



DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND THE CHALLENGES OF LEADERSHIP IN NIGERIA UNDER BUHARI ADMINISTRATION

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ABSTRACT: *The output of democratic process depends on the nature, character and pattern of administrative leadership of the democratic leader piloting the affairs of the state. Since independence, Nigeria has witnessed different administrations or regimes with concomitant implications on democratic governance. Despite abundant human and natural resources in the country, the realization of the dividends of democracy are not being enjoyed by the citizens because of political leaders controlling state affairs. This study examines the challenges of Buhari's administration and its implication on democratic governance in Nigeria between 2015-2023. The study adopted descriptive and documentary research methods and relied majorly on secondary data and elite theory was adopted as the theoretical orientation of the study. The study revealed that the major challenges of leadership in Nigeria under the Buhari's administration are corruption, non-adherence to the rule of law and banditry related issues which serves as impediments to democratic governance in Nigeria. The study, however, recommends that the government should set up independent corrupt agencies with personalities who have integrity to run it, so that the issues of corruption will be ameliorated. Government should also allow the judiciary to independently carry out their judicial function without any political interference and further allow the law to take its course at every set time without violating the principle of rule of law as propounded by Albert Venn Dicey. Government should strategize effectively using the security apparatus of the state to create an enabling environment that is secure for all to stay and not having fear that the security of the populace is not guaranteed because of inability to stop the ongoing and lingering banditry issue of grave security concern to Nigeria and to the international community at large. The study concluded that there is need to have a strong agency comprising of individual that has integrity, the professionalism of conduct of lawyers and purging of the legal system who has compromise to subvert the justice system and strong strategic provision of effective security apparatus will help to mitigate this issues that has devoid the people to believe that they are not enjoying the benefit of democratic system.*

KEYWORDS: Democracy, Governance, Leadership.



INTRODUCTION

The quest for democratic governance with good leadership at the helm of affairs is the aspiration of citizens in most countries of the world. It is incontrovertible to state categorically that democracy is in the contemporary world the most desirable form of government. In fact, most medieval political systems have been displaced by democratic forms of government. Democracy has become a national and international virtue to which all aspire. Moreover, it is one of the dominant issues in contemporary global politics and in countries that are not democratic or those still under military rule. Democratic governance births the notion of mass participation and political development. It upholds the assertion that democracy guarantees the rule of majority and the rights of minority (Sharansky, 2004). In theory, democratic principles highlight the essence of transparency, accountability, human empowerment, infrastructural development and socio-economic growth through inclusive governance (Macpherson, 1973). In practical terms, democratic experiments in most African states lack scorecards to justify the gains that accompany democratic governance (Okibe, 2000). Every opportunity to assess democracy in Nigeria and compare notes with other claims produces a chilling response that the country is still democratizing after many years it embarked on the tortuous journey. Indices of inclusive governance and development are grossly inadequate and it keeps one wondering what Nigeria conceives as democracy different from democratic practice (Okibe, 2000). The major distinctions between developed and undeveloped or developing nations predicate on the type of governance process they put in place, the level of citizen's inclusiveness in decision-making, the effectiveness of response to demands, including the performance of the system in policy formulation and implementation. The system encompasses political, socio-economic, religious, cultural, and human and natural resources development sub sectors that forms the source of indicators for ranking countries. Scholars coalesce at any level of assessment, in classifying most countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, either as undeveloped, underdeveloped, or developing countries of the world (Sorenson, 2007). The classification depends largely on the sustainability of their different development programs, which the countries in Africa portray worse indicators.

