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Topics Related to Armed Conflicts Worked on by the Main Organs of the United Nations Organization in the Last Decade and their Effectiveness in Maintaining International Peace and Security

By Josselyn Roca Calderón

Abstract- The original objective of the conclusion of the Charter of the United Nations, the constitutive treaty of the United Nations Organization, was to maintain international peace and security. This organization has gained great relevance over the decades, since most of the States have been carrying out actions under its parameters, such as, for example, deciding that their international disputes be resolved by the International Court of Justice. However, after more than three-quarters of a century of the UN's existence, armed conflicts still exist. In this article, the topics covered in the last 10 years by the main UN bodies in the field of armed conflicts will be analyzed and the effectiveness that these works have had in terms of maintaining international peace and security will be analyzed in order to provide certain recommendations for a better result.

Keywords: general assembly, armed conflict, security council, united nations organization, international peace and security, international dispute settlement.

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Topics Related to Armed Conflicts Worked on by the Main Organs of the United Nations Organization in the Last Decade and their Effectiveness in Maintaining International Peace and Security

Los Temas En Materia De Conflictos Armados Trabajados Por Los Órganos Principales De La Organización De Las Naciones Unidas En La Última Década Y Su Efectividad En El Mantenimiento De La Paz Y Seguridad Internacionales

Josselyn Roca Calderón[1]

Resumen- El objetivo original de la celebración de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas, tratado constitutivo de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas fue mantener la paz y la seguridad internacionales. Dicha organización ha ido cobrando gran relevancia con el pasar de las décadas, ya que los Estados, en su mayoría, han venido realizado acciones bajo sus parámetros como, por ejemplo, decidir que sus controversias internacionales sean resueltas por la Corte Internacional de Justicia. Sin embargo, luego de más de tres cuartos de siglo de existencia de la ONU, aún siguen existiendo conflictos armados. En el presente artículo, se analizarán los temas abarcados en los últimos 10 años por los órganos principales de la ONU en materia de conflictos armados y se analizará la efectividad que han tenido dichos trabajos en cuanto al mantenimiento de la paz y seguridad internacionales a fin de brindar determinadas recomendaciones para un mejor resultado.

Palabras claves: *asamblea general, conflicto armado, consejo de seguridad, organización de las naciones unidas, paz y seguridad internacionales, solución de controversias internacionales.* [1]

Abstract- The original objective of the conclusion of the Charter of the United Nations, the constitutive treaty of the United Nations Organization, was to maintain international peace and security. This organization has gained great relevance over the decades, since most of the States have been carrying out actions under its parameters, such as, for example, deciding that their international disputes be resolved by the International Court of Justice. However, after more than three-quarters of a century of the UN's existence, armed conflicts still exist. In this article, the topics covered in the last 10 years by the main UN bodies in the field of armed conflicts will be analyzed and the effectiveness that these works have had in terms of maintaining international peace and security will be analyzed in order to provide certain recommendations for a better result.

Keywords: *general assembly, armed conflict, security council, united nations organization, international peace and security, international dispute settlement.*

I. Introducción

Actualmente, la Organización de las Naciones Unidas (en adelante, la ONU) presenta diversos desafíos a fin de enfrentar los nuevos peligros que acarrean al mundo y, por tanto, atentan contra el mantenimiento de la paz y seguridad internacionales. Estos peligros pueden ser generados por Estados, por otros actores internacionales o por sucesos no previstos como el COVID-19. Dicho virus ha arrasado con muchos seres humanos, motivo por el que hoy en día, en el marco de la Comisión en Derecho Internacional de la ONU, se encuentra en discusión un proyecto de tratado para que a futuro se controle mejor una pandemia similar. No obstante, los peligros clásicos que dieron lugar a la creación de la ONU misma aún no han desaparecido, por lo que la ONU debe seguir haciendo frente a la existencia de conflictos armados en el mundo.

En el presente artículo analizaremos los temas más trabajados en materia de conflictos armados en el marco de dos de los órganos principales de la ONU durante los últimos 10 años (2012-2022) con la finalidad de identificar el estado actual del trabajo de dichos órganos a este clásico peligro a la paz y la seguridad internacionales. Los órganos mencionados son la Asamblea General y el Consejo de Seguridad, y han sido seleccionados para el análisis dada la relevancia tanto orgánica como temática con la que cuentan. A partir de la revisión realizada, evaluaremos, a nuestro criterio, qué tan adecuadamente estos órganos de la ONU cumplen con sus objetivos en materia de conflictos armados y propondremos algunas recomendaciones a fin de que la misma mantenga un

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desempeño idóneo de su rectoría en paz y seguridad internacionales.

