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ASSESSMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES PROVISION BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN THE SOUTH EAST GEO-POLITICAL ZONE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RESTRUCTURING

BY

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Abstract

The lop-sided infrastructural architecture in many geopolitical zones in Nigeria since the enthronement of President Mohamadu Buhari administration in 2015 seems to be one of the main causes of the current political agitations and secessionist movements calling for restructuring. Notwithstanding the provision of the nation's constitution that guarantees true federalism with equity, justice, and fairness, many people, especially in the Southeast region of Nigeria have alleged favoritism and marginalization in the provisions of some basic infrastructural services. The paper examined the nature of infrastructural services provided in this geo-political zone (south east) in comparison with other geopolitical entities in Nigeria and its implications to political restructuring. The qualitative method of data collection was employed with In-depth Interview (IDI) as the major instrument although complemented with secondary sources. The Equity Theory and Spatial Inequality Theory formed the theoretical framework of the study. Findings from the study revealed that the southeast geo-political zone has been marginalized in infrastructural services distribution which the respondents attributed to ethnicity and religious differences. The respondents did not consider resources derivation as an attributable factor but agreed generally that the refusal of the zone to vote massively for the ruling government in 2015 and 2019 general elections respectively accounted for their ordeal. Given these revelations, some recommendations were made geared at embracing equity, justice, and fairness in infrastructural services distribution which will also douse the current tension for restructuring.

Key Words: Assessment, Infrastructure, Infrastructural services, Geo-political zone, Restructuring

Introduction

In many countries including Nigeria, the distribution of some critical infrastructural services seem to be lopsided or unevenly spread especially among different geo-political zones. This may be rooted in certain societal ideologies, environmental factors, economic, cultural, and political processes, or ethnic and religious differences (Ademiluyi & Aluko-Arowolo, 2009, Adeola & Bulus, 2014). In the socialist states such as Poland, China, Soviet Union, and others, the central government has to provide all the resources free for the citizens both in the urban and rural areas without discrimination or giving priority to one region to the disadvantage of others (Morton, 2018). In other words, it is like a 'pool of Common Wealth' where the citizens are expected to discharge their responsibilities to the state with the state trying to reciprocate by discharging her obligations to the people. The implication is that both the rich and the poor have

free access to critical infrastructural services for their overall wellbeing. The capitalist system, on the contrary, seems to undermine the intent of all citizens and as such access to infrastructural services is limited to the elites or the highest bidder among states or communities, leading to abject hunger and undesirable poverty (Okeke & Chukwudebelu, 2014).

The provision of infrastructural services appears to be one of the foundations of good democratic governance. According to Olufemi (2019), a good democratic government is expected to put in place all measures and resources considered it to make the living conditions of its people to be of maximum standards. The author also stated that in addition to sustaining societal living conditions, the provision of infrastructural services is the key to the economic growth of any nation. Adebayo (1985) also opined that the achievements recorded by any state leader are measured by the level and type of infrastructural services provided or engaged in concerning the agitation of the people and available resources.

In Nigeria however, the phenomenon of inequity or lop-sided infrastructural services provisioning seems to be obvious and epitomized in the use of geo-political zones since the emergence of democratic government in 1999. Ezeakukwe (2019) noted that the southeast geo-political zone has been marginalized in the provision of basic infrastructural services since the enthronement of democracy in Nigeria in 1999 and the situation is becoming worse with the onset of President Mohammadu Buhari Administration in 2015. The author stated that this is contrary to the philosophy of Nigeria's founding fathers and nationalists such as Late Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and Pa Obafemi Awolowo who continued to maintain that to achieve political and economic success, there is the need to honour the equality of the federating units in resources distributions.

A brief analysis of the situation before the Nigerian Civil War shows that the southeast Nigeria, in addition to having provided a robust opposition to the British Colonial administration, also stood on having a strong Nigeria without any form of discrimination (Ezeakukwe, 2019). This deliberate policy of denying the people of the southeast region of the basic infrastructural services appears to have been the genesis of the current move for restructuring and secession by this group and which has also generated insecurity in the region. According to Aribisala (2015), the southeast region receives the smallest amount of revenue among all the zones even though Imo State and Ebonyi State are counted among the oil-producing states of the nation. The author also reported that during the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo, the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) under Major General Buhari as the chairman only executed 4,440 kilometers of roads in the Southeast zone which represents only 24% while 13,870 kilometers were built in the northern Nigeria representing 76%. The Enugu-Onitsha Road, the Enugu-Port Harcourt Road, the 9th Mile-Markudi Road amongst others are yet to be rehabilitated by the government. There is also the absence of an international Airport in the Southeast region as work in AkanuIbiam International Airport, Enugu is yet to be completed for smooth international rights. The runways need to be retouched and water supplies must be taken care of in addition to the cooling system. Mikairu and Agbo (2019) observed that the situation had attracted the attention of the Southeast governors who had to make formal complaints jointly to the federal government on the deliberate delay of the project. This situation implies that travellers from the southeast had to go to Lagos or Abuja before they could board a flight overseas.

