



Comparison of President Olusegun Obasanjo and Muhammadu Buhari Civil Administrations of Socio-Economic Affairs

Fatima Abubakar Katcha

Department of Political Science, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai, Nigeria
fatikatcha@gmail.com

Abstract

The socio-economic development of any society is relatively dependent on the nature, character and pattern of its administrative leadership. Since its independence, Nigeria witnessed different administrations or regimes with their concomitant implications on the socio-economic development and well-being of its citizens. This paper examines the President Obasanjo's (1999-2007) and Buhari's (2015-date) administrations and their implications on socio-economic development in Nigeria. The data gathered are mainly from the secondary sources and analyzed using the content method of data analysis. The paper adopts the elite theory to serve as a theoretical foundation for the study. The comparative study revealed that socio-economic development remain part of the major challenges of leadership bedeviling both administrations in Nigeria. However, the Buhari's administration demonstrated much leadership inapt in addressing the socioeconomic challenges of Nigeria. Top on the scale are insecurity, corruption, pervasive poverty and loss of lives and properties, high level of crimes among others, which further affects the socio-economic well-being of Nigerians. The paper concluded that even though the fight against corruption and insecurity are on the front burner of both administrations, more proactive measures need to be put in place in tackling the menace headlong, and issues such as high levels of poverty, massive unemployment and the problem of immunity clause need to be revisited.

Keywords: Administration, Insecurity, Corruption, Development, Socio-economic development, Nigeria.

Introduction

Most African countries still struggle over the socio-economic development of their various societies. Although, this failure has been always related to bad leadership which mostly plays significant role at the expense of forces or factors that are more harmful to the growth and socio-economic development of these countries. The most prominent among is the inability of administrative leadership across these countries to tap, initiate and transform the societies in line with the resources (both human & Material) at their disposal within their geographical domain. In other words, the socio-economic development of any society is intemperately dependent on the nature, character and pattern of its administration. For instance; Freedom, Christian and Temilola (2015) noted that, in terms of resources, Nigeria is endowed with enormous natural and human resources sufficient to place it among the first 20 developed countries of the world. It is also the Africa's largest producer



of oil and the sixth largest oil producing country in the world. Yet, these have not been translated or reflected in the socio-economic conditions of the Nigerian citizens.

Since its independence in 1960 to date, Nigeria witnessed fourteen different administrations with their concomitant implications on the structure of socio-economic development and well-being of the citizens across the country, despite its abundant human and natural resources. The return of civil rule in 1999 gave Nigerian citizens a high expectation that the new era of socio-economic development and welfare of citizens has come to stay, but today these expectations were defeated by the high level of poverty, unemployment, corruption, insecurity among others that deteriorated the inferior social, economic and well-being of the common people in the country. On one hand, the current administration under President Buhari's leadership, during his campaign period vowed to end all the social and economic menaces if elected into office in 2015. On the other hand, many people believed that having assumed office he once occupied as a military officer and for which he contested four times, his administration is expected to urgently tackle several challenges that have besieged Nigeria over the last three decades (Freedom et.al, 2015). However, things are even getting worse than expected especially considering the massive number of unemployed youths that are roaming the streets which contributed to the high level of poverty and different sort of crimes across the country.

Therefore, the concern of this paper is to examine Obasanjo and Buhari's administrations and their concomitant implications on the socio-economic development in Nigeria. Some of the specific questions raised by the study include: what are the challenges making Nigerian leaders perform worse than expected particularly on the issues of citizen's welfare and socio-economic development of the country? Is there any effort put in place to improve the citizen's welfare and socio-economic development in the country? What are the successes or failures of such an effort, if any? Consequently, the paper is divided as follows: introduction which has been covered, conceptual issues, and theoretical discourse, challenges of President Obasanjo and Buhari's administrations, and their Implications on socio-economic development in Nigeria, and conclusion and recommendations.

