

HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC

By

Olufunso Kehinde Alufoge

funshomartin@yahoo.com

Department of Political Science and International Relations
Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State

and

Moses Metumara Duruji

mosesduruji@covenantuniversity.edu.ng

Department of Political Science and International Relations,
Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State

Abstract

Human rights and sustainable development are two concepts that are interdependent and much related. For this reason, the former Millennium Development Goals and present Agenda – 2030 are geared towards development through human rights based approach. This study therefore, is aimed at examining the present state of human rights in Nigeria and her level of development from 1999 to 2018. This study is basically qualitative, while linkage theory is adopted as its theoretical framework. The study posits that the persistent human rights violations in Nigeria is a major hindrance to sustainable development, and that Gross Domestic Product should not be the main indicator of development, since high GDP has not always reflected human development. The study concludes that human rights violations in Nigeria have impeded development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Human Rights, Sustainable Development, Human Capital Development, Nigeria

Introduction

There is a mutual reinforcing relationship between Sustainable Development and Human Rights in practice these two terms have shared a long history (ECLAC, 2010). Sustainable development and human rights are interdependent and the two concepts mutually reinforce each other by advocating objectives that should be realised in conjunction with each other. No wonder Annan (2015) declared that “our world could not have development without human rights”

To achieve a world that upholds the principle of equality in which no one is truly left behind; commitment to the protection of human rights must become a priority which means human rights must be recognized, respected and protected. In the same vein, the sustainable development goals can be seen as tools to actualizing all human rights and how it affects socioeconomic and cultural development. By protecting these fundamental entitlements, such conflicts that arises from poverty, minority marginalization, and all other forms of marginalization are prevented which creates the enablement for sustainable development.

The objective of this research is to reveal the intricate link between human rights, development and how they impact sustainable development.

Conceptual Clarifications

Human Rights

Without respect for human rights, security and sustainable development will be an illusion (Asia brief, 2013). Right connotes a moral or legal entitlement to have or do something, hence it describes a relationship between a right holder, who is entitled to a thing, and a duty-bearer, from whom the right is claimed. Lankford and Sano (2010) in describing human rights stated that; “human rights are literally the rights that one has because one is human; they are universally recognized entitlements which everyone everywhere, is expected to enjoy. It is entitlement by birth that should not be deprived of anybody; they are entitlements which are owed to every human being simply because he is human.” The development of human rights as it is today can be credited to the movements to end slavery, colonialism, genocide, oppression, and discrimination.

The gross human rights abuses that characterized the Second World War crystalized the need to globally protect individuals. This birthed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) being the first United Nations declaration on human rights that stipulated the core sociocultural, economic and political rights that are to be accrued to all. The second was the drafting of the International Covenant on

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). These two covenants coupled with the UDHR are the International Bill of Human Rights. In them are the entitled, binding regulations that state governments are expected to respect and foster. Such rights include: *right to life; equality; security of person; freedom from slavery; freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention; freedom of movement and residence; due process of law; freedom of opinion and expression; freedom of association and assembly; right to safe and healthy working conditions; right to form trade unions and to strike; right to adequate food, clothing, and housing; right to education; and right to health.*

Sustainable Developments differs from regular or classical development which according to Chambers (1997) is a specified state of growth or advancement; a new and advanced product or idea; an event constituting a new stage in a changing situation. While sustainable development is seen as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (United Nations General Assembly, 1987, 43). In the quest to enhance the livelihood of the present generation, it is important to take into consideration the repercussions of our actions for the coming generation, and those coming after, with emphasis placed on conserving all resources (including human resources) they will require (Lohani and Aburaída, 2017). The key focus of sustainable development is ‘‘long term’’; as such, policy decision makers are expected to rationally weigh policy options and make decisions that will solve the present needs and take care of future generations.

The synergy or linkage between development and human rights is considered within sociocultural and economic rights, which encompasses the rights to work, clean water, seek-education, affordable-health, sanitation and good food. Many people are deprived of these rights in Nigeria which is a marked obstacle to development. Also the political rights of the people as; freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom from discrimination, freedom to fair justice and freedom of torture from the police or any armed force of the country are not in any way enjoyed by the people which in an attempt to seek redress often lead to frustration and aggression.

Theoretical Framework

There are several theories, approaches and perspectives in the field of social sciences and administration which can be adopted for this study, however; the understanding of human rights based approach to sustainable development requires a shift from traditional development to human development. A theory that describes how an action is capable of having a ripple effect on other aspects of a society would be appropriate for this study. Accordingly, this study adopts the linkage theory as propounded by Rosenau, and expanded by other scholars. Rosenau (1969) used the term linkage to describe the relationship between international relations and political science. At this point, they were considered not to be related. He described how domestic policies are

capable of having international impact. The theory explains that any sequence of behaviour or action which occurs in one system is reacted to by the other party (Rosenau as cited in Adelusi, n.d). To Crump (2009) the theory explains the way one event determines the process or outcome of another, and this can be within a polity. Linkage theory is adopted to show the intricate web of interconnected events, how an action or event leads to a series of other events. This could be referred to as a ripple effect or a butterfly effect in which initial small events can lead to large events. The theory is founded on the idea of connections or links between occurrences and sequences of which for every action there is a reaction.

