

Police brutality and civil violence implications on societal peace and the economy: a study of end-Sars protests in Nigeria

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Received: June 22, 2021 | Revised: September 2, 2021 | Accepted: September 30, 2021

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.5534837

Abstract

Police brutality is a recurrent incidence in Nigeria that has been attracting both domestic and international attention but not without implications. This study, therefore, examines the effects of police brutality, using the end-SARS case, and the consequences of its impact on the peace and economy of the Nigerian state. Adopting a qualitative research method, data collected from both the primary (in-depth interview) and secondary sources were textually analyzed. While two states and the Federal Capital Territory were the areas of study, the findings revealed that the social and economic conditions of the country are adversely impacted as the ethnic division was deepened and the investment environment worsened respectively using frustration-aggression theory as a framework. The study, therefore, recommends that the Nigerian government should be more proactive in responding to citizens' complaints and compensate victims and businesses affected by the crisis amongst others.

Key words: brutality, economic, end-SARS, peace, police, protests.

Introduction

Nigeria is a country with recurring records of police violation of the fundamental human rights of citizens (Naankiel, 2013). Though there is no widely accepted definition of police brutality despite its presence since the history of civil policing, Root (2015) maintains that Police brutality involves the use of unneeded or excessive violence by officers. Root (2015) states further that the issue of police brutality is best explained by images and examples highlighted thus: first, Pluto's of German Shepherd Police Dogs attacking Civil Rights Marchers in the 1960s and the police officer blasting those marching with fire hoses; second, the notorious film footage from the unpopular robbery King beating in 1991; third, Kelly Thomas, a homeless man in Orange County CA, was beaten to death by police; and, the case of Albner Louima, a Haitian immigrant who was brutally beaten and sodomized by New York City Police officers with a toilet plunger in 1997. These often-cited

scenarios diffuse powerful messages of which is underscoring of the presence of police brutality, even in a more civilized society like United State, more so that the recent outburst of the protest (tagged #black life matters) occasioned by the demise of Floyd George due to police incivility besides the implicit of its almost universality.

Interestingly, civil violence is argued to be important because of the help it offers in explaining political inquiries; it assists in proposing civil violence as a significant topic of political inquiry; and, usefulness in providing both theoretical and general enlightenment on human violence. (Gurr, 1968; Hungtington, 2008; Gupte, 2011). Meanwhile, Gupte (2011) submitted that civil violence is a term used to describe an organized act of violation and destruction carried out as a sign of defiance against a central authority or between opposing groups which even occur in modern or progressive societies. Gupte also maintains that

there is no fail-state mechanism against the outbreak of civil violence in a modern democratic system or any political system.

Giving another perspective, Gurr (1968) stresses that civil violence suggests something as important as a genus awaiting universal acceptance and that civil violence is better and satisfactorily explained as psychological and material conditions. These submissions are predicated on his theoretical proposition that men on several occasions change to violence as a response to their dissatisfaction with government performance. But to Huntington (2008), civil violence is a stimulator of various efforts employ for explaining a widely held belief in the US that civil violence is linked with poverty.

The case of Nigeria civil unrest was orchestrated by excesses of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) (including brutality, violence, extortion and abuse of fundamental human rights in almost all parts of the country) which started on Thursday, October 8, 2020. Nnadozie (2017) described SARS as a frightening and crime section of the Nigerian Police Force instituted in 1992 by Simeon Danladi Midenda, a retired Commissioner of Police with the addition of the word 'Special' to an existing Anti-Robbery Squad making it 'Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). According to Okogba (2017), the Spokesperson of the Police Force, Jimoh Moshood articulates that SARS is one of the 14 units under the Nigerian Police Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department charged with the responsibility to arrest, investigate and prosecute individuals found wanting of crimes like armed robbery, murder, kidnappings, hired assassinations, and other highly dreaded crimes. But keeping faith in her mandate as advanced is the underlying justification for her existence.

However, Ogbette, Otu and Olumide (2018) succinct evaluation of SARS impact asserts that it can be better categorized into positive and negative and that positively, they have been instrumental to the arrest of many notorious criminals across the country. And buttressing the good side of SARS, Muhammad (2017)

references the officers' arrest of some of the dreaded kidnappers terrorizing the country for over six-year, citing examples of two renown syndicates, Henry Chibueze, known as Vampire, and Onwumadike Chukwudumeme with appellate as Evans.

