

Leadership Change in Nigeria: Promises, Expectations and Realities under the Buhari Administration

**Sunday Owen ABANG¹, Ikenna MUO², Babatunde Adekunle
Okuneye³**

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Abstract

This paper attempts to extract some of the variables that can explain the leadership style under Muhamadu Buhari administration from May 29, 2015 to October, 2021. The Buhari's government has frequently stated that political, social and economy recovery and growth are main concern on its policy agenda. This raise a question of how beneficial is the policies out of Buhari's administration to the Nigerian people? The study used the secondary sources of information for the purpose of analyzing the leadership style of Buhari administration. The study revealed that the promises made in 2015 and 2019 gave Nigerians hope for change in all sectors but the reality is that some of those promises have not been achieved in the following areas- poverty, insecurity and food prices. The study recommends that Nigerian leaders should have a clear understanding of the Nigerian state peculiarity for the purpose of administering the state properly.

Keywords: Leadership, Nigerian state, Behaviour, Corruption and Insecurity

¹ PhD in Department of Political Science ,Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye. Email: abangsundayowen@gmail.com

²PhDin Department of Business Administration, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye. Email:Muoigbo@yahoo.com

³ PhD in Department of Economics, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye. Email:okuneyebabatunde@gmail.com

1-Introduction

The British colonialists entered the territory called Nigeria state in 1863 introducing the indirect rule system where the Emir, Oba, Obi, Chief and King manage the affairs of their territory alongside the district officers. In 1922 the first constitutional development started in Nigeria by Hugh Clifford with elective principles, followed by Richard constitution in 1946, Macpherson constitution of 1951, and Lyttleton 1954 constitution that introduced the federal system of government with its own defaults in practice in this contemporary period. In October 1, 1960 the Nigerian elites who took over power at independence act as the imperialist policemen by reinforcing the chain of dependency (Bassey, 2003) even when they introduced national development plans. Again, the Tafawa Balewa administration had to look elsewhere for resources not only for jump-starting the economy but also commence new developmental project. Can introduction of development program make someone a good leader?

The question is what are the qualities of a good leader? The qualities of a good leader include empathy, humility, resilience, vision, integrity, accountability and influence. Bassey (2003) writes that what differentiate a good leader from a bad leader is in the area of human activities which require different leadership qualities. Under the parliamentary system of government in the 1960's in Nigeria, Tafawa Balewa administration faced a lot of political, economic and social problems ranging from the crisis of mismanagement, the Western Nigeria crisis called 'wetie', and ethnic crisis which eventually polarized the country. The polarization of the country along ethnic lines and corruption provoked the five Majors under the leadership of Major Kaduna Nzeogwu to stage the first coup in Nigeria in January, 1966.

The first military ruler under Major General Aguiyi Ironsi had to jettisoned the federal system for a unitary system of government with a unification decree number 34 of 1966 (Okere, 2014). This angered the northern officers who viewed the coup as an Igbo officer's organised coup and at as such stage a counter coup that brought in a northern officer Lt Col Yakubu Gowon as the Head of States in July 1966. The later witnessed a civil war that wasted lives and properties from 1967 to 1970. Since 1966 to date, eight military heads of state have succeeded each other either by coup d'état or

palace coup. The return to civilian government in October 1, 1979 referred to as Second Republic was aborted by a coup led by Major General Muhammadu Buhari in December 31, 1983 followed by another coup led by General Ibrahim Babangida in August 1985 coup regarded as a palace coup, a smooth changing of the guards (Ekpu, 2018) who later ‘step aside’ after annulling 1993 election that pave way for an Interim Government under the leadership of Chief Ernest Shonekan who was later overthrew by General Sanni Abacha- his demised brought in General Abubakar Abdulsalami who handed over power to the civilian in May 29, 1999 now called the fourth republic in Nigeria.

The fourth republic started in May 29, 1999 and the Peoples’ Democratic Party won the election and ruled for sixteen years under the leadership of President Olusegun Obasanjo, Umaru Yar’Adua and Goodluck Ebele Jonathan at different periods. In May 29, 2015, Muhamadu Buhari under the umbrella of a mega party -All Progressive Congress (APC) through the process of merger form won the general election of 2015 and 2019.