Conceptual Clarifications

Administration

The term administration has been thoroughly defined by different scholars in the field. For instance, in the words of Gladden (1952), Administration means, to care for or look after people, and/or to manage society's affairs. For Marx (1959), Administration is a determined action taken in pursuit of a conscious purpose. It is the systematic ordering of affairs and the calculated use of resources aimed toward achieving societal goals. Administration has also been defined as the organism and use of men and materials to accomplish a purpose (Nigro, 1971). In the same direction, Simon (1947) maintained that administration is the activities of groups cooperating to accomplish common societal goals. According to Gullick (1937), Administration has to do with getting things done, with the accomplishment of defined objectives. Bercley (1991), conceptualized the term "administration" as a process involving human beings jointly engaged in working towards achieving common goals of society. Arising from the foregoing definitions, however, this paper adopts the meaning of the term or concept, looking at it, more, from the perspective of political administration. The term political administration is so crucial that it elicits broader discussions among scholars in recent times.



It hence, stresses the relation between politics and administration. Anderson, (2000), for instance, suggested that the level of politics should concentrate on the general political outlining (agenda setting) and entrust the remaining to the administration. It has been observed that politicians make their decisions based on single cases, which ought to be an administrative matter entirely.

For the purpose of clarity, political administration, as it applies to this paper, can be seen as the methodology and vision adopted by various leaders to address certain issues or problems, which no doubt, has a significant effect on the well-being of people and the overall socio-economic development of the country. For instance, Nigeria, under the administration of late former President Yar'adua, adopted the vision of the 7 Points Agenda, which was replaced with the Transformation Agenda by his successor Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, even though the program was not completed. While, the current administration under the leadership of President Muhammadu Buhari set to eradicate corruption and insecurity in Nigeria, which left the transformation agenda of former president Goodluck Ebele Jonathan abandoned.

Development

The concept of development is like other concepts in social sciences that cannot be subjected to a single definition. Todaro (1997) argued that development is a multi-dimensional process involving the re-organization and re-orientation of an entire economic and social system that involves radical changes in institutional, social, and administrative structures as well as in popular attitudes, customs, and even beliefs of people in the society. Development is, therefore, defined as a planned and comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims to continually improve the well-being of the entire individuals of a defined geographical area. The individuals would be actively involved in open, meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits (Fritz, n.d). On one hand, Gboyega (2003) conceptualized development as an idea that embodies all attempts to improve the conditions of human existence in all ramifications. It implies improvement in the material well-being of all citizens, not the most powerful and rich alone, in a sustainable way such that today's consumption does not imperil the future, it also demands that poverty and inequality of access to the good things of life be removed or drastically reduced. It seeks to improve personal physical security and livelihoods and expansion of life chances. It is reasonable to know that development is not only an economic exercise but also involves social, economic and political issues and permeates all aspects of societal life (Lawal & Oluwatoyin, 2011). On the other hand, Gauba (1981) define development as a process in which a system or institution is transformed into stronger, more organized, more efficient and more effective form and proves to be more satisfying in terms of human wants and aspirations. Therefore, development is primarily a positive phenomenon. It stands for the improvement of human life in all spheres.

Urien (2014) further observed that development does not only means capital accumulation and economic growth but the condition in which people in a country have adequate food, job and income inequality among them is greatly reduced. This is because the major objective of development is to improve the level standard of people and provide the opportunity to develop their potential. Therefore, development in this context means the ability of political authority to combine both human and natural resources to improve the quality of people's lives through the provisions of security, quality education, adequate health facilities, constant water and electricity supply and all



other necessary infrastructural facilities that can provide a conducive atmosphere for the people to build up their abilities within the state.

Socio-Economic Development

Socio-economic development generally refers to the sustained or concerted actions of policymakers and communities aimed at promoting the standard of living and economic health of a specific area. Such actions include the development of human capital, critical infrastructure, regional competitiveness, health, safety, literacy and other initiatives (Ukpong and George, 2012). Olukayode (2014) asserted that socio-economic development is a product of development, thus, can be seen as the processes of both social and economic transformation in a society, which embraces changes taking place in the social sphere mostly of an economic nature. It is made up of processes caused by exogenous and endogenous factors which determine the course and direction of the development. To him, socio-economic development is measured with indicators, such as GDP, life expectancy, literacy, levels of employment and equality in one hand, and on the other hand, changes in less-tangible factors are also considered, such as personal dignity, freedom of association, personal safety and freedom from fear of physical harm, and the extent of participation in civil society.