On the other hand, highlighting the negatives of SARS, Muhammad (2017) submits that some men and officers acted against the rules of engagement; they are influenced externally with monetary values as some irresponsible money bags used them to service their interest to beat up, embarrass, and harass their opponents; and, often maltreat meaningful Nigerians as fraudsters based on their appearances such as wearing of costly wrist-watch or posh cars. These deviant acts largely created a void between SARS operations and objectives. Amnesty International study on SARS motivated by citizens' complaints attested to SARS inhuman behaviour such as subjecting its detainees to horrific torture, beatings, shootings, extortions, humiliations to unlawful execution (cited in Ogbette, 2018, p. 4), validating the perverseness of the section of the Nigerian police misdemeanour. Though, it is noteworthy that many Nigerians objections over the activities of SARS did not just begin with the recent experience (2020) but was recorded in 2010, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019, making the government, according to Ojewale (2020), to disband them repeatedly in those years except in 2010.

Currently, the federal government has declared SARS disbanded on October 11 2020 (in the course of the protests), and replaced it with Special Weapon Tactical Team (SWAT) though not acceptable by a large section of the public especially the youth, justifying their stance on the assumption that little or no difference would exist between SARS and SWAT as same personnel will migrate to constitute the latter. The initial demands of the protesters at the onset of the protest are the following: federal government to abolish SARS; provision of Justice for the victims of police brutality; and, reformation of the police. However, the failure of the government to swiftly respond to these

demands led to increasing in demand which includes: revival of both the educational and health systems; improved efforts in job creation; to take power from the old and corrupt politicians that have never cared about protecting interests of the youths.

While the sympathetic disposition of the Lagos State Governor Babajide Sanwoolu to the agitating youths motivated him to give an audience and personally transmit the letter containing the stated request to the Nigerian President General Buhari, the protest still lasted for more than three weeks halting almost all sectors activities including businesses, manufacturing, education, aviation to mention just a few aside from disrupting public peace and being hijacked by hoodlum to loot both personal and commercial valuables. Since nature harbours vacuum, is it fair to assume that the grounding of the national system will not affect the economy? And, will the tension not negatively influence public perception of national peace as fragile?

Both problems highlighted are disturbing as the youth population still bears the brunt of the consequences of the country's ailing economy. The National Bureau of Statistics (cited in

Ojewale 2020: np) states that: "the second quarter National Bureau of Statistics in 2020 showed unemployment rate at 27.1% and the underemployment rate at 28.6% out of the 21.7 million unemployed young people between the ages of 15 to 34 made up the 34.9%. The young also made up 28.2% of 22.9 million underemployed Nigerians"

This background set the basis for this research. Hence the objective is to unravel the implications of police brutality and civil violence on the societal peace and economy in Nigeria using the end SARS protest as a case or focus of study. This is premised on the belief that the knowledge of both the economic and civil psychological effects would heighten the governments (federal and states) awareness of the cost and reasons why preventive and proactive governance should be entrenched. This would open up more research interest in the study focus hitherto not thoroughly engaged. The paper comprises seven sections. Following the background are the method, literature review, theoretical framework, areas of study, findings, discussion and analysis and conclusion and recommendation respectively.

Material and methods

This study is rooted in the qualitative research approach. It adopts a case study research method for a robust analysis of the end SARS uproar. Data is collected through both the primary and secondary sources. This primary source entails the use of in-depth interviews of nine key informants which agrees with Morse (2000) recommendation that between eight and twelve interviewees are sufficient for data

generation. Those interviewed include Protestants, business owners affected by the protests and journalists. The secondary information is extracted from Newspapers reports and articles, Magazines, Journals, and credible online sites. The sourced information was descriptively analyzed to draw inferences used to conclude and in offering recommendations.