2-Conceptual and Theoretical Discourse

The first question to ask is what is the definition of Leader? As expressed by Winston and Pattern in Agbaje et al, (2009):

“A leader is one or more people who selects, equips trains and influences one or more follower(s) to the organization mission and objectives causing the follower(s) to willingly and enthusiastically expend spiritual emotional and physical energy in a concerted coordinated effort to achieve the organizational mission and objectives”.

What is leadership? .Richard (2014) writes that the word leadership is close to the Latin word called ‘ducere’, and that it has so many interpretations ranging from direction, guidance, transformation, facilitation, orchestration, and servitude. Romero (2004), focused on 74 countries to ascertain whether countries tend more toward the patron or toward the modern leadership style especially when narrowed down to economic growth. Romero concludes that whenever there is a leadership shift, its affect economic growth. Marshal and Molly (2002) support the thought of Lao Tzu that some leaders accomplish a great deal and, are loved and praised by followers...but the best leaders, when the work is done and the goal

attained, the people say, we did it ourselves. The personality of a leader plays a great role in the relationship between the people and their leaders and between one country and another for example Indira Gandhi of India, Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy of United States of America is examples of leaders who stood out by the virtue of their personalities and characters.

Contingency Theory- this theory focuses on a particular variable that have to do with the environment in order to determine which particular style of leadership is sustainable to handle a situation. Situational theory means that a leader chooses the best course of action based upon situational variables. Muo (2019) concludes that generally, leadership involves the ability to determine the most appropriate course of action and getting others to follow their course.

3-Methodology

The paper adopts the secondary method to assess the leadership behaviour of President Muhamadu Buhari from 2015 to October 2021. To be able to ascertain secondary sources we relied on official publications, National Bureau of Statistics, Central Bank of Nigeria, Channel Television reports, textbooks, journals, periodicals, and Federal Ministry of Information to explain the connection between leadership promises and expectations. There are reasons why the secondary source in this paper is essential- it is to explain the practical aspect of leadership in Nigeria. One of the reasons is to reflect on the prevailing views of President Muhamadu Buhari on national matters.

Buhari Presidency: Expectation and Realities, 2015 to October 2021

Nweke (2015:164) notes that:

“Leadership within a democracy ought to reflect the will of the people, which means service. There is difference between objective service and self-service... Objective service refers to purposeful leadership aimed basically at the common good. Such leadership is most appropriate for democratic governance...Self-service approximates the attitudes of corrupt leaders who utilize the privileged positions of leadership for personal aggrandizement. This is the kind exhibited by many corrupt Nigerian democratic

leaders a situation that results in developmental retardation of the nation'

In 2015 general election, Nigerians voted for All Progressive Congress (APC) for using the "Change Slogan" as a promise in their campaign to improve on the societal challenges particularly in the area of security, poverty, corruption, terrorism and food prices. The APC led government of president Muhamadu Buhari had been criticized by public commentators in many occasion for not really stepping up to solve problems of continuous security challenges, banditry, oil bunkering and oil pipeline problems. To address the critics views, the Minister of Information- Alhaji Lai Mohammed says that the federal government spends sixty (60) billions naira annually on the repair and maintenance of vandalized oil pipeline across the country (The Punch, September, 2021). More so, the Nigerian people expected a change in 2019 General election tagged 'Next Level' to solve the problem of high rate of unemployment, increasing herders-farmers crises and the continuous terrorists attack in the north eastern and banditry in the north west and north central zone of Nigeria. APC sympathizers believed there was no need for change in 2019 general election because Buhari had done well. In the result of 2019 elections Buhari won the election by polling 15, 191, 847 votes (Vanguard February 29, 2019).

In the word of Eskor Toyo (2000:153) in interpreting Nigerian elections, he says "it is an error to think that there is democracy in Nigeria in the midst of corruption, heavy election rigging, crass opportunists, fraud, ethnic chauvinism, a shameless use of money power, and thuggery" This paper would use the following criteria to assess the Buhari administration from May 29 2015 to October, 2021, poverty, corruption and security in order to ascertain the possible improvement in the Nigeria.

