APPRAISAL OF SOCIAL INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: A DESK-BASED SURVEY.

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Abstract

This paper appraised the impact of the present administration's National Social Intervention Programmes (NSIP) as peace and development mechanism in Nigeria. The paper relies on journals, books, conference papers, government official report, reports from international organizations, observations, as well as newspapers and magazines as source of data and relevant information. It is purely an evaluative research, guided by the Marxist/conflict theoretical perspective. The paper fines that the rate of insecurity, poverty, unemployment, food insecurity and so on, are still high in spite of the four (4) years plus of NSIP fight against it. The paper therefore recommends people's and experts involvement, reduction of unemployment and hunger and fighting insecurity; construction and building of critical infrastructures as well as development of human capital among others as measures to addressing these challenges.

Keywords: Social Intervention Programmes, Peace, Development and Socio-economic development.

Introduction

Nigeria has a population of over 200 million people according to United Nation (2020) worldometer data, landmass of 910.768 sq km, Nigeria is larger than most countries in Europe, for example Sweden, Norway and Denmark put together. A proven oil reserve of 37.2 billion barrels with crude output of 1.488 million barrel per day; gas reserve of 198.71 trillion cubic feet. About 20 per cent of this gas is used to generate electricity; at the present rate of production Nigeria's gas can last for another 110 years. We have greater agricultural potential as well. Of our 98 million hectares of land, roughly 74 million hectares are arable. Nigeria's location on the west coast of Africa is nearer to both EU and US for the delivery of any goods than the Far East countries. A cargo vessel from Nigeria takes about 12 day to EU and over 15 days from Far Eastern countries. With all these resources and potentials, one expects that Nigerians should be enjoying some level of relative peace and rank high in most if not all development indices or indicators. (Adoyi, 2011; Onu & Oche, 2019). But as stupendous as all of these endowments are, Nigeria still remains one of the poorest, chaotic, fragile and crises ridden country in the world.

The poverty profile in Nigeria – one critical indicator for measuring actual development shows that the incidence increased from 28.1% in 1980 to 43.6% in 1985, but declined to 42.7% in 1992 and rose again to 65.6% in 1996 (FOS, 1996). Recently, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2019) released the 2019 poverty and inequality report in Nigeria. The report highlighted that 40 percent of the country's total population, or almost 83 million people live below the country's poverty line of 137, 430 naira ($381.75) per year. Human Development Indices (HDI) for 2001 ranked Nigeria the 142nd with HDI of 0.40 among the poorest countries. Nigeria's HDI value for 2018 is 0.534 which placed the country in the low human development category – positioning it at 158 out of 189 countries and territories (UNDP, 2019).

Flowing from above, twenty-one (21) years into democratic rule, peace and socio-economic development continue to be stunted, distribution of wealth remained

uneven and political stability elusive due to corruption and several crises eruptions within the country. In a simple language, in the last twenty-one years, the level of poverty, unemployment, inequality and diverse killings – all critical indicators for ensuring and measuring peace and development have steadily increased (Ucha, 2016). Parallel to this development is the corresponding explosion in crime, kidnappings, human trafficking, militia, thuggery, banditry, hooliganism, youth restiveness, violence and even terrorism; all detrimental to positive peace and development in Nigeria. This background perhaps set the agenda for the Buhari led administration to set up or create the National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) in 2016 to tackle poverty and hunger across the country. The suite of programmes under the NSIP focuses on ensuring a more equitable distribution of resources to vulnerable population; including children, youth and women. To actualize her core mandates NSIP have the following programmes: **N-power programme,** designed to assist young Nigerians between the ages of 18 to 35 to acquire and develop life-long skills for becoming change makers in their communities and the global market with a stipend of N30, 000 monthly. **The Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programme** directly supports those within the lowest poverty bracket by improving nutrition, increasing household consumption and supporting the development of human capital through cash benefits of various categories of the poor and vulnerable. **Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP)** is a micro-lending intervention that targets traders, artisans, enterprising youth, farmers and women in particular by providing loans between 10,000 and 100,000 at no monthly cost to beneficiaries. And finally, **The Home Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSF)** aimed at delivering school food to young children with a specific focus on increasing school enrolment, reducing the incidence of malnutrition (especially among the poor and those ordinarily unable to eat a meal-a-day), empowering community women as cooks and by supporting small farmers that can help stimulate economic growth.