Results and discussion

Literature Review

Civil society organizations across the globe have been a leading vanguard in ensuring a peaceful and free society, though meeting with hitches within and sometimes outside the national boundaries. For instance, the administration of privacy rights often affects the gathering of information on brutality and similar

allegations against the police and other law enforcement agents. In other words, the confidentiality attached to public information makes it most time difficult to access, sometimes resulting in retaliation and harassment of investigators by the law enforcers and promoting cover-ups of documents and rights abuses. As observed, people's efforts are

been limited due to lack of criminal prosecution, the ineffectiveness of internal and civilian complaint mechanisms, limitations of civil suits, lack of transparency, attack on corps monitors and insufficient training of officers (USA, 2017).

Expectedly, human rights abuses are to be exposed, tried by the court of law and not undermined. In this sense, it is plausible to argue that even prostitutes and drunkards have the same right to protection as others including convicted criminals. Meanwhile, because the opposite is often the case, Worden (1996) threw light on some of the reasons responsible for police unethical behavior as some officers defined their activity as exclusive to crime-fighting; a tendency of bending the rules of engagement; likely to use force on antagonistic suspects; and, also tends to apply force on suspects.

In United State, for instance, Paybarah, and Diaz (2020) asserts that the clash in Philadelphia between the police and protesters was sparked by the fatal shooting of a black man alleged to be wielding a knife. Going by global trends of events, police brutality appears to be turning universal as many committees reports across states and reformers' movement observations reveals that the victims of police violence are the poor, minority groups and immigrant population or people with fewer regards. To counter this anomaly, different groups have been expressing concerns or organized protests against police brutality on many platforms and became intimately involved in police violence such as black panthers, the American Indian movement and the Brown Buffalos (Root, 2015).

Highlighting the significance of civil violence, Gupte (2011: 1) maintains that:

Civil violence is very important as it is a strong mechanism of gaining access to credibility and authority for the disenfranchised group, asserting of one's identity or gaining acceptance in social group. Evidence from around the world suggests that looting and thievery form an integral part of civil violence. A very good example is the case of Mumbai, a city in India prone to riot and civil violence where between 1992 and 1993 a Police

gave a report on a rioter holding mosquito repellent, cloth, TV sets and other items with a relatively low street-value...

There are different modes of civil violence like rioting, arson, stone, missile throwing and they are public conveying more messages than the physical effect of violence on the society (Gupte, 2011). This largely accounted for reasons why victims of police brutality were honored as Martyrs in the United States. An example is the "Memorial Day Massacre" in Chicago in 1937; an organized strike ensued at the Republic Steel Plant when police opened fire killing ten strikers as others wounded while police moved in to beat demonstrators (Root, 2015, p.1). In this same vein, George Floyd remains a Martyr in the hearts of Americans and the world. Hill, Tiefenthaler, Trieber and Stein (2020) noted that Minneapolis Police Officers arrested George Floyd after a store employee levelled allegation of counterfeit use against him. In this process of police response, Floyd lost consciousness after being pinned down to the ground by Derek Chauvin with his knee on Floyd for a full minute and twenty seconds. The George Floyd experience seems not to only attract global attention to police brutality but also embolden other climes to toe the same path and seems to boost the courage of the Nigerian end-SARS protesters.

Efforts have been channeled to minimize or end incidences of police brutality in many countries of the world. Toward this end, the 2001 committee's review of US heightens concerns on police brutality and brutal life-ending under the US Law Enforcement agents; and there has been a rise in the enforcement powers of police as well in the state fight against terrorism. The aftermath is a record of great reduction in the abuse of power by the Force with excessiveness on people of a different race. But after 2001, police brutality has increasingly worsened (USA, 2001). In the Nigerian case, Ibietan and Okafor, (2016, p. 1) recommended that: "...robust capacity building mechanisms that incorporate expertise and professionalism in public bureaucracies, plus multi-stakeholder collaborative approach as a platform for re-invigorating institutions in Nigeria". It all entails

or boils down to the need for reorientation and capacity building of police personnel alongside cooperation of various institutions in government for optimum performance.

Theoretical Framework

Frustration-aggression theory is employed as an anchor for this research. It is a commonly used theory for analyzing aggression-related research beginning from the late 1930s and the theory was proposed in 1939 by a group of five Yale Psychologists; Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer and Sears 1939 and applied in clinical and social psychology, sociology, ethnology, criminology and medical research. The two assumptions of the theory are: aggression is preceded by frustration and frustration always leads to aggression (Breuer and Eldon, 2017).