4-Poverty

Aluko (1975) narrowed down his explanation of poverty to inadequate level of consumption expressed in insufficient food, clothing and shelter and that the absence of the basic necessities of life and the lack of hope to acquire these items really mean the person is poor (Agbor, 2017). Poverty is not just the inability to eat three meals a day or fasting by religious faithful, but it has to do with the difficulty to acquire or get the basic necessities of life. Going by the National Bureau of Statistics (2010) about 60.9

percent of Nigerians lived in abject poverty and in 2012 the figure stood at 54.7 percent meaning that almost 100 million people are living on less than a \$1 (£0.63) a day (BBC News, February 12, 2012). The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in 2020 recorded that 40 percent or 83 million Nigerian live in poverty. Vanguard newspaper, July 21 ,2021 reports put this way “ national poverty headcount rate is 40.1 percent.

With the challenges facing majority of the state in Nigeria in the area of salary, this inform this question, is there any programme to alleviate poverty in Nigeria from 2015 to October 2021. The answer is yes. Mohammed (2020) itemized steps taking by Buhari’s administration to alleviate poverty:

- i) 75 billion naira for National Youth Investment Fund (which is a part of the 2.3 trillion naira Economic Sustainability Plan), for the establishment of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Survival Fund,
- ii) One-off payment to support self-employed individuals with a one-time payment of 30,000 naira for 333,000 youths, the N-POWER that engaged 500,000 youths,
- iii) The FINTECH, programme, FARMERMONI, TRADERMONI and MARKETMONI schemes from which over 2 millions Nigerians have benefitted,
- iv) The Digital Youth Nigeria initiative, the Mobile Service Repair Training and the Graduate Internship Scheme, from which over 500,000 youths have benefitted.

Commentators argued that unfortunately, these programmes impact have not significantly reduced the level of poverty rate in Nigeria-while Buhari (2021) declared that his administration has lifted 10.5 million Nigerians out of poverty from 2019 to 2021(Premium Time, June 2021).

Table 1: State by State Analysis of Poverty rate in Nigeria

| Serial Number | State | Poverty Headcount % |
|---------------|---------|---------------------|
| 1 | Sokoto | 87.73 |
| 2 | Taraba | 87.72 |
| 3 | Jigawa | 87.02 |
| 4 | Ebonyi | 79.76 |
| 5 | Adamawa | 75.41 |
| 6 | Zamfara | 73.98 |

| | | |
|----|-------------|-------|
| 7 | Yobe | 72.34 |
| 8 | Niger | 66.11 |
| 9 | Gombe | 62.31 |
| 10 | Bauchi | 61.53 |
| 11 | Enugu | 58.13 |
| 12 | Nasawara | 57.30 |
| 13 | Katsina | 56.42 |
| 14 | Kano | 55.08 |
| 15 | Plateau | 55.05 |
| 16 | Kebbi | 50.17 |
| 17 | Kaduna | 43.48 |
| 18 | Cross river | 36.29 |
| 19 | Benue | 32.90 |
| 20 | Abia | 30.67 |
| 21 | Imo | 28.86 |
| 22 | Kogi | 28.51 |
| 23 | Ekiti | 28.04 |
| 24 | Akwa-Ibom | 26.82 |
| 25 | Rivers | 23.91 |
| 26 | Bayelsa | 22.61 |
| 27 | Kwara | 20.35 |
| 28 | Anambra | 14.78 |
| 29 | Ondo | 12.52 |
| 30 | Edo | 11.99 |
| 31 | Oyo | 9.83 |
| 32 | Ogun | 9.32 |
| 33 | Osun | 8.52 |
| 34 | Delta | 6.02 |
| 35 | Lagos | 4.50 |
| 36 | Borno | 29.9 |

Source: Natural Bureau of Statistics, adopted from Simona Varrella September 2021.

Please see figures 1, 2 and 3 below

Figure 1: World Poverty Clock placed it at 41% as at September 2021 with the figure at 87 million



In Alexander Irwin 2021 work of using data to combat crisis writes that the effect of Covid 19 crisis, the national poverty rate in Nigeria is forecasted to jump from 40.1 percent in 2019 to 45.2 percent in 2022 implying that 100.9 million Nigerians will be living in abject poverty in 2022.

Figure 2: The food inflation for 2021 is 22.7% and this alone increase the level of poverty when some states find it difficult to pay the minimum wage of 30,000 naira to grade level one in the State civil service.