Having run or still running for close to four (4) years now with over twenty-one billion naira already spent thus far from the one hundred and seven trillion naira appropriated for the intervention programmes, can conclusion be objectively drawn that National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) as a social intervention programme is addressing her core mandate or objectives and impacting on peace and development positively in Nigeria? Although, since the past two (2) decade, Nigeria has never been short of Social Intervention Programmes aimed mainly at ensuring peace, alleviating poverty and improving the socio-economic condition of her citizens. Some of these intervention programmes includes: Operation Feed the Nation (1975/76); Green Revolution (1979/80); Better Life Programme for Rural Women (1987/88); NAPEP (2001); Amnesty Programme (2009); YOU-WIN (2010/2011); and other specific programmes associated with promoting peace, poverty alleviation and promoting development. This paper therefore, appraised the impact of National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) as a social intervention programme on peace and development in Nigeria. To achieve this core task, the remaining parts of this paper is organized in five (5) sections after the introduction. Section two provides explanation to key terms/literature review like: Social Intervention Programmes (SIP), peace and development. The third section provides a theoretical framework for this paper; where the Marxist/Conflict theory was adopted, review and applied to the study. At the fourth section, the paper assessed the impact of NSIP on peace and development. Section five critically examine the challenges militating against NSIP as a social intervention scheme while section six draw a conclusion and suggested some recommendations to tackling the challenges confronting the current social intervention (NSIP) scheme and the unending challenges of peace and development in Nigeria.

Explanation of Key Terms/Literature Review

It is necessary to clarify some key terms as used in the context of this paper. These key terms include: Social Intervention Programme (SIP), peace and development. Social Intervention Programme are programmes designed to deliver

social benefits and develop human capital for specific targets groups. It can be any of the following: social welfare, safety net, and social protection. While each of these has its own definition and unique characteristics, they are sometimes used interchangeably. Social intervention programme are inclusive of but, not restricted to poverty alleviation, access to public health care, access to financial services, access to insurance, and pension and job creation, technical and vocational skills development, and refugee protection growth among others. They can be implemented and or/funded by public or private sector entities or international and local development organization and they are mostly targeted at vulnerable citizens (Iheonu & Urama, 2019).

The core or central objective of any social intervention programmes include socio-economic developments – to raise the standard of living and earning capacity of vulnerable citizens while establishing a 'social floor' that protect all citizens. Social intervention programmes has the capacity to ameliorate some of the socio-economic issues plaguing a developing nation like Nigeria such as unemployment/underemployment, illiteracy, financial exclusion, poverty and malnutrition as well as violent crises among others. Globally, poverty and other challenges of underdevelopment have been on a steady rise which has yielded a global rise in social intervention schemes. As at 2018, social safety nets (SSN) are active in 64 countries globally, a standard increase from 2 countries in 1997. Even countries with the highest standards of living such as Norway and Switzerland spend over 25 per cent of their annual revenue on several social intervention programmes. Such social intervention programmes around the world includes: the USA's child benefit programme, which facilitates access to education and in turn helps to break the intergenerational poverty cycle.

On the other hand, peace whether as a concept or as an academic field of study is quite broad; it could simply mean freedom from disturbance and tranquility; a state of mutual harmony between people or groups, especially in personal and interpersonal relations. It is also a situation where people are able to resolve their conflicts without violence and can work to improve the quality of their lives.

