunities and improved healthcare, housing, safety and social development. Also, cities can contribute to national growth through increased revenue generation and political stability and engine of development. On the other hand, cities that are poorly planned, managed and governed can become centres of poverty, inequality, crime, conflict etc.

The challenges posed by the rapid urban growth in Nigeria are immense. More easily observable and perhaps very frightening are the general human poverty, inadequate housing and poor environmental management, leading to the declining quality of life and the underutilized as well as the untapped wealth of human resources. Housing and associated facilities such as water, electricity, waste disposal are grossly inadequate. Lack of access roads and inadequate social/infrastructural facilities. Thus, millions of people live in substandard environments called slums, plagued by squalor and grossly inadequate social amenities, such as, a shortage of schools, poor health facilities and lack of opportunities for recreation among others. This calls for urgent government attention towards tackling these challenges.

Recommendations

- Government to combat poverty and reducing hunger by promoting economic development and job creation through public-private partnership, access to credit facilities etc.
- Involve local community and stake holders in local government and urban administration.
- Reduce air pollution by upgrading energy use and alternative transport systems such as rail way system.
- Government to provide services such as waste disposal and housing to accommodate urban population.
- Development of rural areas to reduce the rate of rural-urban migration.

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MULTIPLICITY OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON THE OUTCOME OF THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS AND THE PARTIES' PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

The study examined the performance of the parties in the 2019 general elections with a view to ascertaining whether such numerous numbers of political parties, vis-à-vis their outputs, are desirable. It employed mixed method design. The data obtained were analysed using thematic analytical interpretation. It observed that the 2019 general elections recorded an unprecedented influx of political parties with a total number of ninety-three registered ones. These registered parties entered into elections at various levels in different places for the purpose of competing for power struggles. Majority of the parties performed below expectation with many of them unable to secure even a single seat at all levels during the 2019 general election becoming a problem with parties making the electoral process cumbersome and over-tasking for the electoral body and the electorates. The study found that with the exception of the ruling APC and the major opposition PDP, all the remaining parties performed poorly in the elections. It recommended that any party that failed to record significant efforts towards winning some seats at any level should be deregistered following legal process and merger should be recommended for some of them who performed below expectation.

Keywords: APC, election, electorates, PDP, performance, political parties

Introduction

The 2019 general election is another threshold and a watermark in the democratisation process of Nigeria and Africa at large. The election has been the sixth consecutive general elections that are taking place in the Fourth Republic unprecedented in the history of Nigerian politics since the political independence in 1960. Like the previous general elections in the country, the election was heralded with the vicissitudes of fear, anxiety, speculation, hope, uncertainties and political permutations and 'politiricks' prior to the election

proper (Sule, 2018). During a general election in Nigeria from 1999 to 2019, a new trend always emerged which transformed and altered the dimension of Nigerian politics and democracy. For instance, in 2003 and 2007, massive rigging characterised with violence and intimidation occurred. In the 2011, the election created a wider chasm and deepened the politics of ethnicity, religion and regionalism and in 2015 a new day came in which a history was made where the opposition party of All Progressives Congress (APC) defeated the incumbent ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) which was unprecedented. In the 2019 General Election, an influx of numerous parties was witnessed in which approximately 100 political parties were registered and battled for various seats (Sule, 2019).

Political parties are considered as the engine room of democratic process because they are the tools for the struggles of power contest, representation, policy input and output and an overall ideological disposition of a pressure group with similar interest. Parties are the apparatus that are formed as a form of social and political organisation which harmonise interest and pursue them through a constitutional contest of power in an election. Parties are ideological vehicles for conveyance of principles and public choice in a democratic regime (Webb & White, 2007, p.3). In Nigeria, there was protracted proliferation of political parties from the emergence of the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) in 1922 to the present era continuously. The parties in Nigeria are characterised and have exhibited low level of principles, absence of ideology, regional outlook, ethnic affiliation and religious leaning most especially in the First and Second Republics. In the Fourth Republic, the scenario metamorphosed from regional, religious and ethnic parties to a more elite-based consolidated parties devoid of principles and ideologies except the usual scramble for power for the sake of primitive accumulation. In the Fourth Republic, the constitutional provision of multi-party system allowed for the haphazard and bizarre emergence of parties in large number which has been affecting the electoral process and the entire polity in general (Akinboye & Anifowose, 2008, p.256).

This study examines the role and impact of the large number of registered political parties in the 2019 general elections especially on the conduct of the election, cost of election, voters' responsibility and other related issues. It particularly discusses whether the non-performing parties in the recently concluded election deserved to continue to exist and what can be done in curbing the random emergence of parties that cannot play any

significant role in the electoral process except perhaps, occupying the space of ballot papers making them cumbersome and tedious for the voting process.

Literature Review

In this section, academic literature that exists in the area of study are critically reviewed and analysed in thematic form to enable for the identification of the area that requires attention for contribution to knowledge. After a thorough review and investigation, the research identified that there are numerous uncountable works on political parties in Nigeria from various perspectives and dimensions but there is virtually little or none on the issue of examining their performances in the recently concluded election which made a good fortune for contribution. The literature is reviewed under the following sub-themes: the 2019 General Election in perspective; conceptualising political parties and Nigerian political parties: a background.

The 2019 General Election in Perspective

In preparation for the 2019 General Election, the total number of registered voters across the country increased with 15.3 million making a final number of valid voters to stand at 84, 004, 084 million. The male constitutes 53% of the total voters while female is 47%. Statistics indicated that the younger ones dominated the larger percentage of voters with those from the age of 18-35 constitutes 51%, 36-50 years 30%, 51-70 years 15% and 70 and above years 4% and this by implication indicated that 81% of the total registered voters are younger than 50 years of age. By occupation, the voters' registration showed that students are the highest with a total number of 22.3 million, farming/fishing 13.6 million, housewives 11.8 million, business 10.8 million, trading 7.6 million, civil servants 5.0 million, artisans 4.5 million, others 6.0 million while nobody indicated that he is a politician or public servant. The voters' registration by geopolitical zones indicated that the Northwest has the highest number of voters of 20.2 million, Northeast 11.3 million, North Central 13.4 million, Southwest 16.3 million, Southeast 10.1 million and South South 12.8 million with a total polling units of 119, 973 across the country (Election Factbook, 2019).

The electoral body, INEC released that a total number of 22, 643 candidates are contesting for 1, 504 position in the 2019 General Election. The election is scheduled to hold for the Presidential and National Assembly on 16th February and for the 29 affected states and their houses of assembly on

2nd March. However, the elections were postponed for both the Presidential and National Assembly and for the Governorship and State Houses of Assembly with an addition of one week from the initial date due to logistic problems according to INEC (INEC 2019).

This phenomenon of election postponement has become a part of the Nigerian political culture taking place in 2007, 2011, 2015 and recently in 2019. An important issue which is a challenge to the success of the election is the security situation in the country particularly in the North. The Boko Haram insurgency continued to occur frequently in the Northeast, armed banditry, kidnapping and cattle rustling threatened the Northwest while farmers-herders conflict affected the Northwest. Although, the situation is becoming better ahead of the election, it is still alarming and is expected to affect the outcome of the election (Page & Tayo, 2018, p.2).

The election suffered from a serious logistics problem because of many factors but the most influencing is the number of parties and candidates that participated in the election. About 93 political parties were registered for the election and 73 of them contested for the Presidential seat which made the ballot papers and the result sheets cumbersome and costly. The election is the most expensive in the history of the country financially which cost N 249 billion higher than the N 125 billion in the 2015 (Sule, 2019). The Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room in their assessment of the environment of the 2019 General Election in Nigeria reported that they have a serious concern on the effectiveness of the following: non-partisan security agencies, voter register integrity, card readers failure during election, transparent results collation, efficient and accountable election administration, political parties, fair play campaign ground for all parties and contestants and violence mitigation and electoral accountability. The report further expressed concern that unless all the above critical issues were handled properly, it may affect the success of the election (Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room, 2019).

The 2019 General Election deepened democratic practice in Nigeria and kept the hope of continuous civilian rule in the country. Like other elections in the past, it was accompanied with imbroglios and political confusion in addition to tension and perceived violence and threats. The INEC registered 93 political parties and 73 of them contested for the presidency, but the contest was a clear battle between the ruling APC of Muhammadu Buhari and the major opposition PDP of Atiku Abubakar. The results indicated that the APC candidate secured 55.54% of the total votes, the PDP scored 41.18%

while other parties scored 3.28% (Sule, 2019). Governorship election was held in 29 states out of the 36 and the ruling APC won 15 while the main opposition PDP won 14. In the National Assembly election, in the Senate, the APC won a total seat of 65, PDP won 43 seats and Young Progressive Party (YPP) secured 1 seat making a total of 108 so far as declared by the INEC during the time of writing this research. One seat is not yet declared. In the House of Representatives, APC has 217 seats, PDP 115, All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) 9, African Democratic Congress (ADC) 3, Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) 2, Action Alliance (AA) 2, Social Democratic (SDP) 1, Action Democratic Party (ADP) 1, Labour Party (LP) 1 and Allied Peoples Movement (APM) 1. Eight (8) are yet to be finally awarded during this investigation. The results in general indicated a landslide victory for the ruling APC. However, it should be noted that the distribution of seats according to parties in the National Assembly in both the upper and lower chamber are not final because of the existence of legal tussles across the various parts of the country with the losers challenging the winners and some of the seats might be lost by the winners in the process which may alter the equation of the distribution as anticipated.

Conceptualising Political Parties

Political parties are mandatory elements for democratic survival. This work conceptualised political parties in two major perspectives, classical and modern views. The political party literally and conventionally is a segment of some society members which can embrace some part of the citizenry with similar ideology and policy preference (Michel, 1965). Political party is also observed as a fraction of a whole (Sartori, 1976) which is a combination of few individuals with a sole purpose that mobilise public for struggle to capture power in a competition. Parties are seen as exceptionally struggling for control over the government in the sense that the general orientation of the political party whether in its formal or informal aspect is that of striving for power (Duverger, 1966). Party is also seen as a term which will be employed to express associations, membership in which rests on formally free recruitment, the end to which its activity is devoted is to secure power within organisation for its leaders in order to attain ideal or material advantages for its leaders (Weber, 1968). In another opinion, parties are seen as a group whose members decided to act in collaboration in the competitive struggle for power (Schumpeter, 1942).

It is widely believed that, most citizens or almost all need to participate in political activities but it is impossible for direct participation in decision making especially in modern democracies with population explosion that cannot be contain in a single gathering. This is why modern democracies need institutions and organisations in which political party is the most important of them all. Without political parties, modern representative democracy is not conceivable. Political parties articulate and aggregate different interests, visions and opinions and they are also the main source for recruitment of political elite. Political parties are central institutions of modern democracy (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011).

A political party is a group of men aspiring to control political power by securing office in a duly constituted election (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011). Parties can therefore be understood as permanent associations of citizens that are based on free membership and a programme, and which are anxious to occupy through the path of elections, the politically decisive positions of the country with their team of leaders, in order to materialise suggestions for resolving outstanding conflicts. In an ideal democracy, political parties are the key mechanisms that make the democratic chain of political delegation and accountability work (Speijcken, 2011).

Political parties play many roles and functions for democratic sustenance and political parties can serve multiple functions. Political parties' major role and the purpose their formation, is mobilising public opinion to a focus and framing issues for a popular judgement (Sule, Azizuddin & Mat, 2018). They build and aggregates support among broad coalition of citizens' organisations and interest groups; they integrate multiple conflicting demands into coherent policy programmes; recruit and train future leaders at executive and legislative levels; they provide voters with alternative choice framework and options of policies; they organise the process of government and stand collectively accountable for their actions in future elections (Sule, Azizuddin & Mat, 2018).

Nigerian Political Parties: A Background

Due to the speed with which political development took place; numerous ethnically based parties emerged in opposition to other ethnic parties. The political elite had consumed the goal of national unity and fell back to sub-nationalist politics. In some countries like Nigeria, sub-nationalism has flared in civil wars of liberation from what some in the

marginalised and ethnic minority political elite conceived as a form of internal colonialism exacted by the ruling ethnicity (Salih, 2003, p.41). Ethnic politics affected party politics in the First Republic even in foreign policy of Nigeria with NPC; Northern and Muslim dominated being sympathetic towards Palestinian cause while NCNC Southern and Christian dominated having more affiliation to Israel's cause (Gambari, 1980, p.49).

Many other scholars (Almond, Powell, Dalton & Russell, 2005; Meredith, 2006; Babawale, 2006; Ake, 1996; Kurfi, 1993, Crowder, 1986; Maier 2000) characterised Nigerian political parties as ethnic in outlook, regional in orientation, elite based and not democratically situated for grassroots mobilisation. Instead of attaining to cross-cultural and heterogeneous mobilisation for institutionalisation of democratic practices, they resorted to ethnicity, regionalism and religious sentiments to mobilise support instead of ideological and secularistic multi-cultural mobilisation for political participation and representation.

Most of the African political parties including that of Nigeria emerged from the decolonisation process through nationalist movement which mobilised citizens for independence. Thus, African political parties and African democracies at large suffered from traumatic experiences such as revolution, decolonisation, independence or severe repression during authoritarian or military regimes (Salih, 2003, p.181). This denotes that political parties in most African countries and Nigeria in particular by their nature are devoid of ideological or nationalistic values but rather decolonisation and later serving other purposes. Such has been the nature of political parties in Nigeria since political independence.

From independence to the First and Second Republics, there existed a multi-party system. Between the periods of independence to First Republic, the three formed political parties (NCNC, AG and NPC) dominated political activities and formed the government. The NPC and NCNC formed a coalition government from 1959 to 1966. Several smaller parties also emerged, including the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC), the Niger Delta Congress (NDC) and the United National Independent Party (UNIP). Some of them later formed alliances such as NPC and NNPP that formed Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). Similarly, there emerged the United National Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA), an alliance of NCNC, AG and NPP (Akinboye & Anifowose, 2008: 246).

In the Second Republic, 1979-1983, the country also practiced multi-partism. The five political associations that fulfilled the stipulated conditions and requirement for party formation were registered as political parties in December 1978. These were the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), Nigeria's Peoples Party (NPP), Great Nigeria Peoples Party (GNPP) and Peoples' Redemption Party (PRP). The NPN dominated the politics of the Second Republic. Most of these Second Republic parties were tagged "old wine in a new bottle" or the reflection of older regional and ethnic political parties (Akinboye & Anifowose, 2008: 246).

The Fourth Republic multi-party system was expanded where more than ninety political parties were registered between 1999 and 2019. There were also alliances and re-alliances. The APP became ANPP, AD became ACN. The Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) registered in 2010 became the major opposition party in the 2011 Presidential Election that challenged the ruling PDP. After post 2011 election, a new alliance emerged where four major mega parties unite to become one. They are ANPP, ACN, faction of APGA and CPC which was registered by INEC in June 2013 as APC. The APC went ahead to win the 2015 General Election at national level with majority seats at state level for Governorship election and replicated the same in the 2019 General Election except the governorship seats which were split equally with the opposition PDP (Sule, 2019).

The history of Nigerian political parties shows that Nigeria maintains a multi-party system and the parties are ethnic and regional in nature. In order to arrest the daunting effects of ethnic and regional influence of political parties in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, it was regulated that for a political party to be registered, it must have at least state offices in two third of the states which is 24 in addition to Federal Capital Territory in Abuja. While many political parties were registered from 1999, INEC deregistered some of them based on the ground of poor performance and lack of national outlook with a view to minimise ethnic and regional politics. Regulations were provided in the Constitution for the operation and registration of political parties as well as financing of political parties to ensure transparency and fair play in the rules of the game (Sule, 2018). The process of registration and deregistration of parties continues up to 2019 and beyond unless if adequate measures are taken to address this worrisome development which is the main focus of this study. Some of the few parties transformed after consolidation from ethnic and regional to an elite-based party like the PDP and the APC.

Framework of Analysis

This work adopted structural functionalism in explaining the context of literature and discussions of findings as a theoretical explanation of the entire work in general. The term “Structural Functionalism” originates from ancient classical works of the Greek philosopher Aristotle in his study of the ultimate causes in nature of actions and their relations to the end or utility. The other philosophical foundation for the framework is from the French 18th century philosopher Baron De Montesquieu who identified a clear separate role and function of governmental institutions. Functionalism has been given a modern face by Charles Darwin in his theory of evolution which has been used to influence thoughts on human behaviour. Modern Sociologists, Talcott Parson (1951) and Robert K. Merton (1968) further expanded Functionalism in explaining the social co-existence in terms of different expected and real roles of various groups and institutions in the society. The theory was given a political aroma by Almond and Coleman (1960) from the viewpoints of Political Science which led to the coinage of the term “Structural Functionalism” specifically in politics which means the examination of the ideal and real role of a political institution.

Structural functionalism has four major assumptions as follows. One of the major assumptions is that, society has fragments of structures and their functions which work independently and inter-dependently. Thus, there is a clear difference between the ideal function of any organisation, political institution or societal component and its real function in the society. The second assumption is, there is a relation between a political structure and its function and it may be influenced by certain factors in its function or malfunctioning. The third assumption is, society or political system should be studied using the real function it is performing and not the proposed or ideal function which may not be applicable in some given conditions. Furthermore, the theory suggests that, political system or nature of a society determines the structure and functions of organisations and their systems and sub-systems for example; an advanced democratic society might have a better structure that functions accordingly than a backward democratic or developing democracies.

In applying the theory within the context of this work, it should be conceived that parties have specific functions and role that they are expected to play such as recruitment of like minds, leadership role, contest for power and opposition watchdog. However, most of the parties in the 2019 General

Election in Nigeria seemed to be registered for another purpose obviously for political manouevering and political game play instead of genuine contest for power. The ideal function from the real is differentiated in this regard which is the main arguments of this work.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

The research used both the primary and secondary sources of data collection. The research gave much emphasis on the use of secondary sources more than other sources because of feasibility and affordability. The primary sources are two. The first source is direct participant observation from the researcher who has been an active stakeholder in the process of the conduct of the 2019 General Election observing and following carefully the procedures from the registration of parties, party primaries, INEC preparation, the general election itself and the announcement of results. The researcher is a Collation Officer in Gombe Local Government Area of Gombe State during the Presidential and National Assembly Elections and a Collation Officer in Funakaye Local Government Area of Gombe State during the Governorship and State House of Assembly Elections. The second primary source is the use of documented sources from INEC as generated from its website.

The secondary sources consist of books, journals, newspapers and internet sources. They were used for the review of related literature and formation of framework of analysis which enabled for the identification of the literature gap for contribution to knowledge and filling of the research gap in the process.

The data collected was used for discussion and analysis using thematic analytical interpretation where some vital sub-themes were identified and issues were discussed under them using content analysis. The discussions were made using some statistical tools such as pie chart and table for a simpler percentage. The framework of analysis was integrated together with the existing literature for a new finding.

Discussions and Findings

In this section, the various data collected were presented and discussed under some identified sub-themes. Chart and table were used where necessary for easy illustration of the data and analysis after applying the adopted framework of analysis and making of reference to the previous knowledge in existence.

Guidelines for the Registration of Political Parties in Nigeria

Registration of political parties is the right of every Nigerian provided he fulfilled the set regulations and criteria for the register according to Section 40 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution. The applicable laws that are relied upon for the registration of new political party in Nigeria are Sections 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, and 227 of the Nigerian 1999 Constitution as Amended and Section 78 and 82 of the 2010 Electoral Act. Any person that seeks for an elective political office must be a member of a registered political party. The INEC provided that if an individual or a group of people desire to register a party, they must follow certain three steps. The first step is to identify a name, a logo and an acronym of the proposed party. The name, logo and acronym must not be similar to that of any other existing registered party, religious or ethnic associations. There must be a Chairman, Secretary, National and State Executive Committee members, a draft constitution, a manifesto, reflection of a Federal Character principles in drawing the membership and the headquarters must be located in Federal Capital Territory Abuja (FCTA) with presence in at least 24 states of the Federation (INEC, 2019).

Second step is the submission of application to INEC which must be accompanied with a N1 million non-refundable fee, obtain the necessary application form, submit fifty (50) copies within thirty (30) working days, the forms must be accompanied with the signatures of the proposed party Chairman, Secretary and their residential addresses. The third step is that the INEC will verify all the claims in the registration form, if the INEC is satisfied that the party met the requirements it will register the party and if the INEC is not satisfied, it will decline from registering the party but the party may re-apply again after meeting the criteria again (INEC, 2019).

It should be noted from the above that registration of a new party in Nigeria is difficult but it is easier for determined and serious groups to achieve within a short period of a time. This is the major reason why over 100 parties were registered from 1999 to 2019. The financial requirements, constitutional settings of the party and its membership and the overall criteria are not discouraging for politicians to register new parties anytime they so wish at will. What the Structural Functionalism depicts in this context is the fact that parties are established to gather public opinion and interest from the same ideology, present them at the national level and seek for power to actualize these interests. However, in Nigerian context, it seems some parties are

registered for other purposes not necessarily for interest articulation, interest aggregation and seeking for power to actualize their political ambitions. They are either registered to bargain for political influence, confuse voters or to secure the financial support from donor agencies and other benefits accrued from the struggle for power. In addition, some studies Page and Tayo (2018) and Sule (2019) observed that the large number of parties affected the INEC's preparation, led to higher cost implication, confused the voters and made the electoral process difficult.

How Parties Performed in the 2019 General Election

In the 2019 General Election, ninety-three (93) political parties were registered. The INEC declared that all the parties were duly registered but not all of them contested at all levels. Some of them contested for the post of the Presidential Election, Senate, House of Representatives, Governorship and State House of Assemblies. For instance, seventy-three political parties contested in the 2019 Presidential Election which are A, AA, AAC, AAP, ABP, ACD, ACPN, ADC, ADP, AGA, AGAP, ANDP, ANN, ANP, ANRP, APA, APC, APDA, APGA, APM, APP, ASD, AUN, BNPP, CC, CAP, CNP, DA, DPC, DPP, FJP, FRSH, GDPN, GPN, HDP, ID, JNPP, KP, LM, LP, MAJA, MMN, MPN, NAC, MCNP, NCP, NDCP, NDLP, NEPP, NFD, NIPP, NNPP, NPC, NPM, NUP, PCP, PDP, PPA, PPC, PPN, PT, RAP, RBNP, RP, SDP, SNC, SNP, UDP, UP, UPN, WTPN, YES and YPP (Sule, 2019). Out of the above-mentioned parties, only two fought fiercely for the seat which are the APC and the PDP with many of them perceived as prompting for either one of two or seeking for political bargain in stepping down for the major party. Many parties stepped down for either the APC candidate or the PDP candidate few weeks or days before the final election. The performance of Nigerian political parties in the 2019 Presidential Election is presented in table 1 below for easy illustration and clarification.

Table 1: Showing the Performance of Parties in the 2019 Presidential Election

S/No.	Parties	Votes Won	Percentage
1.	APC	15, 191, 847	55.69%
2.	PDP	11, 262, 978	41.28%
3.	Others	826, 419	3.03%

4.	Total	27, 281, 244	100%
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Source: Sule (2019).

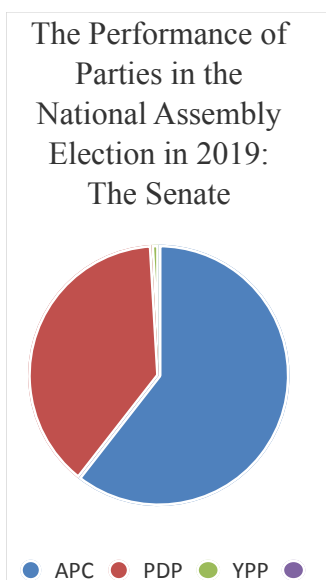
The above statistics depict a surprising voting turnout for the parties in which out of the 73 contesting parties, two parties of the APC and PDP secured 96.97% of the total votes while the remaining 71 parties ended up with only 3.03%. this shows that the APC and PDP performed excellently but the other parties performed poorly and have proved to be liabilities in the ballot papers of the INEC and a tedious work for the voters in the polling units.

The above performance in the Presidential Election is similar to what is obtainable in the National Assembly Election. In the Senate, only three (3) parties were able to win a seat out of the total registered 93 parties which means that 90 parties are now totally not represented in the upper chamber. The pattern of distribution of the seats according to parties' performance is presented in the chart below.

Figure 1: Performance of Political Parties in the National Assembly Election 2019: The Senate

Source: INEC (2019, www.inecnigeria.org. researcher).

In the House of Representatives, there is still the two major efforts of parties in the election. below shows the pattern of performance but parties; APC and PDP are the significant ones in this perspective. Table 2 of the parties' output in



Political Parties in the Election 2019: The

retrieved from Computation made by the

Representatives, there is terms of performance but parties; APC and PDP are this perspective. Table 2 of the parties' output in

Table 2: The Performance of Parties in the House of Representatives in 2019

S/NO	Parties	Seat Won	Percentage
1.	APC	223	61.94%
2.	PDP	117	32.50%

3.	APGA	9	2.50%
4.	ADC	3	0.83%
5.	AA	2	0.56%
6.	PRP	2	0.56%
7.	SDP	1	0.28%
8.	LP	1	0.28%
9.	ADP	1	0.28%
10.	APM	1	0.28%
Total	10	360	100%

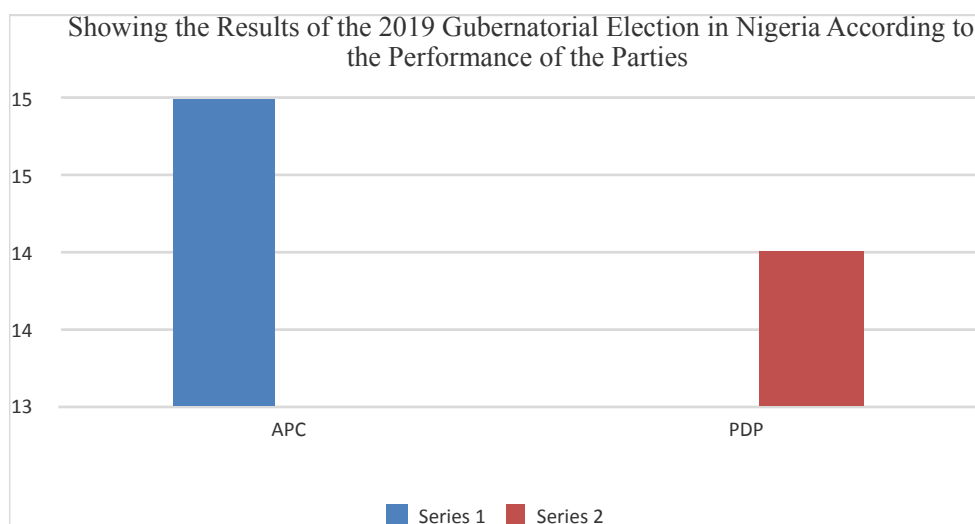
Source: INEC (2019, retrieved from www.inecnigeria.org. Computation into percentage made by the researcher).

The above statistics show that like the Presidential and Senate Elections, only two parties made giant efforts in terms of performance which are the APC and PDP who combined together pulled out a total percentage of 94.44%. Other smaller parties struggled to show relevance with few seats which is an improvement when compared to other elective seats in 2019 but, they could not secure enough or much to exhibit relevance in policy-making or leadership in the chamber. It should be noted that the current pattern of seats distribution according to parties' performance may change due to existing numerous litigations by the runners-up against the winners. However, the alteration that may emerge cannot be more than a seat swap between the APC and PDP in most cases which cannot make any significant impact in changing the parties' performance in this regard.

The Governorship Election in 2019 revealed further that only two parties performed well. There are total of 29 states in which the Election hold out of the 36 States in the Federation. APC and PDP are the only parties that secure seats at Governorship level without any party winning a single seat out of it. At the State House of Assembly level, the seats in the 29 States were mostly shared among the ruling APC and PDP in their respective controlled states. Few parties recorded some seats like NNPP in Bauchi State which won

one State House of Representatives seat. The result is displayed in the chart below.

Figure 2: 2019 Governorship Election Result According to the Performance of Political Parties



Source: INEC 2019, retrieved from www.inecnigeria.org. Computation into Chart made by the Researcher.

In essence, the overall performances of the parties indicated that only two parties deserved to participate in the electoral contest in the 2019 General Election if true notion of party politics and power struggle which is the aim of any party is taken into consideration. Sule (2019) observed this scenario in his work that most of the parties which participated in the 2019 General Election do so for other purposes rather than seeking for power. One of his submission was that they were introduced to confuse the voters and secure political bargain for access to resources. The scenario also disclosed the applicability of the adopted framework of analysis Structural Functionalism which explains that there is a clear distinction between the ideal and real function or role of an institution in politics. Parties are established or formed for representation, capture of power and opposition role among other functions, this is the ideal purpose. In reality, parties in Nigeria that contested for the 2019 General

Election participated for other purposes apart from the above- mentioned reasons which is the real purpose of their emergence.

Multi-Party: Sustainable or Not?

Multi-party system is argued by some scholars (Johari, 2011; Speijcken, 2011) as the best for a plural society like Nigeria to enable for the accommodation of diversities, complexities, interests, conflicting demands and other related issues. Nigeria as the 10th most populous country in the world has more than 400 ethnic groups, six geopolitical zones, three major religions, multiple and complex pressure groups and interesting parties in power structure and power struggle. This might have been the major reason why the Nigerian 1999 Constitution recognised for the existence of multi-party in Section 40.

However, instability in Nigerian parties is a major issue of concern. It is expected that parties should have a well-designed ideology and principle that they will stick to permanently in their persuasion of the voters' support. In Nigeria, parties tend to be more aligned to ethnic, religious and regional affiliations than ideology or principles most especially in the First and Second Republic as observed by some scholars (Almond and Powell 2005, Meredith 2006, Babawale 2006, Ake 1996, Kurfi 1993, Crowder 1986 and Maier 2000). Ironically, the Nigerian parties could not utilise the diversity of the country to form a strong alliance that will last in democratic governance. Most of the parties expired after the termination of a Republic by the military in the country. Many parties could not last up to five (5) years in their history they will vanish in the thin air. The longest party in the country that survived for over three decades is the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) which is an offshoot of the Northern Elements Progressives Union (NEPU) established by Malam Aminu Kano. When the First Republic was terminated by a bloody coup in January 15th 1966, the NEPU was scrapped together with its contemporaries. The opportunity to return to democratic rule in 1979 led to the re-emergence of NEPU by the founder through a new title and acronym PRP. The PRP was registered again in the Fourth Republic after some few years of democratic experience to revive the ideology of Malam Aminu Kano. The longest serving party in power is the PDP which ruled for straight sixteen (16) years from 1999 to 2015 followed by the ruling APC which ruled for four (4) years from 2015 to 2019 and is set to rule for another four years from 2019 to 2023 and probably beyond.

In the view of this study, there is nothing wrong with multi-party system in Nigerian democracy and it is even suggested that it should be maintain as the best but there should be mechanism for sustaining the parties through a well and carefully designed criteria that will allow for only the serious ones to be formed and which will discourage the unserious ones from emerging. For instance, instead of the provision that a new party which seeks for registration with INEC must be present in at least 24 States and FCT Abuja, the criteria should be extended to be mandatory for any aspiring new party to be present in all the 36 States, FCT Abuja, all the 774 Local Government Areas and all the wards in the 774 LGAs with clear evidence for that. Such move will ensure that only serious parties that wish to come and stay forever are registered. Similarly, all the parties that failed to win at least one seat in either the Gubernatorial or National Assembly Elections should be de-registered because it failed to display its national presence and relevance. In this regard, the country will end up with obviously five stronger parties that can compete for various elective offices and that will make the cost of election less expensive by reducing the logistic issue and the electorates will find it convenient for voting.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that the parties that participated in the 2019 General Election were too much and failed to showcase the arguments in support of multi-party system in the country. Only two major parties of the ruling APC and the main opposition PDP recorded significant success and a remarkable performance. Most of the parties were just there for other purposes apart from that of the establishment of a party in a democratic rule. The presence of too many parties in the Election made it expensive, logistic difficult and the electorates found it overtasking in identifying their parties of choice in the polling units. The study concludes that a country like Nigeria will find it easier and feasible to continue with the multi-party system but it could not afford such number as ninety (90) or hundred (100). Strict criteria should be adopted to ensure that only parties that are genuinely seeking for registration to facilitate democratic governance are allowed to register. In this regard, the following suggestions are provided to achieve the desire and objective of this paper:

1. All parties that participated in the 2019 General Election and failed to secure at least one seat at the Gubernatorial, Senatorial and Federal

House of Representatives lack national presence and relevance and should be de-registered;

2. Any party that seek for registration must have a party structure with leadership in the FCT Abuja, 36 States of the Federation, 774 Local Government Areas and all their wards with a concrete evidence to support so to avoid rampant emergence of non-performing parties;
3. INEC should amend its laws to make it mandatory for all the existing parties and those to be registered in the future to design a manifesto before they continue to exist and not just a campaign slogan;
4. The electorates should be sensitised to support parties based on performance and ideology and not region or ethnic affiliation of the parties and
5. The abolition of public funding of parties should be retained to discourage the haphazard registration of parties to benefit from the proceeds of the public funding support.