Nigeria's food inflation

Food prices have risen to record high

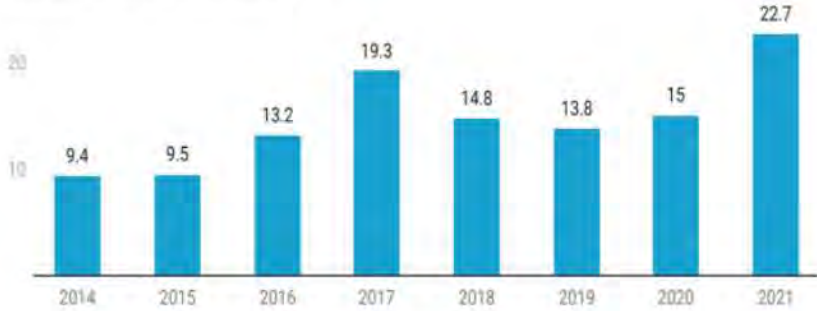
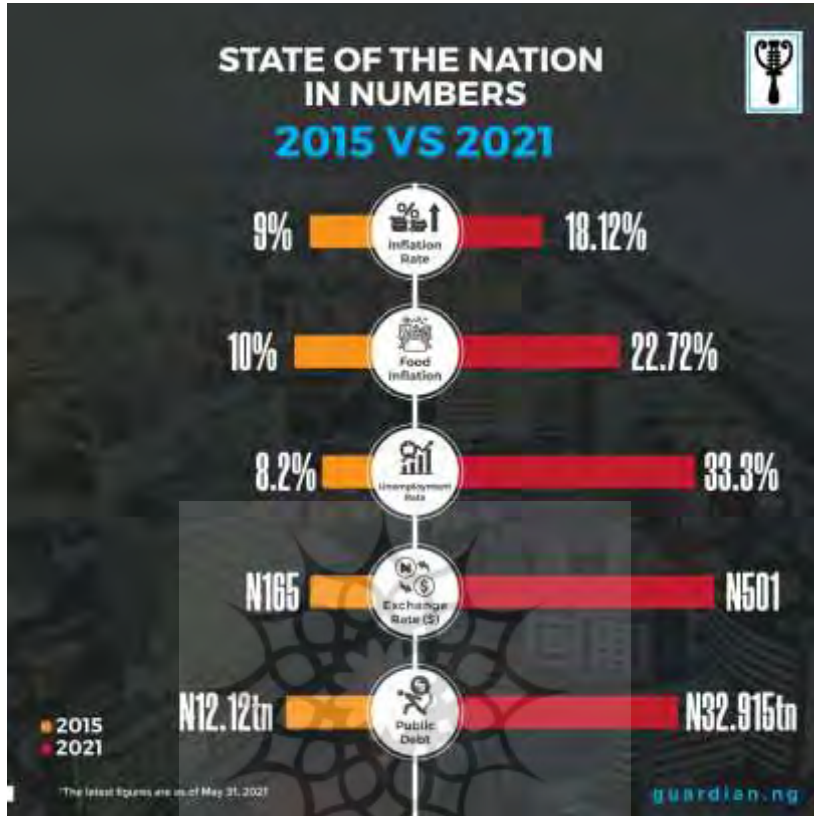


Chart: BusinessDay • Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) • Created with Datawrapper

Most of these poverty eradication strategies are in form of handouts and thus cannot alleviate poverty, which has become a web entangling every sector of Nigeria (Agbor, 2017). NAPEP for instance fail to make a dent on the poverty situation because of poor policy conception, poor implementation, short-sightedness and inadequate approach in addition to failure in considering the extent and dimensions of poverty in Nigeria (Babayo & Umar, 2019)

Figure 3: Percentage of Economic Strangulation
(a)

پژوهشگاه علوم انسانی و مطالعات فرهنگی
پرتال جامع علوم انسانی



(b)

From 2015 to October, 2021, figure 3 shows rise in inflation rate in food, unemployment, exchange rate and public debts in Nigeria under president Muhammadu Buhari while figure 4 below shows the different growth per sectors from 1999 to 2021.