Equally, the second Niger bridge which the ruling government used as one of its campaign promises in 2015 and 2019 is still far from completion. The inability of the government to finish this project has posed a problem too opening up the waterways to the

Atlantic Ocean. Presently, no standard and modern railway is linking the East with such cities in the North like Kano. Aribisala (2015) also reported that under the PTF National Health and Rehabilitation Programme (NHERP), the entire states of the southeast geo-political zone got zero percent allocation while the North got 100%. The side of primary Health care programme also witnessed similar incidence with the Southeast having 12% and the North having 88% allocation.

In the same vein, the coal resources and other solid minerals deposits in the region have not been profitably exploited to provide employment to the youths and enhance the living standards of the people. The lop-sided tendency of the federal government infrastructural service delivery in the Southeast geo-political zone seems to have brought the promise that this paper had to examine the perception of the public on the provisioning of the infrastructural service in the South-east geo-political zone, which seems to have brought the people out to a boiling point while advocating for restructuring or opting out of Nigeria. It is against this background that this paper tried to have an assessment of the provision of the infrastructural services by the federal government to the people of the southeast geo-political zone and its implications to political restructuring in Nigeria. This is the general objective of the study.

In addition to this general objective, the following specific objectives also came into play; (i). To ascertain the relationship between infrastructural services provision in the South-East by the federal government and ethnicity (ii) To ascertain the relationship between infrastructural services provision in the South-East by the federal government and party affiliation/loyalty, (iii) finally to end out whether infrastructural services provision in the South-East by the federal government is related to religious differences.. This will help to fill the knowledge gap as prior studies (Davies, 2019, Adeola & Bulus, 2014, Ademiluyi & Aluko-Arowolo, 2009) tend to dwell on Economic development and infrastructural facilities in Nigeria with none specifically geared towards restructuring.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

(a) Infrastructural services: Infrastructures are the physical facilities considered crucial in promoting human development or the general wellbeing of members of society (Davies, 2019). This may include roads, bridges, electricity, railway, portable water, sewers, telecommunication, schools, hospitals, markets, housing recreation centers, and so on. These facilities tend to shape people's quality of life and economic growth. Oke (2013) also stated that infrastructural facilities are necessary for a nation in the management of its population growth and alleviation of poverty. It is the thermometer in which a country's developmental status can be measured (Olufemi, 2019). In addition to facilitating the production of goods and services, it also helps in distributing the finished goods to the end-users. It also assists people in achieving relative self-reliance in the nation's development process. As Adeola and Bulus (2014) noted, they are classified as specialized elements in the development process designed to improve the socio-economic wellbeing of the people. In other words, they are the catalysts of the development of a nation and necessary for improved quality of life (Oisasoje & Ojeifo, 2012).

Since infrastructural services are meant to make life easier and more pleasant, the federal government is expected to provide states or federating units with these facilities to enhance societal living conditions (Oguzor, 2011). They are the basic structures needed for the operation of a society.

(b) Restructuring: Restructuring is such an amorphous concept that could be interpreted or misinterpreted by many people depending on the situation it is used. Generally, it may imply a fundamental change or arrangement that alters the previously existing relationship between

different components of a system. According to Igboke (2020), restructuring simply means to change the political institutions of a nation or state from the former way it was organized consequent upon generated agitation among the units and then make it work better to accommodate the interests of all sections or groups. It is a kind of rearrangement, reorganization, or reformation of the polity.

Similarly, Omoniyi (2021) sees restructuring as a transition from a lop-sided federal political structure to true federalism which is characterized by political inclusiveness, people-oriented constitutional amendments, resource control, electoral process, political representation, sharing of offices, citizens' rights, protection of lives and properties and building of enduring political infrastructures. It is a tool advocated by a particular section of a nation that feels that they have been marginalized or shut out of the federal government on the provision of infrastructural facilities and other basic needs required for maximum living. It is also basically to re-organize and entrench equity among geo-political zones in sharing amenities and opportunities necessary for true federalism.