Socio-economic development, therefore, refers to the various authoritative efforts, initiatives, policies and programmes aimed at improving the quality of social life and economic well-being of the majority members of the society. Skills acquisition, poverty alleviation programmes, equality, provision of quality education, health facilities, employment and security, constant water and electricity supply, roads, and agricultural facilities are the major factors that determine the level of socio-economic development of a country.

Theoretical Foundation

To explain and analyze the challenges of both administration and its concomitant implications on socio-economic development in Nigeria, the Elite theory could be more relevant and useful, because of its ability and strength to identify the character of those who actually ruled or administered the society. This theory originates from the writings of Gaetano Mosca (1858–1941), Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923), Robert Michels (1876–1936), and Max Weber (1864–1920). Mosca (1939) for instance, emphasized the ways in which tiny minorities outorganize and outsmart large majorities, adding that “political classes” (i.e. political elites) usually have “a certain material, intellectual, or even moral superiority” over those they govern. Pareto (1968), postulated that in a society with truly unrestricted social mobility, elites would consist of the most talented and deserving individuals; but in actual societies, elites are those most adept at using the two modes of political rule, force and persuasion, and who usually enjoy important advantages such as inherited wealth and family connections. Michels (1962), rooted elites (oligarchies) in the need for large organizations for leaders and experts, in order to operate efficiently, as these individuals gain control of funds, information flows, promotions, and other aspects of organizational functioning that are geared toward the development of an organization, power becomes concentrated in their hands. Weber (1978) held that political action is always determined by the principle of small numbers which means the superior political manoeuvrability of small leading groups. In mass states, this element is ineradicable.



However, the term political elite can also be defined as a group of high stratum decision-makers in a concrete political structure which monopolizes political power, and influences major social, political and economic policies that are geared towards the socio-economic development and wellbeing of people in the various structure of society. Thus, the main duty of the political elite to the public as a whole is to reconstruct society by attempting to mobilize and tap available resources necessary for the socio-economic development of the state. Yet, the political elite class in Nigeria seems to assumed different dimension that is unusual of realistic functions in a development context. In other words, the formation and conduct of Nigeria's political elite group have not been translated into a source of socio-economic development in the country. This is in spite of the observation made by Purcell in Ojo (2006), that powerful initiatives from within the political elite groups are critically important for national development. Presently, the crisis of socio-economic development, induced by the political administrative elite, is the most serious problem facing Nigeria. The country has remained largely underdeveloped despite the presence of huge mineral and human resources. Six decades after the end of foreign domination, Nigeria is still fighting with problems such as a high poverty rate, lack of basic infrastructural facilities in all sectors of the economy, corruption, unemployment, high mortality rate, political crisis and insecurity of lives and property among others.

Olusegun Obasanjo Administration's Policy Agenda (1999-2007)

Following years of economic stagnation under military rule, with the coming of the fourth republic Nigeria embark on comprehensive reform programmes during the civil rule of President Obasanjo administration. The programmes were based on the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) and focused on four main areas; improving the macroeconomic environment, pursuing structural reforms, strengthening public expenditure management, and implementing institutional and governance reforms.

Extend reforms to the sub-national levels: the state governments adopted the same programmes known as state economic empowerment and development strategies (SEEDS) in line with NEEDS which was only adopted by a handful of states. Moreover, fiscal decentralization in Nigeria implies that states and local governments are responsible for half of government consolidated expenditures. Posing independence of their expenditures decisions for social services such as health and education. Though, corruptions, low capacity and weak institutions at the sub-national level hinder the ability to implement public policies for smooth achievement of set goals.

Focus on non-oil growth and employment generation: this involves movement from micro to macroeconomics stabilizations. By so doing we move from oil sectors to a more diversified economy, to reduce poverty, improve agricultural reforms, and solid minerals.

