

EFFECT OF THE ENDSARS PROTEST ON THE NIGERIAN ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT: *The study examined the Effect of the EndSars Protest on the Nigerian economy; with specific set objectives to find out the causes of the EndSars protest in Nigeria; ascertain the effect of the EndSars protest in Nigeria and proffer possible solutions to the causes of the EndSars protest in Nigeria. The study adopted the structural-functionalist theory and used the survey research method given the work coverage. Thus, the method of study was qualitative. Data were generated from secondary sources which included journal articles, news papers and other online sources. Literature review however shows that, SARS is notorious for its brutality and human rights abuses and the lack of accountability for their actions while the Nigerian economy suffered huge losses of billions of naira resulting from the protest. The Police Act, which was adopted in 1943, has broad discretionary powers in the hands of police officers, making the abuse of power possible. The study concludes that, EndSars protest has left memories not just on the Nigerian people and her economy but on the global community on issues of police brutality in Nigeria. The study therefore recommends that, state governments, in collaboration with security agencies and other stakeholders (Civil Society Organizations and traditional/religious institutions) should create avenues for interaction with the general populace and listen to the millions of voices calling for police reform; there should be great transformations in relationships between the police and communities and the Federal and State Governments should invest in youth employment to create sustainable economic opportunities for young people in the country thereby, growing the economy.*

KEY WORDS: EndSars, protest, economy, police brutality, good governance, corruption

INTRODUCTION

Globally, it has been established that major disruptive events such as group protest, civil conflict and politically motivated violence have been widely shown to disrupt economic growth (Bleaney and Nishiyama, 2002). Since the return of democracy in Nigeria in 1999, the historic eight-day general strike, mass rallies and street protests in Nigeria became the first national protest that

brought the Nation to a standstill economically. From Monday January 9 to Monday January 16, 2012, the country was brought to a halt with both public and private businesses locked down to protest the increase in pump price of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) with scores of protesters cut across all age bracket passing nights on major streets across the country demanding for a reversal to the old pump price of PMS (Lakemfa, 2012).

In 2017, EndSARS started when Segun Awosanya and other activists on Twitter began to demand that the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) be scrapped. A report by Amnesty International(2016), indicted SARS as being responsible for human rights abuse, cruelty, degrading treatment of Nigerians in their custody and other widespread torture. Also, Amnesty International (2020)documented about 82 cases of abuses and extrajudicial killings by SARS. This figure is probably conservative at best. The objective of the campaign was to catalyze mass action against the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a unit of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) set up to respond to armed robberies and violent crime. The campaign, which adopted a mix of online and offline strategies, was popularly known on social media as #EndSARS. Over ten thousand Nigerians signed a petition and submitted it to the National Assembly calling for the unit's disbandment, citing various abuses against Nigerian youths. Although efforts were made by the National Assembly, the National Human Rights Commission, the Police Chief, and even the Vice President, not much changed. Coupled with this, the Police Act, which was adopted in 1943, leaves broad discretionary powers in the hands of police officers(Ujene; Orji and Obianger, 2018).

Footage of alleged SARS officers shooting a young Nigerian and driving off in his car emerged on 3rd October 2020 on social media. This, sparked a nationwide movement and a global phenomenon. Thus, by 7th of October, 2020, nationwide protests led by young Nigerians had started in several cities. The protests were peaceful but the Nigerian Police Force began throwing teargas and shooting at unarmed protesters. The outcome was serious injuries and death of some protesters in several cities across the country (Oshinnaik, 2020). The major demand of the protest was the disbanding of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) due to continued extrajudicial executions and extortion by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) with a long record of abuses and demand for good and accountable governance in the country (Okon, 2020).

The World Bank's classification by region and income, sees the Nigerian economy as a typical developing country in the lower-middle income category. The productive base of Nigerian economy remains relatively weak, narrow and externally-oriented with primary production activities of agriculture, mining and quarrying (including crude oil and gas) accounting for about 65 percent of the real gross output and over 80 percent of government revenue (World Bank, 2018). Like any developing nation, Nigeria faces some challenges in its development stride and efforts to improve the quality of life of its citizens. The critical economic issues concern the need to foster sustainable rapid economic growth that will cater for the needs of its large population and

the imperative for proper integration of its domestic economy into the world economy in the face of increasing globalization (Ajakaiye and Adeyeye, 2001).