Other scholars have built on frustration-aggression theory and contributed by underscoring the importance of the theory to overcoming frustration (Buss 1963, 1966; Thompson & Kolstoe, 1974 cited in Breuer and Eldon). As well, Berkowitz (1989) highlights how frustration interferes with the desired or cherished outcome while Hurt (1970) contends that long occurrence of frustration result in the escalation of aggression and violence at both the individual and societal levels (cited in Breuer *et al*, 2017). Breuer and Eldon (2017, p. 9) conclude that: “the theory has lasted over a decade and consistently fits in use for basic and applied research regardless of notable changes in aggression theories from a focus on the biological drive to learned responses and environmental behaviour contingencies”.

The application of the theory to this work is depicted in how the brutality of the dreaded SARS on Nigerian citizens has brought about increased fears among the populace, limited the exercise of people's fundamental human rights-frustration. Many citizens had terrible experiences in the hands of SARS with the government non-responsiveness heightening their pains thereby making them unleash their bottled aggression through the protest. The chain reaction explicated validates the assumption that aggression is always preceded

by frustration and that frustration leads to aggression.

Furthermore, lack of immediate solution and increased brutality during the protest added to protesters frustration, especially shootings during the protests at the Lekki toll gate on October 20 2020, allegedly leading to the death of some protesters with pictures showing Nigerian flag tainted with blood. This is believed to have made the crisis degenerated into destruction, hijacking and looting of both private and government properties. Frustration-aggression theory is found suitable for the analysis of this paper despite its criticisms and suggestions for reformulations by Barkowitz (1984, 1990) that reformulation of frustration-aggression should be made more popular and applied to other disciplines such as in the study of the effects of media on society violence.

Areas of Study

Two states, Lagos and Anambra, and the federal capital territory (FCT) in Nigeria are chosen for this study. The choice is predicated on the researchers' observations. First, the states where the protests were observed domiciled in the southwest part of Nigeria except the FCT located in the northern central region; and, second, the three areas represent the country's geographical spread with the FCT contiguity to the northern part, though none of the northern states recorded incidence of end-SARS protest.

(i). Lagos State

The end-SARS protests kicked-off on October 8th 2020, in Lagos after the video of a young Nigerian that died after his encounter with SARS police officer in Delta state went viral. Within the metropolis, locations with a significant presence of protesters are Alausa (Lagos state secretariat), Ikeja – the state capital, Agege, Abulegba, Mushin, Surulere, Ikorodu, with the epic centre being the Lekki Toll Gate. Hordes of youth with different flyers inscriptions of #ENDSARS has-tag or similar phrase were displayed with popular hip-hop musicians and celebrities gracing the spots to boost their morale, at least in the first two weeks. But the protest took a new dimension when protesters

discounted the pleas from government quarters to halt the rampage and disregard for an imposed curfew by the state government that might spur the engagement of military invasion of the Lekki toll gate. Meanwhile, the ugly scenario alleged to have caused the death of some protesters (though it is a controversial issue with varying numbers of death from different sources) might have been averted if both the protesters and security personnel allow law and reasons to prevail respectively.

Nonetheless, as observed by Norbrook (2020), before the military shootings on the midday October 20, 2020, curfew was announced by the Lagos State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu over worries that criminals have hijacked the end-SARS protests but was not honoured or seems to yield any positive result triggering military enforcement and shootings. Furthermore, Paquette (2020) asserts that the CCTV cameras at the Lekki Toll Gate were removed by the government official and the power supply disconnected prior to the military invasion, seemingly signifying government efforts to shield video capturing or media evidence.