The study of the synergy between human rights protections and sustainable development is only reinforced by the linkage theory in which it can be used to argue the important role that human rights occupy in the quest for development. Practically, such events as the global financial crisis and Arab uprisings, have reiterated the bond or interdependence of human rights and development. The violation of civic and political rights, lack of accountability and transparency, rule of law, corruption have often been linked to civil unrest in many parts of the world, which of course undermines the sustainability of growth and development. From observation, before states erupt into failed-state status and states of crisis, there are usually symptoms of looming continued denial and violation of fundamental human rights in sociocultural and economic sphere. A typical example was the case of Libya.

By a unanimous vote of the General Assemble of the United Nations, Gaddafi's led administration of Libya was suspended on grounds of human rights violations, citing the abuse of rights to association and peaceful protests of which violence are used against protesters. It should be recalled that the 2010/2011 Arab Spring or Arab Awakening erupted as reprisal to oppressive anti-democratic government in North Africa and in the Middle East region, with the aim of changing such administrations through revolution in Libya, Syria, Yemen, Tunisia, Egypt (Zuber and Moussa, 2018).

Nigeria is not an exception; the conflict that arose in the Niger Delta region erupted as a result of the government negligence of the cry of the people for environmental protection and their share of the national cake. The continued violation of rights and absence of accountability increased ethnic and civil unrest between the Urhobo, itsekiri and ijaw people. The proliferation of light weapons in the region also led to the militarization of Niger – Delta. In Northeastern Nigeria, the prevalence of poverty, illiteracy, high birth rate and general hardship makes the region a brewing ground for insurgency. Mohammed Yusuf was able to make use of the hardship and the negligence of the Nigerian government to recruit deprived and aggrieved citizens into the insurgent Boko Haram, which has continued to impact negatively on the nation's development.

Nigerian State and Human Rights Abuse

Human relations within a polity and the relations of sovereign entities are hoisted on the foundation of rule of law. In the absence of this fundamental principle, humankind is done for, and will be characterized in Thomas Hobbes idea of state of nature where life is short, nasty and brutish (Okakwu 2018). The president of the federal republic of Nigeria Muhammadu Buhari in a keynote address to the Nigeria Bar association stated;

... where national security and public interest are threatened or there is a likelihood of their being threatened, the individual rights of those allegedly responsible must take second place, in favour of the greater good of society.

The above statement in essence suggests that the rule of law is second to national security and human rights also. Since October 1st 1960, the government's inability to empower and protect the rights of citizens, particularly minorities' ethnic groups, has been a bane to unifying and initiating national development in the country. The January 15th 1966 coup the toppled the federal republic was in response to many factors amongst which is; "minority marginalization,"

The violation of human rights in Nigeria reached an all-time high during the successive military regimes. Onyegbula (2001) describes military government in Nigeria as being; characterized by gross human rights abuse and repression of political dissent, the respect for rule of law and due process were abandoned for the naked abuse of power, the press reported several cases of people being harassed, detained without trial, tortured, extra-judicially executed, brazenly murdered, discriminated against and forcibly displaced from their homes, environmental pollution, degradation and woman destruction of the ecology as a result of oil exploration activities were common place in the oil rich Niger Delta.

Of the several military administrations that inhibited human rights, the darkest of all inhibitions were carried out under the regime of late General Sani Abacha. Typical features of his administration include the extrajudicial arrest and execution of pro-democracy activists, journalists and politicians. A major arrest and execution that gained major attention from the comity of states was the arrest and killing of Ken Saro Wiwa and the eight (8) Ogoni chiefs.

With the death of General Sani Abacha and the return to civilian rule under democratically elected President Olusegun Obasanjo administration; the protection of human rights and its improvement under the 1999 constitution have been made. Following the swearing in as President, his administration set up the Human Rights Violation Investigation Commission. In charge of the Commission was retired Justice Chukwudi Oputa (Onyegbula, 2001). The commission was set up to investigate abuses and violations carried out in the previous administrations, and to prevent the present and future Nigerians from experiencing similar fate. Despite the progress

made by the commission, there is still room for improvements in regards to upholding the principle of human rights. In 2012 American Human Report and The Human Rights Watch 2015 Report highlights segments where major actions are needed; such highlighted areas include; violations by insurgent and terrorist groups, violations by armed forces of the State, infringement on right to protest, freedom of the press, and social inequality. The violations of human rights in Nigeria are numerous; organizing them under collective sub themes as done below enables fuller comprehension.