The EndSARS protest had a devastating impact on the fragile Nigerian economy. With an oil economy trying to pick up from the ruins of the Covid-19 pandemic, a recession was already looming and unavoidable. The Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI, 2020) disclosed that Nigeria lost more than N700 billion in economic value since the EndSARS protests started. Fagbo, (2020) asserts that, while the protest went on, the short-term economic consequences for the people began to mount. A drop in consumer spending on non-essential goods was one of the most visible signs of its impact. The protest shut down major activities of Nigeria's busiest airport with major roads blocked and economic activities brought to a halt.

Nonetheless, most businesses, from Multinational Corporations to informal businesses in Nigeria and across the globe faced a lot of dwindling economic fortunes in 2020. Notable among such economic crises was the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent precautionary measures of government on trade due to closure of both local and international borders and most recently the EndSARS protests which halted smooth operations of major economic activities across the Nation (Oshinnaike, 2020). However, it should be noted that while our concern in this paper is to point out the effect of the EndSARS protest on the Nigerian economy, it is equally important to note some of the effects of Covid-19 pandemic and other regulatory policies on Nigerian businesses because they are interconnected.

Lock-downs due to the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted production activities, supply chains, reduced demand for non-essential goods, posed security challenges and reduced revenue across all sectors of the economy. For most businesses, recovery has been sluggish; for businesses that source their raw materials or products from abroad, the border closure policy and the restriction on foreign exchange made their recovery tougher. The economic cost of the looting spree that engulfed Nigeria in the last week of October as a result of negative consequences of EndSars protest compounded these problems. Food costs, already higher than normal due to government policies, were worsened by the destruction of storage houses and warehouses. In addition to these warehouses, commercial properties such as bank ATMs and restaurants were vandalized (Oshinnaike, 2020).

The ENDSARS protest therefore resulted in drop in government revenue and consumer confidence on the financial markets and the already worsening economy (BusinessDay, October, 22nd 2020). Overcoming the challenges of poverty, fighting corruption, meeting the basic needs of the people in the face of inadequate and inefficient infrastructure are critical social challenges that government is determined to address. However, protests and increased disenchantment of citizens across different sectors have continued to have negative effects on the economy of the Nation. It

is against this backdrop that this paper is out to examine the effect of the EndSars protest on the Nigerian economy.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria's economy is characterized by declining capacity utilization of major infrastructural facilities, large budget deficit, high level of unemployment and inflation. In addition, it is dependent on a single commodity, which is oil, with weak industrial base, low level of agricultural production and inefficient public utilities in health and social security. Nigeria, Africa's largest economy by gross domestic products (GDP) and the continent's most populous nation, saw its commercial and economic capital, Lagos, slowed, disrupted and then shut over a stretch of two weeks due to the activities of EndSars protesters, creating a cloud of uncertainty around its economy with an attendant erosion of confidence surrounding her economic development. No doubt, there were losses of revenues, means of livelihood, properties, and ultimately lives occasioned by activities of EndSars protesters.

On the 17th October, 2020, the EndSars protest took a different turn as thugs began to attack peaceful protesters in cities and towns across Nigeria. In the country's capital, Abuja for instance, on the 17th October, 2020, thugs launched an attack on protesters at Kubwa in the outskirts of the city. Two days earlier in Lagos, thugs had attacked protesters at the Lagos Government House, Alausa. On the 20th October, 2020, things snowballed into something larger, the looting and destruction of public buildings and private businesses, inspired by the looting of Covid-19 palliatives kept in some warehouses across the Nation brought the Nation to a standstill with police stations and other Para military security vehicles destroyed across the Nation (Nkasi, 2020).

At the backdrop of the destruction of public and private properties and businesses in the wake of the EndSARS protests after the Lekki massacre of EndSars protesters, businesses have been counting their losses while economic experts have listed the immediate challenges the crises threw-up against Nigeria's struggling economy. For instance, in Lagos State which was the epic centre of the protest, the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry put the estimated economic loss at N700 billion in 12 days, meaning a loss of N58 billion daily. Similarly, toll revenue loss is also estimated at about N234 million in 13 days, showing that N18 million was lost daily to the protest activities ((Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2020).