Improvement of domestic business climates: the administration gave a proper environment for small and large scale entrepreneurs. Survey shows that ranking increased marginally from 109 out of 175 in 2005, and 108 out of 175 countries in 2006. However, challenges such as computerizing land registration titles, and custom reforms, which doing business requires remain a priority in the future.

Infrastructures expansion and privatizations: Due to poor infrastructures such as poor roads and railways transportation and ports, power sectors, etc, government tried to ensure quality and



quantitative improvement of these sectors. Obasanjo tried to improve public-private partnership (PPP), and many organizations were privatized such as housing and power sectors, but efforts were aborted by one factor or another.

Strengthen domestic institutions: CBN is one of the strong domestic institutions that support long-term growth and development, by ensuring monetary policies are well achieved. The National Assembly in 2006 drafted legislation on fiscal responsibility bill to ensure budget transparency and fiscal reforms. The public procurement bill, the NEITI bills, various tax reforms bills, CBN/BOFI act amendment bill, the ports bills, anti-trust bill/competition bills, and downstream gas bill as well as EFCC and ICPC.

Obasanjo's Challenges and Implications for Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria

Undoubtedly the bane of the Nigerian State is leadership. Nigeria has not been fortunate to have purposeful and visionary leadership that can help galvanize the country to the pinnacle of socio-economic and political growth and development. The situation is even more horrendous under the military jackboots that are not responsible to anybody but themselves. This is in addition to gross violation of the constitution, mismanagement of the national economy, misappropriation of public funds, and the centralization of a pluralistic country like Nigeria, scant regard for the rule of law, due process, judiciary and constitutionalism.

So, it was with joy and very high expectation that the Nigerian populace received the government of Obasanjo in 1999. It was thought then that, at least since democracy is a government of the people, for the people and by the people. It will be a government that is considerate and carry out programmes that will ameliorate the deplorable conditions of the Nigeria people and take the national economy out of the woods. It was expected that the government would be concerned about the needs, aspirations, desires, plights, expectations and concerns of the Nigerian people. All these have been nothing but a tantalizing mirage. Not only was misanthropic economic policies pursued, to the Obasanjo's government that the people amounts to nothing in its estimation. This was the period when there was constant friction between the legislature and executive occasioned by the autocratic nature of President Obasanjo, this is coupled with the ceaseless violation of the various provisions of the constitution and the systematic institutionalization of Ghana-Must-Go as an instrument of political settlement.

It will be recalled that in the first four years of the Obasanjo administration, Nigeria was in the wilderness, as the President kept gallivanting throughout the globe, not minding the multiplicity of encumbrances the country is enmeshed in. He is rather more interested in what the international community thinks about him. This is the real reason that the developmental dividends of democracy in Nigeria have not percolated to the people that actually needs them. Instead of setting goals and targets that can positively move the country, he plays the politics of divide and rule, ethnic sentiment, religious passion, exclusionist agenda and runs a- one- man- show.

In 2003, when he was re-elected and since he started his so-called reforms programmes, things have not dramatically improved for the Nigerian people. The price of petroleum products has been increased 11 times; as a result of the privatization programme hundreds of thousands of people have lost their means of livelihood. In fact, according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2006) report, over 70 per cent of the entire Nigeria population lives on less than less than



\$1 per day. Indeed, when the economic programmes of the government were put together, it was hurriedly done without wide consultations. Today, in Nigeria many people don't know what NEEDS is, or what is in the NEEDS document? The various dramatis personae in the Nigerian economy do not know what NEEDS stands for. So, if people are not generally informed of these basic facts, how can they work in tandem with the government to bail Nigeria out of the protracted economic morass? That is why nothing is working in the country today. Today, in Nigeria, healthcare centers are worse than mere consulting clinics, education sector is in a shambles, agriculture is in a very pitiable state as Nigeria imports most of what it consumes, housing is just for the very affluent, roads are in a deplorable state of disrepair, solid minerals development is virtually not existent, power supply is terrible even after when over \$1 billion have been expended on the crucial sector, adequate water supply is still a tall dream, yet there is constant water and power supply when compare to neighbor states like Ghana, Benin Republic and Togo, the per capita income, GNP, GDP and industrial capacity utilization are abysmally low. So, what concrete things can the government point to as achievement, if it is telecommunications, for instance, it is a big rip-off, it would be recalled that Nigerians, fought tooth and nail before the per second billing system came on board, ditto the price of SIM cards, there is also the problem of network failures and other connectivity problems associated with telecoms in Nigeria, and we know what obtains in different countries of the world, why is Nigeria different.