Issues of leadership and good governance have been of great concern in Nigeria since attainment of independence on 1st October, 1960. Despite abundant human and natural resources, mismanagement of state coffers has been hampered by lack of good leadership traits by our political leaders. Most Nigerian leaders are accused of lacking the requisite vision, passion and character for political leadership (Dike, 2009). The consequence is that despite Nigeria's largesse in rich resource endowment, she has consistently been ranked low in various international assessments on leadership and good governance. The output of democratic governance in any society is intemperately depending on the nature, character and pattern of its administration (Freedom et al., 2015) resulting in a scenario where either the military that sacked a civilian regime or co-military one belched allegations of inordinate ambition, human rights abuse, perversion of justice, pursuit of personal interests and corruption as reasons for inability of the country to develop. Lack of good governance based on democratic principles culminates in abuse of power, mismanagement of national resources and decay in infrastructure. Background study reveals that the Provisional Ruling Council (PRC) which was the highest presiding body at that time handed over power to General Abdusalami who conducted an election that brought General Olusegun Obasanjo of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) to political power as the democratically elected president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 1999. General Olusegun Obasanjo of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) after



successful completion of its tenure in political office conducted an election that brought Alhaji Shehu Musa Yar'Adua to power who later died untimely on the throne and his Vice Goodluck Ebele Jonathan took over as president to complete Alhaji Shehu Musa Yar'Adua first term in office before winning as president in 2011 and later lost to President Muhammadu Buhari of All Progressive Congress in 2015 who then assumed political power till 2023. The emergence of Muhammadu Buhari as president was due to a number of factors. The change mantra brought about by the success of the broom revolution which was made possible by several factors ranging from widespread disloyalty to the PDP by a section of its card-carrying members who decamped or cross carpet to APC and stakeholders arising from imposition of unsellable candidates to poor leadership performance of government in the country and growing systemic corruption. This created high sense and levels of disappointments, disillusionment and frustration for party members and the electorates thereby paving the way for the APC, a house that was built against the PDP dominance to thrive. Massively rooted against the ills perpetrated by the PDP, the APC leveraged upon the dissatisfaction of the politicians and citizens on the performance of the PDP and its change campaign as well as prowess of several disgruntled PDP big wigs and stalwarts to secure victory at the polls (Eneasato & Okibe, 2020, p. 1).

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria has experienced a crisis in the area of political leadership which has adversely affected the outcome of governance. There is nothing wrong with democracy but rather the leadership traits of President Muhammadu Buhari has frustrated and diminished the process and outcome of governance with several lingering issues. Democracy in Nigeria is still fledgling and struggling to survive under the administration under study as there is overwhelming public outcry regarding the administration in relations promoting corruption rather than ameliorating the menace. deliberate violation of the principle of the rule of law and banditry related issues that created security concern to democracy.

Research Questions

For the purpose of this study, the following research questions guide the study.

1. To what extent has the prevalence of corruption affected the growth of democracy in Nigeria?
2. To what extent has the issue of violation of the principle of rule of law affected the output of the judicial/ legal system in Nigeria?
3. To what extent has the negative effects of banditry issues been an issue of national concern in Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of leadership challenges on democratic governance in Nigeria.

The specific objectives are to;

1. To examine the prevalence of corruption and its implication on governance in Nigeria



2. To establish the issues associated with violation of the principle of rule of law and its impact on the judicial /legal system in Nigeria.
3. To proffer pertinent suggestions that will help to mitigate the negative effects of banditry issues in Nigeria.

Justification of the Study

This study is justified on the ground that since her inception of practicing democracy since 1999, there is continuous transfer of political power successfully from one democratically elected civilian president to another without military incursion in politics. The study is justified, as it will also help to complement further research work in this area of study and provide panacea to bad leadership identified with the third world in which Nigeria is not an exemption. The importance of a study of this nature can easily be understood when one considers the negative effect of challenges of leadership under the Buhari administration. Basically, the study has both empirical and theoretical significance.

Empirically, the study will be of benefit to the entire society because the recommendations that will be drawn from this study will serve as measures ensuring that leaders who are democratic in purpose are elected to govern will ensure democratic tenets are sustained consistently in the country. Theoretically, the study will serve as an academic bank to other researchers, politicians, political scientists, government functionaries by contributing to the existing body of knowledge and literature on the subject matter of democratic governance and challenges of leadership in Nigeria.

Limitation of the Study

This research work was impaired by time constraint and paucity of funds. Data that could have been obtained from some offices were restricted due to official secrecy of such data required. However, available secondary data were utilized to ensure that the objectives of the research are realized. Although the data used were collected from reputable sources, the authenticity of the findings might not be insulated from bias.