These losses were also accompanied by several lootings and vandalism at several shopping malls in Lagos, including Lekki ShopRite Mall, Circle Mall, Montaigne Mall, Lagos City Mall, the razing of the Lekki Toll Gate, state-owned buildings and facilities, the setting ablaze of several police stations, local government councils, invading traditional institutions, public and private transport and other facilities by some hoodlums who are said to have hijacked the peaceful protests to create chaos and a state of anarchy across the federation. Economic analysts lamented the impact

of the aftermath of the protest, which has ravaged the nation's economy as well as raised insurance premium estimated in billions (Olubiyi, 2020, Nkasi, 2020).

On social media, a lot of young Nigerians recounted gory stories of their encounters with the squad, with some reporting cases of brutality, abduction, extortion, extrajudicial killings and false imprisonment. These stories corroborate a 2020 Amnesty International (AI) report detailing patterns of human rights violations committed by SARS. SARS in their operations are known to wear plain clothes and carrying assault weapons. On Tuesday 20th October 2020, in Jos, Plateau State, while the protest was on-going, thugs hauled the Jos city biggest market, Terminus, where they burned cars, hauled shops and attacked unarmed EndSARS protesters.

The effect of the EndSars protest is felt across states in Nigeria in all sectors of the economy. With the news that SARS had been disbanded, Nigerians took the news with a grain of salt and carried on with pressing their demands for total disengagement of the unit and for wide-ranging reform of the force. The hashtag on social media changed from #EndSARS to #SARSMustEnd (Olisah, 2020). With the announcement of a new unit Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) by the Nigerian Police to replace SARS, the hashtag for the protests quickly changed to #EndSWAT on Twitter. Police intimidation, oppression and brutality on business men and women is a hindrance to smooth economic operations. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the effect of EndSars protest on the Nigerian economy.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the EndSars protest and the extent to which it affects the growing Nigerian economy. However, the specific objectives of this study are:

- i. Identify the causes of the EndSars protest in Nigeria
- ii. Ascertain the effect of the EndSars protest on the Nigeria Economy
- iii. Prescribe possible ways of solving the problem for peaceful co-existence of the police and people in the country

Research Questions

In order to resolve the major quest of this study, the determination of the following questions becomes necessary:

- i. What are the causes of the EndSars protest in Nigeria?
- ii. What are the effect of the EndSars protest on the Nigerian economy?
- iii. In what ways can the peaceful co-existence of the police and people be achieved to avoid another protest?

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section of the study, we aim at conducting a careful review of relevant and related literature focusing on the research questions. The theoretical framework for this study is drawn from the Structural Functional Theory.

Literature Review

History of Protests in Nigeria

Activism is by no means new to Nigerians. Before 1960, social protests were rampant. Activists challenged social issues like colonialism, slavery, rising inflation, unemployment and corruption. These protests took various forms such as print, radio, music and of course, the streets. For instance, during the colonial era, a local newspaper, *IweIrohin*(1859 – 1867) initially set out to create a reading culture amongst Nigerians ended up becoming a vigorous critic of the slave trade. The reaction of the British Colonial Office was expected; they reprimanded the newspaper for supporting indigenous causes (Stears Business, 2020).

Despite this, the paper had some successes. *IweIrohin*'s journalism was a strong weapon in the fight to deliver the Egba people from the rulers of the Dahomey Kingdom, a major player in the slave trade with the British. Therefore, as early as the 19th century, *IweIrohin* was already proof of the transformative power of citizen-driven protests, in the form of journalism. Decades later, during the 1929 Aba Women's Riots (as the British named it), we witnessed 'sitting' as a major protest tactic. The female protesters would dance and sing about their grievances outside the homes of warrant chiefs and Native court officials. In some cases, they would go as far as plastering the properties with mud (Oshinnaiké, 2020).

These protests relied heavily on the persistence of the Aba women, knowledge of their culture and a commitment to non-violence, at least on the part of the women. These riots were not in vain, and are remembered as significant markers of women-led protests in the country. They led to significant successes against the British government, including reducing taxes and the resignation of a number of local stooges appointed by colonial authorities. Noticeably, *IweIrohin* and the Aba Women's Riots are known as effective and non-violent protests. In the case of Aba, the police, unfortunately, killed over 50 women despite their peaceful approach. Still, what these two events showed was that peaceful protesters attract more sympathy from audiences because they do not carry the collateral damage that goes with the violent protests we have seen in Nigeria's history (Stears Business, 2020).