Violation of Rights by Armed Forces

The armed forces of a country are indispensable apparatuses of the state, as part of the executive arm of government, they uphold the rule of law (human rights included) by protecting and securing lives and properties within a state. This is why it is ironic when such apparatus who are established to secure the rights of the citizens are the major perpetrators of violations.

The Nigeria security services have regularly been charged and found guilty of gross human rights violations even under democratic leadership (Nzarga, 2014). In 1999 when democracy was re-introduced into the country, despite government's attempt to uphold the rights and dignity of the people, on the 20th of November, 1999, Human Rights Watch reported that over 2500 civilians were massacred in clash between protesters and the Army. The massacre according to the HRW resulted not only in the death of citizens, but also in the destruction of properties. Means of livelihood was halted with no provision for new means; this was a clear violation of fundamental human rights.

Not having learn from their previous wanton killing and destruction, on October 21st 2001, the Army was in retaliation to the killing of 19 soldiers who were on duty to restore peace between the Tiv and Jukan people. In retaliation, the army killed over hundreds of the people of Zaki Biam, Vasea Anyim Lorlo, Ugba, and Sankera beggar (Nzarga, 2014). The Executive Director of the Africa Division of Human Rights Watch; Takirambudde, stated that "the murder of the 19 soldiers should certainly be condemned, but their deaths do not justify the slaughter of civilians by the Nigerian army." ("Nigerian Soldiers Massacre", 2001). The action of the Nigerian armed force was in clear violation of section 33' of the 1999 constitution which states; "every person shall be entitled to life and no one shall be" deprived intentionally of his life, save in the execution of a sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offence of which he has been found guilty of in Nigeria."

In a more recent altercation between citizens and the armed forces, is the Baga invasion in Borno State in 2013. In which soldiers of the Military Joint Task Force out of frustration of their perceived non-readiness of the residence to cooperate and reveal intelligence about the terrorist group Boko Haram of which they believed operated

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from the small fishing town. The terrorist group launched an attack on the JTF which led to the mortality of one soldier. As usual, the army launched a repressive attack on the small fishing town, setting life and properties of perceived supporters of Boko Haram ablaze. The result of their action has left many internally displaced turned many into orphans, widows and widowers.

Apart from indiscriminate killing, another violation that has frequently been reported to have been violated by State Security Services is sexual abuse. Sexual abuses mostly rape is a violation of human right that steps upon human dignity. Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) reported a case of the rape of a three years old girl by a mobile policeman in 2007 also in 2012, former members of the Nigerian Army; ‘Corporal Nse-Eyedip, Emeze Uzoma, Ugwu Matthew’ before being dismissed from the army were found guilty of rape, extortion and harming of their victims in Wuse Zone 2, Abuja where they were posted to patrol the surrounding. Instead they made use of their patrol vans to chase down, capture their victims and carry-out the dastardly action. It should also be noted that earlier in 1999, in the town of Choba in Port Harcourt, a group of women in the town were sexually assaulted by members of the Nigeria army who were assigned to guard an American oil company (Onyegbula, 2001).

The armed forces have also been heavily involved in preventing the rights of press agents to be heard and the rights of other Nigerians to be informed. Members of the press have been regular victims of arrest and harassment, a Lagos based NGO which advocates freedom of expression and freedom of the press Media Rights Agenda stated that between 2002 and 2003, journalists were over 50 times accosted and abused by members of the Nigeria Armed Forces. Human Rights Watch 2017 reports the detainment and seizure of Abubakar Usman and Emenike Iroegbu whose computers and mobile devices were broken into by the EFCC and Department of State Security agents (HRW-Report 2017).

Other violence committed by the armed forces as reported by Human Rights Watch include killing of 347 Shiite members in Zaria, the killing of 40 members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), infringing on their rights to life, freedom of association, movement and protest.

Violations by Oil Corporations

As typical of capitalism, maximization of profit is key and so in the oil rich Niger-Delta region of Nigeria, oil corporations have usually operated without restrictions and due adherence to regulations in order to increase productions, this has led to them adopting substandard environment; and health safety practices that have had negative ripple effects on the environment; a violation or right to life. According to Onwuazombe (2017), over 13,000,000 barrels of extracted oil have spilled on water

and land as a result of the use of substandard equipment and vandalism, of pipelines.