Scope of the Study

In order to adequately address the stated problems, the scope of this study is limited to the Fourth Republic (2015-2023). The study is to assess democratic performance in relation to the challenges of leadership in Nigeria thereby assessing the period in history.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Democratic Governance

To attempt to review literature on democratic governance is not a futile exercise in this study. The essence is to provide a framework to understand those formal arrangements for governing democracies. Literarily, democratic governance in its simplest form refers to a system of government that is democratic both in theory and practice. This makes it quintessentially imperative to conceptualize democracy and governance separately so as to have both basic and comprehensive knowledge about what the terms implies.



Democracy

Democracy is the most desirable form of government today as Ayoade (1998) concluded that 'to be on the side of civilization, a country must go democratic'. Scholars of various persuasion in attempting to discuss the term democracy expressed concern with the problem that surrounds the task of defining the term. Irele (1998) concludes that 'it is difficult to have an acceptable definition of democracy'. In another vein, Owolabi (1999) gave two reasons that are widely responsible for lack of consensus amongst scholars on what the term democracy represents. The first according to him is that:

"Democracy has become in current usage another world for political decency and civilization.... Democracy in a way has become a moral concept with a regime laying claim to it just for the sake of survival without any commitment to its ideals'.. He further emphasizes that 'another reason why democracy is difficult to define is because of its ideological commitment". Lipset and Lakin (2004) conceive democracy as a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials, and a social mechanism, which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence major decisions by choosing among contenders for political office. Modern representative democracy, which invariably brings about sustainable political development and ultimately leads to nation building if properly managed, should reflect the aforementioned characteristics. Lijphart (1994) employed the majoritarian model as a synonym of the Westminster model to refer to the general model of democracy. The majoritarian rule according to Lijphart is based on majority rule with the following elements as its instrumentality

"one party and bare majority cabinets (concentration of executive power) fusion of power with cabinet dominance, unicameralism) for asymmetric bicameralism), two party system, plurality system of elections,....unitary and centralized government, parliamentary sovereignty with unwritten constitution (lack of judicial review), and exclusively representative government".

Sartori (1967:35) perceived democracy as "the power of people and rule of the people". Appadoria (1975:118) conceptualized democracy as a system of government under which the people exercise the governing power either directly or through its representatives periodically elected by themselves. Osaghae opined that democracy is concerned with "how to govern the society in such a way that power actually belongs to the people" (Osaghae, 1992:31). Babawale was explicit that democracy within the last decade can arguably be said to be the most sought after and yet the least understood system of government known to mankind. The collapse of authoritarian regimes in Eastern Europe, the end of the cold war and a renewed upsurge of nationalist agitations in many parts of the world seemed to have opened the floodgates for new definitions of the concept of democracy (Babawale, 2007:37). However, the legacy of accountability bequeathed by many years of military rule continued to be an impediment to democratic development (Akanbi, 2004:27). The World Bank defines governance as the "manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development" (World Bank, 2005). Olamosu (2008) argues that various cultures have passed through different political systems of how to organize themselves in the best manner possible in which democracy appears to be a representative government. He further stated that many have drawn the necessary lessons over previous mistakes, most time-to-time tyrannical power. This has been responsible for various political systems now known in history. Among these doctrines are oligarchy, aristocracy, anarchism, autocracy, republicanism and democracy. Scholars of various persuasions like Mbachu defined democracy in its simplest



form as the “government of the people, for the people and by the people” (Mbachu, 1994:13, Remy 1994:31-34). Schumpeter succinctly views democracy as an “institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's votes” (Schumpeter, 1942:25). From these analogical assertions, one can deduce that democracy is the struggle for power at arriving at a logically concluded decision. Medearis (2001), in the debunking definition of democracy, intended to preserve elite damnation in the unwelcome socialist democracies for the future is anticipated in the name of realism and that democracy is stripped of all ethical content. Political thinkers, according to Dahl, erroneously conceive of democracy on the model of plurality voting, as a method which only registers first preferences, in explaining further in this Dahl’s characterize democracy as the product of many minorities (Dahl, 1956). Mills (1983) anchored his position on stability of the polity and that of all forms of government, is that democracy has been more enduring and appealing to the modern political world. Nye and Ricci collectively argue that democracy as a concept serves as an efficient criterion by which distinguish democratic government from other forms of government, since electoral competition for political leadership is usually easy to measure (Nye, 1977; Ricci, 1970).