In 1966, the military took action that resulted in Nigeria's first coup d'état. This violent protest led to the death of regional leaders like Tafawa Balewa, Ahmadu Bello and Festus Okotie-Eboh. The rationale behind this protest was that the military leaders would do a better job governing the newly independent country. Unfortunately, coups succeed coups, and peace was quickly relegated to the past. Between 1966 to 1999, Nigeria experienced many coups. However, the initial claim to rid the country of the men

in high and low places that sought bribes and demanded 10% was seemingly forgotten. Other protests include, the labour union protest, student union protest and the most recent been EndSars protest (Oshinnaike, 2020).

Causes of EndSars Protest in Nigeria

In their study of world protests between 2006 and 2013, for example, Ortiz, Saenz, Burke, and Berrada (2013) found out that a significant percentage of world protests, especially in Third World countries in the past decade have been against neo-liberal reforms, including the privatization of public enterprises, full-scale deregulation of public utilities and the implementation of various forms of austerity measures. According to Rao (2010) the protesters in the Third World countries against neo-liberal reforms seemed desirous of a state that was robust enough to be able to stand up to, and refuse, the dictates of powerful international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, whose structural adjustment prescriptions had stripped away the minimalist safety nets of overwhelmed but aspiring welfare states. The protests against neo-liberal reforms according to Ortiz et al (2013) demanded reforms such as increased government funding of social services, public utilities and reduction in corruption especially in the petroleum industry controlled by shylock and oligarchic marketers.

Thus, protest serves as a way of reminding those in power about the inconsistencies and horrors in the lives of marginalized groups. Several causes have been attributed to the emergence of the Endsars protest, noting also that while SARS is notorious for its brutality, human rights abuses by security forces are not confined to the NPF. In 2015, Amnesty International published a report which detailed a series of atrocities committed by the Nigerian military. Human rights violations by security forces date back to Nigeria's military dictatorships, when security agencies such as the police were established to safeguard military regimes rather than to protect and serve communities. Notwithstanding the advent of democratic rule in 1999, this mindset remains deeply ingrained. Police officers and military personnel have been deployed to intimidate peaceful protesters as well as arrest journalists and other critics of government (Nkasi, 2020).

Another major driver of the EndSars protests is the human rights abuses committed by SARS and other security operatives which is the lack of accountability for their actions. In many situations, security operatives who violate human rights are shielded by the police hierarchy; victims are afraid to speak out for fear of being targeted again. A June 2020 Amnesty report stated that the government has failed to prosecute a single SARS operative since the National Assembly passed the Anti-Torture Act of 2017 (Amnesty International June Report, 2020). Also, the enabling legislation for the NPF, the Police Act, is obsolete. The act, which was adopted in 1943, leaves broad discretionary powers in the hands of police officers. These allow officers to perform warrantless searches and make arrests based on mere suspicion of guilt or

even intent to commit an offence. This is the crux of many allegations against SARS: victims' phones have been seized without a warrant, while others have been arrested for their tattoos or dread-locks.

Scholars have argued that social media has become central to many protests that have occurred in the past decade (Silva, 2015). Social media can play a key role in mobilization because it facilitates access to large amounts of contacts, generates collective identities, and serves as a site for information distributions (Valenzuela, Arriagada and Scherman, 2012). Scholars are, however, quick to point out that social media does not necessarily create new forms of protest or alter traditional organizing in fundamental ways. As Valenzuela et al (2012) contend that activism should not be restricted to the online space. In other words, social media tends to support or facilitate traditional protest forms. In addition to using Twitter and Facebook to coordinate protests and to denounce police violence, protests used social media as an alternative information source, a space to publish a counter-narrative to the version being portrayed in pro-government propaganda channels.