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STATE POLICING: A VERITABLE TOOL FOR MANAGING HUMAN SECURITY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The number of violent crimes such as suicide bombing, religious killings, rape, kidnapping, ritual killings, politically-motivated killing and violence, ethnic clashes, armed banditry and others are increasingly becoming the regular signature that characterises life in Nigeria. This paper argues that human security can be restored in Nigeria through the institution of state policing irrespective of its shortcomings. Human security entails protecting people from threats, creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity. State policing if launched in Nigeria would be a leading example of security sector reforming in Nigeria with view to human security factor. Findings revealed that the current centralised system of Nigeria within which the police force operates may not be tenable in adequately curbing the menace of insecurity in Nigeria. However, the Federal Republic of Nigeria is urged to carry out some reforms such as building and strengthening its democratic principles and restructuring its system of federalism. Nevertheless, antagonists of state policing have argued against it on the ground that the country is not ripe for it because state chief executives might turn them into personal armies to fight political oppositions. The study relied on Secondary data comprising documentary evidence such as scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles, books, newspaper reports, and relevant E-materials through which data were generated for the validation of its hypothesis as well as content analyses and thematic review. We anchored our investigation on the theories of structural-functionalism and social contract which supports the need for reorientation; reorganization and repositioning of the Nigeria Police Force to enable it perform credibly its key functions.

Keywords: State Policing, Human Security, Federalism.

Introduction

The present security arrangement in Nigeria seems to be inadequate or simply unproductive. The idea of state police comes to mind, as one of the ways in the short and long term to curb criminal activities militating against the security of all aspects of our society. State police existed during the First Republic as Regional and Native Authority Police Forces. The officers were derived from the communities and with the advantage of shared common language and culture, crime prevention and containment at the early stages were relatively easy. However, abolition of regional and native authority police to form a unified police force significantly weakened security at the grass roots level, and in some cases badly managed local crises eventually escalated to major insurgencies. At this stage in the history of Nigeria, the restoration of state police as another tier of law enforcement has become imperative. According to Okechukwu and Anyadike (2013), most Nigerians now sleep with one eye open as those who are lucky to escape burglars are kept awake all night by booming sounds of gunshots or dins of bomb explosions by those too powerful to be stopped. Not only has the continued state of insecurity threatened the very fabric of national integration in the country and created the ecology of fear, disquiet and anxiety, it has also meted a deadly blow or what Imhonopi and Urim (2012) call “spectral bite” to industrial development.

The scourge of insurgency, terrorism and banditry continue to rage with passion in almost every state in Nigeria. This challenge has taken a new shape as it metamorphosed into the killer farmer- herdsman clashes which has sent not a few hapless, innocent citizens to their early graves in Benue, Taraba, Plateau States (Ayo, 2019). It’s surprising that the impact of humongous amounts allegedly spent so far to drastically reduce insurgency vis-a-vis the pervasive insecurity is not being felt. In December 2017, the National Economic Council approved \$1 billion dollars to combat the insurgency and other sundry crimes. Where has all the money gone with insecurity especially in the area of human security, creeping into every nook and cranny of the country? Nigerians desire and indeed deserve a safe, secure and productive environment for gainful employment, where their potential can be identified, honed and maximised (Ayo, 2019).

The time has come to be more proactive; to put in motion mechanisms that prevent all manner of crises than being reactive when they do rear their ugly heads. We strongly believe that state policing would be a rewarding proactive measures if adopted. Sadly, Nigeria’s military expenditure in 2009

was \$1.864 billion or N276.5 billion, representing 0.90 percent of the Gross Development Production (GDP). In the 2008, 2010, 2011 and 2012 fiscal years, the total expenditure earmarked for both internal security and defence in the approved budgets were N292.7 billion, N422.9 billion, N563.2 billion and N 921.91 billion respectively (CBN, 2012). This is five times greater than the expenditure on security in Cote d'Ivoire and almost 15 times of that of Ghana (Oladesum, 2012). It's sad to note that these humongous expenditures have not been able to guarantee the Nigerian population human security.

Furthermore, Okechukwu and Anyadike (2013) asserted that in the face of these expenditures, the security forces appear helpless to curb the insecurity trends. The internal security mechanism appears to have broken down completely as the state no longer has the monopoly of the means of violence. In addition, the involvement of very powerful individuals has escalated the problem, bringing an unprecedented sophistication to the vice, as their automatic weapons such as the AK94 and mode of operation have beaten the low ranging arms of the police hollow in the crime war. At least, ten to thirty lives are lost either through violent robbery, political assassinations, murders and religious killings in the north eastern parts of Nigeria on a daily basis. Other manifestations of threats to human security include drug trafficking, human trafficking, human sacrifice, ritual killings, sectarian and political violence, communal strife and natural disasters (Darmer, 2004).

Indeed, the realities on ground are very worrisome. Even when government officials are targets of the violent attacks and some of them are kidnapped by unscrupulous humans, the federal governments have been unable to surmount the challenges. Therefore, the concept of state police is appealing because it fits our federal constitution better and suits our crime situation. Making our idea and legal foundations of state police conform with the concept of community policing would enhance the success of state policing. This means that state police forces must be subject to the people and the constitution. The states have houses of Assembly but unfortunately, they have all become rubber stamps of governors. Therefore, the control of the police when state policing must have been instituted would rest in another institution. It could be a state police commission which would have 50% of its membership as elected independents, and 50% appointed by religious groups and the civil society.

Owing to absence of holistic human security in Nigeria, farmers have fled their farms in fear of being attacked especially in the northern region

which is the country's main food-growing region. The health sector has also received its own share as the numbers of injured persons are increasing with little or no facilities to cater for them as well as health workers abandoning their post in fear of being killed. The killings and abduction of school children and college student by deadly sects has forced the closures of schools indefinitely and the withdrawal of children and wards by parents from schools, therefore denying them access to education. There are inadequate shelters for the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and yet, the number of IDPs is increasing drastically (Awortu, 2015). It is against this backdrop that this paper examines human security and the place of state policing in restoring it.

Theoretical underpinning:

Theories in social sciences are methodological approaches used to explain and analyse the content, formation and effectiveness of a particular phenomenon. This is why (Onuoha, 2008) defined a theory as “lenses through which we see the world”. They enable us to conceptualize and contextualize both past and contemporary events and also provide us with range of ways to interpret complex issues. Following from the above, this paper would adopt the structural-functional theory and the social contract theories in the explanation of state policing as a veritable tool for managing human security in Nigeria.

The structural-functional theory is an off-shoot of the systems theory. This approach looks at both social structures and social functions. It characterizes a certain structure, that is, arrangements by which legitimate policy decisions are made, but with an eye to its functions in the whole context of social behavior (Beer & Ulam, 1968). Major proponents of the theory are Gabriel Almond and Coleman (1960) and Almond and Bingham Powell (1996). They introduced structural-functionalist approach in comparing political systems. They argued that, in order to understand a political system, it is necessary to understand not only its institutions (or structures) but also their respective functions. They also insisted that these institutions, to be properly understood, must be placed in a meaningful and dynamic historical context. The basic assumptions and postulations of the structural-functional theory are:

- It takes the society as a single, interconnected system. Each element performs a specific function. The basic feature of such a system is the interaction of its components for the maintenance of its equilibrium.

- If the society is a system as a whole, it has parts that are interrelated. A social system has a dominant tendency towards the stability that is maintained by virtue of built-in mechanism. If there are deviations or tensions, they are resolved. Thus change in a social system is not sudden or revolutionary but gradual.
- Underlying the whole social structures are broad aims and principles that are observed by the members of the society

This approach sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. It asserts that our lives are guided by social structures, which are relatively stable patterns of social behaviour. Social structures give shape to our lives for example; in families, the community, and through religious organizations. While structure refers to those arrangements within the system which perform the functions and /or roles; functions denotes the consequences involving the objective as well as process of the patterns of actions and roles. A single function maybe fulfilled by a complex combination of structures just as any given structural arrangement may perform functions which might have different kinds of consequences for the structure (Varma,1975). However, three basic questions are involved in the concept of functions namely:

- 1) What basic functions are discharged in any given system?
- 2) By what instruments are those functions performed?
- 3) Under what conditions are the performance of these functions done?
(Johari, 2005).

In applying this theory to our study, the Nigerian social system consists of myriad of structures and its concomitant roles. Each element performs a specific function in the society. These functions denote the consequences involving the objective as well as the process of the patterns of actions and roles. We have the federal police as a sub-structure within the Nigerian polity which is laden with the responsibility of protecting the Nigerian citizens and properties at large. The police are an institutional structure charged with the responsibility of controlling the use of violence by other groups. However, these functions have been partially performed and have failed to uphold the needed human security in Nigeria thus causing instability and disequilibrium in the Nigerian political, social and economic system. law enforcement, maintenance of peace and public order, protection of lives and properties,

prevention of crime and providing a wide range of services to the citizens are all roles of the police. Unfortunately, the hands of the federal police are tied under the operational control of the inspector general. This has led to failure in performing its responsibilities and this shows the need for a better policing system tagged state policing.

The Social contract theory is nearly as old as philosophy itself. It is of the view that persons moral and/or political obligations are dependent upon a contract or agreement among them to form the society in which they live. However, social contract theory is rightly associated with modern moral and political theory and is given its first full exposition and defence by Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau are the best known proponents of this enormously influential theory, which has been one of the most dominant theories within moral and political theory throughout the history of politics.

The Social Contract begins with the most oft-quoted line from Rousseau: "Man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains". Humans are essentially free, and were free in the State of Nature, but the progress of civilization has substituted subservience to others for that freedom, through dependence, economic and social inequalities, and the extent to which we judge ourselves through comparisons with others. Since a return to the State of Nature is neither feasible nor desirable, the purpose of politics is to restore freedom to us, thereby reconciling who we truly and essentially are with how we live together. Social contract theory says that people live together in society in accordance with an agreement that establishes moral and political rules of behaviour. Some people believe that if we live according to a social contract, we can live morally by our own choice and not because a divine being requires it.

Social contract theory Scholars like Hobbes (1588-1679), Locke (1632-1704) and Rousseau (1712-1778) had reasoned that men and women existed in the state of nature when they entered into social contract and established the political state. In the process, they gave up their rights of protecting themselves to the state which undertook to guarantee their safety. Humans are rational; they will choose to submit to the authority of a sovereign in order to be able to live in a civil society which is conducive to their own interests. Therefore, when the people experience a state of insecurity, it means the state has failed in keeping its own aspects of the social contract, and the people reserve the right to either change the state (government), or seek

alternative effective strategies (state policing) to ensure their safety within the state pending when the State is able to correct itself. If this move of the people is frustrated, aggression may result in the form of revolution.

Nwolise, (2012) writes that the Social Contract Theory provides the platform for a better understanding of the evolution and dynamics of state police discourse in contemporary Nigeria. The debate on the necessity and importance of state police in contemporary Nigeria stems from the breakdown in general security issues as manifested by high level of terrorism, rape, kidnapping, massacres, ritual murder, unresolved assassinations (politically motivated and for other reasons), ethno-religious conflicts, armed robbery, rural banditry, among others. These incidences of insecurity have generated untold anxiety and fear, especially in the inability of the federal controlled Nigerian police to curb or curtail their occurrence to some reasonable degree.

Conceptual Clarification

Human Security

Before the end of the cold war, scholars have, for many several generations interpreted and restricted the understanding and meaning of the concept security to the security of the nation- state and not the people (Danjibo,2013). The idea of human security started gaining attention in the world politics due to the various reports of many independent international commissions set up by the United Nations and other regional bodies from 1950s through 1980s, occasioned by the growing dissatisfaction with the existing traditional idea of security. Human security is a vague concept with no specific or universally accepted definition; nonetheless, scholars are undisputed of the fact that it centres around the security of persons first. It is basically an emerging concept which seeks to tackle fundamental issues threatening human beings and to find long-lasting solutions to them. Human security is a concept that has been defined in a broad and a narrow perspective. The broad perspective championed by the 1994 United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP)-Human Development Report defines human security "as freedom from fear and freedom from want". "It also elaborates the two aspects of human security: one, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease, and repression; and two, it means protection from

sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life whether in homes, in jobs or in communities” (Adedoyin, 2013).

In the narrower perspective championed by the Canadian Government under the Foreign Minister of Canada, Lloyd Axworthy (1996-2000) and the academic community, human security is limited to freedom from fear; that is freedom from violent threats against individual such as death, physical and psychological abuse and abduction. Human security’s main point reverberates around the vital core of human needs which has to do with the removal of fear and want, and in accordance, Danjibo (2013) posits that, “as far as most citizens are concerned, the basics of food, shelter, education, health and freedom are all they want”. It is imperative to stress that human security is a not a replacement for State security. Rather, it seeks to examine every aspect of human life, taking into account the various possible threats at different levels (local, national and regional). The Human Development Report of 1994 entitled 'New Dimensions of Human Security' was undoubtedly the first attempt to define the concept in a universal way. Human Security is defined in relation to seven dimensions reflecting almost all of the key components of human development. They are:

- **Economic security:** assured basic income; access to employment and resources.
- **Food security:** physical and economic access to food for all people at all times. Hundreds of millions of people in the world remain hungry either through local unavailability of food or, more often, through lack of entitlements or resources to purchase food.
- **Health security:** access to medical treatment and improved health conditions. Poor people in general have less health security, and in developing countries the major causes of death are infectious and parasitic diseases.
- **Environmental security:** living in a healthy physical environment which is spared from desertification, deforestation and other environmental threats that endanger people's survival.
- **Personal security:** individual security from physical violence. Threats can take several forms, for example: threats from the State, foreign states, other groups of people (ethnic tension), individuals or gangs; threats directed against women or children based on their vulnerability and dependence; threats to self (e.g. suicide, drug use, etc.).

- **Community security:** most people derive their security from membership of a social group (family, community, organisation, political grouping, ethnic group, etc.). Tensions often arise between these groups due to competition over limited access to opportunities and resources.
- **Political security:** living in a society that guarantees basic human rights and freedom of expression.

As noble as this concept is, it has not been void of criticism since it gained prominence in international politics. Human security, some argue, is merely 'old wine in new bottles,' combining traditional concerns about 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want.' The former addresses political liberties and the latter economic entitlements, roughly parallel to the first and second generation of human rights. Others argue that the concept is 'too idealistic,' and fails to consider the real-world politics of geopolitical power in a rapidly changing international system. In further conceptualization of the concept, it is important to state that there are at least two approaches to understanding human security.

The narrow school, which is associated with Canada and, to a certain degree, with the Human Security Network. Fundamentally, this school argues that the threat of political violence to people, by the state or any other organized political entity, is the appropriate focus for the concept of human security. This perspective is mainly linked to the idea of freedom from fear. The broad school argues that human security means more than a concern with the threat of violence. Human security does not only entail freedom from fear, but also freedom from want. This perception is associated with Japan, the Commission on Human Security and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security. More recently, it can be argued that a third perspective or a second generation of human security i.e. the European school, is evolving which encompasses both the narrow and the broad school (Ayodeji & Omowunmi, 2014). Human security cannot be sustained if the security agencies responsible for upholding the ethos of peace in the society fail in their responsibilities. This is why this article advocates for a restructuring of the Nigerian policing system in order to accommodate the state policing style.

State policing

State policing is a style of policing popular in many countries and among international police reform programmes; many variations now exist, including “community-orientated policing”, “responsive policing”, “neighbourhood policing” and “problem-solving policing”, among others. The main idea of state policing is that the police can best serve citizens at the state level by building trust and forming mutually beneficial relationships. Policing denotes the use of agencies set up by law to maintain internal security of the state to promote and sustain democracy and the rule of law. These bodies or organizations play important roles in the execution of national laws made by the government in the pursuit of national interest and the protection of the national image of Nigeria (Maina,2006). In operational terms, typical state policing strategies involve consulting state representatives, creating state-level accountability mechanisms, increasing public outreach, using specific patrol patterns and decentralizing policing structures.

Despite its widespread popularity, state policing remains controversial. Criticisms focus on the potential for police abuse and political repression when contact between the police and community increases without sufficient training or democratic safeguards. Most Nigerians now are clamouring for the state police as the only means to secure the ordinary rights of the Nigerian citizen, given the monumental failures of the Nigerian Police in preserving the safety, and the public rights of Nigerians. The National Police has been used to terrorize and suppress the rights of Nigerians, and has fallen short of the hope that as a federal institution, it would be deployed with the agreement of the executive authorities of the regions, in this case, the states, to secure the domestic safety of Nigerians.

The Nigerian State and Policing

The Nigerian police as a federal institution has proved to be corrupt, misaligned with the hopes of the people, and has retained its colonial constabulary character, rather than evolve as a civil institution under a civil authority with that mandate to protect and serve the citizens. Human security is at its lowest ebb as the serial hatcheting of ordinary Nigerians by “Fulani Herdsmen” to whom the Nigerian Police, constitutionally mandated to provide Nigeria’s domestic security has no response. This indicates the necessity for closer state policing, from a diffuse police from the centre. There is an urgent

need for the creation of state police as the major solutions to ending this communities' invasion by so-called unknown gunmen.

Human security is about eradicating threats to dignified life that characterise contemporary society; it is about securing life free from threats. Human security represents an effort to re-conceptualize security in a fundamental manner. Even though human security is primarily an analytical tool that focuses on ensuring security for an individual not the state, our argument follows that the absence of security for a state will invariably make the individuals vulnerable to unhealthy attacks which will hamper their security. Therefore, state policing remains a veritable tool for the protection and promotion of human security in Nigeria. State police is the best option for Nigeria now. There are many advantages Nigerians will enjoy with state police.

Lack of state police is what brought about vigilance and cultural security outfits in different nomenclature. Instituting a state police means that the Federal Government will have to release some funds so that states will be able to finance it. This means that the allocation to the states must change, which brings about the imperativeness of fiscal restructuring. Too much power in the centre is creating a lot of problems. State police will address Boko Haram menace because insurgents are human beings and live in the communities; so people know them. If we had state police, the issue of Boko Haram would have been nipped in the bud. People would also have identified those engaging in robberies in their neighbourhood. It is only a decentralisation of the force as practiced in most developed countries that can rescue the nation from the bite of insecurity.

The continuous increase in the rate of sophisticated crime, incessant killings and security threat over a period of time coupled with the helplessness, lackadaisical and sluggish attitude of the centrally controlled police in Nigeria has conditioned the clamour for the creation of state police (Ehinder, 2012). The underlying argument is that the present structure of the police makes them alienated from the grassroots, so having state police will make the police more effective as they would be closer to the people and more conversant with the terrain. The effectiveness and efficiency of local militias like Odua People's Congress (OPC), Bakassi boys, Egbesu boys, Vigilante Groups, among others have lent credence to the belief by many that security is a local problem and only those who understand the terrain can manage it.

Our advocacy for the institution of state policing hinges on the fact that it tallies with the principle of federalism on which Nigeria styles its constitution. The power of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is divided between the central government called the federal government and the 36 states of the federation in Section 2 subsections 2 of 1999 Constitution. Law making function in the centre is the responsibility of the national assembly while the states houses of assembly perform similar function subject to the limit permissible by the legislative list contained in second schedule to the constitution (Section 4 of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria). More so, the executive powers of the federation are by virtue of section 5 (1) of Nigeria 1999 constitution vested in the president while that of the states are vested in the governors. Thus, federalism is not complete without the existence of state police.

In more advanced federating societies, there are federal and state police. For instance, the American federal system has Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), State Police establishments and City or County Police. The provision according to section 215 (4) of 1999 constitution of Nigeria is unequivocal that a state commissioner of police shall be at liberty to refer a directive given by a state governor to the president before acting on them. The continuous increase of threat to human security in terms of growing sophisticated crime and incessant killings over a period of time coupled with the helplessness, lackadaisical and sluggish attitude of the centrally controlled police in Nigeria has conditioned the clamour for the creation of state police. Ehindero (2012).

The present structure of the police makes them alienated from the grassroots, so having state police will make the police more effective as they would be closer to the people and more conversant with the terrain. The effectiveness and efficiency of local militias like Oodua People's Congress (OPC), Bakassi boys, Egbesu boys, Vigilante Groups, among others have lent credence to the belief by many that security is a local problem and only those who understand the terrain can manage it. Also, Nigeria is too large and heterogeneous for its security matters to be over centralized. In a country that is usually confronted with administrative bottlenecks and unnecessary bureaucracies often waste time on simple matters like deployment of troops to quell insurrection. Adedeji (2012). The long process of getting approval from the Inspector General of Police before any action can be taken to quell

insurrection or security threat in a given state, worsens the security situation in the country and particularly stripes the Nigerian populates of human security.

Decentralization promotes specialization and efficiency. This, among other things, may be accomplished by placing the appointment, discipline and removal of the state police heads in the hands of an autonomous body or commission. The present structure in Nigeria as it affects the police, does not reflect true federalism and we should not make any pretence about it. Nigeria, at independence had Regional and Local Government Police. If they were left to blossom, the system would not have allowed the security of Nigerians to degenerate to the current abysmal level. (Nwogwugwu and Adewale, 2015).

Almost all developing countries especially Africa cannot be said to be free from the devastations posed by insecurity. In Africa human insecurity of different manifestations appears to engender humanitarian tragedy. The persistent insecurity of different sort since Nigeria returned to democratic rule in 1999 is a clarion call to evaluate the Nigerian state and her policing.

Oladesu, (2019) noted that the moment of truth has come. The reality has dawned on the privileged class that the danger is real. As targets of kidnapping, armed robbery, terrorism, banditry and herdsmen/farmers conflict, the rich are crying and the poor are also not left out of this tragedy as they constitute the largest victims.

Adequate security provisions, maintenance of law and order informed the core functions of the government. Insecurity has become a common phrase in Nigerian state and this tends to distort the essence of the good life of the people of Nigerian, who now live in fear and raised pessimism on their corporate survival. According to Thomas Hobbes the men in the state of nature surrendered their rights to form a government knowing that life in the state of nature was brutish, nasty, solitary, and the need for them to be safeguarded through the formation of government expected to oversee the prevalence security in order to have peace and stability that is needed for the people to realize their potentials.

According to Ezeah and Osayi (2014), one of the hottest insecurity in Nigeria is Boko Haram, a terrorist sect whose overt and covert activities has threatened the foundation of the country. Similar to this is the activities of herdsmen's, which threaten the unity of Nigeria. Thus, the activities of both Boko Haram and herdsmen presently make Nigerians live their lives in fear without knowing when bombers and the secret killer herdsmen will come their way. This means that Nigeria faces great insecurity with the growing

insurgence in the North-East, banditry in North-West, separatist agitation in the South-East, Niger-Delta militants in the South-South, herdsmen's persistent attack in the North-Central and other instances.

Nwogwugwu and Kupoluyi, (2015) observed that it is generally accepted that the principal role of government in any society is to provide security. No doubt, security is the ultimate for all times, climes, peoples and nations and "unless one can be assured of his physical security or safety, everything else will be meaningless". According to Imobighe (2006), without security, individuals within a state will find it difficult to engage in productive activities. Similarly, without security, the state is bound to experience great difficulty in harnessing its human and material resources towards meaningful development and the promotion of the general well-being of the people. Internal or domestic security is very crucial for the attraction of foreign investments, nation-building and national integration. The tables below give more vivid information.

Table 1 Showing Boko Haram Attacks:

S/N	Date of attack	State	Location	Impact
1	July 29, 2009	Yobe	Attack on Potiskum, Yobe State Divisional Police Headquarters.	4 people killed
2	Mar 13, 2010	Plateau	Another sect operation in the northern part of Jos, Plateau State.	300 people killed
3	Oct 1, 2010	Abuja	Explosions near the Eagle Square, Abuja.	12 people killed and many injured
4	Dec 24, 2010	Plateau	A bomb attack, in Barkin Ladi, Jos, plateau State.	8 people killed
5	Dec 31, 2010	Abuja	Explosions at Mogadishu Mammy Market, Abuja.	10 people killed
6	Jan 21, 2011	Borno	Attack on Borno state Governorship candidate of all Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), for the 2011 election, Alhaji Modu Gubio.	7 people killed
7	Mar 2, 2011	Kaduna	Boko Haram killed two policemen attached to the residence of Mustapha Sandamu, at Rigasa.	2 people killed

8	Mar 30, 2011	Yobe	Bomb planted by Boko Haram in Damaturu, Yobe State, exploded and injured a police officer	1 injured
9	April 8, 2011	Niger	Bomb at INEC office in Suleja.	8 people killed
10	Apr 26, 2011	Bauchi	Army Barracks in Bauchi bombed.	3 people killed and many injured
11	May 29, 2011	Abuja, Bauchi and Zaria	Multiple bombings in different locations in Northern Nigeria	13 people killed and 40 injured
12	June 7, 2011	Borno	Series of bomb blasts occurred in Maiduguri.	5 killed and several others injured
13	June 16, 2011	Abuja and Borno	Nigerian Police Headquarters, Abuja, Bombed by a suspected suicide bomber. A bomb blast also occurred at Damboa town, Maiduguri.	7 killed and many vehicles damaged
14	June 20, 2011	Katsina	Boko Haram stormed Kankara Police station in Katsina state.	7 policemen killed and 2 security men
15	July 9, 2011	Borno and Niger	A clash between Boko Haram and the military in Maiduguri, Borno State, also in Suleja, Niger state, a bomb was targeted at a church.	35 killed and many injured
16	July 12, 2011	Borno	Boko Haram threw an explosive device on a moving military patrol vehicle.	5 people killed
17	July 15, 2011	Borno	Explosion in Maiduguri.	5 people injured
18	July 25, 2011	Maiduguri	Bomb explosion near the palace of traditional ruler in Maiduguri	8 people killed
19	Aug 26, 2011	Abuja	A Suicide Bomber Drove Into The United Nations building in Abuja.	25 people killed and 60 injured
20	Sep 12, 2011	Bauchi	A bomb attack on a police station in Misau.	7 people killed

21	Sep 17, 2011	Borno	Brother in-law of Mohammed Yusuf, the slain leader of Boko Haram, Babakura Fugu, shot dead in front of his house in Maiduguri by two members of the sect two days after he was visited by former President Olusegun Obasanjo	1 person killed
22	Oct 3, 2011	Borno	Book Haram attacked Baga Market in Maiduguri.	3 people killed
23	Nov 4, 2011	Yobe	Attack by Boko Haram in Damaturu, YobeState	150 people killed
24	Nov 27, 2011	Yobe	Attacks in Geidam.	7 people killed
25	Dec 24, 2011	Plateau	Bombing in Jos.	80 people killed
26	Dec 25, 2011	Niger	Christmas Day bombing in Madalla.	50 people killed
27	Jan 6, 2012	Adamawa	Christ Apostolic Church was attacked and Igbo people were also killed in Mubi in the same state.	37 people killed
28	Jan 20, 2012	Kano	Multiple attacks in Kano	250 people killed
29	Jan 26, 2012	Kano	The Sabon Gari of Kano State witnessed another explosion, which caused another pandemonium in the state	Many injured and some luxury buses damaged.
30	Feb 7, 2012	Kano	A bomb blast in Kano market and military barracks	5 people killed
31	April 8, 2012	Kaduna	Easter Day Church bombing	38 people killed
32	Jun 17, 2012	Kaduna	Multiple attacks on churches	12 people killed and 80 injured
33	Aug 7, 2012	Kogi	Deeper Life Church	19 people killed
34	19 April, 2013	Borno	City of Baga	200 people killed
35	17 Sept	Borno	Checkpoint near Benisheik	143 people killed

36	Jan 26, 2014	Borno	Book haram attack kawuri market	45 people killed
37	April 14, 2014	Borno	Kidnapped chibok girls	276 teenagers
38	May 20, 2014	Plateau	Twin blast hit Jos town	118 people killed
39	July 1, 2015	Borno	Book haram attack three villages	145 people killed
40	Feb, 2016	Northeast	Two suicide bombers attack near Nigerian refugee camp	58 people killed
41	Jan 17, 2017	Northeast	Nigerian fighter jet mistakenly bombed a camp for the internally displaced persons in Rann	90 people killed
42	March 1, 2017	Northeast	Book haram attack IDPs in Rann	3 killed, 3 injured
43	Feb 19, 2018	Yobe	Bok haram kidnapped Government Girls Science and Technical College in Dapchi	110 teenagers

Source: Adapted from Adagba, Ugwu and Eme (2012:86-89) cited in Achumba, Ighomereho & Kpor-Robara, (2013:85-86)

Compiled by the authors from CNN

Achumba, et al (2013) pointed out that from these indices, we can say that the insecurity situation in Nigeria from 2009 is unprecedented. In addition to the usual crimes, the coordinated attacks from the Boko Haram sect in the northern part of the country, besides making life miserable for Nigerians, has affected so many businesses operating in that region. The bomb explosions initiated by this group have been on the increase leading to enormous loss of life and property and a general atmosphere of fear and social tension in the country. Statistics above have also indicated that Nigeria has been identified as the least peaceful country in West Africa (GPI, 2012). According to Igbuzor, (2011) West Africa is among the most unsecured region in the world and Table 2 below indicates that Nigeria appears to be the most unsecured country in the region as it has consistently ranked high in insecurity among the countries in West Africa.

Table 2 showing herdsmen attack:

S/N	Date	State	Location	Impact
1	A p r i l , 2016	Enugu	Heavily armed Fulani herdsmen attacked Nimbo (Nimbo Ngwoko, Ugwuijoro, Ekwuru, Ebor, Enugu Nimbo, Umuome and Ugwuachara) villages in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area. Ten residential houses and a church were also burnt in addition to Heavily armed Fulani herdsmen attacked Nimbo (Nimbo Ngwoko, Ugwuijoro, Ekwuru, Ebor, Enugu Nimbo, Umuome and Ugwuachara) villages in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area. Ten residential houses and a church were also burnt in addition to	4 0 people killed
2	A p r i l , 2016	Taraba	An attack on residents and razing of houses in Dori and Mesuma villages, Gashaka Local Government	1 5 people killed
3	February, 2016	Benue	Agatu Community	5 0 people killed
4	December, 2015	Plateau	An attack on Kwata community, Jos South Local Government, following a prior warning leading to deaths and six houses burnt	2 2 people killed
5	J a n 1 , 2018	Benue	Herdsmen attack Guma and Logo local government	7 3 people killed

6	June 23, 2018	Plateau	11 communities attacked by herdsmen in Barkin Ladi LGA	8 6 people killed
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Compiled by the authors from (Akinyetun, 2016).

It's important to note that the facts provide in the tables above did not cover all the security mishaps in Nigeria and it appears that the Nigerian Government has not put in much commitment in providing adequate human security. These challenges have strengthened the operations of these traitors.

Obviously there is no better time to dwell on the issue of introducing the state policing style than now that Nigeria is facing serious domestic security challenges. Sincerely, state policing is the solution to our security challenges. Hence, the need to look critically at what would be the impact of state policing in Nigeria especially in the area of human security.

Conclusion

This study is an attempt to present pensively the degenerated state of human security in Nigeria with the assurance that state policing presently remains the major way out of this menace. The current structure of the Nigerian policing system has left much to be desired especially in the area of upholding human security. Human security entails a broad approach which addresses security holistically, considering both political, social, environmental and economic threats. There is a clarion call for the decentralisation of the Nigeria Police from the Federal level to the States. Although the call for State Police has been re-echoed in Nigeria for several years, we had a glimmer of hope as the 8th Assembly resolved to undertake a fresh round of Constitutional amendments in 2018 to include State Police after President Buhari admitted his "helplessness" in dealing with violence despite being vested with the Executive powers of the Federation under section 5(1) (a) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) and key powers of appointment of the country's security chiefs. We hope that the national assembly will clearly see the urgent need for the institution of a state police which would aid in addressing the various threats on human security considering the shortage of police personnel for the teeming Nigerians.

According to Agbakoba cited in Olowolagba (2018) the creation of state police is necessary in order to address the security issues in Nigeria. The

renewed clamor for creation of state police over severe killings in the country is a necessary demand. Agbakoba reiterated that the centrally controlled police could not provide adequate security cover for the country, pointing out that state police would strengthen security. The new impetus for state police is a welcome development. Gadzama, (2018) supported the view that:

“The point has been made that there is no way the Nigerian Police Force and the other security forces as presently constituted can effectively perform and meet the expectations of the citizenry with their current strength, equipment holdings and absence of modern crime fighting capabilities”.

Nigeria, a country of an estimated 180 million people only grapples with 370,000 policemen with analysts estimating the ratio of one policeman to 100,000 citizens (“Need for State Police”, 2016). Even a machine or robot would not be effective when thrown into use in this kind of a situation. The average duty of the police is to maintain human security, indubitably, inadequate number of police officers to some extent gives hoodlums, criminals, bandits, terrorists among others the prospect to strike at will, given every little circumstance. As it stands now, there is hardly no state in Nigeria enmeshed in one form of security challenge or the other.