In the account of Amnesty International (AI), 12 people among protesters were reported shot dead by the police at two unnamed different locations in assaults shared widely on the social media while ten were killed at the Lekki toll gate and two killed in Alausa (Wiley, 2020). One of the Lekki toll gate protesters was quoted thus: "We were sitting on the ground and singing Nigerian National Anthem and most of us had flags in our hands and we raised it, they opened fire directly straight at us and they kept on advancing and advancing. One or two people got hit. Everybody got up and it became total chaos" (Orjinmo, 2020, p. 1). It was also noted that as many dead bodies lied after shootings subsided, Ambulances were sent by the military men to carry corpses away with the intention to wipe evidence (Orjinmo, 2020). While the toll gate event tagged 'black Tuesday' may linger in the memory of many Nigerians as it culminated into wide-spread aggressive civil violence by the original protesters and hoodlums seizing the moment as an opportunity to loot and destroy

both the government and private properties in the state leading to the groaning of loss of capital and sources of livelihood especially by the latter.

It is worth noting that the shootings attracted not only the national but global condemnations. For instance, Erezi (2020) noted that the United Nations Secretary-General has frowned at the shootings and killing; the former US Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton, called on President Buhari and the army to halt the killings of protesters; and, The current US president, who was at that time was a contestant, urged Nigerian leaders to stop clampdown on protesters. Also, foreign musicians, perhaps in solidarity with their Nigerian counterparts, expressed their displeasure against the shooting. For instance, Beyonce and Rihanna also shared solidarity messages through their Twitter handle (Haynes, 2020) while the Lagos state governor twitted after the shooting and looting thus: it grieved my heart seeing destroyed properties and I can't watch arsonists, hoodlums and anarchists continue their hide under the end-SARS Protests to cause mayhem on the law-abiding citizens disrupting lives and destroying properties (Akoni, 2020). Though there was rising tension across the country, it became heighten after the President's speech, a day after tollgate shootings, failed to acknowledge it but simply asked for calmness with a promise to reform the police. This, as well, widens the platform for political readings and trading over the protest, deepening the political dimension of the crisis.

Moreover, we must highlight the collateral damages of the public and private assets to elicit the after-effects psychologically and economically. Notables in Lagos are: Nigeria Port Authority Lagos – set ablaze, Orile Police Post, Lagos – set ablaze, Lekki Toll Gate, Lagos – destroyed Bus Rapid Transport Terminal, Oyingbo – new buses set on fire, Television Continental, Ketu, Lagos – set ablaze, VIO and FRSC Office, Ojodu – FRSC branded cars, generators – set ablaze, Bus Rapid Transport Terminal, Ojodu, Lagos – buses set ablaze and BRT Bus at Berger – set ablaze. Others worthy of mention are: Lagos Television, Agidingbi, Ikeja – shut down, Recreational Center, Oregun, Lagos

– set on fire, Oba's Palace, Lagos – Burnt to ashes and his sceptre of authority seized, Sanwo-Olu Mother's House, Surulere, Lagos – set ablaze, Kings College partially destroyed, Many lives lost already to the protests all in Lagos and South-West, Oriental Hotel, Victoria Island – Lagos partially burnt Guarantee Trust Bank (GTB) – branches burnt down, Access Bank Branches burnt down, Ajeromi Local Government Secretariat, Lagos Island Local Government – destroyed, Lagos Island East Local Council Development Area (LCDA) Secretariat – set on fire, Lagos Mainland Local Government Secretariat – destroyed, Ibeju Lekki Local Council Development Area (LCDA) Secretariat – destroyed, Sanwoolu's Uncle's house on Lagos Island – burnt down (Ogunyinka, 2020, P.1). The governor estimates the cost of fixing the damages at one trillion nairas (Billions of Dollars) indicating the extent of the economic cost to the state alone.

(ii). Anambra State

The end-SARS protests in Anambra commenced peacefully on October 10 2020, and were joined by youths in their hundreds. Reputable personalities gracing the protests in the state includes artists such as Chinedu Okoli, Highlife Maestro better known as Flavour, Chibuzor Nelson Azubuike, a rapper popularly known as Phyno, Kingsley Okonkwo, known as Kcee (Adebulu, 2020). Governor Willie Obiano of Anambra State gave his support to the protesters and assured them of attending to their demands. In the Governor's words: "I joined youths of our dear state to say #End Police brutality and I support them because they did not only vote and defend their votes in my 21 – over – 21 victory but all their requests are genuine and germane and I oblige to honour all of them. I am honoured to be among the youths sharing their feelings" (Aroh, 2020). This is a clear indication of the governor accreditation of the reason for the protest, though almost based on political sentiment possibly for personal aggrandizement.