Effect of the Endsars protest on the Nigerian Economy

The effect of the Endsars protest on the Nigerian economy, is enormous, one least expected, thus unimaginable. One of it, is unattractiveness. It may attract downgrades by rating agencies, as the crisis has potential to roll back gradual progress being made in economic recovery. Still, on the impact on the economy, MutiuYekeen who is the Head of Corporate Communications, Primero Transport Services (PTS) Ltd, owners of BRT Buses, said the company lost over N100 million in six days resulting from the protest, which has had the nation's economic capital ravaged (Abuede,2020).

Also, Uwaleke and Gam-Ikon, Garba Kurfi, Managing Director at APT Securities and Funds Limited, in a note to Business A.M., said there will be some economic impacts from the protest; especially from the grounds of closing the economic nerve centre (Lagos) for over three days, is a great loss. In his words: "Remember, Lagos controls about 50 per cent of the Nigerian economy. It's a great loss as this will affect all flights take-off and landing, which centres around Lagos, as well as other economic activities that have to be postponed. It's a huge loss to the economy. The impacts are many because most other parts of the country are linked to Lagos in one way or the other."Speaking on the market expectations, Garba said "the market reflects the happenings in the economy; however, we are expecting the market to move upward because of the Q3 results which are expected to be better than Q2 because of the opening of the economy from Covid-19. Also, many investors will like to stay in the capital market, because there is no better alternative to invest than the capital market (Abuede,2020).

In Lagos state, Assets replacement cost is put at N1trn, and will definitely manifest in the GDP. According to industry executives and economists, the result will manifest in a fall in real Gross

Domestic Product, GDP. It will fall to around 6.91% year-on-year, deepening the projected economic contraction, disruptions in supply-chain, and faster rise in inflation. Investment bankers clearly stated that about N1trn is lost to firms. More so, job losses and poverty are certainly going to be on the rise (Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry LCCI, 2020).

In addition, retail stores across the countries were looted and goods carted away. The long list of destroyed public and private property in Lagos includes AjeromiIfelodun Local Government secretariat; Palace of the Oba of Lagos; Lagos High Court, Igboere; Oyingbo BRT terminus; Ojodu Berger BRT terminus; Vehicle Inspection Office, Ojodu Berger; Lagos State Public Works Corporation, Ojodu Berger; Lagos City Hall and Circle Mall, Lekki; numerous luxury shops in Surulere, The Nation Newspaper, TVC, and Shoprite Lekki. The destroyed BRT vehicles cost \$200,000 each, while 57 of them cost \$100,000 each, all totaling about N3.9 billion. According to the police, the 25 stations burnt in Lagos are Orile, Amukoko, Layeni, Ilasamaja, Ikotun, Ajah, Igando, Elemoro, Makinde, Onipanu, EbuteEro, Pen-Cinema, Isokoko, Alade, Cele, Igbo-Elerin, Shibiri, Gbagada, Onilekere, Makoko, Daleko, Asahun, Makinyo, Amuwo-Odofin, Anti-Kidnapping, Surulere. Other police stations that were vandalized but not burnt were Ojo, Ojodu, Mowo, PPL, and Morogbo (LCCI, 2020).

In other affected areas, Airport Road, SarkinYaki, Court Road, Burma Road, and Zungeru Road, business activities were brought to a standstill. In Plateau state, banks and shops were destroyed. In Enugu, Youths participating in the #EndSARS protest grounded the state capital. Motorists were prevented from getting to their destination on time. Thousands of youths supporting President Muhammadu Buhari and scores of others calling for an end to police brutality staged multiple protests in different parts of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, bringing social and economic activities to a standstill (BusinessDay, October, 22nd 2020).

Other states apart from those mentioned above also experienced huge negative effect on their businesses, resulting from the EndSARS protest. A release by the Anambra State Police Command's Public Relations Officer, SP Haruna Mohammed showed that 21 police divisions were attacked by hoodlums who disguised as protesters, while seven of them were burnt down. Other government property burnt or destroyed were, the High Court Ogidi, Idemili North LG Secretariat, while Zik Statue at DMGS roundabout, Onitsha was vandalized. Also, the nation's capital, Abuja, Kano, Oyo, Ogun and Plateau states witnessed destruction, death and looting. In Kano state, rampaging youths went after shops and homes of residents in the area carting away valuables and setting some ablaze. Several vehicles were also burnt (Fagbo, 2020).