The peaceful protests of citizens of such regions have usually been countered with violence. According to Human Rights Watch (2000) about 50 youths of the Olugbobiri, Bayelsa State area approached a Nigerian Agip Oil Company flow station in Tebidaba, with the purpose of entering the compound and protesting the unsatisfactory projects of the oil company in the Olugbobiri area. Reports gathered from eyewitnesses commonly stated that armed men of the oil company released fire on the young men without a warning. About 42 of them were able to jump into the water and escape, 7 died instantly, one later died in the hospital. The following week after the attack on the youths, members of the army were stationed around the flow station, and they regularly harassed a small fishing town, making it difficult for people of the town to fend for themselves, a violation of Article 23.1 of the UDHR which states "everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment". There are several violations of rights to life by oil companies in the Niger Delta region, of which the people's protests are usually quelled with violence and unlawful detention of people. Onwuazombe (2017) stated that a vast inhabitant of Niger Delta people are very susceptible to many environmental problems related to diseases, many have been badly affected by hydrocarbon pollution, and many are potential patients of cancer.

Violations of Child's Rights

A 2017 UNICEF report on Nigeria states that "Abuse in all its forms are a daily reality for many Nigerian children and only a fraction ever receive help. Six out of every 10 children experience some form of violence – one in four girls and 10 per cent of boys have been victims of sexual violence. Of the children who reported violence, fewer than five out of a 100 received any form of support. The drivers of violence against children (VAC) are rooted in social norms, including around the use of violent discipline, violence against women and community beliefs about witchcraft, all of which increase children's vulnerability." The United Nations Convention on Child's rights include; "every child has the right to life, and be allowed to survive and develop; every child is entitled to a name, family and nationality; every child is free to belong to any association or assembly according to law; every child has the right to express opinions and freely communicate them on any issue or subject without restriction under the law" (Nwosu and Uche, 2017).

According to the United States Department of States 2017 report that in Nigeria, there are about 30 million children who are of the age of primary school pupils, despite this, about one third of them are not receiving primary education. The Northern part of the country has the lowest rate of enrolled students, and the gap between boys and girls enrolled into school is wide, according to 2017 UNICEF report, "in the North, for

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every 10 girls in school, more than 22 boys attended''. Economic hardship, culture and religion are main reasons for the disparity between enrolled boys and girls. The security situation is also one of the factors children of school age are not enrolled into schools, (HRW, 2017) between 2009 and 2015; attacks by Boko Haram in the Northeastern part of Nigeria led to the destruction of over 910 academic institutions and forced at least 1,500 others to close.

Apart from the problem of non-enrolment of children, another major pandemic is the issue of Almajiri. Based on a 2010 report by the Ministerial Committee on Madrasah, there are over 9 million Almajiri living in Nigeria. This is a major threat to sustainable development. Maigari (2017) stated that ''in actual fact, the Al-majiri phenomenon represent one of the most historically ridiculous fiasco of the predominantly Muslim populated Northern Nigerian enclave. To sit back and not ensure the rights of over 9 million to basic education is equal to sitting back and watching the country perish. This population will remain useless, their inherent potentials untapped and serve as potential recruits for insurgent groups, thereby frustrating government's policies and schemes in pursuit of sustainable development. Children in Nigeria are also exposed to sexual assaults, due to the economic hardship, child labour is prevalent in Nigeria and over 56% of the internally displaced persons are children (Sullivan, 2017). According to UNICEF, as at 2003''Nigeria had the largest number of child brides in Africa with more than 23 million girls and women who were married as children.''

Abuses by Boko Haram and Inter-Communal Violence

Apart from members of the armed forces perpetrating killings and destruction of properties, another group responsible for destructions and violations of rights is the Boko Haram sect. They are the cause of internally displaced people, their attack include beheading, kidnapping, suicide bombings of crowded places. Also attacks on internally displaced people and refugee camps, religious buildings, both mosques and churches, market places and other properties of individuals or political groups they perceive to be antithetical to their course (Sullivan, 2017). The sect often uses women and girls to infiltrate or bypass security to carry out their deadly operations. According to a 2017 human rights watch report, the sect made use of two ladies to carry out a suicide attack on an IDP camp in Dikwa. Borno State, leading to the mortality of 58 internally displaced persons. The kidnap of Chibok school girls in 2014 and the Dapchi school girls drew massive international attention to the human rights situation in Nigeria. Busari (2018) reported that since 2013, the Islamic insurgent group has kidnaped over 1000 people in Nigeria. This is a grave violation of rights of these victims to develop and actualize their full potentials to the development of Nigeria.

Other Violations

Violations by state and non-state actors in Nigeria are numerous that they happen daily in the country. In early 2018, herdsmen clash with farmers led to the death of thousands of Nigerians, predominantly Christian population in the Middle belt. The federal government's action to make a religious law superior to the constitution in certain states, thereby creating Islamic States is a blatant violation of fundamental human rights; the result of this is people in the same federation are made to have different rights. Women are daily victims of domestic violence, ethnic discrimination is practiced by all the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria, a long history of suspicion and tension exist amongst these groups that dates back to colonial. The government's attempts keep peace; have always involved the use of armed forces that have ended up abusing the rights of individuals in the country.