Further, the Governor promised to comply with his colleagues in the country to set up a special panel to ensure justice and converse

with SARS leadership in the state with the intent of effecting the release of those in their custody. (Kaffash, 2020). But as protesters swiftly headed to the venue, they were resisted with sporadic gun shot by the police officers causing a pandemonium (Eze, 2020 & Nwafor, 2020). On October 22, 2020, the once peaceful protests in Anambra turned violent resulting in the attacking of area command 3-3 division and murdering of a police officer's, all in Nnewi. Additively, state high court in Ogidi, Idemili Local government council burnt while other government properties are also destroyed. Consequently, Nigerian Army Officers in the state were deployed to ensure the security of lives and property (Nwaiwu, 2020). Unfortunately, the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) at Agu Awka was looted and Covid-19 palliatives looted while a trailer load of Covid-19 palliatives on its transfer to an unknown location was also ambushed by the youth and the materials carted away (Chukindi, 2020, Okafor, 2020). Apparently, the Anambra case is a prototype of that of Lagos in terms of protesters behaviour, military intervention and the accompanying looting and vandalism of properties resulting in huge resources loss.

(iii). Federal Capital Territory, Abuja

The Abuja end-SARS protests are characterized by the leading of high-profile political activist like Aisha Yesufu, Sowole Omoleye, Sahara Reporters Publisher, as well as a musician, David Adeleke popularly known as Davido amongst others.

The Abuja experience seems different probably because it is the capital city as city security committee was prompt to ban end-SARS protest under the auspices of preventing any form of Covid-19 infraction, the privileges that protesters enjoyed at the beginning in other parts of the country were not found in Abuja (Agbo, 2020). Nevertheless, the government action was condemned as a violation of citizens' right. It is noteworthy that the aftermath of the protest recorded looting of Covid-19 palliatives warehouse and few private properties looted.

From the review of the states and FCT, it is discernible that protesters original intent is not to loot or vandalize properties but register their grievances. However, the extent of properties loss and hindrances to free movement of goods and services are instructive on the adverse effects of the almost three weeks protest on the socio-economic condition of the states and country at large alongside the heat generated in the polity.

Discussion of Findings and Analysis

This section presents the key informants' interview (citing the striking statements) and secondary data with critical analysis to provide premises for drawing conclusion and recommendations. Two sub-themes are employed to execute this: societal peace and economy. Two questions posed to address the two themes from nine respondents are: how have the end-SARS protests affected peace in the society? And, how have the protests affected the economy?

(a). Societal Peace

The name SARS has continued to be dreaded in Nigeria before its demise as a result of the level of rights abuse associated with the officers conducts which in most cases contrast police code of conduct. As opined by Gberevbie, Joshua, Excellence-Oluye and Oyeyemi (2017, p. 6): "The challenge among government officials in Nigeria bothers on behavior that is unethical" With many Nigerian sharing this view, the mantra that says 'Police is your friend' would sound like mere rhetoric. **Respondent 2** avowed that: "palpable violent attack and brutality, fear, terror and anxiety" grip them repeatedly when they hear the name SARS, implying that they would avoid hanging around the highly policed area, especially SARS. Consequently, many citizens have apathy for police or security personnel paid by the state to ensure their socio-economic protection.

Besides, the degeneration of end-SARS protests at Agege Abattoir, Fagba, Iju/Ishaga axis into the looting of private assets and businesses (belonging to the Yorubas and Igbos descents) allegedly spearheaded by the Hausas extraction residing in the shanties around that vicinity clearly indicate the likely social acrimony

that would accompany the mayhem between the Hausas and the other two major tribes in Nigeria. According to an eyewitness account, Mr Femi Olokun, a resident in the area, who stated thus: "We are under attack in Fagba, Iju-Ishaga. Hoodlums and Hausas are chasing, killing people and setting houses ablaze. The incident started at about 8 am. I saw two people that were mauled down. I and my family members have escaped to a safe location" (Akoni, 2020). This is very instructive on the public perception that the Hausas are seizing the riotous situation to perpetrate or stealing, robbery or looting of the two rivalries ethnic groups or unleash mayhem on their host communities. These would deepen the existing division among the poly-ethnics state.