More scholarly, Ibeanu, (2006) cited in Wapmuk, (2018) sees peace as a "means to an end" and as a necessary condition for sustainable development. Francis (2006) also added that peace is primarily concerned with creating and maintaining a just order in society and the resolution of conflict by non-conflict means. While Rummel, (1979) defined peace as an internal state (of mind or of nations) or to external relations. Or it may be narrow in conception, referring to specific relations in a particular situation (like a peace treaty), or overarching, covering a whole society (as in a world of peace). He further stressed that, peace may be a dichotomy (it exists or it does not) or continuous, passive or active, empirical or abstract, descriptive or normative, or positive or negative. The problem is, of course, that peace derives its meaning and qualities within a theory or framework.

In this diversity of meanings, peace is no different from such concepts as justice, freedom, equality, power, protection and class. And a common feature or element that can be drawn from these various understandings of peace is that, it is a necessary component for pursuing and sustaining development at all facets of human development. What then is development?

The concept of development has various meaning to various development scholars; these various scholastic understanding of the concept emerged from their various disciplines and orientation. From this assertion, Adeyanju (2008) aptly captures this debate by submitting that; one conclusion that has not been reached is on a holistic and acceptable definition of development. There are divergent definitions and understandings of the concept just as is the case for many other concepts in the various disciplines that make up the humanities. However, Boafe (1991) cited in Joda (2015) conceived of development as a process of economic and social advancement which enables people to realize their potentials, build self-confidence and lead lives of dignity and fulfillment. He further stressed that, it is a process that aimed at freeing people from evil of want, ignorance, social injustice and economic exploitation. In the same vein, Young (1983) cited in Joda (2015) stressed that; development implies a change for the better. The ordering of society, social and economic processes in such a way that

leads to either alleviation or eradication of gross poverty, ill health, and illiteracy as well as to raising the standards of living of the people and increase material comforts for all.

Flowing from these understandings above, Igbuzor (2009) and Alubo (2012) argued that development must mean "progress of some kind." Such progress entails comparison between two periods and not infrequently as well as between different countries. Development can further be understood as all-embracing sets of activities and processes, deliberately planned, to yield positive change in a system like Nigeria. In Seers's cited in Alubo, (2012) definition of the concept of development posed as questions provide a more clearer understanding and means through which development can be measured and clearly identified. Those pertinent questions are: What is happening or have happened to poverty? What is happening or have happened to unemployment? What is happening or have happened to illiteracy? These questions posed as definition and indicators to measuring and identifying development can further be extended to food security, health, and transportation and so on. When all these indicators are on the increase or increasing, inference cannot be drawn that development has taken place even if there is visible growth; but if on the contrary, conclusion or inference can be safely drawn that there is development.

Building and expanding upon Seer's understanding of the concept, the UNDP (1990) report cited in the National Human Development (2015) report conceived development as revolving around human; and therefore a process of enlarging people's choices. In principle, these choices, can be infinite and can change over time. But at all levels of development, the three essential issues are for people to lead a long and healthy life, to acquire knowledge and to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living. If these essential choices are not available, many other opportunities will remain inaccessible. But development does not end there. Additional choices highly valued by many people range from political, economic and social freedom to opportunities for being creative and productive and enjoying personal self-respect and guaranteed human right.

Theoretical Framework

The nature of social reality is so complex that every social phenomenon is subjected to various analyses and interpretations depending on the theoretical realm one falls, and there are as many theories as there are phenomenons. Be that as it may, for this paper, the conflict/Marxist theory was adopted in appraising the impact of NSIP on peace and development in Nigeria.

Conflict theorists focus their attention on society as a whole, studying its institutions and structural arrangement. Conflict is a loose and vague term which refers to various situations, ranging from disagreements, tensions to open warfare. The theory is best illustrated by the work of Karl Marx, a German philosopher and social thinker. His thoughts are often referred to as Marxism which is a worldview or philosophy, as well as a theory of society.

Championed by Marx (1818-1883) and advanced by other Marxist or conflict theorists like Mosca (1965), Darendorf (1929); conflict emphasized the importance of structures within society. It also advances a comprehensive model to explaining how society works. It equally highlights the importance of divisions in society. In doing so the theory concentrates on issues of power, inequality and struggle. It tends to see society as composed of distinct groups pursuing their own interests. The existence of separate interests means that the potential for conflict is always present and that certain groups will benefit more than the others. The conflict/Marist theorists examine the tensions between dominant and the disadvantaged groups within society and seek to understand how relationships of control are established and perpetuated.