Empirically, to ascertain the economic and financial effects of the protests on small businesses, SBM surveyed and interviewed 180 business owners in two locations in Lagos state: Oshodi Isolo, and Lagos Mainland, in the last week of October 2020. Businesses surveyed were mostly sole proprietorships (84.1%) with no employees and a few micro/small enterprises (16%) with about 2

-10 employees. Shop owners, petty traders involved in wholesale and retail trade of many sorts were surveyed because they were affected by looting that followed the protest. A majority (66%) of the respondents were aged 25-40, followed by those who were 40-65 (32%) and a few were under 25 years of age (Morgen, 2020). Despite the above, though the LCCI President, Mrs. Toki Mabogunje expressed concern about the negative impact of the protest on the Nigerian economy, she noted that the protests yielded positive results and reawakened the need to reform the shortcoming in Nigeria's political governance.

Theoretical Framework

The main tenets of the theory have been carefully used to analyze the Effect of the EndSars protest on the Nigerian economy. Structural functional theory was developed by Talcott Parsons (1902-79), an American Sociologist in the twentieth century. Other contributors to this theory include: Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer and Emile Durkheim. According to functionalism, society is a system of interconnected parts that work together in harmony to maintain a state of balance and social equilibrium for the whole. For example, each of the social institutions contributes important functions for society: Family provides a context for reproducing, nurturing, and socializing children; education offers a way to transmit a society's skills, knowledge, and culture to its youth; politics provides a means of governing members of society; economics provides for the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services; and religion provides moral guidance and an outlet for worship of a higher power (Ritzer, 2012).

The functionalist perspective emphasizes the interconnectedness of society by focusing on how each part influences and is influenced by other parts. Functionalists use the terms functional and dysfunctional to describe the effects of social elements on society. Elements of society are functional if they contribute to social stability and dysfunctional if they disrupt social stability. Some aspects of society can be both functional and dysfunctional. For example, crime is dysfunctional in that it is associated with physical violence, loss of property and fear. But according to Durkheim and other functionalists, crime is also functional for society because it leads to heightened awareness of shared moral bonds and increased social cohesion (Harlambo & Holborn, 2005; Ritzer, 2012).

Functionalists posit that there is value consensus in every social reality. They believe that there is general agreement by members of a society on what is desirable, worthwhile and worthless. People share consensus on the values, norms and beliefs of a society. A high degree of consensus in a society whether it is democratic or communist binds members together to form an integrated and cohesive unit. Functionalists also assume that societies and phenomena are pervaded by stability. The theory assumes that a certain degree of order and stability is necessary for the survival of social system. Functionalists downplay the conflict in society between classes and believe that once norms and values are maintained, the society would be conflict free (Ritzer, 2012).

The theory works on the assumption that each part cannot be understood in isolation until it is seen or explained in relation to the other parts. Thus the essence of each part such as the liver cannot be understood until it is looked at in terms of how it relates with the heart and the brain to keep the whole body as one. The theory also works on the assumption that each society has certain needs in that there are a number of activities that must be carried out for social life to survive and develop. In the structural functional model, individuals carry out each of these tasks in various institutions and roles that are consistent with the structures and norms of the society. One of the avenues for fulfilling this function is through the functionality of the Nigeria Police as an agency saddled with the mantle of fighting crime as it relates to the well being of the people and economy in general.

Applying this theory to the topic under study, the Endsars protest affected not just the SARs arm of the Police but the entire Police, Nigerians and the Economy. The Police is supposed to work for the betterment of the populace but its inability to provide security for all and sundry, prompted the protest. Thus, the theory explains the role the EndSars protest plays in ensuring reforms in the Nigerian police force for a better security architecture and robust economic development. From the functionalist perspective therefore, the EndSars protest which is an agitation in relation to the function of the police as an agency is likened to a structure that contributes to smooth functioning of the Nigerian economy by ensuring a better police with government agencies, ministries and departments. As the body has essential organs, each with a specific function in the body, just like other institutions of the family, economy, politics, education and religion, police as an organization in the society also has its own function to perform. Its working will help maintain the smooth functioning of other institutions in the society and particularly the smooth functioning of the economy.