It is instructive to note the 1999 constitution which Obasanjo swore on oath to uphold, gave specific instruction as to how the economy should be managed. For instance, section 16(1) b state very clearly that the state shall, "control the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity". Section 16 (2) c stipulates that, "the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individual or of a group; and section 16(2) d explains that, "suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, reasonable national minimum living wage, old age care and pensions, and unemployment, sick benefits and welfare of the disabled are provided for all citizen". The government has failed to do any of this, yet democracy is predicated on the rule of law and constitutionalism.

It is unfortunate that government points to the re-consolidation exercise of banks from N2billion to N25billion, but the fact is that the people of Nigeria have not been empowered enough to stabilize and propel the internal dynamics of Nigeria's productive force. And, are the banks actually re-capitalized? Again, why has a lot of local or domestic companies' closed shop in Nigeria? Why has the so-much talked about foreign investment eluded the country? Yes, the government of the day (Obasanjo regime) said alot about having so much cash in the foreign reserve, but these are monies generated as a result of increase in oil prices in the international market, and not because of the propensity of the domestic manufacturing sector to produce massive and compete at the world market. In any case, why stockpile cash, when there are different area of the economy begging for attention?

Thus, poverty and unemployment became the order of the day, corruption writs large and many things seemed not to be working. Unfortunately, this is the same government of president Obasanjo that wants to sit-tight, until the third term agenda was roundly defeated in the National Assembly.



Now, the same self- government and the Ahmadu Ali led garrison politics wanted to impose a candidate on the Nigerian people. Certainly this is not the type of government and people Nigerians bargained for. Nigerians deserve a better deal. Nigerians have never had a true democratically elected government in the real sense of the word, as the polity has been highly militarized. What it has done since the commencement of Obasanjo’s administration reform programme is to implement policies as churned out by the international financial organizations and donor agencies, however none of this policies can effectively guarantee organic development, what it has done is to encourage the development of underdevelopment, as well as promote capital flight while making the Nigerian economy perpetually subservient or eternally tied to the apron strings of the international finance capital.

Impact of Obasanjo’s administration on socioeconomic development

During the 8 years of Obasanjo’s administration, the government was dominant of dictatorship and maladministration. However, it was able to make a lot of achievements in telecommunication, aviation and other transportations; management of Niger Delta restiveness, oil and gas sectors, agricultural sectors, labour and industrial relations, police reforms, manufacturing sectors, tourism, solid minerals, sports, child trafficking, pension, employment and jobs, inflations level, poverty reductions, ethnic and religious harmony, etc.

Thus, the administration made some other outstanding achievements: Paying off our suffering sovereign debt to Paris and London clubs of credits nations. Which was champion by indefatigable World Bank vice president in Washington USA and later become minister of finance Mrs, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo Iweala. So also, foreign debt/debt services, telecommunication sectors, power sectors, postal services, armed forces and internal security, housing and urban sectors, banking and financial sectors, foreign investment, trade, ratting and investment, drugs control and NAFDAC, Drugs control/NDLEA, human and child trafficking, anti-corruption war and good governance/EFCC and ICPC, human rights records, foreign affairs, and domestic debts payments among others.