Figure 4



Figure 5: Macro-economics indicators under Buhari Administration from 2015 to 2021



Source Channels TV, June 2021, Nigeria

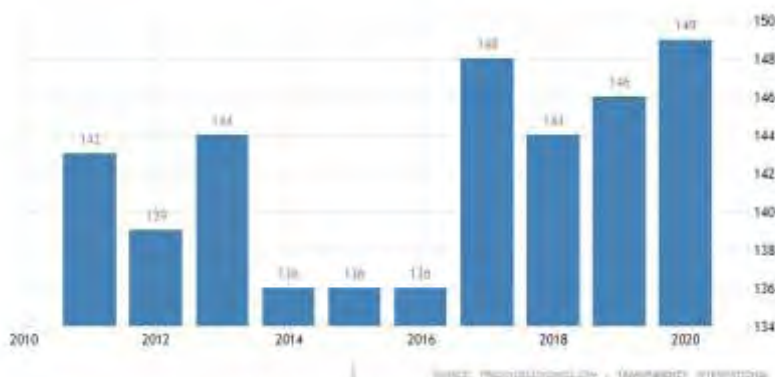
The question is what can we deduce from these images? From figure 3 to figure 5 there is a rise in inflation rate, food, unemployment, exchange rate, public debt amounting to increase in the poverty rate by state and in turn leading to high rate of insecurity in Nigeria.

Corruption

Corruption is a serious issue globally as Nigeria ranks 149 out of 180 countries in the Transparency Index analysis, and this is an

indication of the unethical conduct of some public office holders (Transparency international index, 2020).

Figure 6:



Section 15(5) of 1999 Nigeria constitution (as amended in 2011) provides that government must eradicate all corrupt practices and abuses of power. However, the incidents of corruption continued to rise and the high rate of corruption leading to different anti corruption programme (like War Against Indiscipline during the military and the establishment of anti-graft agencies like the Code of Conduct Tribunal, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences (ICPC) (Saliu& Muhammad, 2007, Lame & Odekunle 2000,). Despite the efforts of these agencies, the cases of corruption are on the increase as many politicians have been accused, arrested, prosecuted and convicted in different courts. There are still reports that a lot of public money is stashed by public servants in foreign banks in Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America, safety tanks as reported by Nigerian dailies.

The list of 103 high profile cases (HPCC) in 2017 was handed to the Attorney General of the Federation in Nigeria by Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC). These names include judicial officers, Senators, Governors, ex-ministers, and other politicians (Bertrand 2017:38). Some of these cases started as far back as 2003, 2008, 2015 and are still in court uptil date while some are serving their jail terms as contained in table 2 below.

Table 2: Record of Accused Corrupt Public Officials and Politicians

| S/N | Accused Person | Amount |
|-----|---|---|
| 1 | National Social Insurance Trust Fund | N84bn |
| 2 | Dr. Chimaroke Nnamani. Former Enugu governor | 5.3 billion |
| 3 | Saminu Turaki. Former governor of Jigawa | 36 billion Approach, laundering |
| 4 | Dr. Orji Uzor Kalu Former governor of Abia state | Convicted for N7.6bn between 1999 to 2007, Premium time, 2021 |
| 5 | Joseph Dariye. Former governor of Plateau state, now in Jail | N2bn |
| 6 | Jolly Nyame(now in Jail Former governor of Taraba | N64bn |
| 7 | Maina Abdulrasheed; Pension Reform Task Force | N100billion naira pension fraud |
| 8 | Col. Dasuki Former national security adviser to president Jonathan | Arm Deals \$2.1 bn dollars |
| 9 | Ibrahim Magu | Could not account for Interest on 550bn; 332 recovered properties |
| 10 | Theodore Orji Fmr abia Governor | N551bn |
| 11 | James Bala Ngilari Former governor of Adamawa state | Accused of N30 billion |
| 12 | Gabriel Suswan Former governor of Benue state | Accused of 20 billion |
| 13 | Aboubakar Hima (From Niger Republic) | N166bn arms supply fraud |
| 14 | Oliza Metuh | Alleged diversion of 400 million naira in 2016 |

| | | |
|----|------------------------|---|
| 15 | Mr Mohammed Adoke | Alleged involvement in the controversial 1.1 billion oil Malabu oil deal 2015 |
| 16 | Diezani Alison Madueke | Billion dollars fraud 2017 |

Source: Guardian, Vanguard, Sun and Punch from 2007 to October 2021.

Security

Defending lives, properties and sovereignty of the state constitutionally resides in the police, armed forces, state security services and other allied organs in the polity. (Petro, 2009). ThisDay Newspaper reported that at least 19, 890 people were killed by non-state actors in Nigeria between 2015 and 2019 and that Fulani bandits conducted 106 attacks in North Central Nigeria in the first quarter of 2018(*ThisDay* Newspaper of July 1, 2018). New Telegraph, August 23, 2021 reports that Kidnappers and Bandits made 20 billion naira from ransoms paid by governments and individuals in about 500 attacks between 2019 and 2020. The underlisted table of killing in Nigeria was adopted from Abang (2017) and Abang (2019) for purpose of explanation in this paper with additional data.