METHOD OF STUDY

The method of study adopted for this study was the survey method. Generally, survey research usually serves as the blue print which specifies how data relating to a given problem should be collected and analyzed. The choice of this method is as a result of the area of coverage, the entire country. However, data were collected from Journal articles, Newspapers and other online sources.

Contributions to Knowledge

This study will contribute to knowledge theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it will contribute to knowledge by adding on the existing body of literature on the topic: The Effect of EndSars Protest on the Nigerian Economy and thereby serve as a guide and reference material to other research fellows who have interest in going into similar area of study. It will also help to analyze mass protests in Nigeria and the stand of Nigeria on ways of curtailing it in future in order to protect the economy. The study is further significant in the sense that its findings will provoke other researchers to conduct research in similar area. Furthermore, its contribution to knowledge will help fill the gap created in knowledge on effect of EndSars protest on the Nigerian economy and contribute to its fight against police brutality in Nigeria.

Practically, the study is of important, as it will enable the government and the other organizations like Amnesty International (AI) whose policies and programmes are aimed at curtailing human right violation to its barest minimum on what to look out for in future study. Also, the study will be of benefit to the government in formulating policies that will aid the legal framework of police reform. The study has helped in unearthing the historical antecedents of EndSars protest and its major proponent which has not just exposed its historical importance but created an avenue for historical documentation for further referencing.

CONCLUSION AND RECCOMDATIONS

Conclusion

The study revealed that the Endsars protest though a peaceful one initially was a reaction to police brutality hence the call for a disbandment. Although the disbandment has been announced severally but with no implementation until the protest. The protest which became deadly was as a result of the inhumane attitude of a section of the Nigerian police called SARS towards its victims. It was discovered that the EndSars protest did not only achieve its aims of SARs disbandment but also had important non-institutional outcomes using non-institutional mechanisms of drawing global attention to the menace of police brutality in Nigeria and increased public concern for good governance and accountability for an improved economy. EndSars protest has left memories not just on the Nigerian people and her economy but on the global community on issues of police brutality in Nigeria. Economic crises have been a major problem particularly in Third World Nations with attendant high poverty level, unemployment, high illiteracy, hunger, disease and problem of industrialization. According to Omokolade, (2020), The African Department of the International Monetary Fund attributed the civil unrest in Nigeria, spiked by the peaceful #EndSARS protest to the vulnerable state of the Nigerian economy. The Board blamed the civil unrest and the social instability in the Nation on the economic difficulties in the country as well as Nigeria's economy low growth prospect. IMF reiterated that the protest in the country is not just against police brutality, but also unemployment, poverty. The Department explained that the difficult event that followed since the wake of the decline in oil prices in 2015-16 in Nigeria, has made economic prospects low in the country, and this dislocation has exerted pressure on standards of living, which fueled the protest.

However, the development of the economy in the midst of EndSars protest is still feasible through promotion of small scale businesses that will contribute a long way to stimulating sustainable economic development in the society through creation of jobs, reduction of unemployment and crime rate among other social problems that are protest related due to a dwindling economy.

Recommendations

i. Government, whether Federal, State or Local government Governments, in collaboration with security agencies, Civil Society Organizations and traditional/religious institutions should

create avenues and listen to the millions of voices calling for police reform and see an opportunity to transform relations between police and communities.

ii. The disbanding of SARS and establishment of SWAT as pronounced by the Inspector General of Police should be backed up with action, signaling a reform by prosecuting officers involved in brutalizing the masses.

iii. Governance and the justice system should also be reformed. Once meaningful reforms are implemented, the rights of citizens will be truly guaranteed within a thriving economy.

iv. Businesses that were damaged during the EndSars protest need to document damage and losses through photographs, videos and statements at the nearest state judicial commission of inquiry and seek financial assistance where possible.

v. There is the need for Nigerian businesses to take insurance more seriously. Insurance penetration rate in the country is very low, estimated at 1.6%. This will help compensate them adequately in times of damage or theft.

vi. The intervention of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) in rebuilding public confidence and trust through consultations with the citizens, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), media and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) should be sustained. This approach should be complemented with confidence building structures including the setting up of a public enquiry on the police reform procedures to foster trust in security agencies.

vii. The Federal and State Governments should as a matter of urgency, address youth unemployment by investing in their employment through the creation of sustainable economic opportunities for young people in the country thereby, growing the economy.

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