The 1999 constitution prohibits ethnic discrimination; however, ethnic groups regularly accuse the government of discrimination in revenue allocation and development projects (Ajayi and Fashagba, 2014). Ethnicity has been the root cause of several human rights abuses in Nigeria; the constitution of federal republic accords all Nigerians the freedom of mobility and to live in any region of the country, however in practice non-indigenes are often discriminated against, making it hard for them to find employments and housing. For example, in June 2017, the Northern Arewa Youth Consultative Forum demanded Igbo people to leave 19 States in the Northern region of the Federation, on such claims that they were taking their jobs. However such demand was withdrawn later in August.

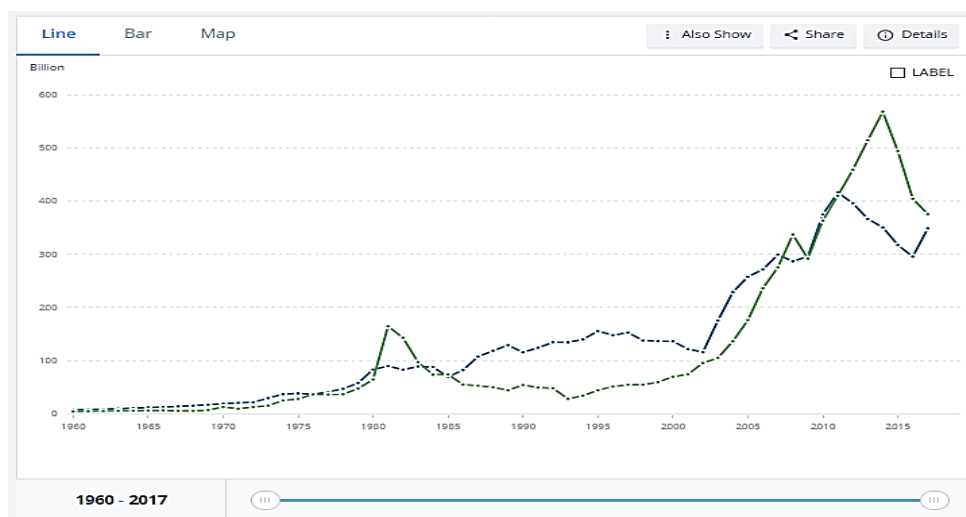
Human Rights Based Approach to Sustainable Development

The intricate link between human rights and sustainable development has been realized by United Nations General Assembly, thereby leading to the establishment of the Agenda 2030 of which the 17 goals are targeted towards human development. Development has been focused on economic indexes for too long and history has shown that economic growth doesn't always reflect human development. There is no sense talking about economic growth without human development; economic wellbeing of a country is measured by rise and fall in GDP. Gross Domestic Product is an aggregate of a country's income (Alonso, n.d). This aggregate pays no consideration to the source or how the income is generated in the country; therefore some sources may yield high GDP while it harms the environment and the citizens. Should a country adopt policies that is attractive to foreign direct investors but lead to the flooding of the local market with imported commodities and foreign owned firms which engage in illicit practices as; environmental pollution and violation of labour laws. At the end of an economic year, the country would have amassed an increase in GDP, but this wouldn't have reflected in human development; the environment would have been badly polluted which will in turn worsen the livelihood of the people. Nigeria is an archetype of a country with disparity between economic growth and

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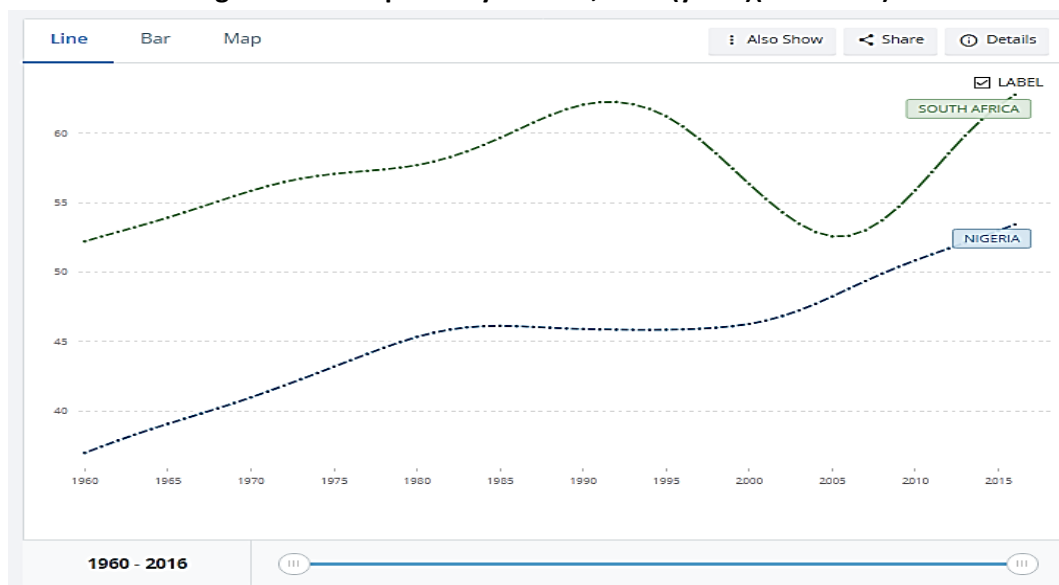
human development. In 2014, Nigeria rebased its GDP data and overtook South Africa to become the largest economy in Africa. Despite this statistical improvement, the livelihood of the people didn't improve as depicted in the figures below:

Figure 1: Economic Growth in Nigeria and South Africa (1960-2017)



Source: The World Bank (2019).