Reacting to the unfortunate security incident in Taraba, the Governor of Taraba State, Darius Ishaku said that “he is helpless and cannot do anything over the security situation in the state calling on residents to pray to God for peace in the state” (cited in Tyopuusu, 2019). According to him if any governor tells you that he will do anything about insecurity, such a governor is lying. This is because Nigeria runs a “feeding bottle” federalism, where states are appendages of the federal government. The constitution did not place the security architecture of the country in the hands of governors. According to him, governors do not have control over the Police or Army and virtually there is nothing they can do over security. Just like many other Nigerians, we urge the Federal Government, particularly the National Assembly, to begin to look into the possibility for states to establish their policing system. The Nigerian Governors’ Forum must also commence agitation in this regard. State police remains the panacea to the various security challenges faced by our nation.

Recommendations

- 1) The Federal Republic of Nigeria is urged to carry out some reforms such as building and strengthening its democratic principles such as building a civil society, upholding the rule of law, monitoring human rights violation,

control of small arms proliferation and restructuring its system of federalism. This paper agitates for the reformation of Nigeria's security architecture which would help checkmate cases of insecurity and this could be realised through the veritable tool of state policing.

- 2) Instituting a state police means that the Federal Government will have to release some funds so that states will be able to finance it. This means that the allocation to the states must change, which brings about the imperativeness of fiscal restructuring in terms of resource control and revenue sharing.
- 3) Decentralization promotes specialization and efficiency. This, among other things, may be accomplished by placing the appointment, discipline and removal of the state police heads in the hands of an autonomous body or commission.
- 4) The Nigerian police as a federal institution has proved to be corrupt, misaligned with the hopes of the people, and has retained its colonial constabulary character, rather than evolve as a civil institution under a civil authority with that mandate to protect and serve the citizens. To this effect, there is need for a total overhaul of corrupt tendencies from all facets of our nation through proper sanction of corrupt individuals.
- 5) Payments of salaries and other remunerations of the police should be made prompt and consistent while other welfare packages should be made attractive to ensure high level of job satisfaction and contentment within the officers. Government should ensure that police are able to live a worthy life that guarantees the meeting of their basic needs. It will be difficult to enforce anti-corruption principles when salaries are delayed and inadequate.
- 6) Police officers both at federal and local levels should be provided with sophisticated weapons such as arms and ammunitions, hand blast grenade, bulletproof vest among others in order to face courageously and incapacitate the enemies of peace as well as enhance operational efficiency. Beyond proper arming of the police force, it's imperative to train and retrain recruits of the police force as this will help keep officers abreast of technological innovations especially in operation of police equipment.

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AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (AGOA) AND EXPORT DIVERSIFICATION: AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) is a piece of American legislation passed by the U.S. Congress in May 2000 under George W. Bush's administration. It aims to diversify sub-Saharan African economies; increased access to the U.S. market; and consolidate sound economic policies through the elimination of tariffs on eligible African countries' products entering the U.S. market. The AGOA has gone through series of amendments (AGOA II, III, IV and V). The current AGOA V was renewed from 2015 to 2025 by Barrack Obama's administration. This study, therefore, examined the AGOA policy; and in doing so, Immanuel Wallerstein's World System theory was adopted as theoretical framework. The study relied mainly on secondary source of data. The study revealed that energy related products (crude petroleum, oil and gas) dominate African exports to the U.S. under AGOA; AGOA is U.S. trade weapon against Chinese influence in Africa. The programme inter alia further (re)integrates African economies into global capitalist system thereby deepening the disarticulation, distortion, disruption, of African economies. Furthermore, AGOA is bedeviled with plethora of problems such as capacity constraints and the cost of doing business; infrastructural challenges; economic challenges; institutional issues; the nature of the AGOA legislation; etc. In order to overcome these problems, it is recommended that there is need to reduce the cost of doing business in Africa. AGOA should be integrated into countries' national emergence and development plans; sub-Saharan African countries should re-strategise and make AGOA a sub-regional issue; sub-Saharan African should embark on long-term economic growth and development in order to realise robust economic transformation among others.

Keywords: AGOA, Capitalism, GSP, Imperialism, Sub-Saharan Africa, World System.

Introduction

The African Growth and Opportunity Act (hereafter, AGOA) is a piece of American Legislation passed with the objective of increasing the volume of trade between the United States and Sub-Saharan Africa. It aimed to achieve this by significantly reducing and eliminating tariffs and quotas for certain goods exported from qualifying African countries to the United States. More than 1800 products were added to the General System of Preferences (GSP) under AGOA, all eligible for export to the United States free from preventative duties and excises. Countries would however have to meet a set of qualifications in order to take advantage of the Act. The Act authorises the President to designate countries as eligible to receive the benefits of AGOA if they are determined to have established, or are making continual progress toward establishing the following: market-based economies; the rule of law and political pluralism; elimination of barriers to U.S. trade and investment; protection of intellectual property; efforts to combat corruption; policies to reduce poverty, increasing availability of health care and educational opportunities; protection of human rights and worker rights; and elimination of certain child labor practices (U.S. Trade and Development Act, 2000).

The United States President reviews qualification for AGOA yearly. At inception in May 2000, 34 countries qualified to receive benefits. Currently, there are 38 eligible countries (AU, 2017). The idea behind AGOA is to promote exports that will lead to growth; providing preferential access for African products to the American market that would incentivise greater production, open economies and ultimately lead to economic growth. Since its passage in May of 2000, it has been the centrepiece of U.S-African trade relations (Paez, Karingi, Kimenyi, & Paulos, 2010). The AGOA document specifically states that increased trade and investment flows have the greatest impact in an economic environment in which trading partners eliminate barriers to trade and capital flows. Successful amendments (AGOA II, III, IV and V) have extended the Act's duration and allowed it to conform to changing political environments. However, years later, African economies remain the smallest in the global market and waning optimism about AGOA's effectiveness to date calls for a re-examination of the trade relations (Zenebe, Peterson & Wamisho, 2014).

Research Method

Secondary method of data collection was employed in this study. Basically, data were obtained through the internet, journals, government publications, conference papers, etc.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to analyse AGOA as an instrument of furthering American imperialism and trade weapon against Chinese influence in Africa. In doing this, the article aims to explain AGOA outside the prism of mainstream propaganda by examining the eligibility criteria. The study also looks at the challenges and prospects of U.S-African trade relations in AGOA and it is divided into six sections: the introduction, theoretical framework, an overview of AGOA, AGOA and American capitalist imperialism, challenges facing AGOA, conclusion and recommendations.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is the world system theory. The theory is the pioneering work of Immanuel Wallerstein (1974). According to him, a world-system is a social system, one that has boundaries, structures, member groups, rules of legitimation, and coherence. Its life is made up of the conflicting forces which hold it together by tension and tear it apart as each group seeks eternally to remold it to its advantage. It has the characteristics of an organism, in that it has a lifespan over which its characteristics change in some respects and remain stable in others. Life within it is largely self-contained, and the dynamics of its development are largely internal (Wallerstein, 1974, p.347). A world-system is what Wallerstein terms a "world economy", integrated through the market rather than a political centre, in which two or more regions are interdependent with respect to necessities like food, fuel, and protection, and two or more polities compete for domination without the emergence of one single centre forever (Chirot & Hall 1982; Goldfrank, 2000).

World System consists of a multicultural territorial division of labour in which the production and exchange of basic goods and raw materials is necessary for the everyday life of its inhabitants (Wallerstein, 1974). This division of labour refers to the forces and relations of production of the world economy as a whole and it leads to the existence of two interdependent regions: *core* and *periphery*. These are geographically and culturally different, one focusing on labour-intensive, and the other on capital-intensive production

(Chirot & Hall 1982; Goldfrank, 2000). The core-periphery relationship is structural. Semi-peripheral states act as a buffer zone between core and periphery, and have a mix of the kinds of activities and institutions that exist on them (Skocpol, 1977). Among the most important structures of the current world-system is a power hierarchy between *core* and *periphery*, in which powerful and wealthy “core” societies dominate and exploit weak and poor peripheral societies. Technology is a central factor in the positioning of a region in the core or the periphery. Advanced or developed countries are the core, and the less developed are in the periphery. Peripheral countries are structurally constrained to experience a kind of development that reproduces their subordinate status (Chase-Dunn & Grimes, 1995). The differential strength of the multiple states within the system is crucial to maintain the system as a whole, because strong states reinforce and increase the differential flow of surplus to the core zone (Skocpol, 1977; Chirot & Hall 1982). This is what Wallerstein called unequal exchange, the systematic transfer of surplus from semi-proletarian sectors in the periphery to the high-technology, industrialised core (Goldfrank, 2000). This leads to a process of capital accumulation at a global scale, and necessarily involves the appropriation and transformation of peripheral surplus.

On the political side of the world system, a few concepts deem highlighting. For Wallerstein, nation-states are variables, elements within the system. States are used by class forces to pursue their interest, in the case of core countries. Imperialism refers to the domination of weak peripheral regions by strong core states. Hegemony refers to the existence of one core state temporarily outstripping the rest. Hegemonic powers maintain a stable balance of power and enforce free trade as long as it is to their advantage. However, hegemony is temporary due to class struggles and the diffusion of technical advantages. Finally, there is a global *class struggle*. The current world-economy is characterised by regular cyclical rhythms, which provide the basis of Wallerstein's periodisation of modern history (Goldfrank, 2000). After our current stage, Wallerstein envisions the emergence of a socialist world-government, which is the only-alternative world-system that could maintain a high level of productivity and change the distribution, by integrating the levels of political and economic decision-making.

The global system is characterised by economic and political relations by nation-states. Economically, countries are integrated through the market in which two or more regions are interdependent with respect to necessities like

food, fuel, and protection. Relating to this assertion, it is obvious that Africa is the storeroom or engine house for the supply of industrial raw materials (food) and fuel to America and other continents, while the advanced economies of America and Europe supply Africa technical skills and technology (second hand though). This interdependence leads to multicultural territorial division of labour. This division of labour refers to the forces and relations of production of the world economy as a whole and it leads to the existence of two interdependent regions: core and periphery - advanced economies of Europe and America; and Asia, Latin America and Africa respectively. These economies are geographically and culturally different; one focusing on capital-intensive and the other on labour-intensive production. The core-periphery relationship is structural. The structure of the current world-system is characterised by power hierarchy between core and periphery, in which powerful and wealthy core societies dominate and exploit weak and poor peripheral societies. For instance, the eligibility criteria of AGOA as currently championed and promoted by the United States of America is imperialistic, capitalistic, exploitative, oppressive, domineering, impoverishing, and above all, pillages African economies. This leads to the disarticulation, distortion, disintegration, incoherence and lack of forward and backward linkages of African economies. This makes African economies structurally constrained and has experienced a kind of development that reproduces their subordinate status. The differential strength of the multiple states within the system is crucial to maintain the system as a whole because strong states reinforce and increase the differential flow of surplus to the core zone. The U.S.A has successfully achieved this through the instrumentality of AGOA to ensure that there is constant flow of surplus (in the form of unprocessed food materials) to America.

On the political side of the world-system, hegemonic powers maintain a stable balance of power and enforce free trade as long as it is to their advantage. This is exactly what the U.S.A. is pursuing through AGOA. Free trade or removal of trade barriers to African raw foods entering America and the elimination of barriers to United States trade and investment as contained in AGOA are disguised to keep American power and continued presence in Africa, indirectly attempting to undo China's influence in African economies. There is no doubt that the enforcement of free trade as contained in AGOA is advantageous to American economy whereas the economies of Africa are disadvantaged. AGOA viewed as American instrument of imperialism is

characterised by unequal exchange relations, systematic transfer of surplus and as a process of capital accumulation.

An Overview of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)

Before its passage, AGOA has had many names in the U.S. Congress. It was called variously as the African Bill; the African Growth and Opportunity Bill; the Africa Act or the Trade and Tariff Act. The voted version is what is today known as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA); and it is part of a law called the Trade and Development Act of 2000. It has had so many names partly because it was so unpopular that each time it got defeated in the U.S. Congress. It had to be re-introduced by another name (Africa Action, 2003). It took several years for AGOA to be enacted. The U.S. ruling classes were persistent in pushing through AGOA because it is so central for the U.S. imperialist strategy that dates from the 1990s. In the 1990s for instance, there was a major shift in U.S. policy towards Africa. The U.S. decided to make Africa a new zone for U.S. capitalist implantation. This was clearly announced by the late Commerce Secretary Ron Brown of the Clinton administration in 1995.

The Clinton Administration Record quotes Ron Brown as saying the United States would no longer concede the African market to former colonial powers. Clinton's regime had two over-arching, long-term policy goals. Firstly, it was in favour of U.S. business interests. What the U.S. wanted was to implant U.S. multinationals in Africa for them to control the rich natural and mineral resources including oil, gold, copper, diamonds, and for them to get a larger share of the African market. The Clinton Record refers to this goal in terms of accelerating Africa's "integration into the global economy which would "advance American commercial interests through an invigorated emphasis on trade and investment. The second U.S. policy goal was to get a firmer military hold on Africa. The Clinton Record refers to this goal as addressing "security threats" emanating from Africa. AGOA is based on both these U.S. long-term policy goals: it imposes conditionalities that dictate economic policy in Africa so that U.S. multinationals can operate lucratively and at the same time, coerces African States into supporting U.S. foreign policy and "national security" interests. Ever since George W Bush was installed as U.S. President, AGOA has become an instrument that perfectly addressed the needs of his regimes' aggressive military policies (Lallah, 2002; AGOA Info. 30th July 2018).

The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) is a United States Trade Act, enacted on 18 May 2000 as Public Law 106 of the 200th Congress. The legislation significantly enhances market access to the U.S. for qualifying Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries. Qualification for AGOA preferences is based on a set of conditions contained in the AGOA legislation. In order to qualify and remain eligible for AGOA, SSA countries must work to improve their rule of law, protect human rights, and respect for core labor standards (Stepak & Ofosu, 2005). The Act originally covered the 8-year period from October 2000 to September 2008, but legislative amendments signed into law by U.S. President George Bush in July 2004 extended AGOA to 2015. At the same time, a special dispensation relating to apparel was extended by three years to 2007; but in December 2006 these were extended to 2012. In 2007, the apparel “abundant supply” provisions were enacted, although these were repealed again in 2009. The intention was to set requirements for local textile fabric sourcing where it was considered that sufficient quantities were available in AGOA-eligible countries. Third, country fabric (the provisions related only to denim initially) would thus first have to be sourced locally or regionally before third country imports could be utilised for onward exports of denim garments.

The Act has expanded the number of African products eligible for duty-free access into the United States from approximately 4,650 - specified under the General System of Preferences (GSP) to more than 6,450 (Kituyi, 2005). Notably, these newly added “AGOA products” include items such as apparel and footwear, wine, certain motor vehicle components, a variety of agricultural products, chemicals, steel and many others. After completing its initial 15-years period of validity, the former President of the U.S., Barack Obama on 29th June 2015 renewed the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA 5) for an additional 10-year, bringing its closure to 2025 (Mathey, 2015; AU 2017; AGOA Info. 30th July 2018).

AGOA and American Capitalist Imperialism

The AGOA provides the U.S. with a new colonial (neocolonial) device to get African States to submit to U.S. capitalist imperialism, with the active support of African ruling classes. The U.S.-African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) provides an avenue for a big catch or king-size powers for the American President (Lallah, 2003; Africa Action, 2003). The U.S. President decides which country he will open the U.S. market to, and which African

State he will close the U.S. market to. AGOA is ridden with conditionalities that African States must submit to in order to be eligible in accessing American market. At least once every two years, under AGOA, the American President has the prerogative to call in African States that he deems "eligible" to an AGOA Forum to tell them what he thinks their political and economic agenda should be (Lallah, 2002; Stepak & Ofosu, 2005). This, no doubt, is neocolonial and capitalist-imperial strategies.

AGOA targets Sub-Saharan Africa economies under the 'claims' that it will foster market-based economic growth and develop trade relationships between America and Africa. The programme provides eligible nations 'duty-free' access to the United States for certain products and also claims to ensure African entrepreneurs take advantage of access to the U.S. market at no cost to U.S. taxpayers. This means broadening eligibility, opening additional sectors of the U.S. market, and strengthening programmes that encourage sustainable economic growth. At the surface, the programme sounds good enough, but there is more to it than meet the eye. In order to qualify, African countries have to meet a specific set of stringent "conditions." Top on the list is the requirement that the beneficiary promotes "a market-based economy that protects private property rights... and minimises government interference in the economy through such measures as price controls, subsidies, and government ownership of economic assets" (U.S. Trade and Development Act, 2000; Kituyi, 2005).

By implication, the whole economy of 'eligible' African country must operate on a profit-basis. Therefore, basic services such as health, education, pensions, water, electricity, telecommunications, transport, and other social services must be transformed into "commodities" sold by capitalist business-operations. Measures to re-distribute wealth and to restrict class inequality such as taxes on companies, on capitalists, on business operations, must be gradually scrapped until they disappear altogether. This is an AGOA condition. A completely "free-market" is one where democratic control does not exist, because everything is run by private companies (Lallah, 2002; Kituyi, 2005).

Furthermore, and the big one that allows American presence, domination, suppression and subjugation of African economies – the beneficiary must make progress toward "the elimination of barriers to United States trade and investment" (U.S. Trade and Development Act, 2000). This particular eligibility requirement provides the U.S a neocolonial tool or device

to manipulate African economy, thereby denying Africans economic freedom. In other words, AGOA eligibility requires not just mild economic deregulation but the outright destruction of any and all tariff protections, flinging open African markets to a flood of American goods that inevitably undermine local industry. In simple words, Africa becomes a dumping ground for made in America goods. This further means that the U.S. for instance will trade capital goods such as plant and machinery, medical equipment, agricultural machinery, aviation equipment and airplanes, etc. while Africa will only trade commodity goods (raw materials). The implication is that while the U.S. gets richer and more industrialised, Africa will continue to remain a commodity continent and perpetually unindustrialised.

To make matter worse, African countries do not really have a choice in the matter, for if they refuse to meet these conditions, they effectively forfeit their access to the American market. AGOA requirement is characterised by draconian measures and are easily as destructive as the dreaded “structural adjustment” conditions that the International Monetary Fund attaches to its loans. The U.S. uses the AGOA to promote the growth and opportunity of American businesses in the U.S. and Africa. AGOA guarantees duty-free entry of African goods and services into the U.S. market without tempering with the U.S. economy (business and profits). For instance, whenever certain African textiles or apparel threatens the U.S. textile industry, the U.S. President can suspend duty-free treatment in that sector. African States have to conform to U.S. directives on customs regulations so as to satisfy the U.S. textile companies. Officials of the U.S. can even snoop around in the Customs offices of African countries seeking AGOA eligibility, to check whether they are conforming to U.S. Customs directives or not (Lallah, 2002).

The AGOA not only aims to pry open the African market to U.S. business by imposing conditionalities, but it also sets up a whole state bureaucracy in the U.S. to assist U.S. multinational implantation in Africa. The U.S. also subsidised its capitalist implantation into Africa. For instance, in the October 2001 AGOA forum, President George W. Bush announced the creation of a \$200 million Overseas Private Investment Corporation support facility to give American firms access to loans, guarantees and political risk insurance for investment projects in sub-Saharan Africa (Lallah, 2002). Lallah further added that, since AGOA was enacted, the United States Information Service (USIS) has been funding programmes in Africa to explain how AGOA can be used as "the jumping-off point to create public-private partnerships in

African countries and to establish matchmaking between African and American capitalists, thereby preparing the way for U.S. multinationals". It is not surprising then, that so many profit-greedy U.S. companies lobbied hard to get AGOA through the U.S. Congress. As a concession to the wave of resistance against conditionalities in AGOA, the final version of the law contained a condition that African countries must respect "labour rights" and other "human rights" in order to be "eligible". The United States is renowned for interpreting "human rights" in its own narrow imperialist interests. In Mauritius for instance, the Industrial Relations Act (IRA) makes the quasi-totality of workers' strikes illegal. Yet the U.S. does not treat this as an infringement of labour or human rights; or not yet (Lallah, 2002).

Essentially, AGOA amounts to unequal and a coercive free trade agreement with most of the subcontinent. Given that AGOA requires its beneficiaries to eliminate barriers to U.S. investment; it is not surprising that the balance of trade comes out strongly in favor of the United States (Zappile, 2011). Trade data shows that Benin, for example, has exported almost nothing to the United States since it became an AGOA member, but has imported some \$600 million worth of U.S. goods that have significantly undercut local producers. Some countries do actually export a great deal under AGOA rules – but only those with substantial petroleum and mineral deposits (Suruma & Lewis, 2008; Kimenyi, 2009; Mathey 2015). Aggregate beneficiary country export statistics do not initially appear to support the conclusion that AGOA has helped to diversify African exports. Paez et al (2010) emphasised that 10 years after the Act's implementation, diversification of AGOA exports remained a challenge. They further stated that through 2010, 90 percent of U.S. imports under AGOA were energy-related products.

Changing circumstances and impressive investments by China necessitate the need for United States of America to increase its economic engagement in sub-Saharan Africa, hence the AGOA. China particularly poses a serious threat to U.S-led global economic order. Currently, China invests more in Africa than any other country. It channels its funds toward infrastructure and investment development projects. As a result, positive sentiments toward the Chinese model of development are steadily growing across Africa. For instance, China finances more than 3,000 large critical infrastructural projects in Africa. China has also extended more than \$86 billion in commercial loans to African governments and state-owned entities

between 2000 and 2014, an average of about \$6 billion a year. China is today Africa's largest creditor, accounting for 14 percent of sub-Saharan Africa's total debt stock (Schneidman & Wiegert, 2018).

As it is already known, U.S. trade with Africa has stagnated over time, and China seems to have surpassed the United States as Africa largest trading partner. China is also rapidly acquiring African companies, with the majority of these in the commodities sectors. Based on this, we may say that America puts AGOA in place for three obvious reasons:

- iv. to recapture Africa and its economy through 'duty-free' exports from Africa and investments therein;
- v. to further (re)integrate Africa into global capitalism;
- vi. as trade weapon against Chinese influence in Africa.

In order to recapture Africa and further (re)integrate its economy into global capitalism, the U.S. increase her imports from SSA by more than 50 percent from the pre AGOA 1999 levels (Kimenyi, 2009). For instance, in 2001, the U.S. imported \$7.6 billion of duty free goods from AGOA eligible countries and by 2008 this figure was over \$81 billion (Kimenyi, 2009). To confirm Kimenyi's position, Bonarriva and Guth (2014) stated that from 2001 to 2013, U.S. imports under AGOA increased by about 10 percent per year, from \$7.6 billion to \$24.8 billion. The preferential status, especially in the earlier years, permitted African producers of textiles and apparel to increase their volume of exports substantially.

Furthermore, in 2008, before the global financial crisis resulted in a reduction to trade flows, combined trade had reached \$100 billion; the aggregate exports from AGOA eligible countries stood at \$81.9 billion (Kimenyi, 2009). By 2011, the U.S. was importing about \$53.8 billion worth of AGOA commodities – essentially, more than 70% of all U.S. imports from sub-Saharan Africa - and a significant increase from the \$22.2 billion in 2000. In fact, African exports under AGOA have increased more than 500 percent over the decade, increasing from US\$8.15 billion in 2001 to US\$53.8 billion in 2011. In 2012 alone, U.S. imports from sub-Saharan Africa saw a 31 percent increase from the previous year. While this does not get as much recognition as other facets, AGOA has also been beneficial to the U.S. commercial presence in Africa.

Over the past 10-year period, this has trebled from US\$5.6 billion to US\$21.5 billion between 2001 and 2012 (Bonarriva & Guth, 2014; Mathey, 2015). Illustratively, every one of the 50 American states increased its exports to Africa in 2012, and some states are exporting over US\$550 million in aggregate and experts estimate that AGOA has created as many as 1.3 million jobs, benefiting 10 million people throughout Africa, while estimates from 2011 suggest that U.S. exports to sub-Saharan Africa accounted for over 100,000 jobs in U.S.A. (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) & African Union (AU), 2014). The results of 15 years of AGOA's trading are mixed. AGOA is believed to have created 300,000 jobs in Africa and 120,000 in the U.S. 480 billion USD worth of commodities were exported under the program with a 10% increase per year in export since its inception in 2000. Despite those bright achievements, the three key objectives of the programme: diversification of sub-Saharan African economies; increased access to the U.S. market; and consolidation of sound economic policies are yet to be fully achieved (Mathey, 2015).

Kimenyi (2009) further stated that, nevertheless, considering the size of the U.S. market for the various AGOA products, it is evident that the potential benefits have not been exploited to any significant degree. Accordingly, in 2008 total apparel imports to the U.S. were valued at \$93 billion, of which SSA accounted for \$1.1 billion (1.26 % of the total market). In the same year, Bangladesh alone exported \$3.5 billion worth of apparel (3.79 % of total market)—more than double the entire exports from SSA. Also of concern is that African exports under AGOA declined in the early years. For example, African AGOA exports in 2004 and 2007 accounted for 54.5% and 36.5% of total exports to the United States respectively.

Kimenyi (2009) stated that further interrogation reveals that the gains from AGOA are overrated. He submitted that in 2008, of the \$81.3 billion worth of exports from AGOA-eligible African countries, merchandise valued at \$66.2 billion entered under the AGOA duty-free provisions. However, \$9.8 billion of the \$66.2 billion was accounted for by merchandise previously eligible for duty-free access under GSP, thus \$56.3 billion worth of trade is directly attributable to the AGOA preferences. Of the AGOA exports, \$52.8 billion of exports (95.7 percent) consisted of energy related products (mainly crude oil). Thus, the real benefits of AGOA to African countries are much lower than what aggregate numbers show—about \$3.5 billion of exports (Kimenyi, 2009).

Nonetheless, various aspects of growth brought by AGOA should be put into perspective by asserting that the preferential treatment accorded to African products in the U.S. has not generated an increase in Africa's share of the world's largest

consumer market. Between 1990 and 2005, for instance, the whole of Africa contributed between 3.3 and 3.9 percent of total trade with the U.S.; in 2011, this was up marginally to 4.2 percent of U.S. imports of merchandise. Comparatively, the share of Africa's exports to the U.S. hovered around the 18 percent mark while figures increased from 3 percent to 13 percent for exports to China in the same period. This shows that more must be done to deepen the U.S.-Africa trade and investment relationship. In addition to promoting U.S. - Africa trade, AGOA was also established to diversify African exports (AGOA Info. 30th July 2018). While AGOA has, undoubtedly, facilitated production and exports of some processed and manufactured products to the U.S., it has yet to lead to any fundamental change in the structure of African exports to the market. Energy related products (crude petroleum, oil and gas) remained the dominant African exports to the U.S. under AGOA (Suruma, & Lewis, 2008; Kimenyi 2009; Mathey, 2015).

Although the number of countries exporting non-energy products increased from 13 to 22, the continued dominance of primary commodities in the U.S. - African trade dynamic contrasts sharply with changing trends in the structure of intra-African trade that reveals that African countries are increasingly trading manufactured goods among themselves. Primary commodities and unprocessed raw materials have dominated African exports since the 1960s, and it is because of this that textiles and apparel were identified as major processed products to benefit from duty-free access to the U.S. market under AGOA (UNECA & AU, 2014).

On top of other objectives, AGOA was also meant to increase the flow of foreign investment into Africa. It was anticipated that Duty-Free Quota-Free (DFQF) access for thousands of African products to the world's largest market would serve as a powerful incentive for American and other companies to invest in Africa. However, with six of the world's fastest growing economies, as per the IMF, Africa accounts for only about 1 percent of U.S. foreign direct investment.

In a 2011 UNECA report, it was uncovered that instead of American firms investing in AGOA, much of the investment in Africa's textiles and apparel industry mainly came from Asian companies. Essentially, while both Africa and the U.S. have derived discernible benefits from their economic and trade relationship, it is also obvious that potential for deepening this growth has not been fully exploited. Illustratively, only three African countries - Nigeria, South Africa and Angola - accounted for eighty percent of total AGOA exports to the U.S. (AGOA Info. 30th July 2018). While this can be attributed to relatively low levels of development in Africa, it is also reflective of an abject failure for both the U.S. and Africa to seize upon trade and investment opportunities on both the U.S. and sub-Saharan Africa sides. While U.S. - Africa trade increased three-fold from \$29.4 billion to \$94.3 billion between 2000 and 2011, there was an astounding fourteen-fold increase in Africa's trade relationship with China - from \$8.9 billion to \$127.3 billion in the same period (UNECA & AUC, 2014).

The Challenges Facing Africa in the Actualisation of the AGOA

There are so many challenges that are bedeviling the actualisation of the objectives of AGOA. Some of these challenges are as follows:

- i. **Capacity Constraints and the Cost of Doing Business:** Many AGOA eligible countries do not have the capacity to produce and export to the U.S. in requisite quality and/or at required quantity. Many African firms have poor production infrastructure - using old technology and operating on a small scale – which makes it very difficult for them to effectively compete in the U.S. Even with the duty-free and quota-free market access provisions, African countries have not been able to effectively exploit the preferences. The simple reason is that African countries are not competitive (Kimenyi, 2009; UNECA & AUC, 2014). A joint WTO, UNECA, and AUC survey clearly shows that the main factors influencing lead firms' sourcing and investment decisions in Africa include not only production costs and market size, but also suppliers' ability to consistently meet product requirements due to severe capacity constraints. Capacity constraints also emanate from Africa's poor human resource capital. Even though AGOA eligible countries have significant comparative advantage in terms of labor resources due to an abundant and inexpensive labor force, transforming this into meaningful competitive advantage has been difficult as many lack proper training and human resource management.

Additionally, limited entrepreneurial skills particularly in the production of goods and development of appropriate bankable projects, and the lack of relevant knowledge and capacity to ensure conformity with U.S. quality standards conspire to limit the extent to which African firms can take advantage of the AGOA opportunity (AU, 2017). The problem is especially exacerbated because much of Africa is made up of micro, small and medium sized enterprises that have difficulty in expanding due to severe financing constraints as they do not have strong relations with financial institution in comparison the few larger and better established firms (UNECA & AUC, 2014; AU, 2017).

- ii. **Infrastructural Challenges:** Inadequate access to stable power, appropriate information and communication technology, reliable transport, road and railway networks, and efficient post-harvest and cool-chain facilities, are some of the major infrastructural challenges that affect competitiveness of AGOA eligible countries. Associatively, poor trade logistics caused by cumbersome documentation requirements, inefficient customs procedures, and poor handling of port facilities penalise firms that rely on imported inputs and doubly hit exporting firms by significantly adding to production cost via uncertainty and long delays – aspects that are unacceptable to most global buyers. Firms in AGOA eligible countries identify input supplies-including availability, quality, and cost - as a major impediment in their respective operations, and these infrastructural challenges make the input supply (both imported and local) process extremely difficult.

In the garment sector, for instance, inputs constitute roughly more than 70 percent of total production costs on average, and thus, inability to acquire large volumes of diverse inputs at required price, quality and time makes African firms

highly uncompetitive. Their Asian competitors, on the other hand, can source high quality inputs with decent prices and in the required time span. On the other hand, Africa's agro-processing production chains suffer from the lack of consistent quality and readily available raw materials (UNECA & AUC, 2014; AU, 2017).

- iii. **Economic Challenges:** AGOA has not and will not be effective in transforming African economies. The fact that the large proportion of AGOA exports are commodities is evidence that the benefits of the initiative will be limited and likely to be short-lived (Kimenyi, 2009). One major reason for buyers' failure to consider sub-Saharan African countries for their sourcing needs is a fear that they may not be able to find sufficient product and quality. This is directly attributable to the size of eligible country economies, their respective industry population - in terms of size, mix, and number of firms – is much too small; posing serious comparative advantages challenges/ when juxtaposed with South East Asian countries that have a much stronger industry population. Even the textile and garment industry, which can be considered an AGOA success story falls significantly behind compared to its major competitors. Putting AGOA eligible countries on the global map of the textile and garment industry requires changing the industry population in terms of numbers, size and mix. The earlier mentioned WTO, UNECA, and AUC joint survey reinforces this point as it identifies production costs and market size as the major factors limiting investment and sourcing from Africa (UNECA & AUC, 2014). Even with the duty-free market access, African agricultural exports still face multiple non-tariff barriers (Kimenyi, 2009).
- iv. **Institutional Issues:** If AGOA exports from African countries have not picked up as much as they should have, it is not for lack of effort. A number of AGOA eligible African countries have provided their exporters with the requisite support through government agencies and business associations. There have also been donor-supported programmes. However, because some of these programmes neither have the strategic direction nor the coordination. Their piecemeal efforts are, therefore, not sufficient to overcome the constraints that come with the weak institutional synergies between the production and trade sectors rife in AGOA beneficiary countries. On top of this, lacking are strong institutional mechanisms both at national and sub-regional levels to provide support for AGOA eligible countries in their effort to take advantage of AGOA. In recent years, eligible countries are embarking on preparing National AGOA Response Strategies, which are expected to overcome these institutional challenges. (UNECA & AUC, 2014).
- v. **Poor Marketing and Merchandising Skills:** Oftentimes, the technical capacity to understand and take advantage of a given market is difficult due to inadequate technical capacity. Firms in AGOA eligible countries have acute limitation in foreign market knowledge and export marketing expertise. A vast majority of these firms do not have the capacity to appropriately merchandise, cost or price their products for export. They have limited access to appropriate

market information and the business contacts required to penetrate the U.S. market or difficulties to meet U.S. markets requirements (AU, 2017). Also, producers also do not know specific aspects of consumer taste, preferences and other marketing and international trade practices (UNECA & AUC, 2014).