Many conflict theorists trace their views back to the writings of Marx whose work emphasized class conflict, but some have also been influenced by Weber (1920). A good example is the contemporary German sociologist Darendorf (1959). In his classic work, "Class and class conflict in industrial society", he argued that, conflict just like the chief exponent – Marx, comes mainly from differences of interest mainly in terms of class but Darendorf relates them broadly to authority

and power. In all societies there is a division between those who hold authority and those who are largely excluded from it, and between rulers and the ruled.

The theory has though been highly criticized for its over determination and exaggeration of economic interest being a constant determinant for conflict that culminated to change. Again, critics of the theory have argued that, it is not all conflict that can necessarily lead to change.

But despite these criticisms, this theory is still relevant for this study, the approach to alleviating poverty, reducing unemployment and hunger to ensuring peace and security as well as development in Nigeria via the various social intervention programmes did not emerged from the poor people or vulnerable or class that are expected to be pulled out from the shackles of poverty but from the elites class; making them (the elitists class) and their allies the actual beneficiaries of the various social intervention programmes and not the so called vulnerable people or class that the programme was originally designed for hence the relevant of this theory to this study.

Impact of NSIP on Peace and Development in Nigeria

Established in 2016, The NSIP programme was created to tackle poverty and hunger across the country. It focuses on ensuring a more equitable distribution of resources to vulnerable population including children, youth and women; since its formulation and implementation in 2016, the programmes under NSIP (N-power, CCT, GEEP, HGSF) combined was said to have cumulatively and directly impacted over 17.6 million beneficiaries and an estimated 44.6 million beneficiaries indirectly since it formulation and implementation across the country with over 1.7 trillion naira appropriated. Achieving NSIP core mandate would have been one of the strongest development stride made by this present administration. The fundamental questions are: with the formulation and implementation of NSIP how had Nigerians felt in terms of peace and development? Is the programme achieving her core mandate? What is the state of the nation today in terms of peace which is a vital element for pursuing and

sustaining development? Can we say Nigeria is peaceful, secure and developing or has developed?

With the present happenings in the country today, and statistics showing the state of the nation as well as the living condition of her citizens, did not provide a positive answers and pictures to these questions. In Nigeria today, 40.1 per cent of our total population are classified as poor (NBS, 2020). In other words, on average four out of 10 persons in Nigeria has real per capita expenditures below N137,430 ($352) per year. In 2018, two years after the programme was inaugurated with fanfare and some N1.7 trillion appropriated to it, Nigeria overtook India to become 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. Being the poverty capital of the world, Nigeria is not living up to the UN's goals of freeing the world from poverty by the year 2050.

The latest mortality estimate report released by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2020) showed that despite the 1.7 trillion appropriated to the National Social Intervention Programme, Nigeria again overtook India as the world capital for under-five (i.e. child) deaths. According to the report, Nigeria recorded an estimated average 858,000 under-five deaths in 2019 as against India, which ranked second with 824,000 death out of 5.2 million under-five death globally.

A social intervention programme like NSIP that 1.7 trillion naira was appropriated to and claiming to have reached over 17.6 million beneficiaries directly with an estimated 44.6 million indirect beneficiaries since it formulation and implementation in 2016 should have a visible manifestation of its core achievement on ground in practical terms. A critical look at NSIP highlighted achievement, the present rate of poverty (which stood officially at 40.1%), unemployment, hunger and other development indices in the country; the 17.6 million direct beneficiaries reached or impacted and the over 28 billion naira spent thus far are not in tandem. There is a significant gap between all of these

figures and the reality on ground which cannot clearly be compare and practically comprehend.