Restructuring is expected to ensure that government is brought as close as possible to the masses at the grassroots, especially those that believe that they were neglected (Omoniyi, 2021). This idea which was anchored on the reframed 1999 Constitution of Nigeria was later documented in the 2014 National Conference (CONFAB) Reports (Uwalaka, 2018). The conference subscribed to the devolution of power with at least 60% of the power of the federal given to the states and local governments to enable the people at the grassroots to have a feel of the operations of government. One of the benefits, according to Uwalaka (2018), is the tendency to experience tremendous growth and development at the grassroots. Restructuring has become the growth and development strategy used by most nations in the contemporary world to reframe the power perspectives of the institutions and levels of government (Igboke, 2020).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(a) Overview of the state of the Infrastructural services in Nigerian Federating Units

The ushering in of the democratic government in Nigeria in 1999 gave an array of hope to the masses for an improved socio-economic condition and full-blown federalism characterized by equity, justice, and fairness. However, the lofty expectations were not recorded especially with the incoming of President Mohammadu Buhari in 2015. Nwokolo (2020) observed that since the attainment of independence, the structure of the Nigerian federation has remained problematic and contentious even though power has remained centralized. According to the author, across different geo-political zones, many factors have been identified which have inhibited the unity of the nation and which have also formed the basis for the current agitation for restructuring. Among such factors are lack of justice, fairness, and equity in infrastructural provisioning which have resulted in increasing poverty. Ezeakukwe (2019) also pointed out that since the coming in of APC-led government of General Mohammed Buhari, the state of political and economic conditions of the people in different geo-political zones, especially the Southeast, has raised the public debate on how best to address what has been characterized as marginalization

Similarly, Yusuf (2004) observed that for many years, there has been an increasing manifestation of the inability of the Nigerian government to cope with the demand for basic infrastructural facilities. The author clearly stated that the Nigerian power sector, for example, operates with low generating capacity relative to the installed capacity. Equally, no significant improvement has been recorded in rail services, while more than 50% of the federal roads are in

very bad conditions, severe congestion at the seaport and use of obsolete facilities in the airports coupled with the fact that not up to 50% of the population has access to clean water.

Omodia and Mohammed (2016) argued that in a nation where the majority of the people lack the basic infrastructural services and other necessities of life, conflict and violent demonstrations or agitations may be the order of the day. The major challenges in Nigeria are largely on providing the infrastructures when they are needed without being influenced by politics of ethnicity or tribal sentiment, party loyalty, corruption, religious sentiment, or based on resources derivations (Olufemi, 2019). It also appears that politics in the form of ethnic-interest agitation and lobbying are common things in democratic governance in developing countries which may have compelled the government of the United Kingdom to establish a separate Ministry in charge of Infrastructural projects (Olufemi, 2019). On the other hand, Sullivan (2013) opined that the extent to which people's affairs are managed, especially on the provision of essential amenities, depends on the class of people in power. The construction of eight stadia simultaneously in Osun State alone in the Southwest and the establishment of Nigerian Airforce University, Nigerian Police Academy, Nigerian Defense Academy, and the University of Transportation in the home state of President Mohammadu Buhari, all in the Northern part of the country, have continued to raise arguments on the fairness and equity in the nation. Kuku (2014) also claimed that there have been reports of the government's insincerity in the handling of issues related to the provision of infrastructural facilities like road, rail services, electricity, water, bridges, seaports, and others while pretending to be serving the common interest of the population. The horrible state of affairs in Nigeria as it relates to poor infrastructural services especially in the Southeast geo-political zone may be the major reason for people of the Southeast to become desperate for change through restructuring or breaking away entirely from the Nigeria federation.

Bamboye (2007) argues that individuals are poor because they do not have access to infrastructural services for improved quality of life. The United Nations Organization also made it clear that the role of infrastructural facilities in the overall economic growth and development of a nation cannot be overemphasized.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopted Equity Theory and Spatial Inequality Theory as its theoretical framework. Equity theory which was developed by John Stancey Adams in 1963 argues that people experience distress when things are perceived as not being fair (Al-zawahreh & Al-madi, 2012). In other words, the greater the level of unfairness that people perceive, the greater the level of their distress. If individuals perceive that what they are given are not fair compared to that of their peers, they will feel distressed and try to change things to create a sense of fairness. The theory stresses that equality and fairness are important. A situation where a particular geo-political zone in Nigeria is neglected in the provision of basic infrastructural services does not speak for equity and fairness in a nation practicing democracy. The current agitation and secession by the indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) in the Southeast may have been precipitated by the neglect of the zone in infrastructural distribution.