- vi. **U.S. Market Requirements:** The stringent U.S. market requirements are another impediment to increased exports particularly when it comes to agricultural products. The sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards (SPS) requirements from the U.S. impose additional demands on exporters, making this a major limitation to export agricultural products under AGOA. But the heart of the matter is lack of awareness of SPS requirements and the cumbersome requirements that see some countries acquiring SPS certification for their export products after a 2 to 3-year period. Another impediment is the fact that most agricultural products lack sufficient value addition to qualify for export to the U.S (UNECA & AUC, 2014).
- vii. **The Nature of the AGOA Legislation:** To make matter worse, in the current AGOA provisions, there is no formal structure for member countries to negotiate with U.S. policy-makers on AGOA. This results in a situation where amendments to the act do not sufficiently incorporate the consensus of the African countries (Kimenyi, 2009). The manner in which AGOA was conceived and hatched shapes the implementation of its contents. AGOA did not emerge from formal negotiations and as such, it imposes American economic dictatorship on Africa. Because it is a unilateral programme that must be renewed from time to time, AGOA can be deemed unpredictable-something that does not bode well for those who could invest in the opportunity it presents. The uncertainty involved in the renewal process, for instance, is a major impediment for the effective utilisation of AGOA as the uncertain and lengthy renewal of AGOA's third country fabric provision in 2012 resulted in a significant loss when orders to African beneficiaries were canceled. Secondly, sanctions and unilateral actions imposed by the U.S. have had the unfortunate consequence of unintentionally inflicting huge collateral damage on innocent parties such as U.S. investors who lost out when AGOA status was revoked from countries like Democratic Republic of Congo and Madagascar, and in the latter case, the thousands of Malagasy women who lost their jobs (UNECA & AUC, 2014).

Conclusion and Recommendations

One important point concerning AGOA is that the procedure used for its establishment and implementation exhibits some elements of imperialism by America. AGOA is not a multilateral agreement negotiated between the U.S. and African countries. It was unilaterally imposed by the U.S. This U.S. law is a kind of "extra-territorial" legislation, as if Africa is a U.S. colony. Although AGOA purports to leverage exports as a way of boosting economic

development in Africa, it does not stipulate that the exporting companies must be African. Indeed, most of them are American, Chinese, and Indian. The vast majority of beneficiaries under AGOA are not impoverished Africans, but wealthy foreign multinational corporations operating in Africa. Indeed, AGOA's insistence on the elimination of local trade barriers allows U.S. companies to bid freely on things like mineral concessions and government contracts. And given that these foreign companies have high capital reserves, they can usually win effectively by blocking out their African competitors, thereby sending African entrepreneurs and businesses into extinction. The overall effect, then, is that AGOA does not create greater market share for African companies but actively diminishes it. AGOA is U.S. capitalist programme. The programme further integrates the African economies into the global capitalist system thereby deepening the disarticulation, distortion, disruption among others, of African economies. The programme makes African economies to be forwardly linked to external economies thereby discouraging forward and backward linkages of the internal economies of Africa. All these cumulatively continue to develop underdevelopment in Africa.

AGOA has drawn mixed results and a successful closure in 2025 will need a change of recipe or strategy both from the U.S. and African countries. AGOA extends the US Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) to Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries and allow them to export around 7,000 products to the U.S. with no duties or customs.

Regrettably, the three key objectives of the programme: diversification of sub-Saharan African economies; increased access to the U.S. market; and consolidation of sound economic policies have not been fully realised. Though many sub-Saharan African countries have embarked on structural reforms and the overall trade volume of sub-Saharan African countries to U.S. increased on AGOA's watch, the diversification objective has not been fully achieved. 90% of AGOA's export was on a single product; oil, out of the 7,000 listed (Suruma & Lewis, 2008; Kimenyi 2009; Mathey, 2015). The identification of the causes of the diversification failure is critical. To that end, the finding of strategies that will help sub-Saharan African countries take full advantage of AGOA is paramount in bringing a successful 2025 closure. Three ingredients may help achieve a successful 2025 closure: an increase in the private sector lead over national AGOA task forces; a better integration of AGOA into countries'

national comprehensive development plan; and a rather sub-regional approach that will contrast with the current national individualistic one (Mathey, 2015).

Consequently, the following recommendations are put forward:

- i. There should be an integration of AGOA into Sub-Saharan countries' national policy and development plans. Based on this, the improvement of production capacity through the use of modern technology and adequate funding of export based Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises remain key ingredient. In order to achieve this, there should be the provision of adequate infrastructure such as access energy (steady power supply), appropriate information and communication technology, reliable transport system, road and railway networks, and efficient post-harvest and cool-chain facilities for the storage of produce.
- ii. As AGOA successfully closes in 2025, sub-Saharan African countries should re-strategise and make AGOA a sub-regional issue. This will foster continental economic integration, coherence and articulation of the various sectors of African economy. African leaders must muster the political will and demonstrate the seriousness in order to achieve this. In view of this, the AGOA committees have a pivotal role to play. The committees have to move to regional levels with planned specialisation at country levels and this should be based on countries competitive advantage. Thus an ECOWAS' (West African Countries' Economic Union) AGOA committee could take the lead of the existing individual 15 national committees at country level. For instance, the committee could identify and advise countries such as Cote d'Ivoire in producing Cola based on its advantage in producing the Nitida Cola, while Nigeria in processing Cola powder with cross stake ventures (Mathey, 2015). Such strategies would promote forward and backward linkages of African economies, thereby fostering economic cooperation and industrialisation at continental level.
- iii. There should be focus on the standard costs of doing business; as the costs of doing business in Africa remain high in terms of regulatory burden, licensing procedures, facility requirements, etc. It is, therefore, important that African countries should focus on collaborative initiatives in areas such as exchange of technology, skilled personnel, etc. to deal with the major cost drivers impacting African competitiveness in AGOA in particular and the global economy in general.

- iv. The fact that the large proportion of AGOA exports are commodities is evidence that the benefits of the initiative are limited and likely to be short-lived if adequate measures are not quickly put in place. Long-term economic growth and development of Africa requires robust economic transformation. Therefore, African policy proposals and programmes should be (re)formulated and evaluated on the extent to which such economic policies contribute to transformation and diversification of African economy. The AGOA should be based on how Africa can attract American capital and also appropriate incentives to mobilise domestic capital for economic transformation. In addition, it is crucial that AGOA eliminates provisions that penalise value addition (Kimenyi, 2009).
- v. A strong foundation should be laid for U.S.-Africa Free Trade Area (FTA) by supporting regional integration efforts in Africa. In this regard, the timing of the FTA should take account of the road map for Africa's continental integration and this should not further fragment Africa or weaken its integration process. Furthermore, a clear road map should also be put forward that elevates U.S. - Africa partnership to the extent that Africa should be allowed to fully participate in the negotiation of trade relations rather than an imposition of conditionalities as currently being done in the AGOA.

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**AN APPRAISAL OF THE TRANSITION COMMITTEE SYSTEM AND
THE WANING OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE NIGERIAN LOCAL
GOVERNMENT SYSTEM: THE INCIDENCE IN PLATEAU STATE**

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Abstract

Local Government Transition Management otherwise known as Caretaker Committee is a practice where a group of persons are appointed to govern the affairs of the Local Government Area temporarily until election is being held. Their appointment is momentary and its essence is to prepare way for the coming of the democratic elected officers and structure as outlined in the constitution. The Nigerian constitution spelt out six months as the maximum outlive of the model but the practice for a longer period of time have gone ultra- vires. This study attempted to examine the effect of the over-adherence of the committee system on the performances of Local Government Areas in Plateau State. Secondary sources of data were generated from an array of both published and unpublished materials such as textbooks, journal papers, news papers, magazines, conference and seminar papers, handbook of the local government Councils and ministry of Local Government and chieftaincy

affairs, among others. Interview was the major instrument used to elicit data for the study. It was found that the Caretaker System or Transition Committee System in the local government system of governance has threatened developmental functions and as well encourages menaces such as the over bearing influences of the state on the local government and abuse of funds in the Local government Councils which are contrary to the provisions in the Nigerian constitutions. Recommendations such as local government autonomy, disbanding of the State- local government join account, vesting of electoral power of the local government area in Nigeria to the INEC among others were proffered.

Keywords: Local Government, Caretaker committee system, democratic governance and development

Introduction

The local government Transition Committee (TC) otherwise known as the Caretaker Management Committee (CTC) is a system of administration that is put into practice by most states of the federation in Nigeria as a way to limit spending and also creating better ways for efficiency and prudent utilization of resources (Whalen, 1970). In this committee system, the governor of any of the practiced states appoints the committee and the committee is further scrutinizes and certify by the State House of Assembly (SHA) (Ladipo, 2000). The practices of the Local Government Transition Committee System gain more audience in the later part of the 1980(s) when the military where at the pinnacle of government (Ladipo, 2000).The1999 constitution surfaced at the later part of the 1990s and also defined local government areas as the third tier of government with democratic structure and delineated responsibility.

At the starting and the watch out of the civilian administration of the Fourth Republic, most state of the federation adheres to the democratic practice as spelt by the 1999 constitution. The friction and consideration that has given way to the Transition Committee System was the loose autonomy configuration designed for the local government areas which was further abetted by the so-called joint account systems pronounced in section 162 of

the 1999 constitution (Diamond, 2006). Other factors which also propelled way to the growth of the system are the domineering influences of the state on the local government service commission and the over dependence of the local government areas for instruction from the state (Kenneth, 2007).

The practice of Transition Committee System in the local government system in Nigeria was further sharpened by the fact that it controlled corrupt practice of democratic and elected structure at the local government who for long were into the act of mismanaging and misappropriating resources that are set and meant for development at the local government areas (Morgenthau, 2003). Whereas there was more to that as it is often seen and assumed. The practice against its canopy of promoting efficiency and judicious use of resources has not only led to the abuse of power as it ought to be practiced in a truly defined federal system but for long has starved the local government areas from carrying out their statutory and constitutionally defined responsibility (Thandika, 2000). The seven (7) schedule of the 1999 constitution as amended spelt out the function which is expected of every local government area in the federation. The constitution has outlined numbers of function to be carried by the local government but these functions are not properly carried out and this is mostly due to the overemphasis on the practice of the transition committee system which for long has deprived the local government system the needed fund that is statutory allocated to it to carry out the spelt and expected functions (Stephenson, 2010). In the transition committee system, the committee does not have much saying on the fund allocated to the local government because they see themselves as more of the creation of the state than a separated tier of government (Ulam, 2010). Most states of the federation controlled the fund which is meant for the local government areas. Most the time, the state releases funds just only for the payment of staff and the maintenances of the already existing structure (Stephenson, 2010). The state raises more money from the practice than when a democratic elected structure is being implanted in the system.

This practice tends to abuse the principle of separation of power that is an obvious feature of a federating society. It does not stop at that but has also retarded the growth of the local government system in the country (Stephenson, 2010). This chiefly shows why the local government system in Nigeria is more of a desiccated place and whose role and functions are only in written than in practice. The Transition Committee is so common in Plateau State and as a result of this, most political parties often uses it as a tool to tap out mass fund in order to strengthen its root and structure, and also to handicap opposition in both the state and the local government areas (Ulam, 2010). This practice for long has crippled development of the democratic structure of local government system in the state.

Statement of the Problem

One of the principal problems that have triggered the study is the overbearing influence of the Plateau State government on the Transition Committee Management in the local government system and how it has retarded development in the local government areas in the state (Kenneth, 2007). The state mostly capitalize on the system to perpetuate heinous act such as control of funds that were meant for the local government areas and as well determine who will governed the structures against the stipulation in the Nigerian constitution. The council account to the state instead of the people and developmental functions are left at the bay. This for long has continued to affect the smooth practice of a functional local Government system in the state.

Another problem which also motivated the study is the abuse of funds which were meant for development by the Transition Committee Management (Anderson, 2007). This anomaly is exhilarated and further fortified by the notion that they are appointed on temporarily basis by the state and as well only set to maintain the system and nothing else unlike those that have emerged through democratic and elective system. This so called supposition has led a lot of abuse of funds which were meant for development, the misuse and misappropriation of resources. It is against this backdrop that the following research questions were posited to guide the study:

- vi. In what ways does the Plateau State government has an overbearing influence that has affected the Transition Committee Management in performing developmental function in the local Government areas in the state?
- vii. What are the linkages between the Transition Committee Management and the abuse of resources that were purposed for development in the local government areas?

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the effect of the local government Caretaker Committee System on the development of local government areas in Plateau State.

The specific objectives include to:

- (a) examine the over bearing influences of the state on the local government with the practice of the committee system
- (b) access the relationship between the caretaker system in the Nigerian Local Government System and the abuse of funds

Assumptions

- (a) The local government Caretaker Committee System has encourages the overbearing influences of the state on the local government areas
- (b) The caretaker system has encourages the abuse of funds in the local government areas.

Methodology

The study used combination of methods. First, ex-post facto research design was employed to extract records from Local Government Service Commission (LGSC), Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs (MLCA), National Development Plans (NDP), among many others. The study also used qualitative tools such as textbooks, journals, newspapers, magazine, conference and Seminar papers and internet materials.

Qualitative and historical methods were employed for descriptive and historical details. The qualitative and historical methods afford us clear perspective into our research problem and the opportunity to decipher the historical details and precise account of the past while using them to discuss the present situation in the Nigerian Local Government System.

Conceptual Clarification

Democratic Elected Council and Committee System

In the word of Mustafa (2010) democratic elected Local Government Councils are structures which are laid by popular choice and participation of the people. In the same direction Timpson as cited in Stephenson (2010) sees elected council as the set of people who are elected by popular participation known as election to spear head the affairs of the Local Government.

Johnson (2014) defined democratic elected council otherwise known as the democratic structure in the local government as the executive (the chairperson) and the legislative (the counselors) who are elected to govern the local government. Bello (2016) also viewed the term as the practice of choosing the council which comprises the executive and legislative by election in the local government system.

The Local Government Transition Committee or the Committee System in the word of Shehu (2010) is a kind of administration or the control of local government area by the state in which the state appoints a committee to spear head or pilot the affair of the local government council. Diamond (2006) defined the committee system in the Local government System as set of people appointed by the state to govern the affair at the Local Government Council. In the same direction, Oyediran and Agabaye (2008) described the local government committee system as the administration of the local communities essentially by means of local agents appointed by and responsible to the central government, be that the central, state, regional or national government.

From the foregoing definitions, it can be inferred that elected council is based on popular participation known as election while the committee system is an imposition by the state apparatus. The former is the choice of the people while the later is appointive in nature.

The Concept of Local Government

Scholars and the practitioners in the field have conceived the term local government been conceived and defined in different ways. According to the United Nations Division of Public Administration (quoted in Adeyemi, 2012, p. 24),

local government is a political division of a nation (in a federal system or a federal state) which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the powers to impose taxes or exact

labour for prescribed purpose. The governing body of such an entity is elected or otherwise selected.

The definition has been reviewed by a number of scholars who have also expatiated on it. Common example is Whalen (1970, p.312) who have stated that:

Each unit of Local Government in any system is assumed to possess the following characteristics, a given territory and population, an institutional structure....a separate legal identity, a range of power and functions authorised by delegation from the appropriate central or intermediate legislature and lastly within the ambit of such delegation, autonomy subject always to the test of reasonableness.

In agreement with the notion, Oyediran and Agabaje (2008) view local government as a government in which popular participation both in the choice of decision makers and in the decision making process is conducted by local bodies which while recognizing the supremacy of the central government and is able and willing to accept responsibilities for its decision.

The Concept of Development and Underdevelopment

Concept of Development

All available evidence as shown in the literature on development portends the concept as nebulous, hence it has different meanings in different contexts and sometimes even in the same context. Consequently, several schools of thought, models, paradigms and theories have emerged to explain the concept (Nnadozie, 1986).

The Western liberal scholars see development as a total transformation of a traditional or a primordial society into the type of technologies and associated social organization that characterize advanced economically prosperous and political stable nations of the Western world (Todaro & Smith, 2003). The above definition implies there is one average or normal path to development which countries have followed in the past and which they are obliged to in the future (Stevenson, 2010).

The scholars of Marxist philosophical persuasion, found the above conception of development grossly deficient, because it has not led to real development, instead, it has enhanced the progressive underdevelopment of most third world state (Bello, 2013). Thus, they see development as socio-economic transformation which man engenders as he, jointly with his fellows,

interacts with the natural environment through labour power. In a similar vein, Okoli and Onah (2002) have viewed the concept as a human issue which should involve the total full mobilization of a society. Espousing a similar view, Nnoli (2003) conceived development as a dialectical phenomenon in which the individual and society interact with their physical, biological and inter human environment, transforming them for their own betterment and that of humanity at large and being transformed in the process. It can be construed from the above mentioned definitions, that development implies the capacity to secure and sustain a better life to humankind in the society. The striving to elevate human life and comfort from a given level considered unsatisfactory to a better and perhaps more comfortable level.

Apparently piqued by this lack of an all-embracing definition of development, Seers (1972, p.47) poses three (3) basic questions, about the meaning of development when he asserts:

The question to ask about a country's development is therefore: What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result development even if per capita income has soared.

But the phenomenon of development or the existence of a chronic state of underdevelopment according to Todaro and Smith (2003) is not only a question of economics or even quantitative measurement of incomes, employment, and inequality. It is a real fact of life for over three (3) billion people in the world. To them development must therefore be conceptualized as a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and the eradication of absolute poverty. Most importantly, development must represent the whole gamut of change by which an entire social system has turned to the diverse basic needs and desires or individuals and social groups within that system, move away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory and towards a condition or situation of life regarded as materially and spiritually better.

Guolet (1990) defined development as the enjoyment of good things of life. He mentioned three basic values that should necessarily serve as a conceptual basis and practical guideline for understanding the inner meaning of development. These according to him are life sustenance (food, shelter, health, and protection), self-esteem (sense of worth and self-respect of not being used as a tool by others for their own understanding, dignity, respect and recognition) and freedom from alienation of material condition of life and from social solitude to nature, ignorance, other people, misery, institutions and dogmatic beliefs.

Rodney (1972) viewed development as a multidimensional process. He emphasised further that development at the level of the individual implies increased skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being, while at the level of the social group, it entails a growing ability to control both internal and external relationships. Development therefore to Rodney is when society members mutually intensify their capacity for dealing with their environment.

What is clear from the foregoing conception is that development is man-centered and a multi-dimensional process concerning the ultimate transformation of society in its entirety (economy, polity, culture, among others). In other words, development implies increasing independence, both independently and jointly. The foundation for a nation's development must be its own resources, both human and material entirely utilised to take care of its own requirements.

The Concept of Underdevelopment

It is not easy to define in few words what underdevelopment entails. The term has suffered from a lot of misconceptions and has been viewed in different places in different perspectives. This assertion flows with the perception of Ibrahim (2003) who advocated that:

The term underdevelopment cannot be restricted to only one or two variables. Their characteristics are apparent and dynamic. Most countries of the third world prefer to use the word developing rather than underdeveloped. The use of the word developing by these countries show some degree of optimism and rest that they will one day become economically developed in the near future.

The list of the underdeveloped countries according to Galbraith (2010) ran the alphabetical gamut from Afghanistan, Brazil, China, to Zanzibar. Goldhosp (2010) indicated that non-industrial countries were first called underdeveloped in a famous report to the United Nations in 1951, and then when the word came to be thought of as pejorative, they were called developing, an instance Myrdal (1980) called diplomacy by terminology. Mount-joy (2010) also points out that a succession of descriptive name has been applied to these countries, the third world (the west and the former east being the first and second respective less developed countries, the south (because they occur in the southern hemisphere)

Shehu (2010) defined underdevelopment as those societies that are considered to be economically poor, low in industrial production, low in level of technological development, low purchasing power, political instability, economic crisis, poverty, disease, squalors, low per- capita income, short life span and predominantly agrarian economy. The definition tandem with the view of Goulet (1971, p.37) who also subscribed that:

As a real fact of life for over two billion people of the world. It is a state of mind as much as a state of national poverty. It is shocking, the squalor, diseases, unnecessary death, and hopelessness of it all. No man understands if underdevelopment remains for him a statistic reflecting or underdevelopment- a culture of poverty.

He went further to say that the prevalent emotion of underdevelopment is a sense of disease and death, confusion and ignorance, as one group understand change of servility toward men whose decision in government causes hopelessness before hunger and natural epidemic of chronic poverty, a cruel kind of hell. The two (2) definitions of the concept of underdevelopment above seem to equate the term to state of abjection, despondence and inadequacy of material thing of life. The definitions ignore the social element and other desirability of mankind such as mindset, peace, good inter-human relations, group hegemony and harmony, group cohesion and a lot of others. The definitions gave adequate premium to poverty at the expenses of other social factors.

Griffin as cited in Stephenson (2010) writes that:

Underdeveloped countries as we observed them today are a product of historical forces and power, especially those released by European expansion, imperial world and the world dependency, manipulation,

exploitation, misdirection and domination. Europe did not discover the underdeveloped countries and societies; on the contrary, she created them and pupated them to her taste.

This definition associates underdevelopment and undeveloped nation to countries that have for some period been dominated by external centres of power economically and politically and hence function as their satellites. Their perception argued that the varying degree of development among various third world countries can be well explained in terms of their circumstance incorporated into the world wide-political and economic global system. The global system is characterised by unequal but simulates development of its component national units.

Amin (1990) in a different angle viewed underdevelopment to the transition of pre-capitalist formation integrated into the world system - a trade relation intended to meet the interest of the capitalist economies in the west: thus draining the peripheral countries of their resources and a situation he termed as unequal exchange. The definition above ignored instances of successful capitalist development in the third world as fixated on external relationship to the total exclusion of internal relations of product .It is simplistic and has a lower epistemological view in its perception. The definition failed to emphasize the interplay of internal and external variables in the perpetuation of underdevelopment.

Committee System and Elective System Plateau State LGA

History has it that there is more of the Committee System which is also known as the Care Taker or Transition Committee in Plateau State than the democratic and elective system. The Committee System first started in Jos North Local Government Area in 2001 and this is as a result of the challenges of conflict in most communities in the area (Stephenson, 2010). The system or the practice later gain acceptance and is mostly used on the ground that the state pool back some resources which were meant for the local government areas and at the same time built structures which would further bring future election to its advantage .

There is more to the issue of creating structure and insecurity as a reason to justify the continued practice of such model. The committee system

for long in the state was used as an avenue for generating revenue to the state (Stephenson, 2010). This condition was worsened by the so called State Joint Local Government Account which section (62 of the 1999 Constitution as amended) enjoins and mandate on the local government system. The state is supposed to give 10% of its internally generating revenue to the local government areas but the reverse was the case. It was from the local Government allocation and returns, the state finances the state university and in the same time, the general hospitals which were built in each local Government area across the state (Shehu, 2010). In 2010, the state Government deducted from the joint account to execute project such as the tricycle scheme, the new government house, and the five kilometer road, among others. This development does not only starve the local Government areas but had let to their retarded growth. Most of the local Government area in the state became slim down and were unable to carry out their expected roles (Shehu, 2010). The zero account system further worsens the situation in the state. This is because none of the local government can sustain itself let alone provide a certain percentage for the payment of its employees. This development contribute to the growth of a lot of imbalances in the system such as the half payment practice, backlog of unclear salaries, queue of unsettled debt of contractors, abandon project and plethora cases arises from non-payment of project executed (Anderson, 2007).

The local government under a democratic elected structure is more functional and performing than during the committee system in the state. A cross sectional survey of developmental project in the state in the local government areas suggested that numbers of life bearing project were carried out during the democratic elected structure than during the so-called committee system. A lot of projects were executed and every bit of spending is accounted for unlike in the committee system. The legislative council checkmates the excess of the executive and the entire council mostly performs well so as to win the trust of the people who gave them the mandate to lead (Diamond, 2008).

In an interview session with a technocrat in the local government in the state on 3rd of November, 2017, Baba Iliya has this to say:

People mostly believe that sustaining the democratic structure in the local government is too expensive. The amount of money that would be used to paid the councils and advisers unnecessary. Money is often abused in the name of project and empowerment. But with all of this, the local government is more efficient and performs better than under the committee system which appointees are only used as tool in the hand of the state government.

The Nigerian Constitution does not make any room for a committee system in the local government. It only stated that the years of the elected council should last for a period of three (3) years and if necessary a care taker committee should be appointed for a period of six (6) months to give room for State Electoral Commission to conduct the new election. Most states enjoy and give so many premiums to the committee system than the democratic elected structure (Kenneth, 2007). The reason is for them to have sufficient control of the local government which on a very good day is supposed to be a separate tier of government. In an interview session on 3rd May, 2018 with Mr.Dingse, a civil servant in the Plateau State Local Government Service Commission on the anomalies associated with the committee system. He enthuses:

What is exposing and tying up our local government backward is the state over interference, the so-called committee system and the poor innovative enterprise of our local government areas. They are not enterprising like their counterparts in USA, Germany, UK, and France. They depended mostly on the monthly subvention and a lot if not all lack the power base to be generating revenue for self sustenance.

The existence of joint account would have no effect on the performances of local government and their state of efficiency if only, they all

have the buoyancy to raise fund internally and as well use other mediums. The joint account is not a causative factor but has helped in complicating the issue. The actual problem mostly began with the rationale behind the formation (Shehu, 2010). They are mostly political and the handy influences of the elite or an appeasing tool to please the particular group at the expense of justification such as state of buoyancy, enterprising spirit, basis of sustenance, among others.

A title holder in Plateau State, Nde Danladi Moses on 4th January, 2018 has this to say in relation to local government abuse of fund in the state:

The local government areas do not function like a separate tier of government. This make them to look like a mere administrative unit and this is chiefly due to their inability to have the knowhow to raise fund for their sustenance. Take a look at Mangu local government for example. On every Friday market, it is known that not less than 10, 000 bags of maize are bought and sold. 160 naira is normally collected for its entrance and when it is sold out, the same money is equally charged as revenue and this will amount to 3.2million on every Friday. Multiply the amount by the number of weeks in the month and it will give you 12.8 million. What of other markets like Pushit, Ampang, Mangun, and Kerang. What is the local government doing with these incomes?

The committee system further makes things worse in the state. The basic predicament that has impeded the growth of local government as the third tier of government in the state were the poor orientation giving to them at the starting, the bogus rationale associated with its formation and the so-called committee system (Kenneth, 2007).

Table 1: Some Selected Projects under the Elective System in Plateau State

S/n	Project	Location	Years
1	Bokkos Investment	Bokkos LGA	2001
2	Water Plant	Mangu	2002
3	5 Kilometer Roads	All the Local Government	2014
4	PHC Rural Extensions	All the LGAs	2012
5	Super market complex	Mangu	2014
6	Ultra Modern Park	Jos South	2001
7	Youth Centre	Shendam	1999
8	Rural Electrification	Wase	2007

Source: Researcher's Survey, 2018

The Plateau State government for long has cherished the committee system over the democratic elective structure. This is because money is easily raised or generated in the system and this development has further helped the state to have the dominant influence over the local government areas. This culture is so pronounced to the extent that the so-called committee often raises money to send to the state government without the state making an order and mandate for such act (Kenneth, 2007). In 2007, when Jang was first elected as the governor of the state, he sacked 17 Directors of Personnel Management (DPM) of the local government areas of the state on the ground that they brought a huge sum of money to him on no just basis. There are a number of cases where a lot of the committee were mandated to give back certain percent of their subvention to the state, instead of the state given to the local government 10 percent as stipulated in the constitution (Shehu, 2010).

Nature of the Local Government Transition Committee in Plateau State

The history of the committee system in Plateau is dated back in 2001. It is a nascent development that was further sharpened in practice during the administration of one of the former governor of the state, Chief Chibi Joshua Dariye. Other justifications often used were the issues of insecurities in some local government areas (Anderson, 2007). The State Government started the committee system in 2001 and precisely in Jos North. Insecurity and tension were used as the basis for its adoption in the Local Government Area. In 2002, the practice became common as state government benefit from it and uses it as an avenue to create structure for future election (Anderson, 2007). The political benefits to the state government is that it enable the state governor to create structure for future election and also serve as a basis for the state governor to compensate those who have supported him or her to be in the government.

Apart from the political and the security reasons, the usage of the committee system has more economic advantage to the state than the local government. This is based on the point that in the committee system, the committee can only pay employees' salaries and as well maintain the system while in the case of the elected council, funds would be released as designed by the federation account (Stephenson, 2010). The essence of this is that, the elected council performs developmental functions unlike the committee system which implanted to pay salaries and also ensure that local government administration and governance is sustained. The Nigerian constitution in section 3(2) makes provision for a democratic structure but most states often avoided the provision so as to plug fund that are meant for the local government areas.

In Plateau State, the then governor in person of Chief Joshua Dariye introduced the model after adopting it in Jos North as a result of the 2001 Jos crisis. The practice was further extended to virtually all the 17 local government area as an intrigue to lay the structure and foundation for his second term aspiration (Shehu, 2010). This was further exposed when all candidates that won primary election in the governor's political party were immediately appointed as the head of the committee so as to help in solidifying the path for themselves and as well the governor to win his second term aspiration and bid (Shehu, 2010).

The development is unhealthy and for long has retarded the growth and development of local government areas in the state. This system of administration often weakens the opposition and thus makes the state to be more or less a practicing ground for a one party system. After the elapse of the tenure of the chairmen elected in 2003, the then governor implanted the caretaker or the so called transition committees in the local government areas to take over the mantle of leadership (Stephenson, 2010). This development lasted for the period of 1 year 6 months (18 months). It was after this period that is in 2005, the Plateau State Independent Electoral Commission (PLASIC) was mandated to provide plans for the Local Government Election (Shehu, 2010). The election was conducted in 2006 and only Jos North was left practising the committee system. This was based on issues of insecurities and the perceived tensions that were in the area. In 2007, after the election which ushered Chief Jonah Jang, the elected Local Government Council in the state was dissolved and the governor re-introduced the committee system (Mustapha, 2010).

After the period of eight months, Plateau State Independent Electoral Commission came out with the time table for the local government election. The election was successful in 16 local government areas. There was violence and protest in Jos North as a result of the election. After the period of 3 years (that is in 2010), there was another election in 16 local government areas. The former chairperson in Jos North was retained but as a committee chairman (Mustapha, 2010). This, according to the former governor (Jonah Jang) was to help him curb the issue of the frequent conflicts which often comes with election in the area. In 2013, there was another election in the 16 local government areas. The committee system was sustained in Jos North (Shehu, 2010).

The emergence of Simon Lalong as the new governor of the state in 2015 brought in another period of change. The chairperson of the 16 Local Governments who were elected during the Jang administration and also difference from the party that ushered the new governor on board were all dissolved and this according to the governor was as a result of their insubordination (Benson, 2018). The governor brought back the committee system which lasted for the period of two years. The committee system was dissolved in 2017 and another committee system was dissolved in 2018 and another committee was inaugurated. The reason behind the so called committee model among most of state of the federation is to help and as well

enable them to raise fund from what is being sent to the local government areas (Benson, 2018). This is because the committee systems are the creation of the state government and are not elected as it is spelt out in the constitution.

The Nigerian Constitution and the Local Government

Since the adoption of Sir John Macpherson constitution of (1958) during the colonial period, Nigeria was a federating unit with power flowing from the national or the central government to the regional or state level. The local government at the time was more of an extension of the state at the rural area and was known as the native authority (Benson, 2018). It was later transformed to division and has finally turned to local government during the Obasanjo military regime. After the bloody coup in 1975, local government system was incorporated and clearly defined as the third tier of government (Mustafa, 2010).

The 1979 constitution as well as 1989 and 1999 constitution fully spelt out the intent behind the formation of local government system and its position as the third tier of government was as well defined. The part 2 and section 3 stated that there shall be seven hundred and sixty eight local government areas in Nigeria as shown in part 2 of that schedule. In the 1999 Constitution, section 7 (1) clearly stated that:

The system of local government by democratically elected local government councils is under this constitution guaranteed; and accordingly, the government of every state shall subject to section 8 of this constitution, ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and function of such councils.