Governance

Having conceptualized the term ‘democracy’, it is equally apt to explore the meaning of ‘governance’ in order to have an encyclopedic view of the appellation democratic governance. Democratic governance is a concept that has assumed wide usage in national and international parlance as it therefore lacks no precise meaning. The concept ‘governance’ first came to fore in 1989 World Bank Report on Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth. The report defined ‘Governance’ for its purpose as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country 's economic and social resources for development. Okunade (2000) while distinguishing between ‘government ‘and ‘governance’ defined governance as ‘the activities and process of governing not necessarily about outcomes, but how such are reached’. According to Robinson (1999), governance ‘is a term that applies to the exercise of power in a variety of institutional contexts, the object of which is to direct, control and regulate the activities in the interest of people as citizens, water and workers’. Ejituwu (1997) opined that democratic governance is described as ‘the exercise of power by a person or group of persons for the benefit of the populace’. He stresses further that this power which theoretically belongs to the people however in a normal democratic situation is transferred to the leaders by a process of election which, in theory also, means that the leaders should exercise the power in the interest of the state’

Leadership

The concept of leadership essentially embraced personality perspective which proposes, for example, that leadership is a combination of special traits or characteristics, which individuals ought to possess, so that they can persuade others to accomplish tasks through effective governance practices (Northouse, 2001). Therefore, it is imperative to state that leadership is to be regarded as a relationship or a partnership between leaders and followers. Based on that, people who engage in leadership are referred to as ‘leaders’, whereas individuals, toward whom leadership is directed, are referred to as ‘followers’. Seteolu (2004) ascertained that leadership theories include trait, behavioral, attribution, characteristic, transformational and visionary. He went further to describe leadership as a combination of strategy and character. Accordingly, Kouzes and Posner (2007) stressed that leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to



struggle for shared aspirations. In this perspective, leadership is about inspiring and guiding the efforts of others by creating an environment in which they can become motivated. From this perspective, the foundation of good leadership lies in understanding what motivates people and appealing to these criteria and prerequisites. Iroanusi reveals that international observers were dismayed and scandalized by the open and brazen resort to manipulation; this has been identified as part of the challenges of leadership in Nigeria under our democratic system. This suggests that the recruitment process of our democratic governance is faulty (Iroanusi, 2000). There is an implicit assumption that leadership is important, that leaders make a difference, and that positive group and organizational effects are produced by leaders and the leadership process (Pierce & Newstrom, 2000).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Elite Theory

This study adopts elite theory as a theoretical framework of analysis, to explain and analyze the democratic governance and the challenges of leadership in Nigeria under Buhari's administration. The study adopts Elite theory, a more relevant theory for implications on democratic governance since the study is investigating personality traits and character which depict that it is more of elitist. 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 out organize 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. It usually has “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. Weber (1978) held that political action is always determined by the principle of small numbers that means the superior political maneuverability 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, influencing major social, political and economic policies that are geared towards the socio-economic development and well-being of people in the various structures 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 for their own political benefit. 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 challenge emanating from corruption, violation of the principle of rule of law and banditry-related security issues which were induced by the political administrative elite, is the most serious problem facing Nigeria. Six decades after the end of foreign domination,



Nigeria is still fighting with problems, such as 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.