Table 3: Record of Killings in Nigeria from 2015 to October 2021

| S/N | States where Attacks took place | Number of Casualties and dead | Year | Response of government | Source |
|-----|--|---|-----------|--|--|
| 1 | Desina Local government in Adamawa state | 28 people killed; 2,500 farmers displaced | July 2015 | Government continues to make efforts to resolve the problem. | Ofuoku&Isife 2009” in International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology Vol. 1 (2) |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------------|--|---|
| 2 | Agatu attacks in Benue state affected Okokolo, Akwu, Ocholonya, Adagbo, Ugboku and Aila villages | Not less than 300 people dead | February 26, 2016 | Government continues to make efforts to resolve the problem. | Daily Post Newspaper, February 26, 2016 |
| 3 | Ugondo, Turan, Gabo, Nenzan in Logo Local Area in Benue state | 60 persons killed | 2016 | Government continues to make efforts to resolve the problem. | The Guardian Newspaper, June 10, 2016 |
| 4 | Okokolo village, Agatu local government Benue state | 5 persons killed by herdsmen | February 18, 2016 | Government continues to make efforts to resolve the problem. | The Guardian Newspaper, June 10, 2016 |
| 5 | Tarfi village in Buruku Local government area of Plateau state. | 12 people killed by herdsmen, and many villagers injured and others missing. | Friday 13, 2016 | Government continues to make efforts to resolve the problem. | The Guardian Newspaper, June 10, 2016 |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|---|--------------------------|--|--|
| 6 | Godogodo town in Jenaah Local government, Kaduna state | Fulani Herdsmen killed 40 natives | October 15, 2016 | Government imposed curfew in the area. | The Punch Newspaper, October 16, 2016 |
| 7 | Kigam, Kitakim, Ungunwan, Magaji, Uguwan Rimi and Kizipi in Kaura local government in Kaduna | Fulani Herdsmen killed 31 natives | November 13, 2016 | Government continues to make efforts to resolve the problem. | The Leadership Newspaper November 14, 2016 |
| 8 | Kauru in Kaduna state | Herdsman killed 34 Christians, with 100 houses destroyed. | November 13, 2016 | Government continues to make efforts to resolve the problem | www.christiantimes.com |
| 9 | RafinGona and Gbayi villages in Bosso local government of Niger state | Nine people killed and six thousand displaced | January 15, 2017 | Government continues to make efforts to resolve the problem | Vanguard January 16, 2017. |
| 10 | Lau Local government, Taraba state | 55 people killed and | January 6 to April, 2018 | Government continues to | ThisDay April 30, 2018 |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| | | hundreds displaced | | make efforts to resolve the problem | |
| 11 | Dundu village of Bassa local , Plateau state | 23 killed | March 12 | Government imposed curfew in the area | Sun, March 13, 2018 |
| 12 | Logo and Guma local government Benue state | 71 killed | Dec 31 to Jan 6, 2018 | Government imposed curfew in the area | Punch Jan 9, 2018 |
| 13 | Three local government affected, BarkinLadi, Mangu and Riyom, Plateau state | 120 killed | June 25, 2018 | Dusk to dawn curfew | Vanguard June, 27 2018 |
| 14 | Mashema, Kwashaba and Birane district of Zumi local government of Zamfara state | 42 killed | July, 2018 | Government continue to make efforts to resolve the problem | Dailytrust, August 19, 2018 |
| 15 | Bassa and Egbura communities Nasarawa state | 31 killed | May, 2018 | Government continue to make efforts to resolve | Vanguard, May 16 2018 |

| | | | | | |
|-----------|---|-----------------|--------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| | | | | the problem | |
| 17 | Gora village, Safana council of Katsina | 10 killed | November, 20, 2018 | Deployment of security to check the incident from escalation | Guardian, November, 22 2018 |
| 18 | Taraba | 5 killed | July 10, 2018 | Government continue to make efforts to resolve the problem | Punch July 11, 2018 |
| 19 | Adamawa | 50 killed | July 10, 2018 | Government continue to make efforts to resolve the problem | Punch July 11, 2018 |
| 20 | Kaduna state | 85 killed | March 13, 2019 | Government continue to make efforts to resolve the problem | ThisDay March 13, 2019 |
| 21 | Plateau state | Attack of Bassa | June 13, 2020 | Government continue to make | ThisDay March 2020 |

| | | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|---|----------------|--|---------------------------|
| | | commu nity | | efforts to resolve the problem | |
| 22 | Niger state | Seven farmers killed by bandits | Jan 1, 2021 | Govern ment continue to make efforts to resolve the problem | Daily post, April 2021 |