The adoption or practice of the CTC template is not in accordance with the provision of the constitution. It is only used as a makeshift and or a stopgap before election is being carried out (Mustapha, 2010). A lot of states and Plateau State precisely enjoys its application and this is a strong migraine to development. Section 162(6) stressed: “Each state shall maintain a special account to be called state joint local government account into which shall be

paid all allocation to the local government councils of the state federation account and from the government of the state.”

The system further gain recognition because of the so-called joint account which allowed state to have financial control of the local government instead of allowing them to be autonomous as it is been practiced in other mature democratic societies. With this development, the local government system in Nigeria has continued to fail in meeting up its constitutional role (Mustapha, 2010). The Constitution of 1999 (as amended) in the fourth schedule has provided sumptuous of functions to the local government in order to boost socio –economic development but all to the contrary. This is because the democratic system which the constitution has specified was substituted with the committee model and thus the prevalence of the challenges of development (Shehu, 2010).

The forces of the centripetal federalism practising in the country has further encourages the growth of the parasitic relationship among the tiers of government. The ideal relationship which supposed to be based on partnership principle is substituted with the super ordinate model (Mustapha, 2010). Powers are not well defined as it is practiced in most developed societies. The local government in reality is a subordinate level and not a separate tier as it was spelt out in the constitution (Benson, 2018). This development does not only retard development but has hindered the progress of local government system in the country.

Theoretical Underpinning

Opportunistic Model of inter-governmental relations (IRG) was adopted as the theoretical underpinning of the study. It was propounded by Niccolo Machiavelli and in 1879. The model was further developed by other scholars such as Stephenson (2001), Smith (2005) and Wechen (2007). The model stressed that where there is unbalanced relationship between tiers or organs of government, development will not only be aloof but cold and unapproachable. The model when further to buttress that the discrepancy and disproportional relationship favour one side or a particular facet at the expenses of others and as well provide room for act such as: exploitation, ultra vires, corruption, misuse and abuse of resources.

Another variant of the model is that the angle with the centralizing power often negate and violate power of the other tier which is not in

accordance with or not good for democratic governance. The theory has the following tenets:

- ✓ In a democratic society where power is not well defined among tiers, other facets bear the brunt
- ✓ Imbalanced relationship among tiers of government is unhealthy for development
- ✓ Where a particular facet or tier tend to dominate and dictate for others, the relationship favoured the unit with the domineering power
- ✓ Transition system introduced among third tier of government is an exploitative tool that hinder development

The theory is applicable to the study in the following directions:

- i. **A Paradigm of Exploitation:** the idea behind the application of the transition or caretaker or transition committee system in the local government system in Nigeria is to enable the state to exploit and as well manipulate the affairs of the local government system. In the practice, unscrupulous amount of funds are often diverted, the state remote control the machinery of governance and thus development is left aloof.
- ii. **Retarded development:** in the practice of the transition or committee system, the local government faces challenges of development. The committees are only appointed to only sustain the structure, pay employees salaries and nothing else. The scene of accountability, transparency, check and balance, development among others are not only abnegated but are moribund and in state of stasis. . The committees are only accountable to the centripetal forces and not the people at the grassroot level. This thus makes development not only to be problematic but unattainable
- iii. **Commonness of corruption:** the act of practising the committee system at the local government level has encourages the growth of corruption. The state abuse funds which are meant for development at the local government level. The committee as well misuse and abuse resources (IGR and subvention) because they are not accountable to the people; they are appointed to administer and thus the prevalence of corruption in the system.

Results and Findings

In the course of the study, it was revealed that the local government transition or caretaker committee does not paved ways for the growth of development. It rather retrogress the society because the appointed committee members are only mandated to paid salary and are not in any way accountable to the people. The issue of Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) is not taking serious and not subjected to any scrutiny as it is supposed in a democratic set up. This equally tandem with the work of Shehu (2010), Yesefu (2011) and Benson (2018) who equally stated that the transition committee system in the local government is more of a curse than a blessing and a migraine to societal development.

Second, it was also found that Local Government Areas in Plateau State during democratic and elective structure are more proactive, productive and efficient in carry out their constitutional duties than under the Caretaker System. A cross sectional survey of developmental projected executed in most of the 17th Local government area in the state shows that most project are mostly been executed during democratic set up than during the Transition Committee System. This is in corroboration with the study of Ahmed (2014) on poverty and un-development in the Plateau State Local Government areas in which he enthused:

In a democratic system, we see sample of projects such as feeder roads, drainages, and culvert, bridges and a lot of others. In the case of the Committee System what is only feasible is the payment of employee's salaries and nothing else. The unfortunate nightmare is that the committee system is more cherished by the state government over the democratic structure.

Conclusion

The local government transition or care takes committee system in Nigeria has caused more problems than gains to the local government system in the country. Its essence of creation or the rationale behind its emanation for long has been distorted and this has robbed most local government areas in the country the chances of advancement. Instead of enhancing rural transformation, transparency in management, judicious use of resources and infrastructural development and others functions as spelt out in the Nigerian constitution, most states across the federation prefer to impose the committee system and most often, there prime aim behind its practice is to enable the state divert funds and as well have a say on what is happening at the local

government areas. This development which is undemocratic and a migraine to the federal system of government have contributed in rendering local government practice in the country ineffective and unproductive.

The situation is worse in Plateau State compared to other neighboring state such as Bauchi, Nasarawa and Kaduna State. There is no government that will come on board and would not recourse to its application. This makes most of the local government areas in the state to be the shadow of their self and as well always lacking behind and not productive. A cursory stroll in the area suggests so. The office of the council is pale and dusty, grasses are at every nook and crannies, the surrounding is shattered by a lot of spoil tractors and in most of the local government areas, a lot of projects were abandoned and the constitution role of local government area as spelt out by 1999 Constitution such as : construction of feeders road, construction of drainages, construction of culvert, rural electrification, caterings for orphanages, and a lot of others only exists in written form and absent in practicality.

The so-called state and local government joint account has further aggravated the issue. It has created more ground for the growth of the anomaly. Instead of promoting act such as judicious use of resources as intended, it has further worsened the situation by opening windows for misuse of resources and other problems such as misappropriation, embezzlement, siphoning of funds, among others that has continued to constraint the growth of a functional local government system in Nigeria. It does not only stop at that but it has compounded to the culture of fund diversion. Since state government only border on what has been sent from the federation account, the so-called committee on the other hand has wider space to concentrate on looting what is generated internally and this is so common because they are not in any way accountable to the people and would neither be hold responsible by the people as compared to the practice in democratic system.

Recommendations

The following sets of recommendations were proffered:

- a. There is the need for the Nigerian constitution to define in practical terms the federal system or layout which the country is operating- Is it centripetal or centrifugal federalism? The kind of federalism defined in the constitution is self contradictory. Section 162 and section 3 are not at par with each other.

- b. The elusive theory and culture of local government autonomy need to be implanted and well ingrained in the Nigeria Local Government System. This will enable Local Government Areas to be self directing, sovereign, and self governing. With this, the spelt out function in the schedule 7 of the 1999(as amended) constitution will be carried out in practical term and application.
- c. The Local Government System in Nigeria needs to be captured in the electoral reform. This will help to check the rate at which most state determine when and how election are to be conducted in the local government areas. When the power is extended to INEC, the excess of the state government will be checked and controlled as it is practiced in developed societies.
- d. Nigeria constitution should be amended and fully put in practice. This should be done in such a way that the hallmarks of democracy which seek to pursuit the cause and courses of individual's liberty, group and individual right are realized.
- e. The survival of Nigerian democracy depends largely on the behaviour of its political parties. They need to abandon the opportunistic politics which they are used to and create room to resolve issues which are fundamental to federal sub-unit relationship such as resources control, good model of electoral system and inter-ethnic bargains should be handled by parties with more sensitivity to national stability.

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SMART CARD READER MACHINES AND GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA FROM 2015 TO 2019: GAINS AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract

Even though Nigeria has been politically independent for close to six decades, the task of institutionalising liberal democracy has been quite elusive. Elections that used to be the major platforms or avenues of recruiting new leaders into government in a democratic system are usually marred by massive rigging, blackmail, violence, militarisation, and intimidation perpetrated and masterminded by the elite. What this symbolise in the country's political history is that leadership is thus by force and not by popularity or consensus. The implication of all this is lack of credibility in elections in Nigeria. As a result of this therefore, the Smart Card Reader (SCR) technology was introduced in Nigeria's electoral process in 2015 in order to give credibility to elections. The SCR machine is a technological device configured to verify, authenticate, and accredit electorate's Permanent Voter's Cards (PVCs) in order to ascertain whether such PVCs were actually issued by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), and to verify through biometric finger scanning the ownership of the PVCs. Within the Framework of David Easton's Systems theoretical model, this paper investigated the gains and challenges consequent upon the use of Smart Card Reader machines in General elections in Nigeria from 2015 to 2019. Using qualitative method of data collection, the paper discovered that, although the use of SCR machines in the 2015 and 2019 General Elections in Nigeria enhanced credibility by eliminating multiple voting, it however generated a lot of controversies as a result of malfunctions, thereby disenfranchising millions of eligible voters in the country. On the basis of these findings therefore, the paper recommended that Smart Card Reader machine will still be useful in

checkmating electoral fraud if the operational mechanism of the device is improved upon, and its use strictly adhered to or complied with.

Keywords: democracy, electoral fraud, electoral process, general election, permanent voter card (PVC), Smart Card Readers (SCRs)

Introduction

In most countries that operate democratic systems of government, elections provide an avenue by which the popular will of the electorate is expressed and realized. By means of elections, the democratic principle of “*one man one vote*”, the basis of all true democratic systems, is put to test. Elections then provide a means for orderly and smooth political succession since government that have not performed creditably are voted out, while those political parties that are felt to have better things to offer to the people are voted into government. In this manner, ultimate ruling power resides in the masses that elect and control their representatives through established modes of accountability (Olisa, Okoli & Nwabufo, 1990).

In Nigeria, however, the institution of elections has not served the laudable functions it does in other democratic systems of government found in the advanced countries of Western Europe and the United States of American. Elections have not proved to be an avenue for orderly and smooth political transition. So, on most occasions, in Nigeria’s political history, the peoples only hope for a peaceful and effective exercise of political choice has been shattered because of the electoral malpractices, fraud, and rigging that have characterised the countries experience with electioneering system. Electoral fraud, according to Lopez-Pintor (2010, p.9) has more serious political implications, in that it allows a party or candidate to take over public positions contrary to the popular will. This undermines the democratic process and usually leads to electoral violence, insecurity, and political instability. Alvarez and Hall (2008, p.134) carry this argument further when they said:

Electoral malpractices make the citizens to lose confidence in the electoral process, and lack of confidence of the citizenry in the democratic process is an impediment in depending electoral democracy because if the citizenry does not believe in the fairness, accuracy, openness, and basic integrity of the election process, the very basis of any democratic society might be threatened.

Concerned about the massive electoral malpractices witnessed in the past general elections in Nigeria prior to 2015, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) decided to introduce and deploy the Smart Card Reader machine for use in the 2015 general elections. The deployment of Smart Card Reader machine became imperative to ensure credible, transparent, free and fair elections in order to deepen Nigeria's electoral democracy. This paper therefore examines the gains and challenges consequent upon the use of Smart Card Reader machine in general elections in Nigeria from 2015 to 2019.

Conceptual Discourse

Election is the process of choosing a candidate either on a party basis or non-party basis for public office. It is a social mechanism for aggregating preferences of a particular kind. Modern elections are therefore, practical ways of ensuring democracy. In other words, elections are a critical component of any democratic society. Elections do not only allow for political competition, participation, and legitimacy, but also permit peaceful change of power, thereby making it possible to assign accountability to those who govern (Hoglund, 2006). In democratic societies, elections empower ordinary citizens to choose among contestants for political offices and promote or encourage participation in government (Ida, 2011). The significance of election is that a political system is democratic to the extent that its most powerful collective decision makers are selected through periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for roles and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote (Huntington cited in Rose, 1980, p.14). It is on the basis of this that Nigeria's return to democratic rule and engagement with the democratic process led to the conduct of its general elections in 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019. By general elections we mean elections that are conducted in the Federation at large for Federal and State elective positions (The Electoral Institute, 2015). General elections are usually held simultaneously throughout the country or within a state, to elect members to the legislature or local government, or to elect the President and political officers. It is held periodically, depending on the constitution of a country. General elections confer legitimate authority on the government and the persons elected

Smart card reader is a technological device set up to authenticate and verify on election day a Permanent Voters Card (PVC) issued by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). The device uses a cryptographic technology that has ultra-low power consumption, with a single core frequency of 1.2 GHz and an Android 4.2.2 Operating System, (INEC, 2015). To put it slightly different, the Smart Card Reader is designed to read information contained in the embedded chip of the Permanent Voter's Card (PVC) issued by INEC to verify the authenticity of these PVCs, and also carry out a verification of the intending voters by matching the biometrics obtained from the voters on the spot with ones stored on the PVC (Engineering Network Team, 2015). The Smart Card Reader also has the ability of keeping a tally of the total numbers of voters accredited at polling unit and forwarding the information to a central data based server over a Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) network. The fundamental reasons for the deployment of the Smart Card Reader in the 2015 general election by INEC were: to prevent electoral frauds, to allow the electorate's votes count, to reduce litigations arising from elections, to authenticate and verify voters, to protect the integrity and credibility of the election, to audit results from polling units across the federation, to ensure transparency and accountability, to do a range of statistical analysis of the demographics of voters for the purposes of research, planning and development, to build public confidence and trust in the election, to reduce electoral conflicts, to ensure a free and fair election, and to deepen Nigeria's electoral and democratic process (Adeniran, 2016).

Theoretical Framework: Systems Theory

The paper is anchored on David Easton's systems theory. System analytical framework does not have its origin in Political Science but rather it was borrowed from the works of a Biologist named Ludwig Von Bertalanffy. According to Olaniyi (2001), the theory in its operational part in Social Sciences developed first in Anthropology from where it was adopted in Sociology, and later adopted in Political Science. The adaptation of system theory to Political Science was first conceived by David Easton in his book entitled: "The Political System" published in 1953. Easton defines the political system as that 'system of interaction in any society through which binding or authoritative allocations are made (Easton, 1965 p.50) Authoritative allocations may be roughly translated as policy-making (Easton cited in Ball, 1990 p.12). It is the making of binding or authoritative allocations which

distinguishes the political system from other systems both within and outside the overall society that forms the environment of the political system (Varma, 2001).

Easton treats all political systems as both open and adaptive systems, and concentrates mainly on the study of the nature of exchange and transactions that take place between a political system and its environment. The conception of the theory in this way, naturally, brings in the concepts of systemic boundaries and boundary conditions. A political system is not merely a set of processes which convert input into output as routine matter. It is a complex cyclical operation with dynamism of its own. The political system has a purpose of its own towards which it tries to move through at every stage it may have to face problem of stress and maintenance, and may have to go through regulatory process.

The systems approach requires that when the government or its agencies plan, they have no choice, but to take into account, environmental factors (e.g. political, social, economic, technological, and ethnic etcetera). In other words, it requires the government to see its problems and operations as a network of interrelated elements with daily interaction between environment external and internal (Ezeani, 2006). Although, systems approach has been criticised on the grounds that input-output would concern mainly with the present and has therefore, no viewpoint of future and has fewer study of the past (Meehan, 1967), its utility for this study cannot be overemphasised.

The political system does not exist in a vacuum, but in an environment which it influences and it is influenced by the political system. Applied to the purpose of this paper, it is obvious that the Nigerian political system like all other political system is basically made up of the law making, law implementing and law adjudicating institutions. In a presidential democracy like we have in Nigeria, these institutions have their powers separated, and each serving as a watch dog on the other. The political system is usually influence by its environmental forces. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) saddled with the responsibility of conducting elections in Nigeria is a part of the law implementing arm of the government found in the political system. The electorates are a part of the external environment of the political system, and could make demands on the system, and expect the conversion of such demands into desirable outputs. At times also, the political system may deem it fit to respond to certain challenges or complaints of the people that may not necessarily be brought to the attention of the political

system. In such cases, the political system does what it thinks is of the best interest of the people. One of such things that the political system did prior to the conduct of the 2015 general elections in Nigerian, in response to the complaints about electoral fraud, which hitherto characterised the electoral process, was the deployment of Smart Card Reader machines. The use of Smart Card Reader in the 2015 General Election became imperative in order to guard against electoral frauds on the one hand, and the deepening of democracy and the promotion of good governance on the other hand. Since then the SCR machine has been part and parcel of the Nigeria electoral process.

Background to the Use of Information Technology in the Nigeria Electoral Process

Past elections in Nigeria had witnessed the desperate bid for political power by some stakeholders with vested interests in the Nigerian electorate process. Some of these stakeholders perpetrated all forms of electoral malpractices including manipulation and falsification of election results, multiple voting, under aged voting, impersonation, ballot box snatching, and intimidation among others culminating in litigations, electoral conflicts, cancelation of election results, and violence. Thus, in the struggle for political power in Nigeria, no tactics was considered indecent including arson, murder, election rigging etcetera (Soludo, 2015). The struggles for political power in Nigeria is like a do or die battle in which all means both fair and foul are suddenly legitimized. The struggle for power is so fierce in Nigeria because, political power is everything; it is not only a source of fame, but an avenue to make quick money through sharp practices. This was probably what Ake (2001, p.7) had in mind when he said: “political power is everything; it is not only the access to wealth but also the means to security and the only guarantor of general well-being. Thus, because political power is overvalued therefore, it is prone to violence and lawlessness (Bagaji, 2003). This is where the present writers agree with Nwosu (1990, p.133) when he said:

Power seekers in Nigeria... see politics as an avenue for making money, a sort of open sea same to wealth. To be in power is to control state resources that are often converted to personal uses. Correspondingly, to lose election is to be out of power and to be denied access to the opportunities for aggrandisement. To maintain incumbency, those in power use

all sort of strategies to ensure that the election result favor them (cited in Edoh, 2003, p. 82).

The struggle for political power is so absorbing that everything else including development, is marginalised (Ake, 2001). Elections in Nigeria are thus habitually subverted by political parties and politicians through the illegal use of money, physical force, and governmental patronage deployed through the intermediary known as “god fathers” (Adeyemi, 2004). Because of the high premium placed on political power therefore, electoral malpractices became a character of Nigeria’s electoral process with its concomitant consequences of loss of confidence by the citizenry in the democratic process and the erosion of credibility and integrity of the electoral process.

The use of ICT in Nigeria’s electoral process actually started in the 1999 elections with the introduction of Pen/ sheet and typewriters. Registration of voters was done manually. Registrant’s details were written with pen on a form that was provided by INEC. The filled forms were collected and used for the 1999 general election.

In the 2003 General Elections, INEC went a step further by introducing Optical Magnetic Recognition (OMR) forms processing machine. This machine was used to produce the OMR forms. However, the manual approach which was used in 1999 general election was still retained as a backup should there be any challenge in the OMR forms. Thus, INEC incorporated computerization, using the Optical Magnetic Recognition (OMR) technology. This involves the compilation of the names and particulars of all the prospective registrants on the forms. The information so obtained is then transferred and shaded on computer readable forms, which were later scanned into data base on compilation of field operations, and processed to produce the register of voters. Each OMR form has a unique identification number, which is assigned to the registered voter who is then issued with a new Temporary Voters Card (TVC).

The preparation for the 2007 General Elections marked the genesis of a new dawn in the political history of Nigeria. INEC introduced the Direct Data Capture Machines (DDCM) for the registration of prospective voters. The DDCM was introduced to eliminate double registration, double voting, and other miscellaneous electoral malpractices. The procurement of the DDCM for the registration of voters introduced some level of credibility to the electoral system (Ayeni, & Adebimpe, 2018). Research revealed that the adoption of

Direct Data Capture Technology with manual backup for the revalidation of voters register made the exercise more transparent, speedy and less cumbersome (Ayeni & Adebimpe 2018).

Prior to the conduct of the 2011 General Election, the attention of INEC was focused on the registration of voters as it existed then, which was discovered to have fallen far short of the level of credibility required for the conduct of free and fair election. Consequently, the then INEC boss Prof. Attahiru Jega decided to procure and deploy over 132, 000 DDC machines with a provision for some contingencies. A more effective and reliable Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) was applied to rid the voters register of multiple registrants while an Electronic Voters Register (EVR) was generated which was used for the 2011 general election. It should be noted that no technology was used for the collation of results. Electronic mail was however used to transmit results from the various Local Government Areas (LGAs) and state offices to the national headquarters in Abuja.

The 2015 General Election marked a new era in the deployment of sophisticated ICT in the history of Nigeria's Electoral process in addition to existing technologies. And improved Automated Fingerprints Identification System (AFIS) was introduced to identify similar fingerprints on the voters register that was used in the General Election. Business rule was also applied in addition to further clean the register. The business rule requires that at least two fingers must be captured for a voter to be included in the register. Also, for the first time in the electoral history of Nigeria, INEC adopted a technology for the accreditation of voters with the aid of INEC Voters Identification System (IVAS) popularly called the Smart Card Reader (SCR). Furthermore the Temporary Voters Card (TVCs) which were issued to voters for the 2011 election was replaced with the Permanent Voters Cards (PVCs). These marked the beginning of the use of Smart Card Reader (SCR) in the electoral process in Nigerian political process. The same device was also adopted by the present INEC boss, Professor Mahmood Yakubu for the conduct of the 2019 general elections in Nigeria.

Table 1: A summary of the Technologies used during Elections in Nigeria from 1999 to 2016

S/N	Year	Voters Registration	Days For Registration	Data Captured	D-Base	Accreditation/ Voting	Result Collation
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1	1999	Pen/Sheets and Typewriters	14 Days	Basic details, no picture or finger prints	NIL	NIL	NIL
2	2003	Optical Magnetic Recognition Form (OMR Form) *Automated Finger Prints Identification System (AFIS)	10 Days	Basic details and finger prints only	YES	NIL	NIL
3	2007	*Direct Data Capture Machine (DDCM) *AFIS	4 Months	Basic details, photograph, and finger print	YES	Electronic Voters' Register (EVR)	Excel Sheet/E-mail
4	2011	*Direct Data Capture Machine (DDCM) *AFIS	21 Days	Basic details, photograph, and finger print	YES	Electronic Voters' Register (EVR)	Excel Sheet/E-mail
5	2015	*Direct Data Capture Machine (DDCM) *Improved AFIS/Business Rule	Continuous Voters Registration (CVR)	Basic Details, photograph, and finger prints	YES	*EVR INEC Voters Authentication System (IVAS)/ Smart Card Reader (SCR)	*Election Transparency Administration and Collation (e-TRAC)
6	2016	*DDCM *Improved AFIS *Business Rule	Continuous Voters Registration (CVR)	Basic details, photograph, and finger prints	YES	*EVR *IVAS	*Electronic-Collation Support (E-Collation) *e-TRAC

Source: Ayeni and Adebimpe (2018).

The Smart Card Reader machine was introduced into the Nigerian electoral process in 2015 for the first time to help improve and deepen the country's electoral democracy. It was introduced by the then INEC boss Professor Attahiru Jega during the Peoples Democratic Party (Party) led federal government of Dr. Goodluck Jonathan. The proponents of the device believed that the Card Reader procedure has the capacity to prevent or minimise rigging in the sense that there would not be multiple voting while the opponents believed that in the peculiar circumstances of the Nigeria situation, the Card Reader is designed to assist a certain political party to win the general election (Peters, 2015). This controversy was based on the thinking that the Card Reader must have been programmed to assist a pre-determined winner of the election by ensuring that a great number of electorate are discriminatorily disenfranchised to deny other parties of favorable votes

thereby ensuring the winning of an INEC preferred or pre-determined political party (Peters, 2015).

The introduction of Card Reader in 2015 was said to be contrary to the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) as well as the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended). Falana (2015) averred that the deployment of the Smart Card Reader by INEC was not illegal. According to him, INEC has the constitutional power to set the standard and guidelines for elections in Nigeria. He argued that the Card Reader is a part of accreditation and not voting. What the law was against then was electronic voting; not electronic accreditation. Banire (2015) contended that the electronic voting machine and the Card Reader are two different devices that are not necessarily deployed together for all purposes. According to him, the Card Reader is not an electronic voting machine but a machine to be used for accreditation of voters only before the actual voting. He maintained that electronic voting requires no ballot papers whereas the 2015 general election was ballot paper-based. Thus, since the use of Card Reader for the purpose of accreditation of voters was not prohibited by the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended), it was therefore introduced for the first time in Nigeria's electoral history in the year 2015.

Gains of the Smart Card Reader Machine in General Elections in Nigeria (2015-2019)

The deployment of Smart Card Reader in the 2015 general elections had some gains in the electoral democracy in country. Firstly, the use of the Smart Card Reader brought about increased confidence by the citizenry and trust in the electoral process. The confidence of electorate was boosted because of the integrity that the 2015 general election appeared to stand for. The electorates were beginning to believe that their votes could count and as such would be respected in future elections. This consequently reinforced legitimacy of Nigerians in the electoral process.

Secondly, the incidence of electoral malpractices was grossly minimised. In other words, loop-holes that hitherto existed in the electoral process were blocked thereby making it very difficult for desperate politicians to engage in electoral fraud. For instances, it was no longer possible to easily inflate the number of voters present at a polling booth, and also the issue of multiple voting became very difficult. In a way, the device helped INEC to effectively checkmate the unethical and undemocratic attitude of power hungry politicians at the polling stations, whose stock in trade is the

perpetuation of electoral fraud for their own selfish interests and those of their political associates.

Thirdly, the introduction and use of Smart Card Reader machine in the 2015 general elections led to the reduction of post elections court cases or litigations as was the case in the previous elections. There was a departure from the past where every election outcome is being contested at the election tribunal. For the first time in the Political history of Nigeria, some of the major contenders (contestants) that did not win in the elections congratulated and even embraced the declared winners. For instance, the PDP presidential candidate and the incumbent president then, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan immediately congratulated the APC presidential candidate Muhammadu Buhari, the winner of the presidential election through a phone call. This was a display of sportsmanship, which in a way, contributed to deepening Nigeria's democracy. This attitude also happened across many States of the Federation in the Governorship, and the National Assembly elections.

The use of Smart Card Reader in the 2015 general elections also brought about a reduction in the post elections violence and conflicts. There was no basis for conflicts and violence, because most of the contestants, who lost in the elections, saw the elections as being transparent and credible due to the use of the Smart Card Reader machine. Therefore, the usual excessively pointless attacking and degrading between the election winners and losers in past elections was significantly reduced. Thus, in view of the reduction in the level of electoral frauds or electoral malpractices consequent upon the use of the Smart Card Reader, tensions were grossly reduced among the political gladiators, and as such, electoral conflicts and violence were grossly reduced in the 2015 general election compared to the previous elections in Nigeria characterised by post election violence resulting to wanton destruction of lives and valuable property.

On the whole, the use of the Smart Card Reader machine in the 2015 general election led to the increase in Nigeria's democratic capacity and the strengthening of democratic institutions. The Nigerian electorate are better informed and enlightened on the imperatives of free, fair and credible election's which underpin a sustainable democracy.

The batteries of the Smart Card Reader machines used in the 2019 general elections lasted longer than the ones used in the 2015 general elections. The use of the SCR machine enhanced credibility of the 2019 general elections as riggings were reduced. However, election riggings were

only possible in some polling stations across the Federation where the SCR machines were abandoned by INEC officials as a result of either inducements or intimidations.

Challenges of the Smart Card Reader Machine in General Elections in Nigeria (2015-2019)

The impact of the use of the Smart Card Reader in the 2015 and 2019 general elections notwithstanding, the use of this device was confronted with some challenges. One of the challenges of the Smart Card Reader machine was the poor awareness of the device and its operations. This was largely INEC'S fault. The electorates, especially those of them in the rural areas were not well informed about the device; some others were not even aware of the existence of the Smart Card Reader machine. A large number of Nigerians did not even have the opportunity of seeing the Card Reader and interacting with it until the election's day. This category of electorate saw the Smart Card Reader as a voting machine. This lack and/or inadequate information dissemination, enlightenment campaigns, and poor sensitisation of the electorate, especially those of them in the rural communities, resulted to some kind of poor voter relation and uncooperative attitudes of the voters towards the INEC officials at polling stations.

Another challenge consequent upon the use of the Smart Card Readers in the 2015 and 2019 general elections was the inadequate training given to INEC ad hoc Staff by the management of INEC. Most of the ad hoc staff particularly the presiding officers and their assistants in the polling stations were not adequately trained on the proper use and handling of the Smart Card Reader. These ad hoc staff was not effectively and efficiently trained on the practical use on the field of the device. The cause of the poor training was inadequate trainers and inadequate Smart Card Reader machine made available for the purpose of practical training by INEC. Thus, some of these INEC ad hoc officials were unable to use the device on the day of elections. As a result of this inability on the part of some of these Corps members, SCR machines were not used in many polling stations across the country and consequently delays were experienced. All these shortcomings led to the poor handling /operation of the Smart Card Readers during the 2015 and 2019 general elections to the extent that some of the devices were unable to detect thumbprint of the electorate during the elections.

Also a number of the Smart Card Readers were not able to function optimally. Some of these Smart Card Readers malfunctioned largely due to

challenges ranging from blank screen, non activation of the Subscriber Identification Module (SIM) card in the device. The failure of the Smart Card Reader machines to function maximally and optimally was attributed to the inability of INEC engineers to decode the inbuilt security installation in the Smart Card Readers. Some of the INEC officials blamed this malfunctioning on the shift in the election dates without the Smart Card Reader machines being reprogrammed.

In addition, some of the Smart Card Reader machines broke down during the election. Although, INEC had made provisions for back-ups in case of any Smart Card Reader brake-down. However, some of the back-ups failed to also function. For instance, most of the Smart Card Reader machines deployed for use at the polling unit of the Presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Bayelsa State during the 2015 general elections for instance, did not function optimally. Similarly, the Smart Card Readers at the polling unit of the vice-presidential candidate of All Progressives Congress (APC) during the 2015 general election were not functional (Adeniran, 2016)

Another challenge was the problem of Permanent Voters Card (PVC) authentication and biometric data verification of the voters at the polling unit by the Smart Card Reader machine. It should be noted that authentication and verification of the voters was a part and parcel of accreditation process for election. Some of the PVCs issued to voters by INEC could not be authenticated by the Smart Card Readers thereby disenfranchising some of the eligible voters in the 2015 and 2019 general election. In some cases where the PVCs were authenticated, the voters' biometric data could not be verified after several attempts; and where the voters got lucky to be verified, it was usually very slow especially in the area of finger prints. For instance, Odiakosa (2015) reported that in Borno State, 10 percent of the eligible voters cards were authenticated and biometric data verified by the Smart Card Readers at most of the polling units. However, the inability of the Smart Card Reader machines to capture the finger prints of some voters was attributed to the greasy, oily, or dirty fingers of the voters (Adeniran, 2016). In most cases, the voters had to scrub their hands on the ground just to ensure that the Smart Card Reader recognises their finger prints (Okoro, 2015).

Furthermore, as a result of the wide spread failure of the Smart Card Reader machines to function optimally as expected during the 2015 general elections for instance, the then INEC boss, professor Attahiru Jega decided to change the rules of the game in the middle of the electoral competition. The

INEC boss did this by approving the use of manual accreditation in areas where the Smart carders malfunctioned during the presidential and National Assembly elections in the country (Odiakosa, 2015). The change in the electoral guidelines became imperative in view of the frustration and disenchantment of millions of voters with the failure of Smart Card Readers to function optimally during the 2015 general election. The announcement of this change in the electoral guidelines from electronic to manual by the INEC chairman professor Attahiru Jega, actually eased accreditation in many areas where the Smart Card Reader machines were non-functional. However, the extent to which this announcement may have inadvertently opened the floodgates for electoral fraud is yet to be fully analysed (Amenaghawon, 2015).

In the 2019 general elections, there were cases of non-compliance with the use of SCR machines in some polling stations. Some of the INEC officials had to abandon the SCR machine on election's day as a result of intimidation by party agents and political thugs or inducements by desperate politicians. Also, some political parties and actors in Nigeria offered money or foodstuff as inducements for voters on election's day. The numbers of post election litigations in the 2019 elections were higher than that of the 2015 general elections. For instance, the Presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), the main opposition party, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar in the 2019 general elections had to challenge the victory of the incumbent President at the 2019 poll, Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressive Congress (APC) on the grounds that the elections were rigged in favour of the APC presidential flag bearer. One fundamental reason for this allegation was the deliberate refusal to strictly comply with the use of SCR machines by some INEC officials who were said to have been either intimidated or induced by the ruling APC.