Muhammad Buhari Administration’s Policy Agenda (2015-2022)

1. Public declaration of assets and liabilities by all political appointees.
2. Inaugurated the National Council on Procurement as stipulated in the Procurement Act. The Federal Executive Council, which has been turned into a weekly market for government contracts, will concentrate on its principal function of policymaking.
3. Review and implement audit recommendations by Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI).
4. Work with the National Assembly towards the immediate enactment of a Whistle Blower Act.
- 5 Work with National Assembly to strengthen EFCC and ICPC by guaranteeing institutional autonomy including financial and prosecutorial independence and security of tenure of officials.
- 6 Ensure that all MDAs regularly comply with their accountability responsibilities to Nigerians through the National Assembly.
- 7 Work with the leadership of the National Assembly to cut down the cost of governance.
- 8 Present a National Anti-Corruption Strategy.
- 9 Make the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) an autonomous and operational agency.



10 Encourage proactive disclosure of information by government institutions in the Spirit of the Freedom of Information Act.

11 End all private jet and first-class foreign travel for government employees, construction of roads as well as train stations, youths' empowerment, and anchor borrowers among others.

However, there are numerous challenges under Buhari's administration from 2015-2022 ranging from Insecurity such as banditry, Corruption, maladministration, immunity of prosecuting political office holders, Pervasive poverty and massive unemployment, etc.

Buhari's Challenges and its Implications for Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria

As a matter of fact, every regime or administration in Nigeria has always been accompanied by many challenges that have implications, which can either be positive or negative, progressive or deteriorative on the socio-economic development of citizens. As noted by Lawal and Oluwatoyin (2011), the nature of leadership in Nigeria has not been able to engender any meaningful national development, in spite of her huge resources endowment. This has greatly affected her quest to improve the quality of life of her citizens. Poverty, unemployment and starvation still pervade the nook and cranny of the country associated with the socio-economic development of the country.

Insecurity

Even though the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria has been weakened down by the Nigerian Military Forces in the North-eastern Nigeria (Nigerian Bulletin, 2016), but other crimes such as banditry and kidnapping, militancy in the Niger Delta, herdsman/farmer crisis, armed robbery, cultism, domestic violence, assassination and hooliganism, and rape among others persist, threatening the lives and properties of people vis-à-vis affecting their social and economic lives across the country. For instance; Nigerian Bulletin (2016) recorded some of the people that have suffered from the issue of kidnapping, in fact, some were even killed since the inception of 2016. Among include; Senator Iyabo Anisulowo in Ogun State, Colonel Sama'ila Inusa who was kidnapped and later killed by his abductors the same day in Kaduna state, the Permanent Secretary of Osun State Ministry of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning, Mrs Adebimpe Ogunlumade, her driver and a Director from the same Ministry Mr Tajuddeen Badejoko who accompanied her were kidnapped in Kogi state. While, in the same state, a female lecturer in the Department of Biological Sciences at the Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi was also abducted and killed after collecting the ransom from her family. Again, kidnappers abducted and killed the newly appointed transition Committee Chairman of Jos East Local Government Area of Plateau State, APC Chieftain in Rivers State, Elyon Ntiro Elijah and Chief Ibibia Walter were reportedly kidnapped a few hours to the commencement of the state's re-run elections, Nancy Keme Dickson who is a sister of Bayelsa State Governor, Seriake Dickson was also Kidnapped in December 2015. Also, the Lagos Command of the Nigerian Police recorded 51 and 25 kidnapped cases in 2016 and in 2017 respectively (Vanguard, 2017).

On the other hand, the issue of banditry and the herdsman/farmer crisis today have taken a new dimension, threatening security and also affecting the socio-economic life of people across the country. Therefore, the issue of insecurity is one of the major challenges of the current administration which if not tackled decisively would continue to have negative effects on the social and economic well-being of the people across the country.



Corruption

Nigeria has been consistently rated among the most corrupt countries in the world by Transparency International in its Corruption Perception Index. As part of his top priorities, immediately after the inaugural ceremony, President Muhammadu Buhari set up a Presidential Adversary Committee Against Corruption (PACAC) headed by Prof. Itse Sagay and among the mandate of the committee was to formulate a strategy and co-ordinate the anti-corruption war of the administration, ensuring that all sectors of the Nigerian society are involved (Igbuzor, 2016). Due to the commitment of the administration to fighting corruption, between 29 May 2015 and 25 May 2016 alone, President Buhari recovered N3.4 trillion, including recoveries under interim forfeiture (Cash & Assets) (This day, 2016). And again, through the new Whistle blowing Policy introduced by the Federal Ministry of Finance, about \$160m and another N8 billion stolen government funds were recovered within its first two months of operation (Leadership Newspaper, 2017).