It is thus germane to situate our analysis within the context of the theme of this study to explicitly understand the relevance of this theory to the research work under study. Elite theory is vital to the study as the leadership pattern of the political leader determines to a great extent, the resultant effect of what the outcome of governance will be. The leadership trait and character of President Buhari with his autocratic background did not in any way translate into good governance within the last eight years of his administration as there was overwhelming public outcry regarding the administration in relation to the promotion of corruption rather than ameliorating the menace. The deliberate violation of the principle of the rule of law and banditry-related-issues that created security concern to democracy is antithetical to democratic tenets and its dividends. The governmental structure put in place by the Buhari's administration had a negative impact thus setting the country back in terms of progress economically, socially and politically.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts descriptive and documentary research methods. The descriptive method was used in order to describe the situation arising from the leadership traits and character of the leader under study. The documentary research method was utilized to review relevant documents and available relevant records that contain information relating to democratic governance and the challenges encountered in the country which are the major variables in the study.

Sources and Method of Data Collection

In order to collect data for this study, we used the secondary source of data collection. In specific terms, the secondary sources included library materials like textbooks, journal articles, government publications, periodicals, newspaper, magazines, seminar, conference paper and credible internet materials which were relevant to the study.

Evaluation of Research Question

The following research questions raised in the preceding work were discussed and evaluated in this section.

Evaluation of Research Question One

The first research question was concerned with the level of prevalence of corruption which shows or depicts that under President Buhari, the fight against corruption is subjective and not objective.



Analysis of Research Question Two

The second research question interrogated the extent to which there is violation of the principle of rule of law under this administration as there is removal of Justices and security officers of certain geo-political region to favor other region based on ethnic affiliation, and the judiciary powers were at series of times eroded, thereby making justice not to prevail which therefore does not guarantee the hope of the common man under the acclaimed democratic government because of the leadership traits of the democratic leader in government.

Analysis of Research Question Three

The third research question was concerned with the negative effects of banditry and security issues. This has been an issue of national concern in Nigeria as many Nigerians cannot sleep because the government which is constitutionally saddled with provision of security has failed in its responsibility under Buhari's administration as there is kidnapping in almost every part of the state.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The review of the three research questions posited by this study revealed that the objectives of the study of having a democratic government for the citizens to have a better life for all has not been achieved as there is suffering of the masses because of policies introduced that did not make the dividend of democracy realizable. Nonetheless, the administration tried in some areas like transportation and rail provision.

Challenges of Buhari's Administration (2015-2023)

Since Nigeria got her independence from Britain, every regime has its own peculiar and inherent challenges regardless of whether it is a military or a civilian administration. However, the re-installation of democracy in 1999 coupled with the nature of politics in Nigeria gave birth to a new dimension of leadership challenges with its attendant implications on the socio-economic development across the country. Even though most of the existing challenges are not different from the previous administrations, the nature, characters, and the personalities involved matters a lot in determining its repercussions on the wellbeing of people as well as the socio-economic development of the country generally. This study itemizes a few challenges under Buhari's administration from 2015-2023.

- a) Corruption
- b) *Banditry issues*
- c) Violation of the principle of rule of law



Corruption

One of the challenges associated with the Buhari's administration is the issues of corruption at its extreme. Nigeria has been consistently rated among the comity of nations as the most corrupt countries in the globe by Transparency International in its Corruption Perception Index. In 2011, Nigeria was ranked 143 out of 183 countries. In 2012, Nigeria was rated 139 out of 176 countries and in 2013, Nigeria was placed at the 144 position out of 177 countries. In 2014, Nigeria was rated 136 out of 174 countries. Although from 2014 to today, Nigeria has not made any improvement and has remained in the 136th position on the corruption perception index (Transparency International, 2017). 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). The committee was unable to achieve anything in this area as corrupt politicians are still moving around the way they like without legal sanctions. Corruption is the bane of democracy in Nigeria under the Buhari's government. The nature, scope, problem, causes and challenges of corruption in Nigeria affected to greater extent the expectation of the people and thus this has resulted in public outcry. Bello-Imam (2010) and Dahida and Akangbe (2013) analytically portrays the concept of corruption and development as a lucid background to seeing the relationship between corruption and the socio-economic and political development of a nation. Corruption in elections subverts accountability and representation in policy making; in the judiciary, it suspends the rule of law; and in the public service, it leads to the unequal distribution of services. The implication is that corruption has pervaded our landscape that it seems practically that everyone is involved in it. The corruption roll calls stretch to Police Officers on the road, the EFCC, ICPC, FRSC Officials, Custom Officers, Immigration Officers, Local Government Rate Collectors. Corruption thrives where there is undue elevation of personal interest above public or national interest. True democracy does not promote the idea of desiring and wanting to obtain, acquire, receive, or satisfy self-interest alone at the expense of others' interests. Such inordinate ambition and craving are commonplace in the Nigeria system and it gives rise to corruption.