Furthermore, a mathematical run down of the NSIP success story in terms of the numbers of poor people the programme was said to have either trained, provided means of livelihood for, and or provide funds for in form of loans from the whopping sum of 1.7 trillion appropriated to the programme, further shows the ineffectiveness of the programme hence the current called by the Federal Government to repackage the programme. According to Senator Goje (2019) N-Power programme one of the programme under the NISP has totally failed in its mandate despite gulping several billions of naira. Three (3) years plus after its establishment and operations the agency have not be able to effectively and efficiently impact on the lives of the less privilege Nigerians despite the huge resources committed to it through appropriation. Flowing from the findings and evidence above, NSIP as social intervention programme one could be forced to say, it is an elitist class arrangement for the continuous domination of the poor class. This explains why the rate of crime and virtually all the development indicators in the country continue to increase in spite of the fight against it.

Studies have shown that more than quarters of Nigerians working age population aged 15-65 years are not in the labour force (Treichel, 2018). According to this study, fully 70 per cent of Nigeria's that is over 160 million of her population are 30 years of age or younger. If this figure was growing two and half years ago; today, it might be right to say it is sky-rocking since it remain unattended to even with the intervention programmes like the NSIP.

With all the development indicators still on the increase in Nigeria today, despite the formulation and implementation of NSIP without any positive indicator that we are secure as a nation and on a smooth ride to our development destination, shows that our social intervention programmes are weak and as such not really impacting on peace and development as laudable as there were with much expectations and hope. What then went wrong?

Challenges of NSIP Programme

Beyond the loss of cultural values in our society and the attitude/character of Nigerians, lack of proper funding among others identified by NSIP as some of the challenges militating against her core mandate to fighting absolute poverty, unemployment and hunger in Nigeria, the challenges goes beyond the above highlighted factors. From a critical assessment, the programme's major challenges are:

i.   **Lack of Citizens/Beneficiaries Involvement:** Taking a closer look at NSIP objectives and her various approaches to fighting absolute poverty, hunger, unemployment and indirectly curbing crime and insecurity in Nigeria shows the lack of citizens/beneficiaries involvement in the programme. Their approaches do not emerge or flow from the people. Just as leadership must emerge from the people and not from a particular class to be effective; poverty, unemployment and hunger reduction scheme like NSIP should have emerge from the people like the Brazil Bosla Familia –a government-run Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programme which has reduced the nation's poverty gap by 12% and has continue to enable the nation to improve its income distribution. Mexico's prospera CCT program has been able to reach over 6.5 million families causing an 11% reduction in maternal mortality which in turn, improved the overall health of their citizens. Nicaragua has grown past its original objectives of simply providing a safety net and generating employment and has adopted a greater role in improving living conditions and development opportunities amongst its poorest population. South Africa's Child Support Grant have helped the nation drop its poverty gap by 28.3%, while self-help groups formed as part of micro-lending programmes and Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) have led to an increase in saving in Ghana and Zambia reporting increase in saving by 11% and 24% respectively because they all emerge or flows from the people.

ii.   **Lack of Feedback Mechanism:** The feedback mechanism if in place would have helps the handlers of the NSIP to check the effectiveness, validity and reliability of their various approaches and strategies hence a missing link between handlers of the programme and the beneficiaries; and most importantly the actual direction of the programmes as a whole.

iii. **Corruption/politicization:** Corruption has greatly bedevils the NSIP programme; the Home Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSF) has records of feeding school children to the tune of 13.5 billion naira monthly doing the COVID-19 lockdown, though Federal Government recently denied spending such amount but one can be sure that such denial will surely not reflect in the financial record of the scheme. The CCT (Market Women Moni) was not also left out. There were reported cases of extortions from the poor market women while the N-power programme was reported to have been hijacked by politicians for settling their political cronies and loyalists.

iv.   **Lack of Effective Monitoring and Evaluation and Database**

v.   **Lack of Stakeholders/Expert Involvement/Collaboration**

Conclusion and Recommendation

There is no quick-fix to eradicating unemployment, poverty and hunger as well as ensuring peace and development in any society. And there is no moral justification for extreme poverty and suffering side by side with great wealth in a society like Nigeria. The happiest and most secure societies were those in which most citizens are independent. No republic could remain untroubled and developed, if large numbers of her citizens were economically marginalized. This account to why crime and insecurity of all sorts has not only remained with us but also escalating like wide fire despite the formulation and implementation of NSIP as a social intervention programme.