However, there are cases of corruption under President Buhari's administration committed by some prominent politicians and administrators. For instance, N270 million to allegedly clear grass for IDPs was diverted by the former secretary to the federation Babachir Lawal. At the states level, the corrupt practices accompanied by the lack of accountability and transparency in spending public funds remain the order of the day, particularly among the state governors. As matter of fact, in some states, paying worker's salaries alone became a headache, not to talk of even infrastructural or socio-economic development and well-being of the state's members. In line with this, Budget (2017) observed that the allocation, utilization and spending of public funds remain unclear, uncoordinated, and brazen, given most of the state government's inability to acknowledge the presence or wishes of the same Nigerians who voted for them and in whose names these funds are disbursed. All of these indicated that most of the state governments do not concern much about the welfare and socio-economic well-being of their people, but are rather interested in diverting the public funds into their private affairs, particular due to their selfish nature, motivated by corrupt mindsets, lack of accountability and transparency within the system, thereby making life difficult for common men across the states and the country as a whole.

Non-adherence to Rule of Law

One of the major ingredients of democracy anywhere in the world is its adherence to the rule of law which gives both rulers and ruled the opportunity to determine their destiny with the stipulated law of the state. However, since the return to civil rule in 1999, there were many breach of law particularly by those that occupied or holds political power. Lawal, Imokhuede & Johnson (2012) observed that the leaders in Nigeria do not show respect for the rule of law, especially, judicial decisions. This hampers the judiciary from effectively discharging its duties. The political executives still undermine the independence of the judiciary through patronage appointments, and judicial administration is characterized by weak enforcement capacity. Adeyanju (2017) further pointed out that the rule of law has suffered some setbacks presently, which need to be properly addressed for the entrenchment of sustainable socio-economic development in Nigeria. Immunity of prosecuting political office holders is another leadership challenge facing the present administration of President Buhari, with its accompanying negative effect on the socio-economic development of this country. Consequently, the immunity clause had created an umbrella for some top government officials (e.g state governors) to tamper with their state resources, thereby leading to infrastructural decay and underdevelopment at the state levels (Daily Post, 2016).



Premium Times (2013) noted that the immunity clause in the constitution provides the president, vice president, governors and their deputies, with protection from prosecution of offences they commit while in the office. However, in his commitment to fight corruption and to ensure offenders face the full wrath of the law, President Buhari assured Nigerians that no stone will be left unturned in the fight against corruption, not even an immunity clause will aid the escape of anyone who is fingered and found guilty by the law, but many of the corrupt political officials have neither been convicted nor jail. Even the attempt by the President Buhari to freeze the account of the Ekiti State Governor, Ayodele Fayose, was actually shattered by serious arguments as to whether those under the category of sitting Presidents and governors as well as their deputies, can face investigation, which includes freezing of their accounts (The Guardian, 2016).

In line with the facts above, Saidu (2015) makes it clear that one of the weaknesses of Nigeria's constitutions is the provision of an immunity clause to political office holders so long as one is occupying a political seat of power, that person is too big to go to jail or court until his/her administration is over. This new emerging trend constitutes a serious threat to the promotion of welfare and socio-economic development of Nigerian citizens as a whole. Therefore, it is a reality that the immunity clause itself, is a gross ambiguity and huge contradiction, which calls for all hands to be on deck to curb the menace.

Pervasive Poverty and Massive Unemployment

Pervasive poverty and massive unemployment in Nigeria have become the greatest challenges facing the administration of President Buhari. Although these problems are not only peculiar to the present administration, because even the previous administrations suffered the same problems, what differs from them is the effort made to reduce the repercussions of these challenges. For instance, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the unemployment rate in Nigeria increased to 14.2% in the last quarter of 2016 from 10.4% same quarter of 2015. It is the highest unemployment rate since 2009. And it rose from 14.2% to 18.8% in 2017 (Vanguard, 2017).