On the other hand, the Spatial Inequality theory which was developed and influenced by Marxism argues that structural and political factors or policy intervention are the causes of inequality in the location decision of Industrial Units (McDonald, 2006). It is therefore, necessary to remove all political and institutional obstacles to the development of economic and social infrastructures so as to integrate poorer states or region into the national economy (Tickamyer, 2000). The implication is that the uneven distribution of basic infrastructural

services across a geographical unit increases the level of poverty and distress among the people which gives room for tension and agitation for regime change or restructuring.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in the Southeast geo-political zone of Nigeria which comprises five states: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo state. These states formed former Eastern Nigeria in the late 1960s before state creation and then the emergence of geo-political zones in the 1990's. Igbo is the local language of the people. The projected population of the zone as of 2020 stands at 27.8 million people (NPC, 2020). Agriculture and Commerce form the major occupation of the people which have the zone to command the largest economies in Nigeria.

The research design was non-experimental with the primary data gathered using the qualitative approach of In-depth Interview. Three states (Anambra, Ebonyi and Enugu) were randomly chosen with 18 respondents from each (i.e. 54 respondents in all). The respondents were purposively chosen for having resided in the area for not less than 10 years and attached to one of the federal universities in each the state (Nnamdi Azikwe, Awka, Anambra state, Dr Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo, Ebonyi State and University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State. The respondents were then subjected to In-depth Interview Guide (IDI). It is assumed that the level of education and their long period of stay in the state will afford them the opportunity of giving a valid assessment of infrastructural provisioning by the federal government in their respective states. Written informed consent was sought from all the participants who were also assured of confidentiality of information given in the process.

In addition, secondary data was collected from journals, published texts, newspapers, the Internet and conference papers. Data collected through the IDI were transcribed and thematically analyzed with relevant quotes pulled out while the materials gotten from secondary sources were properly edited and irrelevant items weeded out. The study was carried out between the months of June-August, 2021.

FINDINGS

Relationship between infrastructural service provision and ethnicity: Participant's view was sought on whether ethnicity has an influence on the provision of infrastructural facilities by the federal government to the South East geo-political zone in Nigeria. In many developing countries including Nigeria, ethnic particularism has been the major cause of inequality in socio-economic development and national integration. An informant who shared his view on this issue stated thus:

Once you are from a particular ethnic group And you are on the top, everything is appropriated to the advantage of the group. This is the situation in the distribution of infrastructural services in Nigeria. Everything in Nigeria has gone to the North because the president is from there. We are treated as an outcast herein South East; no roads, no water, epileptic power supply, and so on.

Another informant who held a similar opinion said 'how can you tell me that Nigeria is one while most states in South East are neglected in infrastructural services, the so-called second Niger bridge is still yet to be completed and the ruling government has been using it to defend themselves against partiality'.

Relationship between Infrastructural Service provision and party affiliation or loyalty

It also appears that the allocation of infrastructural services to states is predicated on the number of votes enjoyed by the government in power during the election. The majority of the participants expressed that since only one state is being controlled by the ruling government out of the five states in the southeast, the people of South East may not be expecting much from the federal government as they did not vote for the APC ruling government in 2015 and 2019 respectively. The southeast geo-political zone is predominantly dominated by the People's Democratic Party (PDP) since the inception of democratic government in 1999.

An informant from Anambra state stated:

I was not surprised by the federal government's neglect of the zone in some of these critical infrastructures because we did not vote for the APC but that should not be the case', after all, the president is the president of Nigeria, and not specifically to APC. The government should try to honour the commitment they made during the campaign.

Another participant in Enugu emphasized thus:

That we did not give the president up to 25% vote during the election does not mean that we will be discriminated in the provision of social amenities in the zone. The APC led government should stop its inflammatory rhetoric.