Violation of the Principle of Rule of Law

The rule of law implies that no one is above the law and requires that all citizens observe the law and are held accountable if they break it. The due process of law requires that the law be equally, fairly and consistently enforced. The rule of law ensures law and order and the protection of citizens as they enjoy their rights. It appears evident that democratic governance under Muhammadu Buhari'S administration is largely affected by the personality of the ruler who reached the pinnacle of his military career as a General. The military institution being what it is; is highly characterized by command, hierarchical structure in which rule or government is personified by the supremacy or seemingly lawlessness of the commander-in-chief and executive head. These same qualities Muhammadu Buhari has demonstrated under a civil government such that analysts and political writers euphemistically choose to refer to his administration as a regime and address him as General Muhammadu Buhari rather than President Muhammadu Buhari Therefore, the respect for rule of law or absence of it under the current administration of President Buhari can understand from some practical issues since the inception of his administration. For instance, the second arrest of Biafra Radio director, Nnamdi Kanu, and the former National Security Adviser to previous administration, Sambo Dasuki in spite of subsisting bail. The recent raid of the homes of some judges (JJustices Walter



Onnoghen and Sylvanus Ngwuta of the Supreme Court as well as the homes of Justices Adebisi Ademola, Muazu Pindiga and Nnamdi Dimgba of the Federal High Court) was described as evidence of absence, or lack of respect for the rule of law and the principles of separation of powers by the present administration thereby only interested in using the apparatus of state to harass the real and perceived enemies (Adeyanju, 2017).

The suspension of the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Walter Onnoghen and the immediate appointment and swearing in of Justice Ibrahim Tanko Muhammad, as the new acting Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN). This action of President Muhammadu Buhari, not only breaches the Nigerian Constitution, but has also managed to undermine Presidential democracy by assaulting one of its hallowed doctrines of separation of powers. For the records, Justice Walter Onnoghen was the head of one of the Tripartite but mutually independent organs that form the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. To attempt to muscle out the Chief Justice of Nigeria using phony charges at a time when His Lordship was primed to play a central role in the fast approaching nationwide electoral process represented the boldest steps in the march to undermine democracy and the rule of law by Muhammadu Buhari. President Muhammadu Buhari's administration has serially violated court orders, going against the rule of law especially in the following known cases like various courts have granted Col. Dasuki bail on at least six different occasions; the Buhari-led government has persistently refused to comply with the court orders as the Federal High Court in Abuja presided by Justice Adeniyi Ademola in 2015 ordered the release of Col. Dasuki's passport and granted him permission to travel abroad for three weeks on medical grounds. Despite the order made on November 3, the Department of State Security Services, DSS refused to release Col. Dasuki. On December 2nd, 2016 the Abuja Division of the Federal High Court Presided by Justice Kolawole ordered the release of Sheikh El-Zakzaky and berated the Nigerian government for violating his rights. President Muhammadu Buhari has paid deaf ears to all orders of court relating to this matter. More so, the case of Omoleye Sowore the convener of the Revolution Now Movement still remains fresh in the minds of Nigerians. This case clearly depicted the illegality and impunity of the Buhari administration epitomized in the invasion of court by officials of the DSS. Not until the international community intervened did the President deem it fit to order the release of these illegally detained Nigerians.