However, in late 2016, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) also reported that about 112 million Nigerians (representing 67.1%) of the country's total population of 167 million are living below the poverty level (Vanguard, 2016). As a matter of fact, poverty is a product of unemployment and inequality on one hand, and it is also a parent of all crime in the society on the other hand. This is what we are witnessing today in Nigeria because the jobless youths are frustrated and retaliating back to the system that created and rendered them unemployed. In line with this, Jombo (2014) observed the following trend; 'The Niger Delta youths, the Movement for Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), the Oduduwa People's Congress (OPC), and the Boko Haram insurgents comprised the young people of Nigeria without salary-earning jobs. The incidence of suicide bombing, terrorists' attacks, kidnapping, destruction of lives and properties, armed robbery, vandalization of corporate facilities, (such as the power holding installations and oil pipelines), car-snatching, drug abuse, and other criminal acts are unlawful activities associated with these groups (Jombo, 2014: 33).

Therefore, this indicated a direct relationship between unemployment, poverty and the high rate of insecurity of lives and properties in Nigeria, meaning that the increased wave of crimes and violence is a result of pervasive poverty and massive unemployment among the Nigerian youths. To find solutions to some of these issues, the current administration introduced an unprecedented social



investment programme known as the N-Power initiative aimed at creating jobs for the youth but, the problem remains unsolved because of high unemployment rate across the country with over 200 tertiary institutions producing more than 200,000 graduates per annum (Freedom, et.al, 2015).

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper established the fact of both administrations experienced insecurity, corruption, non-adherence to rule of law, immunity of the political office holders and pervasive poverty and unemployment as part and parcel of the major challenges of the administrations. Although these challenges are not different from those faced by the previous administrations, however, the way and manner they were handled differ. As a matter of fact, many public office holders today are extra careful to be associated with the issue of corruption, unlike what was obtained in the last administration, this is by no means to say that the scourge (corrupt practices) does not exist among the present sets of political office holders in the country, who hide under the canopy of the so-called immunity clause, in breach of the extant laws of the land. On the other hand, the issue of insecurity particularly the Boko Haram insurgency in the northeast and the militancy in the Niger-Delta has minimised to the barest minimum, if not defeated. However, other security challenges as mentioned earlier in the paper still persists, which can be traced to pervasive poverty and massive unemployment that lingers among the teeming population of our youths, and by implication, threatening the lives and properties of the mass of the people, vis-à-vis their social and economic well-being across the country. Even though the fight against corruption and insecurity are on front burner of both administrations, more proactive measures need to be put in place in tackling the menace headlong, while issues such as high level of poverty, massive unemployment and the problem of immunity clause need to be revisited.

Consequently, the paper suggested the following recommendations:

- a. The fight against corruption should be comprehensive and holistic regardless of political affiliations, ethno-religious inclinations or any other ties. The officials of antigraft agencies must be objective enough and sincere, as well equip and independent, to enable them carry out their duty without fear or favour.
- b. The security agencies should imbibe the habit of quick response to emergency situations that have to do with crime, particularly by exploiting modern communication gadget and detective device measure to intercept crimes before they occur. And even where the crime is successfully committed, both the perpetrators and sponsors should be identified and brought to book.
- c. Both leaders and the citizens at all level of governance in Nigeria must adhere to the rule of law, necessary for the evolution and establishment of a just and egalitarian society.
- d. As a matter of fact, the Buhari administration must do the needful, by sponsoring an executive bill, in respect of the amendment of the immunity clause, if the fight against corruption and overcoming the ills of socio-economic development is to be achieved in Nigeria.
- e. Finally, as a matter of urgency, the Buhari's administration must expand and improve upon its social intervention programmes to ensure the creation and provision of jobs to both skills and un-skilled citizens of the country. This would go a long way in reducing poverty, and thereby minimising the rate of crimes and criminalities in Nigeria.



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