Religious dichotomy and infrastructural Services provision: Religious animosity seems to have become a permanent source of threat to the socio-economic development of Nigeria. As such, the study further sought to examine the influence of religious differences on the infrastructural provisioning to the Southeast geo-political zone by the federal government. The incidence of religious dichotomy has grown exponentially in all facets of socio-economic and political activities of the nation since the entrenchment of democratic rule in 1999. A female participant in Abakaliki, Ebonyi state had this to say:

Religion has divided the Nigerian society since independence and had created a lot of crisis and wickedness among the masses. People have been brainwashed to see another person who does not subscribe to his faith as an enemy who does not deserve anything from him. This is a total misconception and is mostly practiced by our Muslim and Christian brothers. People in the government also have imbibed this wrong notion. May God help Nigeria. If our founding fathers like Zik and Awo had behaved like this ,would we have been here?

Another participant in Awka, Anambra State lamented that Nigerian leaders have been deceived by religion and had forgotten that Nigeria is a secular state that should not allow religious sentiment to affect one's commitment to the people. In his words:

What a big shame? Do our leaders still remember the oath of allegiance, they take the first day they are sworn into office? The last sentence there says 'So help me God'. How can you after taking such oath still go into discrimination, hatred, marginalization of a particular group entrusted unto your hands to take care of simply because they belong to a religious faith different from yours. It is highly ridiculous. The earlier we correct this impression as we hold political positions, the better. Remember, each person will surely stand before the judgment seat of God in the last day.

One participant in Enugu also referred to most of the Nigerian politicians as cultists who no longer have a human conscience and do not recognize God in any form. According to the respondent, governance is built on the spirit of commitment and humility like a shepherd boy who cares for his sheep. The President should see himself as the servant of the people irrespective of religion or ethnic affiliation.

On whether resources derivation determines the extent to which provision of infrastructural services is allocated, the majority of the participants stated that since the exploration of mineral resources is undertaken by the federal government, no state or geo-political zone should be shortchanged in infrastructural facilities. A participant in Nsukka, Enugu State explained that before the discovery of crude oil in Nigeria, the coal industry in Enugu generated a lot of money to the country and the Southeast was never given preference rather the proceeds was used to develop the whole country especially Lagos which serves as the nation's capital city then. He said *'I thank God for blessing Nigeria with a natural endowment, if not for the fact that many of our leaders are clueless, this country would have developed more than Japan and China'*.

DISCUSSIONS

The Nigerian government since 2015 appears to have fallen terribly beyond expectation based on its inability to provide the necessary infrastructural facilities to the Southeast geo-political zone of the country which many agreed to be one of the causes of the ongoing agitation or secessionist movement and the call for restructuring. Most of the federal roads in the Southeast have dwelled more on their dilapidated state with gullies and craters as their general features. Akaeze (2010) noted that where the highways become so bad, robbers often take advantage of the bad road situations to wreak havoc on travellers. In addition, the much-campaigned second Niger Bridge and Akanulbiam International Airport, Enugu are yet to be completed and commissioned. Adegboyega (2021) stated that while the federal government was busy spending \$1.96 billions dollars to construct a railway line that links Maiduguri and Kano to Maradi in the Niger Republic to enjoy affordable transportation, the South East geo-political zone is yet to benefit from the current rehabilitation of railway system. Both the individuals and corporate bodies in the zone spend huge sums of money on daily basis to fuel their generators to meet their alternative energy requirements due to the inefficiency of power distribution companies operating in the zone.

As reported by participants in this study, one of the prominent factors that have been promoting this situation is ethnicity. According to Adetiba (2013), ethnicity is a source of the inequality ravaging different ethnic groups which were enthroned by colonialism. The author remarked that ethnicity has succeeded in depriving states and individual opportunities to have benefited from development programmes of the central government. One of the participants noted that there is preferential treatment given to the Northern zone of the country in the distribution of infrastructural services.

Participants' responses also revealed that inordinate loyalty to the government at the Centre has been a determining factor to infrastructural distribution. This aligns with the view of Njoku (2019), that since 1999 the People Democratic Party (PDP) which is now the opposition party, has become so entrenched in the southeast geo-political zone that they massively voted for the party in 2015 and 2019 respectively. The author noted that only one of the five states in South East is currently being controlled by the ruling party. In addition, people that matter politically within the zone are followers of PDP right from the local government, state assembly members, House Representatives, senate, and governors.