The gory sight witnessed or reported in the media is another source of concern for citizens' orientation on sanctity or dignity of human life, especially the children. For instance, beholding a beheaded person repeatedly might register into the sub-consciousness of the children that human life is not valuable in his society. In addition, some residents deserted their abode in search of a more secure or safe haven or as a preventive measure for being interrogated regarding the crisis. This says more of their belief that they might suffer for offences not committed.

There exists variation about whether Nigeria is peaceful or not. In the opinion of a military officer, their involvement is geared towards enshrining a peaceful society. In his response to the question of how the ends-SARS protests affected peace in society, he quipped that:

As military personnel, one can easily detect when protest is a breach of peace. The Police has the responsibility to maintain peace in the society but when they need the support of the military, we always come in to render help. Remember that the security men also have the right to self-defence when threatened by protesters. The security men are meant to carry out orders from their superiors (obey the last order). All efforts work towards the restoration of peace where there is no peace (Respondent 4, 2020).

A counter of this opinion was given by a protester who stated that peace never existed in the country. A youngster who happened to be present at the Lekki Toll Gate on the day of the shootings responded thus:

Which peace? What type of peace do you mean? Nigeria cannot boast of having peace even before the end-SARS protests. The men of SARS took away the peace of the society through incessant abuse of people's fundamental human rights, Fulani herdsmen are there, the bandits, the government-sponsored thugs, the daily armed robbery, rapists, kidnappers. Though the end-SARS protests may have affected societal peace, we cannot say that the peace we lack is due to the protests (Respondent 1, 2020).

Moreover, while families that lost their loved ones and properties also have their peace threatened the frustration of loss of properties as well caused aggression that has made some people to act irrationally, making them appear irresponsible to the public. A case in point is Mr. Kenechukwu Okeke who lost his property during the end-SARS disturbance and proceeded to sue some of the national master minders or arrowheads including Aisha Yesufu, Damini Ogulu (Burna Boy), David Adeleke (Davido), Folarin Falana (Falz), Debo Adebayo (Mr Macaroni) Maryam Akpaokagi (Taoma), Peter and Paul Okoye, Innocent Idibia (Tuface), Bankole Wellington (Banky W), Tiwa Savage, Michael Ajereh (Don Jazzy) and Yemi Alade in pursuant to sections 88, 109(a), 110(1) (c) of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act, 2015 (Kabir, 2020). To some Nigerians sympathetic with the protesters, it is seen as being politically motivated while those who shared Kenechukwu experience or sentiment see it as a right course capable of deterring future occurrence.

As a corollary, a businessman who suffered a loss of property said this about the peace question: "losing thousands or millions of naira in business does not give anyone peace. The lockdown led to a lack in the house causing home squabbles. Some frustrated and depressed people found reasons to commit suicide. The hardship of recession and covid-19

pandemic added to that of end-SARS protests" (Respondent 7, 2021). In a related trend, Respondent 3 (2020), one of the protesters, asserts that the protest was a peaceful one from kick-off until the government brought in their sponsored thugs, it was the government version that became violent and blew away the peacemaking the people lose their loved ones, businesses, property and means of livelihood.

All these do not guarantee peace to the society but breeds aggression, frustration and eventual violence.

In another dimension, the protest was perceived as being fueled by some ethnic group against another. There were speculations from some quarters that the protests were ethnically motivated. On this development, the Chairman of Southwest Governors' Forum, and Ondo State Governor, Rotimi Akeredolu, (Senior Advocate of Nigeria, SAN), informed Nigerians especially Igbos to treat with neglect the war-mongering Adeyinka Grandson, who has been busy circulating video in the social media asking the Igbos to vacate Lagos state, with the assurance of the safety of their life and property (Ashefon, 2020). The negative implications of this on the national cohesion, peaceful co-existence and constitutional guarantee of residing in any part of the country are too hurtful to be underestimated or overlooked.