Figure 2: Life Expectancy at Birth, total (years)(1960-2016)



Source: The World Bank (2019)

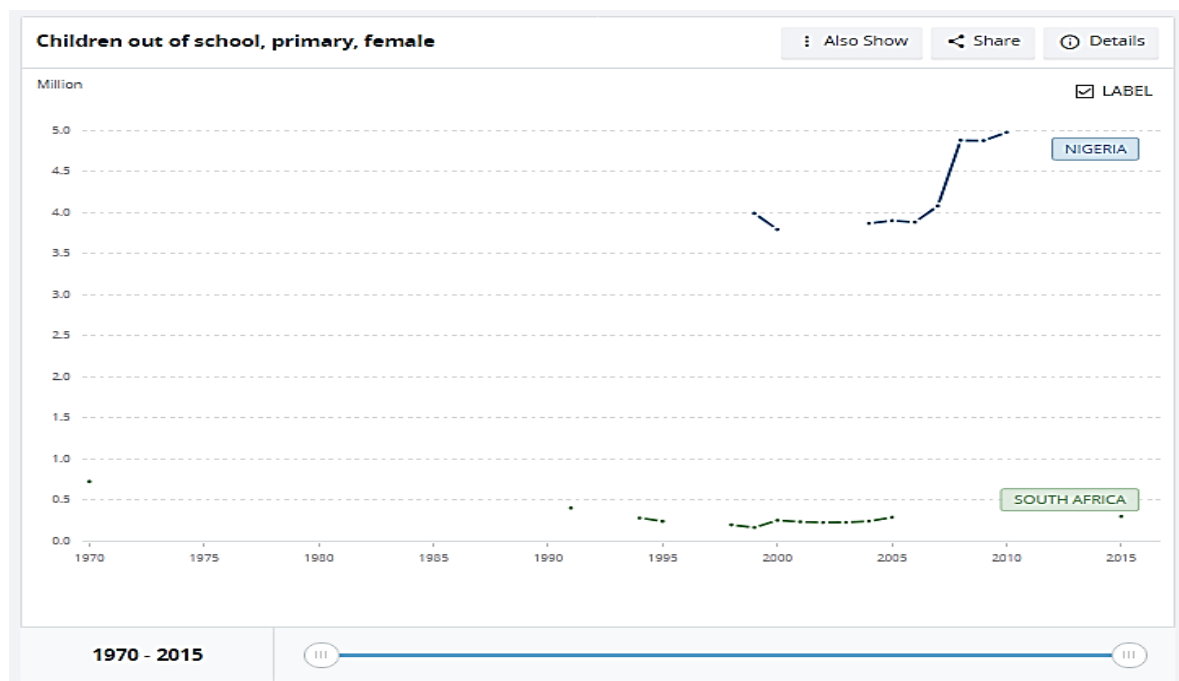
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Figure 3: Life Expectancy at Birth, total (years) (1960-2016)

Country	1960	2016	
Nigeria	36.98	53.43	
South Africa	52.22	62.77	

Source: The World Bank (2019).