It was also revealed from the participants' responses that religious differences have equally been accountable for the inequalities in the infrastructural distribution in Southeast geo-political zone. This finding is in tandem with the submission of Apuwabi (2018) that religious differences have been an obstacle to the economic prosperity and overall socio-economic development of Nigeria since independence. Muslims and Christians are always

involved in crises and killings as a result of perceived hatred and mutual suspicion. Ajegbu (2020) also stated that religion apart from being a source of intolerance and human rights violation affects socio-economic development and infrastructural facilities provisioning. One of the participants in the study stated that even our leaders have been brainwashed that once you do not share similar religious faith, you do not expect to benefit anything from them.

The study participants, however, disagreed with the fact that resource derivation in a state is related to the infrastructural services given. A participant in Nsukka, Enugu State emphasized that it is not possible because before the discovery of crude oil in Nigeria, the Coal Corporation located in Enugu generated a lot of money for the federal government, which was used in developing Lagos and other cities in Nigeria as no consideration was given to the Southeast geo-political zone.

IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS TO POLITICAL RESTRUCTURING

In respect to the foregoing, findings from the study have shown that states in Southeast geo-political zone are neglected in the provision of infrastructural facilities by the federal government; whether in the transport, power or education sector, the Southeast lags behind many other geo-political including its contemporaries, that is; those states that were created at the same time some of the states in Southeast were created. The southeast railway system has not developed beyond what the British handed over to us. This cannot be considered as an exaggeration with the revelations from the study participants who generally attributed the inequality in infrastructural distribution as it concerns the southeast geo-political zone to ethnicity, religious differences and the refusal of the zone to vote massively for the APC ruling government in 2015 and 2019 election respectively. Participants did not consider resource derivation as a precipitating factor in this respect. This cynical performance of our leaders and inequality in the distribution of infrastructural services have been identified as the root of the current clamour for restructuring, secession, and break up by IPOB and MASSOB. How does one account for a situation where the distribution of infrastructural facilities and development projects are concentrated in a particular geo-political zone at the detriment of others. Succinctly, this does not suggest equity. Aribisala (2015) noted that the Southeast receives the smallest revenue allocation. Going by this alleged favouritism of the North under Buhari administration, the clamour for restructuring may further gain attention in the southeast and add to the upheavals shaking the nation to its roots.

Omoniyi (2021) posited that agitation for restructuring is not only restricted to the Southeast geo-political zone as similar agitation is still going on in the South-West and the Middle Belt. These different groups have threatened that they would not allow elections in their zones in 2023 unless the issue of restructuring the nation is sorted out. Many people have expressed their views that the concept of the federal government holding the resources and distributing to states and geo-political zones is no longer in fashion and hence the need for restructuring. John Stancey Adams in his preposition of the equity theory in 1963 clearly pointed out that people will feel angry and dissatisfied when they perceive that they are getting less than what they expect in comparison to their peers (AL-Zawahreh & Al-medi, 2012). In other words, when there is inequality in economic and social indicators of wellbeing across a geographical unit within a country, the results are tension, anger and demonstration (Kenbur & Venables, 2005). One of the advantages of restructuring according to Igboke (2020) is that it ensure that governance are brought closer to the local people or communities.

CONCLUSION:

The study's findings have established that infrastructural provision in the southeast geo-political zone of the country has been at very low ebb since the ushering in of President Mohammadu Buhari Administration in 2015. This unequal distribution of infrastructural facilities has been the bane for the current agitation for secession, break-up and restructuring. Majority of the respondents pointed out that ethnicity and religion had been the cornerstone to this development. They further posited that the Nigerian state has been so weak in acting as impartial actor in promoting the wellbeing of its diverse population as equal citizens in the distribution of national resources for sustainable development. It was also revealed from the study findings that the inability of the APC ruling government to get maximum votes from southeast geo-political zone in 2015 and 2019 elections spelt doom for the region in getting the required democracy dividends from Buhari administration. The opposition party; PDP has been so entrenched and popular in the southeast since 1999. As a result of the hatred, unhealthy rivalry and disparity in development meted to the people of southeast geo-political zone according to respondents' revelation, some recommendations were made which if implemented will go a long way in restoring sanity and reduce the tension on restructuring.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made:

- Since the essence of governance is to better the lives of the citizens, political parties should ensure full compliance on the commitment made during political campaign to avoid inflammatory rhetoric, agitations, protests and other forms of demonstration resulting from disparity in infrastructural services.
- Inclusive governance and well articulated policy frameworks in relation to infrastructural distribution should be made clear to everyone in each geo-political zone.
- Government should set up a body responsible for attending to all issues and complaints that could accentuate centrifugal tendencies and treat without bias.

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