(b). Economy

In recounting the effects of end-SARS protests, the economy is a sector that is strongly hit with ripple effects on virtually all sectors. An interviewee responding to the question of how the end-SARS protests affected the economy avowed thus: "the economy had a huge setback in the government level, organizations, individuals and family level and that the government will have to rebuild all damaged properties especially the police stations and posts burnt down which money should have been used for investment and catering for people's welfare". (Respondent 9, 2020). While the degree of resources lost varies across the affected states, it is pertinent to note that the effects on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and assets replacement cost in Lagos estimated at

one trillion Naira would definitely manifest in increasing the dwindling GDP.

According to industry executives and economist Fagbo, (2020), the result will manifest in a fall in the real GDP hovering around 6.91% year-on-year, deepening the projected economic contraction this year and cause disruptions in supply-chain leading to a faster rise in inflation. Investment in the private sector would contrast to about one trillion Naira resulting in massive job losses. Consequently, the levels of poverty will burgeon steadily with its attendant social crisis like armed robbery, cultism and others. Hence, the multiplier effects are almost immeasurable.

Expectedly, the insurance industry is bound to experience pressure arising from increasing demand for claims from the private sector as succor. As such, government intervention funding would be sought by both the victims of the crisis and industries especially the insurance as shock-absorber to rescue them from the verge of likely insolvency. One of the respondents avowed that: “the economy of our country has finished before now because corrupt politicians have shared it and what we see today is an addition to the suffering of the common people” (Respondent 6, 2020). Similarly, to highlight the impulse of the crisis on the economy, Respondent 8 (2021) submitted that the common people are at the receiving

end of the social divide of the rich and poor, especially as they are just recuperating from the lockdown financial stress still taking tolls on their upkeeps and bills settlement. It is a case of double tragedy on the people’s means of livelihood.

Also, the frozen of some of the active participants or leaders of end-SARS protest by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) via court injunction added salt to the injury of the already shrinking cash flow in the economy. The trapped cash would have, to an extent, increase liquidity and transactions as increasing the commercial activities. Although Akinwotu (2020) notes that the court order was obtained by the CBN for ninety 90 days on security ground as those concern were alleged to have allowed their bank account to be used for generating funds in support of the protests, the act is capable of disincentivising both the local and foreign investors bolstered by the fragility of the country’s business environment that appear not secure for safe investment judging by the long time the protests take, government poor handling of it and damages recorded from vandalism and looting of properties. Every investor, local or foreign, looks for the safety of resources and good returns on investment which is only possible in a peaceful and predictable society. Nigeria case, therefore, cannot be an exemption.

Conclusions

This study has through relevant information on end-SARS protests from areas of study; Lagos state, Anambra state and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) to undertake a critical analysis of the impacts on the societal peace and economy. The paper concludes that civil violence by the citizens under the end-SARS protests spurred by the anti-human activities of the SARS unit of the Police adversely affected the social peaceful livelihood, coexistence, national cohesion or integration of the people as it further heightened the divisive tendency characterizing the multi-ethnics Nigerian society. This is consistent with the thrust of frustration-aggression theory (Breuer et al, 2017) and Ibietan *et al*, (2016) and USA (2017) submission

on the need to improve the policing system.

On the other hand, the economic fortune of the people especially the poor masses are threatened while the private businesses vandalized and looted are set backwards in their aspiration to reap profits from blossoming ventures. The economic consequences include the discouragement it serves both the existing and potential local and foreign portraying the country and unpredictable and unsafe have for investment. In light of this, the social and economic prospects of Nigeria are not only threatened but situate in a reverse trajectory.

On this premise, the paper, therefore, pushes for the following recommendations. First, the government should be more proactive to

citizens' plights, complains or observations on public institutions or personnel and continually employ a diplomatic and democratic approach to addressing conflicts. Also, on the job training and reorientation should be administered regularly to police officers and all the security agents while ensuring that they are well remunerated and furnish with state-of-the-art type of equipment.

Likewise, the government should endeavour

to compensate victims of police brutality as recommended by panels by states to alleviate their hardships and start a healing process to their psychological trauma. Further, businesses affected should be compensated after profiling and government ensure that such ugly incidences did not resurface again to salvage the image and integrity of the country from the investor book of global poor investment locations.

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