Sources: Daily Post Newspaper, The Guardian Newspaper, The Sun Newspaper, The Vanguard Newspaper, Abuja Metro Newspaper, The Punch Newspaper, Leadership Newspaper, ThisDay Newspaper, New Telegraph, Premium Times adopted from Abang, 2019, ThisDay, July 7, 2020 and Daily post 2021

5-Conclusion

Buhari's administration was assessed using these three guides-poverty, corruption and security from May 29 2015 to October 2021 to ascertain the change slogan and the next level slogan promised by APC led administration. From 2015 to October 2021 there have been arguments and counter arguments as to whether Buhari met the expectations of Nigerians. However, from 2015 to 2020, unemployment rate has almost doubled, many Nigerians living below poverty line, corruption rate is high even in the midst of anti-corruption agencies, and that nepotism has become institutionalized while the economy score earn an average mark. The public debt is ballooning at \$86bn (Guardian, 2020). There is area of credit in Buhari's administration but we choose poverty, corruption and security to check the level of change by depending on secondary information. We conclude without any equivocation that the realities have not matched the expectations of the Nigerian people. Unfortunately, developments in the first six months of 2021 have not given much hope. Within a three-year period covering July 2018 to June 2021, the Federal Government recorded a fiscal deficit of 15.35 trillion naira. Statistics obtained from the Budget

Office of the Federation as shown by Amarachi Orjiude report in Punch Newspapers of 2021.

From the above data and analysis, we recommend that the planning department of the federal government should established offices in each local government in Nigeria for the purpose of data collection for analysis. This would help government to come out with programme that would solve some peculiar problem in both rural and urban areas.

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تغییر رهبری در نیجریه: وعده‌ها، انتظارات و واقعیت‌ها در دولت بوهاری

ساندی اوون آبانگ^۱، ایکنما مامو^۲، باباتونده آدکونله اوکونیه^۳

چکیده

این مقاله سعی دارد برخی از متغیرهایی را استخراج کند که می‌تواند سبک رهبری را در دولت محمدم بوهاری از ۲۹ می ۲۰۱۵ تا اکتبر ۲۰۲۱ توضیح دهد. سوال اساسی این است که سیاست‌های دولت بوهاری چقدر برای مردم نیجریه مفید است؟ در این پژوهش از منابع اطلاعاتی ثانویه به منظور تحلیل سبک رهبری دولت بوهاری استفاده شده است. این مطالعه نشان داد که وعده‌های داده شده در سال‌های ۲۰۱۵ و ۲۰۱۹، نیجریه‌ها را به تغییر در همه بخش‌ها امیدوار کرد، اما واقعیت این است که برخی از این وعده‌ها در حوزه‌های فقر، ناامنی و قیمت مواد غذایی محقق نشده است. این مطالعه توصیه می‌کند که رهبران نیجریه باید درک روشنی از ویژگی‌های دولت نیجریه داشته باشند تا بتوانند دولت را به درستی اداره کنند.

کلیدواژه‌ها: رهبری، دولت نیجریه، رفتار، فساد و ناامنی

پژوهشگاه علوم انسانی و مطالعات فرهنگی
پرتال جامع علوم انسانی

^۱ دکتری در گروه علوم سیاسی، دانشگاه اولاییسی اونابانجو، آگو-ایووی. ایمیل: bangsundaowen@gmail.com

^۲ دکتری دپارتمان مدیریت بازرگانی، دانشگاه اولاییسی اونابانجو، آگو-ایووی. ایمیل: Muoigbo@yahoo.com

^۳ دکتری در گروه اقتصاد، دانشگاه اولاییسی اونابانجو، آگو-ایووی. ایمیل: okunyebabatunde@gmail.com