Lessons from the use of Smart Card Reader Machines in General Elections in Nigeria (2015-2019)

First, there was a constitutional controversy over the legality of the use of the Smart Card Reader in the 2015 general elections. As at the time INEC deployed the Smart Card Reader, the constitution of Nigeria and the Electoral Act were silent over the use of Smart Card Readers during elections in Nigeria. Given this constitutional loopholes, INEC should understand that it needs constitutional or legal backing before embarking on any electoral method to avoid controversies.

Secondly, the introduction of the Smart Card Readers in the electoral process in 2015 was impromptu. The short notice did not give room for training INEC staff on the use of the Smart Card Readers and test-running the device. This reason was responsible for the shortcomings experienced by INEC in using the SCRs for the 2015 general elections. INEC should understand that early and adequate preparation for election is necessary to avoid hitches.

Thirdly, the epileptic nature of electricity in Nigeria affected the effectiveness and efficiency of the Smart Card Readers. The batteries of these SCRs were not charged sufficiently for use due to the epileptic nature of electricity. The lesson for INEC is to make provision for alternative arrangements for power sources or get Smart Card Readers that can use solar energy to avoid the failure of SCRs due to battery outage.

Furthermore, voters' education in every election is very important in any democratic process. The voters need to be well educated on the electronic voting methods. During the 2015 and 2019 general elections in Nigeria, most of the voters in the rural communities were not amenable to the use of the Smart Card Readers. Some of the voters were not aware of the electronic method of voting in 2015 and 2019 general elections until the date of the election. The lesson INEC needs to learn is that when the electorates are not properly educated, the electoral process will be slow despite the introduction of high-tech voting method. INEC should collaborate with the political parties, media houses, the government and Non-Governmental Organisations to give the sufficient and necessary education the electorates need before elections are conducted.

On the whole, the number of post-election litigations was minimal in 2015 because of the use of Smart Card Reader machines. Even though in 2019 when there were much post-election litigations, it was largely due to non-compliance with the use of SCRs rather than malfunctioning of the SCR machines. This development has strengthened the electoral process overseen by INEC. The lesson for INEC is that it needs to consolidate on the advantages of using the SCR machines in subsequent elections in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The paper examined the use of Smart Card Reader machines in the 2015 and 2019 general elections in Nigeria from the perspective of David Easton's Systems Theoretical Model. Smart Card Readers were used in the

2015 and 2019 general elections in order to guard against the incidence of electoral malpractices, which had been a major feature of previous elections in Nigeria's political history. The use of SCR machines in the 2015 and 2019 general elections to some extent, ensured transparency, fairness, freeness and credibility. This notwithstanding, the paper found out that the Smart Card Reader machine itself was fraught with some fundamental challenges ranging from its inability to verify some eligible voters, INEC staff's inability to effectively operate SCRs, weak batteries being used for this electronic device to malfunctioning Smart Card Readers machines.

Recommendations

Based on the strength of these findings and the conclusion drawn, the paper makes the following recommendations:

- i. The use of Smart Card Reader machine and other technological devices for elections in Nigeria should be legalised. Once it is made legal, this makes it unnecessary for anybody to start raising issues as regards the legality or otherwise. INEC should also make sure that ample high quality Smart Card Reader machines are made available for use during elections.
- ii. INEC should endeavour to always embark on continuous and elaborate voter education before elections are conducted in Nigeria. Through such enlightenment campaigns, the voters are better informed on the best ways to use Smart Card Reader machines during voting in order not to be rejected by the electronic device.
- iii. INEC should always ensure that its entire ad hoc staff are adequately trained and retrained months before the elections. This is imperative because a well trained staff will not only be effective, but also efficient and greatly productive on the job.
- iv. Also, there is the urgent need to improve upon the Smart Card Reader technology in order to avoid time wasting during voting. It is also imperative for INEC to make provisions for more durable batteries for the Smart Card Reader machines and/or providing alternative source of power for these electronic devices on the days of election
- v. The government should ensure that enough security is provided on election's day for the protection of INEC officials and sensitive election materials. This would make it difficult for political thugs and

their sponsors to intimidate INEC officials into abandoning the use of SCR machines.

- vi. There is the need for government to do something about the growing unemployment rate and consequent poverty in Nigeria. This is because a hungry a person is usually vulnerable and as such easy to manipulate or influence with money to sell his/her vote or be recruited as political thugs.
- vii. The Press, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other civil society organizations should make it a point of duty by ensuring that the electorates are periodically enlightened on the need to shun vote selling and other forms of inducements capable of influencing their voting behaviour.

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**YOUTH VIOLENCE AND PUBLIC SAFETY IN NIGERIA: A STUDY
OF SARA-SUKA GANG IN BAUCHI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA,
BAUCHI STATE, 2009-2015**

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Abstract

Over the years, the violent activities of Sara-Suka, a violent youth gang in Bauchi State, has become worrisome to the people and the government of Bauchi State. The gang has persistently, intimidated, harassed and threatened the lives and property of the people of Bauchi state. In response, the government set up a rehabilitation facility to reintegrate them into the society and make them responsible citizens. In spite of this, the activities of the gangs have continued unabated. This study examines the persistence of violent activities by the 'Yan-Sara-Suka' and the failure of Bauchi state government agency for youth rehabilitation (BACYWORD) to achieve its objective of arresting political thuggery and violent upheavals. The study used survey research design while the principal instruments for data collection included Questionnaire, Interview, Focused Group Discussion, Observation and Documentary Report. The data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The study adopted the Marxist political economy perspective as its framework of analysis. It found that unemployment, corruption, illiteracy, poverty, lack of skills among the youths, occasioned by bad-governance, are the factors responsible for the persistence of Sara-Suka in the study area. It recommends a more egalitarian socio-economic system that addresses the economic imbalance of the Nigerian society in general and Bauchi State in particular.

Keywords: Youth violence; political thuggery; public safety; *Sara-Suka*; Bauchi State.

Background to the Study

Youth restiveness, political thuggery and violence are outbursts that have reached prevalent proportion in Nigeria. Most of the culprits are unemployed youth. There are other factors that exacerbate the crisis such as

poverty, illiteracy, unemployment among other factors, which are all as a result of the production of the socio economic conditions of the society. Moreover, youth violence and thuggery are pervasive phenomenon in all part of Nigeria bearing different names such as Yan-Daba in Kano state, Sara-Suka in Kaduna state, Yan-Shinko in Taraba state, ECOMOG in Borno state, Yan-Kalare in Gombe etc. their deadly activities are worrisome. Some states attempted to rehabilitate these categories of youth and make them responsible citizens. Bauchi state, like the rest of other states, is home to large number of unemployed youth. In Bauchi, they are generally called '*Yan-Sara-Suka*'. These youths have proven become easy prey to politicians who offer them money, drugs, weapons, etc. to intimidate their opponents (HRW, 2007). The activities of *Sara-Suka*, became well known in Bauchi, during the period leading up to the 2007 general elections. They became part of the electoral campaign and voting processes. There are attempts to reduce political thuggery, in Bauchi state, since 1999. Interventions such as poverty alleviation programme, and Bauchi State Environmental Sanitation and Protection Agency (BASEPA) and even political appointments did not produce encouraging results. Therefore, the state adopted a military approach, whereby the government set up and deployed Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) to deal with *Yan-Sara-Suka*, particularly in Bauchi town. But because the approaches were partisan and cosmetics in nature, they have virtually failed.

In this regard, the politicians use and dump the youth who usually turn to violent crimes to make a living (Mbaya, 2013). The government of Bauchi state finally set up committee which suggests the establishment of a rehabilitation agency that could absorb those thugs who accepted government amnesty and renounced violence. The agency is Bauchi State Agency for Youth and Women Rehabilitation and Development (BAYWARD). It later became Bauchi State Commission for Youth and Women Rehabilitation and Development (BACYWORD), with a clear cut mandate and well-designed structure, but it also failed.

Research Problem

This study examined the persistence of *Sara-Suka*, a violent youth gang, and the failure of the Bauchi state government agency, BACYWORD, to achieve its objective of rehabilitating the gangsters and thereby combating political thuggery. Over the years, the violent activities of *Yan-Sara-Suka* in the state have become worrisome to the people and the government because of

their threat to lives and properties. The government had set up several programmes since 1999 aimed at tackling political thuggery but most of the programmes failed. They were replaced with other programmes that also failed. In 2007 there was an agency to combat youth restiveness and create employment for youth and women. It was replaced by a Commission in 2009 with a clear cut mandate. Yet the problem persisted. It has therefore become imperative to examine the factors responsible for the persistence of political thuggery in the state despite the existence of the Commission. Moreover, most of the writers on Nigerian politics focus on the manifestations and the solutions of youth violence and thuggery only which are cosmetics in nature. None of the literature scratched beyond the surface to explain the factors responsible for the failure of the policies that addresses the problem. As the result the following questions are raised:

- (c) What are the peculiar causes of *Yan-Sara-Suka* in Bauchi local government area of Bauchi state?
- (d) What are the factors responsible for the persistence of *Yan-Sara-Suka* in Bauchi LGA of Bauchi state despite rehabilitation programme?

Objectives of the Study

The study aims at performance evaluation of Bauchi State's Commission for Youths and Women Rehabilitation and Development (BACYWORD), with a view to explaining its inability to combat *Sara-Suka* in Bauchi state. In line with this aim, this study has the following objectives:

1. To identify the causes of *Yan-Sara-Suka* in Bauchi local government area of Bauchi state beyond the surfaced
2. To examine and explain the factors responsible the persistence of *Sara-Suka*

Assumptions

This paper is based on the following assumptions.

- i. The continued production of the underclass has created a social crime called *Sara-Suka*
- ii. *Sara-Suka* is a manifestation of socio-economic inequality and any policy by government to rehabilitate the gangs is mere cosmetics because it has not addressed the real cause.

Scope, Justification and Significance of the Study

The focus of this study is on the persistence of *Sara-Suka* despite the policy and programmes designed to eliminate them in Bauchi local government area of Bauchi state from 2009-2015. The study picks Bauchi local government area out of the 20 LGAs of the state, because, Bauchi LGA is where *Sara-Suka* became prominent and occupy the center stage of youth violence. The significance of the work is that although a lot has been written on the phenomenon and the impact of government policies to eliminate it but none of these researches has investigated why the problem persists. Therefore, this study will help to deepen our understanding of the problem and the factors responsible for its persistence.

Research Methodology

The study used field survey research design, where both primary and secondary sources of data are employed. The primary data was collected through the use of the following survey instruments:

- ✓ structured and unstructured questionnaires
- ✓ observations

While the secondary data were from documentary sources, this includes:

- viii. security records (police and prison service)
- ix. hospital records
- x. documents of the two agencies
- xi. information gathered from published and unpublished works, such as National Youth Policy (NYP), books, journals, government gazettes, relevant materials from internet and term papers

The following method was also employed:

- i. in-depth interviews and
- ii. focused group discussions

Research Population and Sample Size

This study used the population of the people of Bauchi local government, as its research population, according to the 2006 census, Bauchi local government has a population of 493, 810 (2006). With annual growth rate of 3.3 percent as at 2015, while the metropolis should have a total population of 709, 338 people (BSSDM, 2015).

The study used Kregcie and Morgan classification of determining the sample size and unit of a given populations. The classification argues that in the study of 1,000,000–5,000,000 populations the sample size of 384 respondents is enough. (1970)

The sample size of this study population is 500 which are considered to be representative enough to the total population of Bauchi metropolis as it conforms to the Morgan and Kregcie criterion. The study area was divided in to north and south as it is in the state’s constituency division, as cluster of convenience. From each constituency three wards were selected randomly, making six wards in the study area, to represent the entire population. This can be presented as follows:

Table 1 Distributions of the Total Population and the Sample Size according to the Wards in Bauchi Metropolis.

Names of the Wards	Total Population per ward in the local Government	Sample Size
Majidadi A	40,442	92
Majidadi B	39,446	89
Makama	29,336	66
Zungur/Liman Katagum	36,718	83
Dan Iya	43,175	98
Dawaki	31,696	72
Total	221,086	500

Sources: BSSDM, 2015

The ward sample size of the study was obtained through the use of the following formulae:

$$\text{Ward sample population} = \frac{\text{Number of ward population} \times 500}{\text{Number of total population}}$$

Example. Majidadi A $\frac{40,442 \times 500}{221,086} = 91.5$

Using the above formulae, the ward sample was obtained by dividing the number of population by ward with the total population of the LGA multiplied

by desired sample of the study. The above is what gave the sample size of each ward in proportion to its population.

Sampling Procedure/Techniques

The study used both probability and none probability sampling techniques due to the nature of the study, this includes:

- viii. multi stage sampling techniques
- ix. purposive sampling techniques and
- x. snowballs sampling techniques

Multi stage cluster sampling techniques, was used to divide the population of Bauchi metropolis into north and south cluster of convenience, as it corroborate the state constituency's arrangements. In Bauchi metropolis each constituency has six wards, however, from there, three wards were selected from north and three wards from south constituency respectively, using random sampling. This technique involves sampling in successive stages such that at each stage, selection is made by using any of the probability (Izah, 2013). Having divided the population into cluster of convenience, systematic sampling method was then used to arrange the populations according to the wards streets for determining the selection interval of the individual respondent. In this case, the target population is the adult male and female and therefore, in reaching to wards as sub cluster of studies, street arrangement was used. The first respondents were randomly selected and followed by the selection interval in proportion to the wards sample population size.

Youth Violence and Thuggery in Nigeria

Youth restiveness and thuggery are peculiar problems to most countries of the world including Nigeria. Jibrin (2012) observes that political violence has become a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the social, economic, ethnic and religious fabric of Nigeria. He argues that the youth have been so much neglected by the successive military and civilian administrations since independence, that the situation has escalated in the last decade due to conversion of youths by political class into drug-addicts, political thugs, political assassins, social misfits, etc. He further argues that the Nigerian political scene is bedeviled by violence. This can further be captured in the word of Anifowose (1982), who argues that violence has been a factor of election in Nigeria right from the pre-independence era. Its causes are

primarily election rigging, manipulation of voters' register, 'the winner takes all' syndrome and monetisation of politics (Anifowose, 1982, cited in Halliru, 2013). Political violence is geared towards winning political competition or power through violence, subverting the ends of the electoral and democratic process. Its tool of trade is the intimidation and disempowerment of political opponents. Political violence takes place not just at election time, but in periods leading to elections, during the elections, and in the period immediately following elections such as during the counting of ballots (Michika, 2009). Banwo (2003:100) posits that, "political violence is the process of the use of extra-judicial means in the course of the contest for power or in exercising political power. These include intimidation, harassment, assassination, blackmail, arson, and looting, physical and psychological attack...among others" (Banwo, 2003:100)

Dunmoye (2012:7) believes that, "a major factor that contribute to conflict in this country (Nigeria), even at the local community levels is the economic crisis and its impact on the production of material existence of citizens. When people suffer from economic deprivation and poverty, they seek solace in a group membership and collective actions. At the local level, the struggle for the resources, that is jobs, lands, etc." Echoing in the same vein Dudley (1973) cited in Aver et al, (2013), maintains that political violence develops as a feature of struggle for power. He further opines that the employment of violence in the struggle for power have some negative implications for the realisation of the collective well-being of individuals and society as a whole. These points can further be seen in the Nigerian political development historically.

Historical Overview of Political Thuggery in Nigeria

Historically, however, thuggery and violence has been a common feature in Nigerian political history, but it is quite difficult to ascertain the exact time it became an indispensable part of the Nigerian polity. According to Yusufu (2002), in a document titled "the use of thugs by NCNC and the AG in the Eastern regional elections of 1957" the detachment of Zikist National Vanguard (ZNV) roamed around the country in a taxi loaned by their members, whipping up enthusiasm, attempting to break up Action Group (AG) meetings and used threat, while on the other hand, there was a group of area boys who travelled with Action Group cavalcaded as boys' guards and there were occasional clashes between them. He further argues that during the

campaign the two major parties constantly and hysterically levelled charges of hooliganism, gangster-ism and corrupt electoral practices as against each other. However, Nigerian politics was characterised by regionalism and sectionalism in its early days. Therefore, the political thuggery was not restricted to only one section or region rather, the whole country.

Mallam Aminu Kano (cited by Yusufu, 2002:6) argues that in 1957 in Kano, the gang men who called themselves mahaukata (mad men) made it a fashion to come out by evening time armed with local weapons and parade the streets and molested members and supporters of the NEPU. According to Mallam Aminu Kano, 'for over one month Kano was not safe for them (the NEPUs)' on the 8th of October gangs swarmed Malam Aminu Kano house beat up his younger brothers and tore of his window shutters, (Aminu Kano, 1958). In another incidence, crazy gangs went to a three-year-old private school supported by NEPU members and dispersed the children, pull down the sign post and broke the benches to pieces. The staff were molested and the owner of the premises was force to withdraw his support of the school. According to Aminu Kano, (1958), the idea of crazy gangster-ism spread to all part of the northern region. Branches were set up by emirs' servants and NPC men. They wore red badges mostly made in Kano. He further reiterates that, Bida, Lafiya, Chafe and Sokoto become as active as Kano. In 1954 elections, after assurance of safety was given to electors, organised hooligans almost controlled the elections, the boxes were tempered with and NEPU candidates had to run for their lives.

However, According to Isichei (1984), the political tussle between Akintola and Awolowo during the First Republic, which witnessed an unprecedented violence, was one of the earliest crises recorded in post-colonial era. Isichei (1984:117) asserts that "the unpopular minority government of Akintola used violence and coercion in the attempt to stay in power" (cited in Samson, 2013). Whether this assertion is true or not, events that follows revealed that both parties employed the services of thugs to bring about confusion, practical violence, assassinations, threats, assaults, public intimidations and a total breakdown of law and order. In March 1959, Chief Awolowo was on tour in the North in connection with the registration of electors; his cavalcade of cars was attack by a mob in Abuja. During this period the most serious clash occurred in the west at Efon Alaiye in Ekiti division when NCNC campaigners become involved in a fight and their cars were stoned. In the same period at Aba, mob attacked the houses of Northern

and Western allies, there was also a clash between Action Group and NCNC supporters in Lagos, likewise in Tiv division there was a fight between Action Group and NPC supporters (Yusufu, 2002). Among so many clashes and fights between supporters/thugs during the campaign and elections, few are mentioned here.

Based on the foregoing explanations it is evident that thuggery has been a feature of Nigerian politics even before independence. What is not clear however is the exact time it emerged and became indispensable to the Nigerian polity? Lawanti (2013), Bambose (2012), Aver et al (2013), are of the opinion that the real political violence and thuggery in Nigeria emerged in 1964 federal election. To contest 1964 election two major allies were formed that is; the Nigerian National Alliance NNA consisting of Northern People's Congress (NPC), Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) and Midwest Democratic Front MDF. The second is United Progressive Grand Alliance UPGA consisting of NCNC, Action Group (AG), Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and UMBC. In 1965 the stage was set in the western region for both the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) and Action Group (AG) to determine which of these parties would rule the electorate. According to Bambose (2002), before the election, there were all indications that, there were not going to be peace in the region, as both parties engaged in using force to win election.

In view of the above, it is important to understand that intimidation, rudeness and harassment by youths become so prevalent in the First Republic before, during and even after the election in the country. Thugs become readymade tools for politicians to harass and intimidate oppositions and the members of public, their activities are mostly fight between different gang groups, opposition gang groups and members of the public during or after campaign and during the cast of votes. The fights between NPC thugs and NEPU thugs have become the issues of concern in some parts of the defunct northern region, in places like Kano, Borno and Bauchi, these tense relations continue to grow until, January 5th 1966, when group of young army officers overthrew the civilian government that led to Nigerian civil war in 1967-1970 (Aver et al, 2012).

The Second Republic elections of 1979, was relatively smooth due to the veiled threat of the immediate military retributions, should law and order break down. The worse is the possibility of postponement of hand over power to civilians (Nwachukhu, 2012). The military intervened in all the transition

election attempting to arbitrate inter-party conflicts, and to caution politicians on the need to adhere to the established rules of conduct. However, the 1983 elections were marred with irregularities, corruption, election fraud and political thuggery, probably because the forces in the political process are less able to compromise (every one want to get power), because their common interest in removing the military in 1979 has been achieved now, therefore, it is left for them to compete and they may use any other force to achieve their desire. Tijjani (2013:34) on the other hand suggests thus:

The quest for votes pushed the NPN to rig the 1983 elections in a grand scale. The elections were so badly rigged that one analyst described it thus: It is very clear that the Nigerian Election of 1983 is a sham election. It was massively rigged and nobody can honestly, truthfully and scientifically state that Shagari and his lieutenants in the state capitals were democratically voted into office. A massive collusion involving the NPN, the FEDECO, the police and some sections of the judiciary had produced governments that could not claim legitimacy by dint of even the most rudimentary requirement of bourgeois democracy (Tijjani, 2013:34).

The manipulation triggered violent protests in some parts of Nigeria, this can further be captured in the maiden speech of the then military Head of State Major General Muhammadu Buhari when they seized power (military), from the civilians, that “the last general election was anything but free and fair. The only political parties that could complain of election rigging are those parties that lack the resources to rig. There is ample evidence that rigging thuggery were relative to the resources available to the parties” (great Nigerian speeches, 2007: 49), these shows that all the political parties in 1983 are guilty of violence and thuggery pending on the availability of the objects of the violence.

However, according to Nwachukwu (2013:5) “The current wave of thuggery started blowing during the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and National Republican Convention (NRC) era of the aborted third republic”. In 1998, the military government initiated a transition which heralded Nigeria's return to democratic rule in 1999. Political parties were formed such as, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), All Peoples Party (APP), and Alliance for Democracy (AD). Elections were set for April 1999, former military ruler Olusegun Obasanjo was elected on the PDP platform, on 29th May 1999. He argues that the elections, witness relatively peaceful process, in terms of political violence and thuggery. After the election, the Nigerian political scene

had changed with cases of political violence and political thuggery. Whether this assertion is true or not, the reports of violence and thuggery in the elections that follows during the civil rule must not be under estimated. In 2003 elections which were conducted by the Obasanjo regime, were prone to thuggery and violence, this can further be clarified in the word of the president himself. Where he warned early in 2002 that politicians were raising private militias that could make the 2003 elections bloody and indeed it was bloody, (Bombose, 2012). However, as the 2007 election drew near, President Obasanjo told the surprised Nigerians, other Africans and the world at large that, the 2007 elections would be a 'do-or-die affair' (Daily trust 11th December, 2006). According to Nwachukwu (2012), the 2007 elections, when it actually came were deadliest and frightening in nature. To him the 2007 election therefore, was generally perceived as the worst in the history of election administration in Nigeria. From the above, it could be argued that, historically, political thuggery has long tradition in the Nigerian politics. Its causes are primarily election rigging on the one hand and the economic condition of the country help in it prevalence, on the other hand. However, it is imperative to know that political thugs exist in all part of Nigeria, bearing different names like, Sara-Suka in Bauchi state, Yan-Shinko in Adamawa state, Ecomog in Borno state, Yan-Daba in Kano state, Sara-Suka in Kaduna state Kalare in Gombe state etc.

Youth Violence and Thuggery in Bauchi State Since 1999

Bauchi state has gone through series of youth restiveness since 1999, like the rest of Nigeria, since the return of democracy in 1999, the state has experienced quite a number of youth violence, political thuggery in particular. According to wunti (2011) *Sara-Suka* as a form of youth violence, become known to the people of Bauchi state during the electioneering campaign of governor Isah yuguda in 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007 and after the election. In line with this, Lawanti (2013) argues that the *Sara-Suka* in Bauchi was formed by the supporters of Isa Yuguda to counter Governor Muazu's use of government machinery to stop Yuguda from contesting. Governor Isa Yuguda, however, claims he inherited the *Sara-Suka* problem from the previous regime (Lawanti, 2013). Whether these allegations are true or not, the consequences of *Sara-Suka* cannot be under estimated in the state. The state, like the rest of Nigeria, is home to large number of unemployed young men who have little

opportunity for legitimate employment or socio-economic advancement. As it is also true across many other parts of Nigeria.

From another perspective, Wunti (2012) argues that, the increasing economic marginalisation of youth and failure to fulfill the socio-economic needs of the people have led to frustration as well as increasing the high level of social insecurity among the inhabitants of Bauchi, particularly the communities of Bauchi Metropolis. Shehu (2011), states that, the implications are that this army of unemployed could easily be lured into any negative tendencies and are in fact ready to be recruited for any social activity. This can further be seen in the words of Haruna and Jumba (2011), that, poverty and unemployment, occasioned by lack of skills among the teeming populace manifested itself in gangster-ism popularly known as ‘*Sara Suka*.’ They argue that, *Sara Suka* are terrorists group who jeopardise the economy of the state as both foreign, and local investors, businessmen, and women, stay away from the state. Because of the fear of the *Sara-Suka*, some business outfits had to relocate to other states that they perceived as safe haven.

However, from the research findings of Halliru (2013) majority of the youth who engage in physical political violence in Bauchi are unemployed with 76.0% of the total sample. The farmers are the second highest category 12.0%. The civil servants and those who engage in one business or another were 6.0% and 4.7% respectively. However, the artisans and craftsmen (those involved in welding, shoe making, carpentry, painting, etc.) were 1.2% only. As such, in terms of occupation, those who are unemployed form a majority of youth in the sample. He further affirms that the 67.0% of the respondents reported that they belonged to gangs due to unemployment. Also, 25.8% of them reported poverty as their reason, while 4.8 percent of the youths stated that frustration was the reason for belonging to a gang. Only 2.4 percent reported that they belonged to gangs due to disenchantment with the system. Therefore, the above data shows that a majority of the youth in Bauchi who belonged to youth gangs, is due to unemployment. Their activities have degenerated into assault, rape, harassment, and extortion of ordinary civilians alongside their continuing political role, most notably during the election period of 2007 between Malam Isa Yuguda of the defunct ANPP and Nadada Umar of PDP then. Many *Sara-suka* youth are armed, most commonly with machetes, clubs and similar weapons. They are armed with light weapons in most cases such as machetes, knife, stick etc. Wunti (2013)

Therefore, it could be deduced from the forgoing that political thuggery in Bauchi state is simply the product of tussle for power among the political elite, for which they recruit youth as their militia. Most of the youth who engage in these acts are unemployed. Therefore, the study discovers that political thuggery has a long history in Nigerian politics. It manifested even before independence and became a serious problem during the 1964 elections. Most of the writers on Nigerian politics focus on its manifestations only and the political solutions which are cosmetics. None of the literature scratched beyond the surface to explain the factors responsible for the failure of the policies that address the problem. This study is an attempt to explain the persistence of *Sara-Suka* in Bauchi state despite the rehabilitation policies by the government.

Theoretical Framework

This study has adopted the Marxist political economy perspective to explain the persistence of youth gang/thugs or *Sara-Suka* in Bauchi state, despite the ‘excellent’ policies of youth rehabilitation adopted by the government. The Marxian political economists see economic processes and structure which are occupied by the bourgeoisies as the key material factor in shaping social structure and class relations, and also the state and the distribution of political power. Marxian theory of crime locates the principal sources of crime in the ordinary operation of the day to day operations of the political economy of a society. In the Marxian view, a sound policy for reducing crime must begin with social relations. Marxists theory takes a different approach to crime than functionalists and other theoreticians. They are concerned with who makes the law (i.e. the ruling class) and who benefits from these laws (i.e. the ruling class). Marxists argue that the real criminals are not the ones currently making up the national jails population, but the ones that have “stolen the wealth from the nation and use the stolen wealth against the poor” (Chambliss, 1976). Proponents of the theory are Karl Marx (1848), V.I Lenin (1917), Bongor (1916), William Chambliss (1976) etc.

Specifically, this study adopted Marxian concept of “mode of production” as used by Umar (2010) and Sa’ad (1988) in analysing social deviance. The “mode of production” was used by Marx in his analysis of the nineteenth century industrial England. It encompasses two aspects: “production forces” and the “relations of production”. Chambliss (1976) argues that the greed, self-interest and hostility generated by the capitalist

system motivate many crimes at all levels within society. Members of each stratum use whatever means and opportunities in their class position to commit crime. Thus, in low- income areas, the mugger, the petty thief, the pusher, the pimp and the prostitute use what they have gotten to get what they can. In higher-income brackets, business people, lawyers and politicians have more effective means at their disposal to grab a larger share of the cake, politicians use all machineries at their disposal to get what they want. To paraphrase Bongor (1916), the Marxists view crime as poverty-induced to the extent that it creates a desperate need for food and other necessities; crime stems from the inequalities created under capitalism where avenues to achieve success and happiness are blocked because of class and racial inequality; crime is inherent within capitalism in its social structures and forces that produce both the greed of the inside trader as well as the brutality of the rapist or the murderer.

Therefore, a surplus population is created to ensure a steady supply of able workers who are permanently unemployed or underemployed, “the underclass” and it is this “surplus population” that commits crimes to survive. Therefore, to Bongor; crime is a response to the contradictions the capitalism. In this regard, Nigeria is a neo-colonial entity, a product of capitalist imperialism. According to the instrumentalist and structuralist schools of political economy, the basic function of the state, any state, but especially the state in the capitalist society is to foster capitalist accumulation and profit (Gabriel & Akindele, 1990). Nigeria is what it is because of the processes which produce her. When the country was heading to independence from the capitalist Britain in 1960, the constitutional processes leading to independence were a mere transfer of leadership from the colonial master to the emerging national bourgeoisie, and the truth is that offsprings are conditioned from the genetic formation of their parents. According to Marx and Engels (1848) “...*the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie....*” Nigeria is labelled as a developing state by the capitalist classification of development and underdevelopment and the economy manifests tendencies of i.e. class distinction, leading to the emergence of classes: the bourgeoisie, the middle-class and the lower class. The existence of classes in the political economy of the Nigerian state can no longer be in doubt; for as noted by Imoagene (1989, cited by Frank and Jide, 2016), the logic of applying the class concept in Nigeria “derives from hypothesis that capitalism... produces its own

uniformities in structural and social arrangements irrespective of time and place. In order to control the material forces of production, the system turns “the under-class” in to commodity. Conflict is inevitable between these classes. In *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) Marx posits that “*the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle...without conflict, no progress; this is the law which civilization has followed to the present day*”.

From the foregoing it can be argued that the militants came up as a result of socio-economic imbalances or social contradictions in the economic system. In respect to *Sara-Suka*, the politicians as the bourgeoisie take them as commodity which they used to reap huge profit, as argued by Cambell, that in a capitalist state anything can be turn in to a commodity. Therefore, it will be difficult to effectively rehabilitate these youth since their problem has not been addressed. Alternatively, the policies of rehabilitation themselves may not be sincerely conceived because if implemented very well they may not be ultimately achieved in the interest of the bourgeoisie.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretations

Table 2 Factors responsible for the failure of the Commission

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Political partisanship	75	17%
Lack of public awareness of the programme	57	13%
Lack of sound community involvement in the programme	18	4%
Unwillingness of government to address the problem	75	17%
Unwillingness of some of the Sara-Suka members to accept the offer	102	23%
Bad-governance	97	22%
Corruption	18	4%

Total	442	100.0
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Source: Field Work, 2016

The table above shows public opinion on the factors responsible for the failure of the Commission. Seventy-five respondents indicate political partisanship as a factor. Fifty-seven respondents indicated lack of public awareness of the programme. Eighteen respondents indicated lack of sound community involvement in the programme. Another seventy-five respondents indicated unwillingness of government to address the problem. One-hundred and two respondents indicate unwillingness of some of the *Sara-Suka* members to accept the offer. Ninety-seven respondents indicated bad-governance as a factor and eighteen respondents added corruption as another factor responsible for the failure of the Commission.

Therefore, majority of the respondents considered unwillingness of some of the *Sara-Suka* members to accept the offer of government as the factor responsible for the failure of the programme. They represent 23% of the respondents. Followed by 22% of the respondents, who considered bad-governance as responsible. Those who considered political partisanship and unwillingness of the government to address the problem as responsible were 17%, followed by thirteen percent (13%) of the respondents who considered lack of public awareness. This corroborates the view of some political thugs during focused group discussions that they did not know of the existence of BACYWORD. Four percent (4%) of the respondents indicated lack of sound community involvement in the programme and another 4% considered corruption as responsible for its failure.

Table 3 Factors responsible for the persistence of the *Sara-Suka*

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, and lack of skills among youth	75	17%
Corruption	57	13%
Bad-governance	18	4%
Role models	75	17%

A, B, and C	102	23%
All of the above	115	26%
Total	442	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2016

The table above shows public views on the factors responsible for the persistence of *Sara-Suka* in Bauchi state. The result shows that seventy-five respondents, representing 17% of the total respondents, indicated unemployment, illiteracy, poverty and lack of skills among youth. Fifty-seven respondents, representing 13%, indicated corruption. Eighteen respondents, representing 4%, indicated bad-governance. Seventy-five respondents, representing 17%, indicated role models (copying and liking the gangsters' way of life). One-hundred and two respondents, representing 23% of the respondents, indicated unemployment, illiteracy, poverty and lack of skills among youth, corruption and bad-governance. Another one-hundred and fifteen respondents, representing 26% of the respondents indicated all the given factors as responsible for the persistence of the problem.