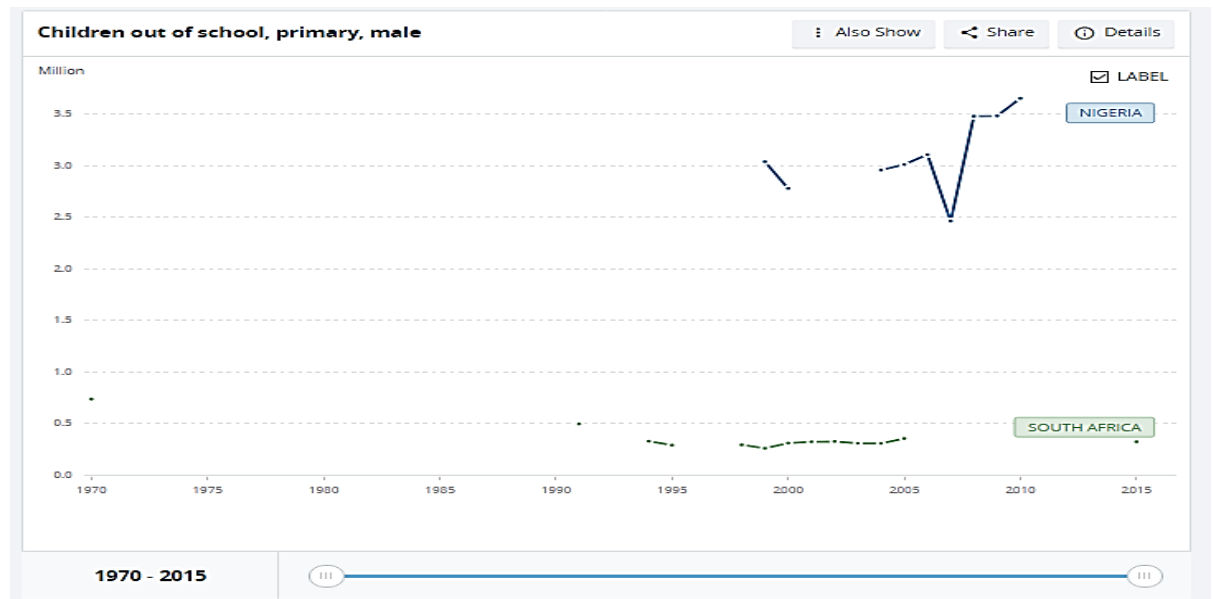
Figure 4: Children out of school, primary, female



Source: The World Bank (2019).

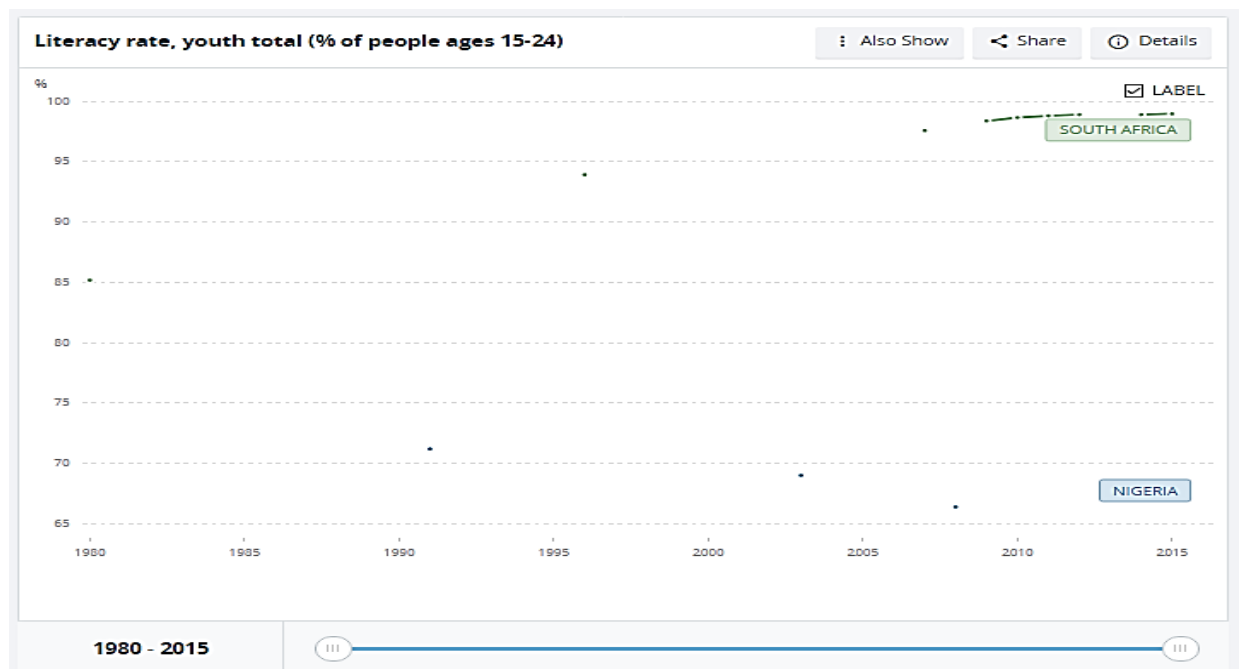
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Figure 5: Children out of school, primary, male



Source: The World Bank (2019).

Figure 6: Literacy rate, youth total (% of people ages 15-24)



Source: The World Bank (2019).

Interpretation and Discussion

After rebasing her economy in 2013 and revealing it in 2014, Nigeria emerged as the economic giant of the continent overtaking South Africa which had occupied this position consistently since 2008. Basically, rebasing of GDP connotes substitution old information used for calculating GDP of previous years with current information. This is important because prices and value of commodities do change (national Bureau of Statistics, 2017). It is expected that governments do this rebasing about every five years, but the Nigeria government had not released the economy since 1990 (Aljazeera, 2014). This means that the country might have attained the position of economic giant of the continent long before 2014. Factors that were added to the calculation that made the difference include such sectors as; film industry, technology industry and e-commerce (Aljazeera, 2014). Despite the economic growth in the country, Nigeria overtook India as the poverty capital of the world (Kharas, Hamel & Hofer 2018).