Banditry Issues

The prevalence of big forests that extend across the states of the zone has inhibited the perpetration of violent acts and rural banditry by criminal gangs who use the expansive and dense forests to terrorize human settlements in the rural areas and the commuters on most major highways. The bandits, mostly operating in gangs engage in serial killings, maiming, kidnappings, robberies, rape, cattle-rustling and other forms of terrorism in states like Zamfara, Kano, Kaduna, Katsina and recently Sokoto, with devastating consequences for the rural population. In Zamfara, for instance, several communities have been completely displaced and the economies of many more communities destabilized and they have suffered diverse losses of various kinds because of the activities of criminal gangs perpetuating cattle rustling, kidnappings, robberies etc. (IPCR, 2017). There is no gainsaying that a lot of kidnapping issues associated with bandits go unreported. The growing rate of kidnappings in Nigeria have hitherto been linked to terrorism and insurgencies; the frequency and ease with which a group can abduct citizens for ransom reveals another vacuum in national security. Questions should be asked about why so few cases are reported and what limits the actions of the police when allegations are brought to them. Harsh penalties such as the example of Lagos State are unlikely



to be an effective deterrent if the issues of trust surrounding reporting incidents to the police are not addressed. Hence, one can deduce from the forging that the Buhari's administration has not been up and doing in the provision of jobs which was placed very high in their manifesto during the period of electoral campaign in 2015. Although, there were promises of jobs but they tend to be real only on papers. Kidnapping is a growing industry in the country constituting a challenge to national security yet untamed by the present administration, having promised to secure the country from both internal and external threats (Chukwurah et al., 2020).

FINDINGS

The study revealed that the major challenges of leadership in Nigeria under the Buhari's administration are corruption, non-adherence to the rule of law and banditry related issues which serves as impediments to democratic governance in Nigeria

CONCLUSION

It is vital to note that from the issues addressed, the proposals on evolving an enduring and sustainable democracy in Nigeria are large and ever evolving. The Buhari's administration has created more issues of pain that has not made the dividends of democracy not to be realizable. This issue ranges from corruption, banditry issues, violation of the principle of rule of law, insecurity, to putting the nations in serious economic crises and backwardness for close to 8 years of his assumption to political office. The democratic governance under this administration will continue to be a mirage in the country until political power is held and used in the interest of the majority. If the current government under President Muhammadu Buhari addresses the menace of corruption and other challenges of Nigerian society things are likely to change for the better. The president as a former governor, minister of petroleum resources and head of state during the military era ought to have a reputation of good leadership and experience character and zero tolerance for corruption and mismanagement. Because it is corruption that drives imposition of political candidates through godfatherism, stuffing of ballots, thuggery, delay and manipulations of election justice and non-prosecution of electoral offenders. Certainly, corruption is the workshop of almost the whole ills of the challenges of electoral process in democratic consolidation irrespective of political, economic, religious or social institutions. Although corruption has been part of every society even in developed countries, history has it that any country with a record of development must drastically curb the rate of corruption. Nigeria should take examples from these countries. Nigerians want to see the dividends of democracy, for all and sundry, through improved living conditions commensurate with the volume, value and varieties of our national resources. This is the citizens' constitutional right. Everything about Nigeria's development has been left for too long in the pipeline. Effectual results from prudent management of the nation's resources are expected from our governments to justify their mandates.

There is an urgent need for conscious efforts to improve the rule of law by strengthening the capacity and transparency of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary to function without undue executive interference and to uphold rule of law at all times. There must be concerted efforts at sustainable prudent management of Nigeria's national resources to ensure democracy dividends for all and national development. EFCC and ICPC who are supposed to be agencies



for curbing corrupt practices are also corrupt themselves thereby amounting to weak institutional foundations of using corruption to check corruption.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having appraised the process and identified the problems facing the country in regards to corruption, violation of the principle of rule of law and banditry security issues of concern to Nigerians under Buhari's administration, the following recommendations are made:

- Governments should set up independent corrupt agencies with personality who have integrity to run it, the issues of corruption will be ameliorated.
- Government should allow the judiciary to independently carry out their judicial function without any political interference and also allow the law to take its course at every set time without violating the principle of rule of law as propounded by Albert Venn Dicey.
- Government should strategize effectively using the security apparatus of the state to create an enabling environment that is secure for all to stay and not having fear that the security of the populace is not guaranteed because of inability to stop the ongoing and lingering banditry issue of grave security concern to Nigeria and to the international community at large.

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