These findings corroborate the neighbouring findings of Umar (2015) on the causes and impact of *Kalare* political thugs in Gombe state. They also confirm the findings of Wunti (2012) on youth poverty, violence and the small arms proliferation in northern Nigeria. Despite the intervention/effort to address the problem of political thuggery over the years, the factors responsible for its persistence remain the same: unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, lack of skills among youth, corruption, bad-governance etc.

More important is the fact that this research has confirmed that those factors (unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, and lack of skills among youth, corruption, bad-governance and role of *Yan-Sara-Suka* as role models) **are the manifestation of economic imbalance in the society**. It is evident that all these factors are orchestrated by the economic conditions in the society and that the imbalance has created the population of the underclass. Therefore, so long as the socio-economic imbalance remains as it is, the problem will persist and will continue to manifest in different forms, either in form of *Sara-Suka* or in another form such as *Kalare* in Gombe state.

Table 4 Respondents view on the strategy that can help in tackling the problem

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Empowerment and skills training	79	18%
Parents and community monitoring	62	14%
Preaching and awareness	18	4%
Death penalty	84	19%
A, B, and C	93	21%
All of the above	106	24%
Total	442	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2016

The table above shows the suggested ways of tackling youth's restiveness in the study area and the responses are as follows; seventy-nine respondents, representing 18% of the respondents suggested empowerment and skills training; 62 respondents, representing 14% of the respondents suggested parents and community actions; 18 respondents, representing 4% of the respondents, suggested preaching and awareness; 84 respondents, representing 19% of the respondents suggested death penalty; 93 respondents, representing 21% of the respondents, suggested a combination of all the options excluding death penalty; and finally, 106 respondents, representing 24%, suggested all the options including death penalty.

Below is the annual report of *Sara-Suka* Victims in Bauchi metropolis, according to the Record of the ATBU Teaching Hospital Bauchi from 2011-2015:

Table 5 Annual *Sara-Suka* Victims from 2011-2015

Year	Male	Female	Total
2011	Record could not be found		
2012	333	72	405
2013	439	91	530

2014	324	86	410
2015	160	45	205
Grand total	1256	294	1550

Source: ATBU Teaching Hospital, Traumatic Records (2016).

The table shows that throughout 2011-2015, there have been cases of *Sara-Suka* violence in the metropolis even though the records of victims for 2011 were not available because of the poor system of recording. Moreover, the table shows the annual increase of the victims from 2012-2014 where 2013 recorded the highest in number, this may be as a result of shortage of political rallies in the state in which the gangsters earned money through. In 2015 there was a decline from 530 in 2013 to 205 in 2015, while the introduction of *Yankomiti* (vigilante group) in 2015 could have accounted for the decline. Notwithstanding, the security agencies are committed to their prosecution but the result was not encouraging. The consequences are getting out of hand, with huge impact on the people of the state. Below are also the annual prosecuted *Sara-Suka* members, under prison custody.

Table 6 Annual Figure of Prosecuted *Sara-Suka* Members under Prison Custody, 2011-2015

Year	Figures	Case specification
2011	330	Nil
2012	438	
2013	499	
2014	846	
2015	587	
Grand Total	2700	Nil

Source: Nigerian Prisons Services, Bauchi Prison 2016

The table above shows the number of *Sara-Suka* members under prison custody from 2011-2015. The table shows an increase from 2011 to

2014 and decline in 2015. The decline came as a result of the establishment of *yan-komiti* by the people of Bauchi metropolis. The result also shows that *Sara-Suka* prosecution reached its peak in 2014. A total of 846 members were in prison. This declined subsequently in 2015.

Findings

From the data presented and analysed, the researcher has established the following facts. That the commission has failed mostly due to: political partisanship, lack of serious commitment from the policy makers, faulty implementation strategy and change of political administration, nonchalant attitude of the beneficiaries to work due to lack of strong monitoring intervention, difficulties in the release of funds, etc. This researcher also found out that there are incidences of *Sara-Suka* in the study area despite the programme. Moreover, the beneficiaries still commit crime despite the intervention. People described the programme as ineffective. This can further be seen in 2013 *Sara-Suka* has 530 victims and declined in 2015 with 205 victims. However, *Sara-Suka* prosecution reached its peak in 2014. A total of 846 members were in prison. This declined subsequently in 2015. The declined of both the victims and the prosecution came up as the result of the establishment of *Yan-komiti* by the people of Bauchi state not the rehabilitation programme. Therefore, this survey has also shown that the Bauchi state Commission for Youth and Women Rehabilitation and Development (BACYWORD) has not achieved its mandate. Because the programme is cosmetics. The underlying current responsible for youth violence and such other citizens are found in the unfair socio economic system. Marxist economist are concerned with who makes the law (i.e. the ruling class) and who benefits from these laws (i.e. the ruling class). Marxists argue that the real criminals are not the ones currently making up the national jails population, but the ones that have “stolen the wealth from the nation and use the stolen wealth against the poor” (Chambliss, 1976).

However, the Marxian political economists see economic processes and structure which are occupied by the bourgeoisies as the key material factor in shaping social structure and class relations, and also the state and the distribution of political power. Marxian theory of crime locates the principal sources of crime in the ordinary operation of the day to day operations of the political economy of a society. Bonger believes that a surplus population is created to ensure a steady supply of able workers who are permanently

unemployed or underemployed, “the underclass” and it is this “surplus population” that commits crimes to survive. These findings confirm the assumption that the ‘continued production of the ‘underclass’ has created a social crime called Sara-Suka’

Lastly, the research found out that the unwillingness of the thugs to accept the rehabilitation offer, Bad-governance, unwillingness of government to address the problem, unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, lack of skills among youth, corruption and the use of Sara-Suka as role models. Are the causes of Sara-Suka in Bauchi LGA as well as the factors responsible for the persistence of Sara-Suka despite rehabilitation. Marxists view crime as poverty-induced to the extent that it creates a desperate need for food and other necessities. Lukman (2010), argues that politicians in Nigeria are noted for their penchant for perverting the political process and sponsoring violence. They do this using the youth as their foot soldiers, given the sorry state of the nation’s economy, unemployment, and pervading poverty. Youth, the most productive segment of the population, have become the willing tool of violence in the hand of the political elite. The lack of meaningful and productive engagement meant that youth are willing instruments that can be deployed for dirty assignments by the politicians, who control their loyalty (Lukman 2010). However, these factors are not only the causes for the persistence of Sara-Suka rather the product of the manifestation of socio-economic inequality and any policy by government to rehabilitate the gangs is mere cosmetics because it has not addressed the real cause. So long as the socio economic condition of these youth remains as it is, so long as the problem will persist and manifest in different forms.

Conclusion

Youth gangs and concerned on public safety is a national issue in Nigeria. The experience is not limited to one part of the country or state rather the whole country. The gang bears different names in the country and has a long historical tradition in the history of Nigeria, before during and after the independence. The causes remained the same. Moreover, the socio-economic system is bend in the unequal distribution of wealth and the continued production of the under-class is never their problem (i.e. the bourgeoisie) rather the production of the surplus population is of utmost advantage, where you get the population to recruit as thugs, which they turn to gangs after they are used and dumped by their recruiters to earned a living. Bauchi state like

many other parts of the country, resort to cosmetic policies, despite a fact that the policy is well structured, but they still failed, because the real cause of the economic imbalance by the unfair economic system is not addressed.

Recommendations

In Bauchi Local Government Area of Bauchi state a surplus population is created through unemployment to ensure a steady supply of able workers who are permanently unemployed or underemployed i.e. “the underclass” and it is this “surplus population” that commits crimes to survive. The study recommends that government should device a means to reduce the production of the underclass through social equality and justice.

The study also recommends seriousness of government in any youth rehabilitation policy with a sincerity of purpose in order to address political partisanship and ensure proper implementation.

A more egalitarian socio-economic system that addresses the economic imbalance of the Nigerian society in general and Bauchi state in particular, should be adopted, in order to address the real cause, which is the continued production of the underclass by the system.

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HERDSMEN MENACE AND CATTLE COLONY CONTESTATION IN NIGERIA STATE: UNRESOLVED ISSUES

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Abstract

Recently, the Nigerian state has been grappling with cases of herdsman-farmers conflict occasioned by the quest for survival by both parties, one desperate to feed their cattle, the other working hard to ensure crop yield is not destroyed by rampaging flock of herds. This has brought to the fore the debate on the establishment of cattle colonies all over the federation. The idea of ranching has been offered as a solution to this menace which is one of the international best practices in other African states like Swaziland, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, among others. The paper investigated the herdsman modus operandi in launching their attacks. The Conflict Theory was adopted as a frame work of analysis. The study revealed that ranching, grazing and cattle colony is a strategy and a hidden agenda to Islamize the whole country. It also revealed that the establishment of cattle colony in all the state of the federation will do more harm to the host communities than good. It was also discovered that, Yoruba southern part of Ilorin was lost to Hausa/Fulani kingdom as a result of cattle colony. Based on the findings, the paper suggests that, since cattle rearing is a private business, individual cattle owners should be encouraged to acquire land for ranching, because it is a global best practice. Since sixteen state governors from the north have volunteer to provide land for the cattle colony, the other states that did not comply can organize their people to be grass merchants to be exporting to the northern states where the colonies would domicile. By this means, a new set of employment would be created. Transport companies would emerge in the supply chain, this will bring sanity, and as well end the conflict between the herdsman and the Nigeria farmers and the Nigeria people at large.

Keywords; Leadership, Herdsmen, Grazing, Ranching, Cattle colony

Introduction

Recently, the Nigerian state has been grappling with cases of herdsman-farmers conflict occasioned by the quest for survival by both

parties, one desperate to feed their cattle, the other is working hard to ensure crop yield is not destroyed by rampaging flock of herds. This has brought to the fore the debate on the establishment of cattle colonies all over the federation. The idea of ranching has been offered as a solution to this menace which is one of the international best practices in other African states like Swaziland, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, among others. Meanwhile, the most significant problem African states is facing today is lack of leadership commitment to their responsibilities. Normally, Leadership should be an intentional conscious effort to attend to the people's needs and aspirations. But in Nigeria the case is different, even though many of those people that are trusted the position of leadership meant well for their people, they still lack the capacity to lead and meet the people's hopes and aspirations. Apart from lack of adequate preparation for leadership, one other notable factor that had inhibited good leadership among African leaders is the seemingly non-existent structures for research and information management in the society. Hence, many well-meaning leaders often do not have the requisite information needed for a thorough appraisal and resolution of problems as they arise. A clear example is the recent herdsmen attack in some states and villages in Nigeria, like the one that happened at the Uzouwani village in Enugu and Abia State and some villages in Benue state respectively, where many people lost their lives from the herdsmen attack. The uncompromised attitude of our leaders to that crisis and conflict showed an ignorance of the state leadership on the modus operandi of the herdsmen, and this was described as poor leadership decisions.

For a long time, the Nigeria states have been under siege by Fulani herdsmen terrorists, operating under a predictable pattern of reconnaissance, attack and withdrawal, leading to many deaths and social dislocations. Between January 2016 and 2019, there have been estimated deaths cases of more than ten thousand Nigerians, which cut across the middle belt, the South-South, and South-East, and some parts in the northern states of the country from the herdsmen attacks, (Akonye, 2018). According to Adisa (2016), the herdsmen are credited with destabilizing the city of Jos, a once tourist destination. These herdsmen history of mayhem have extended beyond the borders of the Nigeria state. They are also the major actors/catalyst in the recent conflicts in the Central African Republic. Armed with adequate information about these murderous group, one would have expected the Governors in the South-East, especially those whose citizens were murdered

in cold blood by these terrorists to come out with a strong condemnation of the herdsmen carnage and unify towards a common cause solution. Regrettably, events in the past only showed confused state executives who do not even understand the magnitude of the problem at hand. In fairness to these Governors, some of them followed the normal state security protocol in responding to this abnormality, hence, the failure to protect the citizens was the liability of the Federal Government of Nigeria and its armed forces. Though, we do not excuse the shabby response of these governors to the herdsmen tragedy, rather, we are inclined to give them a slack because, to solve a problem, one needs to first understand the problem. The Governors did not understand the problem. Most Nigerians and international bodies do not understand the herdsmen problem too. However, it is at this back drop, **the paper investigated the origin of the herdsmen in the Nigeria state and their modus operandi in launching their attacks on their rivalry those involved, and those behind their acts, as well as the reasons for the Federal Government clamoring for the establishment of cattle colony/ Ruga in all the states in Nigeria, and why it will not succeed.**

Conceptual Clarification

Leadership

Leadership as the name goes is a burdensome duty involving the capacity to inspire, motivate and coordinate people or constituency against the odds in the ways of achieving a vision, without losing enthusiasm, cohesion or stability. Its sterling qualities include charisma, bravery, courage, agility, power of speech and persuasion to exercise influence on others, towards a strategic mission or goal. Leadership involves a strategic figure in mind and heart, which alternate between stability and flexibility to reflect a sound judgment of prevailing circumstances. Leadership should be well enlightened, literate, persuasive and yet submissive. Aja, (2006:1) state that:

Leadership in its general sense is the act of coordinating and motivating individuals and groups in the society to achieve desired goals. It is a process through which one individual influence the actions of others. It involves knowing the way, showing the way and going the way.

D.L. Sills sees leadership as something that involves maintenance of integrity, viability, collective order and unity against both internal and external

threats, minimization of dissensions and conflicts, motivation of members and fostering the acceptance by a collectivity of its goals. While Akonye, (2015) define leadership as the ability of a person, or group of persons, to combine and coordinate effectively and efficiently, human, material and financial resources trusted under their care to see that a desired goal is achieved and realize for the interest and betterment of all in a given state

Herdsman

As the name herdsman goes, it is a name use to describe those men who takes care or look after a herd of animals like cattle, cows or goats, among others. They are often said to be farmers or herdsman

Grazing,

The concept of grazing or grazing land according to BBC English Dictionary (1992) is a land on which animals graze or are grazed. In such a land or place, grasses are allowed to grow for animal feeding mainly, cows, goats or sheep, among others. It is a place set aside for animal grazing.

Ranching

Ranching according to BBC English Dictionary (1992) refers to, or represents a large farm, especially one used or set aside for breeding animals of all kind and sizes, like cows, goats or sheep, among others.

Cattle colonies

When we talk about a colony or colonies, we always refers to a country or countries which are controlled by a more powerful country, for instance, Portugal was said to be eager to give independence to its former colonies. Using this in explaining what cattle colony or colonies mean, one can rightly state that, a cattle colonies or colony can be refers to an area set aside for particular animals mainly, cattle, cows, and goats of all sorts, to live together with the people that breed or rear them, (herdsman).

Theoretical perspective

This paper was anchored on Conflict Theory as its framework of analysis since the study is on herdsman and farmers disagreement. Conflict

Theory was developed by Karl Marx who states that, society is in a state of conflict because of competition over limited resources. This means there is a constant struggle between the rich and the poor (the cow owners/the herdsmen and the poor farmers.) thus; conflict prevention becomes a test of good leadership. A theory is said to be a generalized explanation of the relationship that exists in a phenomenon with the primary purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena. The purpose of a theory is to explain, analyze, and predict possibly future trend of events and outcomes. In this work we employed Conflict Theory as our theoretical frame work of analysis. Conflict Theory is an aspect of enquiry in political science that attempt to understand and explain the various contradictions on both antagonistic and non-antagonistic, as in the case of herdsmen and Nigeria farmers, in their relations with states and political actors. The Theory states that, since society has never stopped competing for finite resources, it will always be in a state of conflict. Marx states that, society is in a state of perpetual conflict because of competition for limited resources. Marx also holds that social order is maintained by domination and power, rather than consensus and conformity. This Theory examined social phenomena, like the issue of herdsmen menace and poor Nigeria farmers through the lens that, there is a natural human instinct towards that. Marx is not saying that conflict is good or bad; rather it is an unavoidable aspect of human nature which helps to explain why things are. For instance, Conflict Theory can be used to look at wars, violence, revolutions and other forms of injustice and discrimination by explaining that there is a natural disparity in a society that causes those problems. The implication of this theory is that those in position of wealth and resources will protect and hoard those resources while those without, will do whatever they can to obtain them. This means there is a constant struggle between the rich and the poor (like the cows' owners/the herdsmen and the poor farmers.)

Accordingly, conflicts are a universal and permanent attribute of nature, life and society, as can be seen in the case of the herdsmen and farmers and Nigeria people at large. Conflict going by nature, is necessary and unavoidable. They serve to advance the positive evolution of phenomena, unnecessary and avoidable when irresoluble, and their consequences are negative for society and man. On that note, conflict prevention becomes a test of good leadership. As everyone in the country today is asking our leaders to intervene over the incessant killing of the innocent citizens/farmers by the herdsmen. Every conflict has fundamental or root causes which create and

advance it. There is a time that conflicts between and within states have much to do with the unequal and unjust socio-economic, political and allied structures of the international system, as well as within the state on the other hand. The issue here is that, whether in terms of conflict prevention, management, transformation or resolution, the issue is whether, ideal structure of relations which evolves within or between states, groups or individuals has not been considerably minimized. When the fundamental factors are sowed and allowed to germinate to its escalation, leaders were unable to rip them in the bud due to bad leadership and ineffective conflict management system, as can be seen in the area of herdsmen terrorist, terrorizing everybody in the country. While our leaders pretend as if they don't know what to do. Instead of them to rise and stop these evil activities of the herdsmen, they only take actions on newspapers, which shows leadership ineffectiveness over conflict prevention and management, which hinders the immediate solution to the problem.

Application of the theory

In relating Conflict Theory to this work, we saw how the issue over the activities of the herdsmen and local farmers in Nigeria state has turn to be an issue of conflict that need to be resolved through the intervention of the Federal Government and the people of Nigeria at large. As an issue that goes with conflict management and conflict resolution between the herdsmen and the farmers, we have seen how many lives that have been lost from the hands of the herdsmen menace. We have equally seen how many people that were injured by the herdsmen as a result of the conflicts that have been arising between the two parties, which can only be resolved through the intervention of the government and Nigeria people in general. Karl Marx who postulated this theory states that "conflict is inevitable and unavoidable as long as human beings live together" to see that the conflict that always arises between the herdsmen and farmers are settled once and for all, the Federal Government in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Audu Ogbe came up with the issue of ranching, grazing and cattle colony/Ruga in the thirty six state of the federation. But to the understanding of the Nigeria populace, the issue of introducing cattle colony/Ruga in all the 36 states of the federation as a solution to the herdsmen menace to local farmer will even do more harm to the host community/communities than good. As a result the idea will never work out; neither will it solve the issue of fighting and killing the innocent

farmers by the herdsmen. In the words of Marx, “conflict is unavoidable and inevitable”.

Grazing, Ranches and Cattle colonies contestation in Nigeria

Looking at the issue of herdsmen and grazing as a way forward, one may wish to ask if people are aware that there has been series of interventions and research in respect of the herdsmen and grazing issue. A lot of studies by different agencies have proffered solutions over the years. When it is stated that, the problem predates this present regime, one don't get cranky to find out how far and what has been the intervention. It is only the uneducated ones that get worked up by a single narrative. The problem even predates President Jonathan's government, but in fairness to President Jonathan, he was more proactive in finding a lasting solution to the incessant herdsmen/farmer's clashes and blood bath. But because a President alone can't govern a nation, every effort of Jonathan was messed up by the State governors. It would interest us to know that these governors are mainly those that belong to the same political party with him. The effort of Jonathan to find a permanent solution to this problem was what prompted the Miyette Allah group to appoint him as their Patron. They saw the amount of effort Jonathan put in toward finding a lasting solution to this age long conflict. Failure to implement that robust solution is what has led to what we are presently witnessing. According to Adisa, (2016), President Good luck Jonathan in 2014, inaugurated an Inter-Ministerial Technical Committee on grazing reserves, tasked with proposing strategies for ending the herdsmen crisis. On that note Gabriel Suswan (PDP), former Governor of Benue state (Benue has always been the hot spot hence the choice of Suswan) was appointed by Good luck Jonathan to head the political committee on grazing reserves. The committee got to work and the final report recommended that, recovery of all grazing routes encroached upon by farmers should be recovered. In other to actualize this goal, President Goodluck Jonathan recommended that the Central Bank of Nigeria, should be mandated to release N100 billion to the 36 states, for construction of ranches. The National Economic Council, (NEC) under President Jonathan approved this recommendation and thereafter, the Central Bank actually released the N100 billion. My question now is this, “Did you read that N100 billion was released”? I guess you are wondering just like I did, to whom was the money released to?, Of course, the State Governors took the money but none of them constructed the ranches. I did not say they

pocketed it o! But, it is a fact that none of them utilize the money for the purpose it was meant for. Consequently, the House of Representatives set up a committee to investigate reports that the funds have been looted by the governors and to report back to the House in plenary within 4 weeks. But up till now, no body heard anything about the money and construction of the grazing reserves, (Adisa, 2016).

Be that as it may, the present government of Muhammad Buhari, thereafter followed up the earlier ranching plan formulated by the Jonathan government (which N100 billion was released to the governors for) and in 2016, President Buhari presented a plan to the Nigeria Governors forum to map grazing areas in all states as a temporary solution to the herdsmen crisis, but most governors from north central and southern part of the country opposed the plan. Now, where are we to day? It does not matter whose President. If we don't make this political leaders at all levels act accordingly, we are in for a long ride. Meanwhile, 90% of the governors who took and shared that N100 billion are walking freely all over the place. That's how easy it is to get money out of our treasury and some people will pocket it without using it for what it was meant for. Yet nobody is asking any question. Now, is it Jonathan that caused that? The man wanted to stop the killings and he tried to find a solution, but people within his own political enclave collected the money and pocketed it. It does not matter if Buhari continue as President or not, sooner than later he would head back home to Daura just like Jonathan headed back to Otuoke and our problems will still remain with us. If we don't come together and place a demand on all this rogues to do the needful instead of fighting each other, I can assure you that problems don't go just because you blame someone for causing it. (Adisa, 2016)

Federal Government's Reasons to establish Cattle Colonies in Nigeria states,

According to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Audu Ogbah (2018) The Federal Government reason to establish cattle colonies in Nigeria states is to:-

- i. Checkmate the incessant herdsmen/farmers clashes.
- ii. Pave way for the creation of chains of cattle ranches and
- iii. Solve the frequent bloodletting across the land.

The Minister further stated and, I quote:-

“The reason why we are designing the colony is that we want to prepare on a large economy of scale, a place where many

owners of cattle can co-exist and where cows can be fed well because we can make their feeds. They can get good water to drink; because cows drink a lot of water, and we can give them green fodder” (Adenikia 2018).

Unlike ranches where cattle breeders will acquire land according to extant rules which will subject their operations to the norm and cultures of their host communities. Unveiling the policy, the Minister said that 16 states had indicated interest in the scheme and were prepared to volunteer parcels of land for it. While many states governors and some ethnic and regional associations have met over the policy and took positions. And some are still conferring before deciding. In the statement of Dr. Silvanus Atoh, a retired teacher and farmer over the issue, I quote:-

“The idea of cattle colony has remained unpopular because it sounds rather abstract. The idea may be a good one, but many people still do not know what it means and therefore suspect that it may be a tool being used to achieve some sinister agenda. I have been to those affected areas, these people are not looking for grass to feed their cattle, their mandate is to kill and take over. If they were looking for grass they won't carry arms with Islamic inscriptions on them”

Corroborating Atoh’s view, Major General Ola Ishola Williams; (2018) states that, the herdsmen killings are on the rise. The killings proved that something is wrong with our security agencies. According to Major William, Fulani terrorist group is a group rated as the fourth most dangerous by respected International Conflict Organizations. In agreement with this assertion, the Global Terrorism Index 2015 report, states that Fulani militants have killed 1,229 people in 2014, from 63 in 2013, making them the fourth most deadly terrorist group in the world.

Why Cattle Colony Will Not Succeed In Nigeria state

Commenting on the issue of establishing cattle colony in 36 states of the Federation, Mr. Emeka Anosike, Chairman Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CDHR) (2018), expressed reservation about the potency of the cattle colonies as a panacea to the herdsmen/farmers classes. According to Emeka, the Minister stated that a colony will host 40 ranches which means

that hundred of herders will settle there; such herders will increase in number and seek more land to occupy which could cause more clashes therein. Again, the lands to be donated are lands belonging to people which perpetually will deny them of their ancestral property. If each state donates 10,000 hectares of land as proposed, it will translate to 370,000 hectares of land mass given to a group for personal business. At this point Atoh came up with the following question, “if the land is acquired and the cattle colony is established who owns that land? Who control it? Does it belong to the Federal Government, traditional communities, or families from whom it were collected from? What of the economic tree in such lands, do they still belong to the original owners of the land or the herdsman occupying the colonies? Atoh expressed the fear that the cattle colonies could turn to be states within a state, because they would be autonomous communities whose life style might not be the same with their host communities.

Similarly, Dr. Ahmed Muhammad, former Executive Director, National Veterinary Research Institute (NVERI), Vom, remarked that colonies have their merits. That ranching remains the best option for the cattle breeders because it is more compact. In a related observation Emeka states that Nigeria communities are agrarians in nature and need lands for their agricultural activities. Taking away scarce arable lands will impede farming activities in rural communities. Already many states in the southern part of the country have openly rejected the policy, while some governors in the northern part of the country who earlier endorsed the idea have backed out. Here, Kogi governor Yahaya Bello, for instance, who was quoted as endorsing the policy, has been warned by two of the three major ethnic groups in the state mainly, the Igala and Yoruba, to steer clear of their territory in his search for the land to be used as cattle colony. The Kogi situation is similar to Plateau, one of the states listed by Audu Ogbeh as ready to allocate land for the purpose. Some of the plateau’s leaders have openly rejected the idea and vowed to resist it. First to fire the salvo was Senator Jonah Jang, Governor Simon Lalong’s predecessor, who said that his Plateau Central Constituents were opposed to the creation of cattle colonies and were not ready to relinquish their ancestral lands to be used for that. While Mr. Titus Alams, former Speaker Plateau State House of Assembly, also voiced his opposition to the policy, declaring that Plateau has no land to spare as its farmers do not even have enough. Lalong further told the Plateau residents via statement signed by his media aid, Dan Manjang that no Plateau land would be carved out to be used for a cattle

colony. As the policy gets increasingly controversial, Nigerians appear lost over the difference between the colonies and ranches or even the grazing reserves, which the National Assembly rejected in 2008. Ironically, some leaders of the Mlyetti Allah, Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), the umbrella body of the herdsmen, do not believe on the need for cattle colonies. In confirmation to this assertion, Alhaji Sadiq Gidado, its chairman in Awka Anabra State, told newsmen recently that cattle colonies would not work especially in the South-East, because, you cannot take somebody's land and give to another person to conduct his private business. Gidado at a press conference in Awka dismissed the idea of cattle colonies, ranches, as well as grazing reserve, stating that it is a political creation by politicians to bring disharmony between farmers and herdsmen. Gidado equally blamed the frictions on migrant cattle breeders who were not members of MACBAN, stressing that the body had fashioned out some measures to forestall future incidents. According to Gidado (2018), the regulation is that you only graze where there is no farm. If you destroy farmers' crops and lands intentionally or unintentionally, you must be punished for what you have destroyed. Nigerians have seen merit in Gidado's position as a way forward and urged the federal government to consult widely to arrive at a lasting solution that will address mutual fears and restored harmony between the farmers and herdsmen.

Reporting from the South-West zone, the National President, Odua People Congress, (OPC) New Era, Comrade Razak Arogundade (2018) said the group would resist any attempt by the Federal Government to establish cattle colonies in South-West, declaring that the Yoruba will resist any attempt to cede a portion of their land to herdsmen in the name of cattle colonies. Razak further stated that the way herdsmen are killing innocent farmers are appealing and very sad. Thus the Yorubas can never allow such barbarians to have their way through cattle colonies in the South-West. Razak equally commended the efforts of Governor Ayodele Fayose of Ekiti state for preventing the invasion of Ekiti by the herdsmen. Hence he urges other governors in all Yoruba speaking states in the South-West to emulate governor Fayose's action. As observed, the herdsmen attacks on innocent farmers involve all Fulani ethnic members in Nigeria. Most times, these attacks happen because respectable men in the north and Abuja sanction it. Even President, Mohammed Buhari has a herd of cattle, hence is a Fulani herdsman. Most of them are now asking for cattle colony or grazing areas, a corridor

through the entire Federation. If the request for the cattle colony establishment in the Nigeria states by the federal government is honored the areas will in future become Fulani settlements which may graduate to communities and finally Local Government Areas, with elected officials. If you think I am being alarmist, take your mind back to the once beautiful and serene Middle Belt state of Plateau. The same thing happened in Jos. So it will not be farfetched to conclude that the herdsmen are pawns in an agenda to overrun all towns in Nigeria, so that they will have Emirs in Owerri, Enugu, Benin, Agatu, Wukari, Abeokuta and other towns where Federal Government creates "grazing reserves" or cattle colony/Ruga for herdsmen. If Yunfa didn't accommodate Usman Dan Fodiyo and his warlike immigrants from Futatoro in 1804, Hausa Sarkis would be ruling today in the north. And if Afonja didn't conspire with Alimi, a Yoruba kingdom would not have been ruled by Alimi's offspring till today. It is a subtle continuation of the 1804 Fulani jihad by the fully-armed and protected Fulani herdsmen with an age-long agenda to overrun and Islamize the whole of Nigeria states very quickly. In effect, "The grazing bill is not an attempt to solve the problem of herdsmen with farmers, rather a subterfuge to progress the agenda. It is an age-long political strategy to create a problem. Come up with a "solution" that will advance the cause, then give it a legal backing, and make it look like a win-win situation. Corroborating this view, Bishop David Oyedepo in his statement, wish to have an answers on the following questions, I quote:

“Please share, this post must get to the officials of the Nigeria government before nightfall today. Perhaps they have answers to these heart aching questions from the prophet” “Is cattle business government's business? How much is cattle business contributing to the nation's GDP? Should men, women and children continue to lay down their lives for cattle? How many cattle do Fulani cattle breeders need to sell to purchase an AK47 rifle? Does one need a 3 million naira equipment to protect a 100 thousand naira investment? In a country where there are no natural disasters, should there be mass burials happening all the time? Judging by the technicalities of these killings, can't we see that this is beyond Fulani cattle breeders' initiative?”

In agreement with the above assertion, Akonye (2017), equally wish to know, how these Fulani herdsmen have been going about their cow business since 18th and 19th century? Why can't they continue with the way and manner

they have been doing their cattle business all these years? From every indication do we need a prophet to tell us that there is a secret agenda behind the agitation and clamoring for cattle colony/Ruga, ranches, and grazing reserves in the 36 states of the federation? In effect, Nigerians, both home and abroad, should condemn the idea out right. One thing to note is this, **if** grazing reserve bill is passed and achieved, it means that Fulani herdsmen will have a place mapped out for them in all 36 states of the federation. And the next thing they will do is to start bringing in their wives and children from home and abroad to increase their population therein. And before you know what is happening, they have their Emir installed therein. And gradually they will start taking part in every activities of their host community. They will even start eating the host community like worms, and the place given to them can never be reclaimed back again. At this level, their sect will be ever ready to strike in every state and community with no hiding place for anyone therein, since they have known every nucks and cranes of their host community. At this point, we will be begging them to stop killing us, for we are ready to accept their term and conditions (to be Muslims) in order to live. Thus, Akonye, call on fellow Nigerians to rise and resist/reject the federal government moves towards establishment of the so call cattle colony/Ruga because tomorrow might be late for us to act. Say “No” to cattle colony/Ruga, say “No” to graze reserve bill, say “No” to ranching.

It was on the same idea that Ishaku (2016) noted how Ottomans of Turkey in 1914, began a propaganda that presented the Armenian Christians as a security threat. According to Ishaku, in 1915, all Christians in the Turkish Army were disarmed, retired and were killed. This is how Turkey became almost one 100% Muslim country today. For those who do not know. Remember the seven letters to the seven churches of Revelations 1-3. All those churches were located in today's Turkey. Islam has wiped out Christianity from Turkey. This was the exact model that Adolph Hitler used in Germany to wipe out six million Jews. In this regard, Ishaku, advice and encourage the Niger Delta people to always be at alert, and never lay down their arms. According to Ishaku (2018) there is what we call in Islam, the treaty of Hudaibiya. This is the peace agreement that their prophet, Mohammed had with the Meccans. The peace treaty was to last for ten years but Mohammed, seeing that the Meccans had relaxed, then he launched a military campaign two years into the peace treaty and that was how Mecca fell to Islam. Ishaku equally states that this was exactly late President Musa Yar

A'dua's plan when he gave the militants amnesty. Had he lived longer, the amnesty would have been stopped and action taken on them. Now, President Buhari actually thought that the militants had been fully disarmed, hence he stopped the amnesty. I guesses Jonathan, by the leading of the Lord empowered them even more militarily before he left office as the President of Nigeria. On the other hand, these cattle, on their own have turn to be a destructive instrument over the farm products, destroying the farms on their part, and rendering the farmers economically bankrupt in the bid to enrich the wealthy Fulani through the organized crime of the herdsmen and their modus of attacks.