Although, to place the entire peace and development challenges of the country on the shoulder of NSIP as a social intervention programme; will be unfair and a great disservice to a mere social intervention scheme. But given the obvious

weak-performance of NSIP scheme mandated to complement other peace and development efforts in Nigeria leading to the less-realization of her core mandate to alleviating absolute poverty, reducing unemployment and hunger – a pre-condition to ensuring peace and development in Nigeria with all the resources invested thus far; led the paper to offers the following recommendations:

i.   First, fighting absolute poverty, unemployment, and hunger in Nigeria should be people oriented. It should emerge or flow from the people like the case of Brazil Bosla Familia CCT program, Mexico's Propera CCT program and the Nicaragua's Safety net programme. The people know where the shoe pinches them. We cannot claim to be proffering solutions to a problem such as this without knowing its nature and trend which should naturally flows from the people. In the same vein, management and coordination of any social intervention programme geared towards fighting absolute poverty, unemployment and hunger should be headed by people who know what being poor, hungry and unemployed really means and look like. There is a clear different between "I know and I understand." The "I know sets of individuals" should coordinate the social intervention programs.

ii.   Flowing from the above, the Federal Government of Nigeria in her bid to either alleviate absolute poverty, reduce unemployment and hunger and ensure a peaceful and objective development, experts on peace and development should be consulted and engaged to frame an effective and efficient social intervention program. Disciplinary, evaluating and monitoring team to assessing and examining every strategy and programme imbedded in the scheme should be put in place to check if the scheme is on tract and making any appreciable progress and fulfilling her core mandate. If there are, how many of the poor people have been pulled out from the shackles of poverty, unemployment and hunger within a given period of time and how many can still be pulled out within the same period with the same strategy, programme, efforts and resources. With this

in place, the fight against these monsters will not just be in the media displaying and showcasing abstract achievement. Instead every mechanisms and resources channel towards the fight against poverty, unemployment, and huger to ensuring peace and actual development should align in practical terms with recorded achievements.

iii.   Finally, if the Nigerian Government is serious in her bid to alleviate absolute poverty, unemployment and hunger, with the exception of the NSIP and appropriating 1.7 trillion to it; funds should also be channeled to construction and building of critical infrastructures and section like: accessible roads, steady power supply, quality and affordable education, quality health care delivery services, industries, agriculture, creating and expanding investment opportunities, secured and dependable security system, etc; absolute poverty, unemployment and hunger all essential components or elements to ensuring peace and measuring actual development will naturally watered down and reduced to the barest minimum among her citizens.

iv.   In addition, beyond the intervention schemes, we must begin to open up other sectors of our economy and unbundle our over reliance on oil, our government as a matter of urgent necessity must begin to encourage and support citizens of Nigeria to tap into the potentials of new technologies to impact positively on peace and development. These technologies are not just improving lives, but are also creating jobs globally. Now, is therefore the time to harness the explosion in these technologies so as to connect low-income, high-potential youths with employment opportunities, specifically digital jobs; the possibilities of digital jobs are staggering, over two quintillion bytes of data exist in the world today – 90 per cent of which has been created in the last two years. Businesses and organizations of all sizes and scope – companies, universities, libraries, and government need workers who can curate and manage that data, from transcribing printed books into digital formats to creating database to mine insight from customer data. These tasks can be performed from almost any

allocation in the world, not just onsite at a company's headquarters, and often at lower costs. American internet businesses for instance can set up outposts in Nigeria as they have done in India, and generated 800,000 new jobs and 17 billion dollars in revenue for India (McKingsey, 2008). If Nigeria can put her telecommunications infrastructure up to an appropriate level, we can attract such multi-trillion dollars business that can create thousands and thousands of jobs for our ever increasing unemployed population.

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