In figure 2, the disparity between life expectancy at birth in Nigeria and South Africa is displayed. As of 2016, as shown above; Nigeria was at 53.43 while South Africa was 62.77. It is the responsibilities of any government to make policies that will enable the economy thrive thereby having positive impact on other sectors like health. Life expectancy in Nigeria is low, which according to Matthew, Adegboye, and Fagbeminiyi, (2015) is one of the lowest in the world. Some contributing factors to this include hiv/aids, malaria funding, poor management, inadequate staff etc. (Adegboye, and Fagbeminiyi, 2015).

Another key factor in calculating human development index is literacy level. Education is expected to be available and accessible to every Nigerian Child as a proof of the protection of Child's right to education. According to Folorunsho, Imam-Tamim and Abulraheem (2014), implementation of this right in Nigeria is nothing but a mirage. With the existence of non-enrolled children of school age as displayed in figures 4 and 5, coupled with the Al-majiri population of over 9 million, these pose a great threats to development not to talk of sustainable development. The impact of education on any community is so profound that "education in every sense in one of the fundamental factors of development. No country can achieve sustainable economic development without substantial investment in human capital. Education enriches people's understanding of themselves and the world (Ozturk, 2001). How beneficial will the 65% percent of illiterate youths as shown in figure 6 be to the overall development of Nigeria?

The clamour for the integration and recognition of human rights as a factor in development agendas globally is what is known as the rights based approach to development. Due to its importance, this idea has drawn much attention and much has been written and said about the approach. To Munyao (2013) the human rights based approach can be seen as "the practice of applying the norms and

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standards set out in international human rights law to policies and practices related to development.” As have been echoed severally in this work, human development yields positive changes leading to a holistic development that covers the sociocultural economic and political spheres of the country. The key here is enabling humans to participate (UNDP 2007).

The Agenda 2030 or UN SDGs are anchored or attainable only through rights based approach. Approximately ninety percent of the development agenda targets are bench-marked on international human rights and labour standards (Human rights and the SDGs, 2019). The two concepts are mutually reinforcing in the sense that protecting rights makes it possible for humans to live in dignity, realize and actualize their potentials. The implication of this is the quality of a country's population that enables it to develop and when a country is developing, the country is better suited to protect the rights of her citizens.

In Nigeria, major parastatals and offices established to endear sustainable development through human rights based approach are the National Human Rights commission, NEPAD, the office of SSA to the president on SDGs, the committee in the National House of Assembly responsible for sustainable development. The activities of Agencies, Departments and Ministries are also guided by an inter-Ministerial committee on sustainable development (Odogwu, 2018). NGOs are also involved in the quest for sustainable development in Nigeria; one of such is the Women Environmental Program (WEP). in a 2018 report by WEP, of the assessment of 10 of the federating units of Nigeria which are; Kano, Yobe, Anambra, Abuja, Delta, Rivers, Benue, Plateau, Lagos and Nasarawa in relations to the Agenda 2030. The report revealed that the academic needs of children with disabilities have not been properly met; the few existing schools have debilitating infrastructures and facilities. The duty bearers which are the States are clearly failing in their responsibility to secure the rights of the future of the country, thereby making them liabilities.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to observe the extent to which the violation of human rights in Nigeria has been a hindrance to sustainable development, also to observe the extent to which human rights and sustainable development were mutually reinforcing. Issues of rights violation were analyzed; findings show that duty bearers which are the agents of the State are major violators of rights of the people. Member of state's armed forces in collaboration with the state and Multinational Corporations carry out gross violations with impunity. Death-toll from rights violations causes are in thousands which prevent people from enjoying their rights to free movement and dignity.

The work discusses the paradigm of human rights based approach to development which is advocated by the United Nations to ignite sustainable development through empowering the people.

Recommendations

Increase in education funding and expenditure: despite the key role that education plays in human and national development, the issue of under funding has been a persistent problem in Nigeria. This has led to many students being out of school especially in the northern part of the country. The country's education sector funding must be corrected as a matter of urgency to be at par with UNESCO's benchmark.

Increase in Health budget: The right to health care is a fundamental human right which must be guaranteed by the state and hence the need for increased budget for this purpose

Increased Agricultural Funding: for food to be sufficient in the country and affordable as well as make the country self-sufficient in food production, there has to be increased investment in agriculture.

Enforcement of Rights to education: the report calls for the introduction of rights to education at early stages of primary education. This must go beyond legislation but the pragmatic enforcement of this rights in the country

The above recommendations if applied will immensely contribute to reduce the case of violations in Nigeria, empower the people and enhance sustainable development in the country.

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