Emergence of Herdsmen in the Nigeria state

Discussing the emergence of the Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria, a research fellow by name John, narrated a story on how King Yunfa, the Hausa Sarki in Gobir (now called Sokoto) hosted a Fulani immigrant called Usman Dan Fodiyo and his group in February 1804, who later wage a war against him and his people around 1808 and the outcome of this was their lost of lives, land and property to these immigrant who then took over the entire places. Gradually, since 1808 the whole of the northern region lost its kingdoms and were replaced by Fulani emirates. King Yunfa was killed in 1808 by the Fulani warrior (Usman Dan Fodiyo) who later established a Sokoto caliphate, making himself Sultan. Gradually, other Hausa kingdoms were pillaged and taken over by the Fulani emirs. The ethnic groups in the core north were the first victims of Fulani imperialism, a venture that occurred because the people were given access to grazing land as a result of the hospitality of the hosts. However, they failed to overrun the Bornu and Jukun kingdoms. Thus, the Shehu of Bornu and Aku Uka remain paramount till today. Similarly issue, the Afonja dynasty on their own case also compromised too, by allowing a Fulani warrior known as Janta Alimi to settle in Ilorin, as a result, the Fulani guerrillas killed Afonja in 1824, and Ilorin, a Yoruba town under the Oyo Empire, fell into Fulani hands, becoming an emirate under Sokoto caliphate till today. Even several attempts made by the Odua People's Congress (OPC) to revert to status quo and crown an Onilorin of Ilorin, became an exercise in futility. When these Fulani immigrant came to Oshogbo, for the same mission in 1840, the Yoruba warriors got wise and defeated the Fulani jihadists in Oshogbo. If these Yoruba warrior didn't defeated these Fulani immigrant at Oshogbo, there would have been Fulani "emirs" as rulers in Oyo, Alaafin, Ibadan, Owo,

Oshogbo, Ede, Ado, and Igede Ekiti today. In the same vein, when the Fulani immigrant arrived at Bini (now Benin) if the Bini Kingdom did not fight and repel the jihadists, they would have penetrated the Edo/Delta region beyond the present day Edo North Senatorial District which gave up and allowed the jihadists to overrun and Islamize them.

Herdsmen's modus operandi; those involved, and those behind them

According to Adisa (2015) the herdsmen terrorists are Fulani who are mostly non-Nigeria. There are about 5 million Fulani people in Nigeria and only about 3 million of them are Nigeria. The other 2 million came from outside the country. About 60% of the Fulani in Nigeria are governors, Pastors, Imams, Emirs, Sultan, House of Rep. members, Importers, Exporters, Oil well owners, Lecturers, Vice Chancellors, Ministers, Military personnel and military boys and Senators etc. the Fulani control all sectors of the northern economy. They own all the cattle being reared in Nigeria. The remaining 40% are the poor immigrant and they are in charge of the cattle owned by the Bourgeois Fulani. Research revealed that about 10% of the terrorists are Nigeria, and they live within the Hausa Fulani communities in Ama-Hausa and Garkis in the South--East and South-South regions.

The herdsmen terrorists do not own cattle. Their job is to kill. Most of them are employed by the cattle owners as "security men" whose job is to protect the cattle. They do not follow the cattle around, but move in separate vehicles along a defined route within the states where cattle are being reared. As observed by Adisa (2015), in Garki and Ama-Hausa settlements all over the country, there exists a few Nigeria Fulani (some are born in these states) who coordinate the cattle business. These Fulani either help to manage the family cattle or they are just contracted middlemen in charge of the business on behalf of various millionaire cattle owners. They are also millionaires. Under these middlemen, there are about 20 to 40 Fulani boys within the age bracket of 20 and 35. These are the unofficial Fulani herdsmen security team whose job is to protect the Fulani herdsmen cattle. There are also a group of Fulani herdsmen who rear the cattle from the north to the south. Some of them do not speak English and are so poor that they are paid a token for their job. They do not carry guns. They only carry arrows and machetes to help them navigate the bushes on their way down to the South. As revealed by Adisa (2015) the Ama-Hausas and Garkis harbor 80% of the herdsmen killers. The Garkis are mostly Hausas and other minorities from the north, but within

them, the herdsmen killers resides. These herdsmen “security personnel” do dressed differently from the normal Northern Nigeria within these settlements. They are young, less religious; most of them use drugs, and consume alcohol. Majority of the herdsmen terrorists are migrants from Chad, Niger, and other Fulani enclaves outside the Nigeria state. A small percentage of these Fulani youths are Nigeria born in the states where they reside. They are the ones vested with the responsibility of leading these Fulani on their regular rampage; serving as compasses to the blood-hungry terrorists.

Adisa, (2015), noted that herdsmen that accompany cattle from the North to the South per season do not own cattle: The cattle are owned by more prominent Fulani leaders in the country. Most Nigeria Fulani are no longer migratory herdsmen; they are Emirs, Sultans, Heads of Parastatals, oil barons, Imams, Christian Pastors, Governors, Federal Reps, and Senators. However, they still maintain their cultural ownership of cattle. These wealthy Nigerians increase their wealth through cattle rearing by using their not well off brothers from outside Nigeria to rear these cattle. Instead of investing in ranches and buying of grasses from the South, they prefer having their kinsmen imported from outside the country to take these cattle from the north to south seasonally; using the entire Nigeria space as their “grass kingdom”

Strategies Adopted In Attacking Their Rivalries

According to Adisa (2015), whenever there is a disagreement between the host communities and the herdsmen, or between herdsmen and farmers, the Fulani herdsmen who accompany the cattle will locate the nearest Fulani settlement and if there is none, they will locate the nearest Garki or Ama Hausa. When they arrive, they will narrate their story to the Fulani middlemen (cattle managers), who will notify their top Fulani herdsmen which in this case, include people like El Rufai and some governors and other top Fulani Bourgeois who own the cattle. At this point, a decision will be made about whether there should be an attack or not on the said village or host community. If an attack is sanctioned, then modalities will be mapped out and a date will be chosen for the attack. Most times, Fulani herdsmen in the military and police are notified and they will send a representative from their men at the neighboring settlements. At this point, arms cache will be opened and arms distributed to the participants which may be about 20 to 40 Fulani herdsmen who reside in the Garkis and Ama Hausas. These are the Fulani warriors whose job is to kill. Adisa further noted that, during an attack, every Fulani

person in the area knows there will be an attack and all will contribute to make sure it goes on successfully. Fulani in the higher levels of the military will ensure that all commands under them stand down, and the top Fulani police officers will do the same. At this point, the road will be clear for the Fulani herdsmen to carry their attacks. (Professor Charles Adisa. 2015)

Conclusion

Whenever we talk about herdsmen attack, we must understand that the attack was not carried out by the herdsmen we see escorting cattle on the roads and bushes. Rather, these attacks are well coordinated and approved by the influential men in Abuja and northern parts of the country. In this regard, government should come up with a solution to the herdsmen menace in the country. Accordingly, cattle colony/Ruga, grazing reserves or ranches stuff should have long been established. Hence it will be difficult now because the land is getting smaller. Meanwhile, the Federal Government should advice the herdsmen to stop attacking and killing the innocent farmers, stop feeding their cattle on the farmer's crops and products, not allow their cattle entering people's farms, as well as destroying farmers' products. By extension, Government should promulgate a law against feeding cattle on farmers' products. They should have a place of their own to graze and ranch their cattle.

Recommendation/way forward

In the course of carrying out a research on the issue of herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria, some suggestions that can bring sanity to the issue if adhered to were arrived at. In effect, Most of the Hausa/Fulani men and people from various local communities that came in contact with the researcher suggest a complete ban on grazing in all the states in Nigeria. Some equally argued that with the herdsmen's nature of encroaching on people's land and terrorizing them, any attempt to give them land would aggravate the problem rather than solving it. Flashing back, we remembered that President Goodluck Jonathan in 2014 came up with what he thought could be a way out, when he inaugurated an Inter-Ministerial Technical Committee on Grazing Reserves. On that note, Gabriel Suswan (PDP), former Governor of Benue state was appointed by President Goodluck Jonathan to head the political committee on grazing reserves. The committee report recommended recovery of all grazing routes encroached by farmers. In addition well meaning Nigerians suggested that the cattle should be penned in the north while government releases money

to people in the South to arrange grasses, process it, and send to the north as this is the best world practice. They equally stated that any attempt to give their lands to the herdsmen would definitely result to a civil war. To this end, people believed that this solution is very simple, like to ban grazing, establish ranches for the cattle in the north, pay the southerners to harvest grass and send to north and with this everyone would be pleased with the outcome. As observed, this solution is expected to generate one million jobs in the South and about 500,000 jobs in the North. With these, herdsmen terror will be completely eliminated.

In the words of Terrence Kuanam to Inspector General of police on the herdsmen attack on Benue people, “the Federal Government should assist and establish ranches in all the 36 states in the Nigeria. As observed, cattle Colony won't work. Ranching is the only way out to this issue. And this idea was supported by Hon. Mrs. Apedzan who noted that is better to encourage individual cattle owners to acquire land for ranching which is the best world practice in some countries in African and other civilized countries in the world. At this point Yinka Agunbiade (2016) revealed what the Deputy Senate President, Senator Ike Ekweremadu, identified ranching as the solution to the herdsmen issue with Nigeria farmers at the 2016 Convention of the world Igbo Congress held in New York, USA. Here, Senator Ekweremadu spoke on the menace of herdsmen in the various states in Nigeria and called on the government of the states affected by the herdsmen attacks to pass legislation, and to restrict cattle rearing to modern ranches, and to set up forest rangers to enforce such laws. Ekweremadu also encouraged governments to invest in constructing and leasing out modern ranches which he states will be a solution to this crisis and will equally encourage the production of healthier animals, Provide employment opportunity for the people and will add value to the farm products. Ekweremadu also state that ranching will Promotes peaceful co-existence between the herdsmen and Nigeria farmers, and will be a shift from armed bandits and terrorists acts to legitimate business, etc

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THE NIGERIAN STATE AND DEVELOPMENT: DIALYSIS OF BACKWARDNESS IN ABUNDANCE

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Abstract

The paper seeks to explain the rationale for stunted development of the Nigerian state, despite abundant natural and human resources at its disposal. Pathetic is the fact that the Nigeria state has recently been recognized as having the highest numbers of the poorest people in the world. This has made the need for a change in the development pattern of the country a categorical imperative. Adopting the descriptive method of enquiry as well as the capture theory as the analytical guide, the paper argues that, the distorted level of development in the Nigerian state is as a result of the capture instinct and unpatriotic nature of the Nigerian elite. Findings reveal that, the quest for development has been constrained owing to corruption and the politics of the Nigerian state. Nigeria's enormous resource endowments, measured against its level of development, show a great disparity. This has placed Nigeria in a backward position in all UN development scale. The paper recommends, among other things, a legal framework to make corruption a capital offence that would attract capital punishment on conviction as well as increased funding for science and technology-based education in the country. These would help secure for Nigeria a rapid level of development as well as upturn its current status as the world headquarters of poverty.

Keywords: Nigeria, State, Development, Poverty and Corruption.

Introduction

Nigeria became an independent state on 1st, October 1960 with a level of development considered at par with countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and Ghana to mention just a few. The estimate of Nigeria's natural resources in global scale is very high. Nigeria stock of potential wealth includes huge population of about 180 million, sixth largest crude oil producer with enormous natural gas and hydrocarbon deposits. It has extensive aquatic resources with the country divided into three halves by river Niger, Benue and the Delta tributaries and the associated aquatic wealth thereof. These provided

enormous expediencies for all year round irrigation. There are arable lands that support agricultural production yet development is stunted.

The leaders at independence promised to harness the abundant human and natural resources to provide development for the people to have long life expectancy and many other associate of development. Fifty eight years down the line, this has remained a mirage. Nigeria's enormous resources endowment, measured against its level of development seems a great paradox. According to the United Nation, the country has one of the world's lowest per capita social spending levels resulting in 65 percent of the 186 million citizens living in extreme poverty (USAID website, 2018). This situation is complemented by negative instances of unwarranted displacement, destruction of agricultural farmland and lack of agricultural practices in many areas as a result of the constant security threats. These combined with the poor initiatives toward rural, urban and general economic development has placed Nigeria in backward position in all the UN development scale.

Today, all the countries that were almost at the same developmental level with Nigeria in the 1960s are well ahead of Nigeria in Human Development Indices in all categories of development assessment. Recently, Nigeria has overtaken India as a nation with the highest number of poorest people in the global scale. Nigeria had performed poorly in all Human Development Index assessment, despite it great potentials both human and material. The enormous resource endowment of Nigeria has not been turn into development. This is the crux of the problem which the paper is set to interrogate and suggest ways that would lead Nigeria out of underdevelopment, given that her contemporaries have passed the stage of providing basic existential amenities to its citizens.

Conceptual Explications

This paper grapples with some major contending concepts, namely, state, development and poverty. Their fundamental and definitional conceptualizations are necessary for the purpose of clarity.

State: The concept of state has saturated not only the entire structure of political science but also the whole field of social sciences. It has featured as the central theme of both the traditional and modern political theory. This is why most scholars in the field of politics see it as the nervous system of political science. The concept of state can also be seen from either the liberal or Marxists perspectives.

From the freethinkers view point, Gilchrist (1957:17) cited in Agarwal (2005) opine that the state is a concept in political science and a moral reality which exists where a number of people living on a definite territory, are unified under a government which in internal matters is the organ for expressing their sovereignty and in external matters is independent of other government. Similarly, Gamer (2001), maintained that, the state is a community of persons, more or less numerous, permanently occupying a definite portion of territory, independent (or nearly so) of external control and possessing an organized government to which the great body of inhabitants render habitual obedience.

Furthermore, a state is seen as a people prominently occupying a fixed territory, bound together by common laws, habit and customs into one body politics, exercising through the medium of an organized government, independent sovereignty and the control over all persons and things within its boundaries, capable of making war and peace and entering into all international relations with the communities in the globe (Ekpe, 2007). The state plays an important role in the society. It is the most powerful and universal organisation. It is a exceptional and unique organisation. It is differentiated from other forms of association by its purpose, by the methods it employs to carry out those purposes, by having territorial limits and by its sovereignty. The primary purpose of the state is to maintain order and security as well as ensure economic wellbeing and development of its citizens. It does so by means of a system of laws backed by force (Agi, 2003).

Coker (2008), posit that the state has become more coercive in contemporary times, employing the apparatus of force in the process of implementing public policies and also control and legitimizes authority by maintaining the pattern of class domination and subordination. The state is more clearly expressed by a government and entails a number of permanent institutions, governmental bodies for policy formulation and making of laws; a judicial system with police and federal services to apply the law; and the armed forces for defense against external enemies, and if need be for putting down internal insurrection. Embedded in the conceptualization of the liberal scholars is the fact that, the state is a human community that claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.

On the other hand, the Marxist notion of the state is that it is a political organization of the privilege few (Bourgeoisie class) used for the purpose of exploitation and suppression of the working class. According to Marx (1978),

the state is an instrument of exploitation and coercion, and is the product and manifestation of the irreconcilable class antagonism. At every stage of its development, the society is divided into two antagonistic classes. And the state that comes into being is as a rule always dominated by a single class (the dominant class).

The dominant class is the one that controls the state and uses its machinery to further its exploitation of the working class. Lenin (1932), while further clarifying the above point maintain that, state is an organ for the oppression of one class by another and it creates order which legalize and perpetuates this oppression by moderating the collision between classes. The above position seems true of the Nigerian situation. Majority of the citizens mostly those at the lower level of the pyramidal structure of the country slide into poverty daily while some privilege few get richer because they control the machinery of the state and used same to enriched themselves at the expense of the masses. This practice distorts development in the country.

In relation to this paper a state denotes a legal entity with population, which is located within a clearly defined territory and with a government capable of exercising power and authority over it citizens without any restraint from external influence.

Development: The concept of development lacks a universally acceptable definition. The term development in contemporary usage is vague and imprecise. According to Meier, it is difficult to advance one precise meaning for the term “development”, and perhaps easier to say what development is not than what it is. The term has been subjected to myriad of interpretations and different approaches. The controversy also surrounds the manifestation and interpretation of the impact of the concept.

In the view of Meier (1988), development is as an instrumental process of overcoming poverty, absorbing the surplus labour and diminishing inequality. In this regard development implies emerging from poverty or the reduction or elimination of poverty, inequality and unemployment within the context of a growing economy.

According to Onah (2005), development is not static but is a continuous improvement in the capacity of the individual and society to control and manipulate the forces of nature for the enhancement of the living standard of the people in a society. This definition introduces another

dimension to the meaning of development, it analyses the human aspect of development, that is, the individuals who resides in a given state.

Thesaurus, (1971) also averred that the term refers to; Outgrowth, production, offering ‘to be the effect’ and ‘to be derived from’. It provides a lead to the point that development take place upon something that is planted or an intervention.

Ahmed (2007) also noted that development is concerned with the general upliftment in the material, social and psychological conditions of a given human society. He highlighted some indicators of development, which includes; a higher quality of life, higher income, better education, higher standards of health and nutrition, less poverty in society, a cleaner environment, more equal opportunities, greater individual freedom and richer cultural life amongst citizens of a given state. From the various meanings of development outlined, it can be deduced that development is not limited to economic growth or per capita income alone but is a concept that is all encompassing that analyses the economic, administrative, political, social, cultural, religious, and living standard of the people in a given society.

Dudley Seers (1969) conceives development as distributive justice. To him, development involves not only economic growth but also conditions which people in a country have adequate foods, jobs and the income equality among them. As he put it;

‘The questions to ask about a country’s development are these;
What has been happening to poverty?
What has been happening to unemployment?
What has been happening to inequality?’

To him, if all these three indices (poverty, unemployment and inequality) are at a relatively high rate, there is absence of development, and vice versa. It follows therefore that for a country to be classified as developed, there are parameters to look out for which are: the state of poverty, unemployment and inequality (Seers, 1969 cited in Gana, 1983:92)

Eight years later, in 1977, seers added the vital issue of self reliance. He argued further that emphasis in development should no longer be on overall growth rate or on patterns of distribution. The crucial targets from now on should be on;

Ownership as well as output in the leading sectors;

Consumption patterns that economize on foreign exchange,
(Including imports such as cereals and oil),
institutional capacity for research and negotiation; and cultural goals of the country
(Seers cited in Gana 1983:93)

According to Dudley Seers' conception, which was adopted as the operational explanation of 'development' for this study, its contents could be distilled to consist of the followings;

- i) The state should reduce 'poverty' particularly in the rural areas through the production of goods and services (investments), which would process the raw materials obtained within its economy through Keynesian policy framework.
- ii) Reduce 'unemployment' through generating industrialization by utilizing the resources available and creating agricultural inputs and strategies. Functional education at all levels particularly in the hinter land is a sine qua non in this direction.
- iii) Inequality in the state, the persistence inequality could be managed by the state through even distribution of developmental project especially in the rural sector and through progressive taxation in which the rich would have to pay more while the state deploys the accruing resources to infrastructural development.
- iv) Self-Reliance- industrialization, food production and sufficiency, and the consumption of local products, which would reduce imports and save foreign exchange. These also imply human capital accumulation.
- v) Institutional capacity-In the march towards Development, the state was enjoined, to create institutional capacity for research and innovation. These require the strengthening of all relevant institutions particularly those saddles with the responsibility of implementing rural development effort. A governmental structure resting on a sustainable development base is able to capture the above indices in its policy outputs coupled with sincerity of purpose on the part of the leaders to achieve development.

The Poor and Poverty: The challenges pose by the poor and poverty has been the subject of much interest to scholars. It is believed that no nation is

absolutely free from poverty. The main difference is the intensity and prevalence of this malaise (Agbor, 2010). That is why the concept of poverty has also been seen from various points (Ekpo and Uwatt, 2005), which in real term, has led to various definitions by prominent scholars. One of the definitions put forward by a prominent writer sees the poor as a people, with very little resources with which to meet their basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. Their quality of life is very low, inferior and deserving pity or sympathy. The poor are people whose resources are incapable of providing a socially acceptable standard of living (Essien, 2010).

In his own view, Chambers (2008) defines the poor as people living in poverty. This according to the author implies a general condition of deprivation which comprises of social inferior, isolation, physical weakness, vulnerability, powerlessness and humiliation. This means that the poor have no access to basic needs such as food, clothing and decent shelter and are unable to meet social and economic obligations.

In a personal observation Gordon (1977) stated that poverty clearly defiles a single and all encompassing definition, arising largely from its multi-dimensional nature and context specificity. The author noted that any society can effectively established its own definitions of poverty, that is, of the income level below which families cannot provide themselves an adequate standard of living. The author stated that there is no eternally fixed poverty standard applicable to all social circumstances. Even within one society at a given moment, different people will suggest different definition of poverty.

Contrary to the above view, Aluko (1975), maintained that poverty could be conceived from the perspective of an inadequate level of consumption expressed in insufficient food, clothing and shelter. The above view is corroborated by the explanation explicitly made by Sen (1987), when he claimed that poverty is the absence of certain capabilities which include largely being unable to participate in ones society with dignity. This is because the poor are voiceless, powerless and in a state of pronounced deprivation. The World Bank Development Report (1990) conceived of poverty as the inability to attain a minimum standard of living. In the same vein, Ravalion and Bidani (1994) maintained that poverty is the lack of command over basic consumption needs. It is obvious from these conceptions above that poverty expresses a condition of existence without the necessities of daily living. This existence is mostly associated with needs, hardship and lack of resources across a wide range of circumstances.

Agbor (2010) sees poverty as a deprivation of essential material needs and services. Its economic circumstances describe lack of wealth which involves the absence of capital, money, material goods or resources (in some cases natural resources). Socially, it evokes exclusionism, withdrawal syndrome, dependency and causes the tendency to live an unworthy life. The author contended that:

Being poor involve a lack of housing, food, medical care, and other necessities for maintaining life. If you are afflicted by poverty, as a matter of fact you are far from good food, better shelter, clothing, better and effective medical attention. The absence of the basic necessities of life and the lack of hope to acquire them therefore, defines poverty (Agbor, 2010:56).

Corroborating this view, Okereke (2014) posited that poverty is a condition of lack of the necessary resources needed to provide or procure those things that make for good living like good food, good health and good shelter. The author added that the poor are generally those who live below the standard accepted in any society as good life because they lack the means to do so.

Viewing from the context of Human Development, the United Nations Development programme UNDP, (1998) asserted that poverty is:

The denial of choice and opportunities most basic to human development – the opportunities to live a tolerable life not only materially but also psychologically, politically, socially and culturally. It also implies the lack of the abilities to make choices and use available opportunities purposefully (UNDP, 1998:10)

This view was again reiterated by the World Bank in its World Development Report of 2010/2011, when it stated that the notion of poverty includes vulnerability and exposure to risk, voicelessness and powerlessness. The World Bank saw poverty as pronounce deprivation in well-being (World Bank, 2010). In support of this opinion, Ekpo and Uwatt (2005), postulated that poverty has strong and significant element of various kinds of deprivation namely; personal and physical, economic, social, cultural and political deprivations.

According to this authors, physical deprivation manifests in poor health condition, poor nutrition, illiteracy or educational disability and lack of

self confidence. The important component of economic deprivation includes lack of access to property, income, factors of production etc. Social deprivation involves barriers to full participation in social, political and economic life manifesting either in lack of capabilities to live a healthy life with freedom or lack of access to resources to participate in customary activities. Cultural deprivation involves lack of access to values, beliefs, knowledge, information and attitude. Cultural deprivation prevents people from taking advantage of economic and political opportunities as well as controlling their destinies. Finally, political deprivation manifest itself in lack of political voice, denial of right and freedom of choice and movement, security and justice, occupation of lowly position in public institutions (powerlessness) and coercion through physical threat. Nigerians in large numbers are experiencing these types of deprivation on a daily basis.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this paper was conceptualized to be that, despite Nigeria's great potentials in terms of natural and human resources. The country development has been distorted. Fifty eight years after independence, Nigeria's abundant resource endowment when measured against its level of development showcase a contrasted parity.

Consequent upon this, Nigeria in the midst of bounteous human and natural resources has recently been crowned the world headquarters of poverty, ahead of India. It has recently been reported that Nigeria has 92.1 percent of its population living under 5.5 dollar per day. India has 86.8 percent and Ethiopia 84.7 percent (World Bank & Brooking Institute, 2018).

This situation is complemented by negative instances of unwarranted displacement, destruction of agricultural farmland and lack of agricultural practices in many areas as a result of the constant security threats. These combined with the poor initiatives toward rural, urban and general economic development, has place Nigeria in a backward position in all UN development scale. Poverty has been on the increase, unemployment has also been on the increase while the gap between the poor and the rich is widening in the Nigerian state. All these are indicators of underdevelopment. The petroleum oil which is our major foreign exchange earner is an exhaustible resource, our land areas are being degraded daily, yet no sustainable development effort has been made to cater for the future generation.

The eminent deficit of development in the Nigerian state after fifty eight years of self government constitutes a problem. Because every state has as one its core mandate, ensuring development in human, social, economic, cultural and other sectors of the society within its territorial jurisdiction and this is yet to be achieved in Nigeria, despite the nation's resources endowment.

Framework of Analysis: Capture Theory

It is the thoughtfulness of the discourse that the most appropriate prism through which the phenomenon could be understood and analyzed is the capture theory. The proponents of this theory are Dutta, (2009) and Onuoha (2009). The theory explains the use of privileged positions by the privileged few to pillage the resources meant for the common good (development). According to Onuoha (2009), the beneficiaries of the pillaged resources are particular vested interests that have concentrated financial stake in the outcomes of political decisions. The theory also explains a phenomenon where resources transferred for the benefit of the masses (development) is usurped by a few powerful, usually politically and economically advantaged groups, at the expense of the less economically and politically influential groups.

Institutionally, Capture occurs when policy outcomes are not consciously targeted at particular policy problems, rather particular vested interests tactically become the focus of policy making through means that are devoid of transparency. Under this scenario, the masses are made to suffer for decisions they would never have made if given the choice.

Capture theorists (Dutta, 2009 and Onuoha, 2009) are also of the opinion that Elites are rent-seekers who use their redistributive powers to enrich themselves and certain powerful groups. Today, many of the elite have acquired wealth through connections to the state or via participation in the state itself through politics, the civil service or military. These actions of the captors have left Nigeria's development in a stalemate.

In Nigeria, captors do not only fortify their privileged positions, they brazenly express policy preferences that tend to produce more pain than pleasure for the governed. These policy preferences are largely expressed to satisfy vested interests in the executive, parliament and organized private sector; and thus reducing the governed segments to negligible entities. Due to the acquisitiveness of the Nigerian elites seeking for greater economic fortunes, the policy arena is politically and economically 'garrisoned' to

protect and satisfy these narrow interests to the detriment of the welfare of the citizenry.

As a result, government institutions are defectively structured such that they cannot respond effectively and efficiently to the development demands of the masses particularly in the rural areas. This situation is, in reality, a major cause of stagnated growth and development as well as socio economic backwardness of the Nigerian state. According to Lawal (2007), Nigeria therefore presents a typical case of a country in the world whose development has been undermined and retarded by corruption through consistent and continuous capture of the state apparatus by vested interest.

The capture phenomenon, is achieved through the process of selection bias. Selection bias implies that there is a pattern of distribution of social benefit made in order to favour the economically advantaged groups. The pattern could be defined by caste status (an upper caste social group can discriminate against lower caste groups in the society); by political party affiliation; by economic position; by religious affiliation etc. This situation constitutes a case for capture in Nigeria where certain segments of the country are given preference in appointment and development projects by the federal government without regard to the federal character principles, while other regions are insulated.

This is why Sanyaolu (2003), did not mince words to state that, the transformation of the polity would be hundred times better than what was obtainable, if at least a reasonable fraction of money allocated in the budget were spent on their allocation sector. In other word, the needs of the poor people in the rural areas would have been fully provided for, if the funds pump into development programmes were judiciously utilized in the country.

In connection to the prevailing situation in Nigeria, Uneke (2010), identifies a number of damaging effects caused by the capture phenomenon in the country. These include greed which enables public decision makers to deliberately distort public policies in a bid to create opportunities for graft through bribery, extortion, embezzlement and contract kickbacks; and the cost of doing government business is high as the costs of public projects are usually inflated. Even worse is the fact that a lot of public projects for which costs have been wholly or partially paid in advance are either abandoned or project costs reviewed, usually always upwards. The implication is that rapacious corruption not only increase government expenditures without commensurate tangible results, but scarce funds are siphoned, or even

abandoning otherwise important projects (Uneke, 2010:120). A state that is desirous of development in almost all sector of its national life must therefore halt all pathologies relating to government capture.

Relating this theory to the study, it is worthy of note that the gravity of the Nigerian situation is located in the capture-seeking behaviour of state managers. The constant transfer of public wealth to private realm by elites, cabals and captors which translates to wealth dissipation has proved costly and harmful to development policy successes in Nigeria. The undiminished force with which the transfer occurs is very worrisome. While development is nose-diving in the Nigerian state, the elite capture 'market' is productively blossoming. The masses who should benefit from public decision-making have become the victims of coordinated oppression from the non-benevolent duty bearers. These explains why the Nigerian state have not been able to measure up with it contemporaries in the development ladder decades after independence.

The Orientation of the Study

The orientation of study which the discourse adopted was the qualitative approach, which made the search exploratory in nature. This implies that it was meant to probe the underlying reasons for Nigerian state arrested development even in the midst of abundant resources both human and material and identify motivation for failure of leaders to galvanize and translate the nation resources into development. It was conducted to determine the nature of the problem and to provide a better understanding of the problems. The approach also sought an explanation for the obvious inaction of the state to develop critical sector of the economy. Sectors like power, education, health, agriculture, rural infrastructure etc, even though these areas would easily accelerate growth in other sectors of the economy and improve Nigeria ranking in the Human Development Index (HDI). The study relied robustly on secondary data, drawn from government records, published works on the issue where they existed and the internet.

State and Development: The Nexus

The state is the most powerful political entity in the social system. The state came to be at the end of 30 years European war in Germany. The

attempts to resolve these wars led to the carving out of areas of political jurisdiction defined by Machiavelli as state. A state then became a territorial area under the effective control of a particular authority. The original rationale for constituting a state was to provide for people, what they could not individually and collectively provide for themselves (development), while guaranteeing individual freedom to pursue whatever is within the bounds of the laws of the state.

From the foregoing, it is the responsibility of the state to explore and manage the natural resources derivable from its territory, set terms for the exploitation of the resources as well as use same for the development of it human, economic, social, cultural and other sectors within jurisdiction.

It is a truism that state and development are interlinked. Development which is seen as instrumental process of overcoming persistent poverty, absorbing the surplus labour and diminishing inequality takes place within the confined of a state. Since men are not equal in natural endowment of physical strength but equal in the need to meet material requirement of life, the purpose of the state is to harness the scares resources within its jurisdiction to enhance the life of everybody in the state.

Unfortunately, the Nigerian state has fallen short of expectation in terms of development because statesmen/ leaders are not patriotic; hence conduct the affairs of the state in a personalized manner.

Conclusion

In the present circumstances, the Nigerian state can best be described as a country “so rich, yet so poor”. It is the capture instinct and unpatriotic nature of the Nigerian political elite that have contributed to a stunted development of the Nigerian state in the midst of abundant natural and human resources. In order to drive the processes of development in Nigeria, there should be an attitudinal change amongst the people particularly those at the helm of affairs in the country. This is the only way to get Nigeria to try to pull majority of its citizens out of the poverty line and get close to the level of development of its contemporaries.

Recommendations

The development of a legal framework that will make corruption a capital offence is a *desideratum* in the country. When corruption is a made a capital offence it would attract capital punishment on conviction. And this

would also help reduce corrupt practices to the barest minimum. It would deter people from engaging in capture or diverting funds meant for development in the country. China is an example in this regard.

The funding of science and technology based education is a necessity to fast-tracking development. Scientific knowledge is needed to create genetically modified seedlings toward food sufficiency, manage the degraded environment and redress the imbalance in the population on the one hand and decreasing food index on the other. Science and technology education must be funded if the country wants to upturn the recent reports that made her the world capital of poverty.

Furthermore, the establishment of industries, which would process the various natural resources into finished goods in each sector of the national economy, is imperative. Where this is done, the agricultural sector of the economy would have a meaning thereof and a value chain would be created to process raw materials into more value goods. This would generate income into the economy and would reduce the population of those in the poverty bracket. It is only through this; among other measures that meaning development in the Nigerian state can be ensured.

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