II. La ONU y Sus Órganos Principales en Materia de Hacer Frente a Los Conflictos Armados

Después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, suceso catastrófico en el que diversos Estados del mundo estuvieron inmersos sufriendo graves consecuencias como muertes de millones de seres humanos, así como daños irreparables hacia la flora y fauna, se firmó la Carta de las Naciones Unidas el 26 de junio de 1945, la cual entró en vigor en octubre del mismo año. Las finalidades de la ONU se pueden observar en el artículo 1 de su instrumento constitutivo:

> "Mantener la paz y seguridad internacionales, […], fomentar entre las naciones relaciones de amistad basadas en el respeto al principio de la igualdad de derechos y al de la libre determinación de los pueblos, […] fortalecer la paz universal, realizar cooperación internacional en la solución de problemas internacionales de carácter económico, social, cultural o humanitario, y en el desarrollo y estímulo del respeto a los derechos humanos y a las libertades fundamentales […]" (ONU, 1945, art. 1)

Por lo expuesto, tenemos el conocimiento de que el objetivo macro de la adopción de la Carta fue que no vuelva a suscitarse otra Guerra Mundial, por lo que contuvo diversas disposiciones que se circunscribían en evitar un conflicto armado internacional, a modo de mantener la paz y seguridad internacionales. En ese sentido, podemos apreciar el principio general del derecho internacional, plasmado en el artículo 2.3 de la Carta, el cual señala que los miembros de la ONU deberán resolver sus controversias de manera pacífica por los diversos medios que existen, como los de mediación y conciliación o judiciales, entre otros que figuran en el artículo 33.

Otro de los principios generales del derecho internacional plasmados en la Carta de la ONU a fin de mantener la paz y seguridad internacionales es el de prohibición de la amenaza o el uso de la fuerza, estipulado en el artículo 2.4 de la Carta, el cual posee diversas excepciones como las establecidas en el capítulo VII de la Carta, en donde se señala que, por ejemplo, se puede hacer uso o amenaza de la fuerza cuando un Estado actúa bajo legítima defensa o cuando el Consejo de Seguridad lo autoriza. No obstante, esto último no suele suscitarse por la existencia del derecho de veto que poseen los cinco miembros permanentes del referido órgano, el cual suele generar que no se puedan tomar decisiones de aquel tipo.

Uno de los órganos de la ONU encargados de que se efectivice el mantenimiento de la paz y seguridad internacionales es la Asamblea General, la cual posee atribuciones específicas en el capítulo IV de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas. No obstante, como apreciaremos en los artículos referidos a sus funciones, sólo actuará a modo de recomendación. El artículo 18 de la Carta señala que la Asamblea podrá expulsar a miembros de la ONU, pero siempre que haya una mayoría de dos tercios. Este es una exigencia elevada por lo que no suele suscitarse esta figura de expulsión. Uno de los casos excepcionales fue el de Yugoslavia, el cual fue expulsado, pero lo curioso, en este caso, es que Yugoslavia ya no existía como Estado al momento de su expulsión, por lo que la actuación de la Asamblea General no poseyó mayor impacto de castigo (Roig, 1992).

Otro órgano de gran importancia en el marco de la ONU es el Consejo de Seguridad, el cual, ya que, conforme al artículo 24 de la Carta, los miembros tienen "la responsabilidad primordial de mantener la paz y seguridad internacionales, y reconocen que el Consejo de seguridad actúa a nombre de ellos al desempeñar las funciones que le impone aquella responsabilidad" (1945). Esta disposición nos evidencia que el Consejo de Seguridad tiene un poder coercitivo, el cual lo faculta para actuar ante amenazas al mantenimiento de la paz y seguridad internacional. En esa línea, al tener un gran poder, es que también se le ha establecido parámetros a los que deberá ceñirse, como el de no emitir resolución alguna si es que alguno de los cinco miembros permanentes vota en contra, ya que se produciría un ejercicio del derecho de veto.

El referido derecho con el que cuentan los cinco miembros permanentes del Consejo de Seguridad ha generado que la ONU sea fuertemente cuestionada, ya que la viabilidad del buen funcionamiento de esta se habría visto imposibilitada con la mencionada facultad que poseen los miembros permanentes: Estados Unidos, Rusia, China, Reino Unido y Francia. A la fecha, bien sabemos que es altamente improbable que estos Estados se pongan de acuerdo para actuar ante un conflicto armado o hacia algún ataque que ponga en desequilibro la paz y seguridad internacionales, debido a que son considerados Estados que hacen prevalecer su interés políticos y económicos, por lo que suelen ser caracterizados por su falta de legitimidad y/o representatividad para tomar decisiones adecuadas en el marco del Consejo de Seguridad.

III. Principales Temas Abordados Por de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas en Conflictos Armados

Como ya hemos adelantado, conforme al capítulo IV de la Carta de la ONU, la Asamblea General tiene ciertas funciones que se circunscriben en la realización de recomendaciones hacia sus miembros a fin de que puedan ser atendidas por estos ante

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situaciones que puedan poner en peligro el mantenimiento de la paz y la seguridad internacionales. Es en ese sentido que podremos observar que, en los últimos 10 años, la Asamblea General se ha pronunciado de diversas maneras respecto a los conflictos armados, lo cual ha conducido a que tengamos en dicho periodo un número de 34 resoluciones, siendo la última la relacionada a la agresión de Rusia contra Ucrania de fecha 2 de marzo de 2022. Estas han sido divididas por temas para un mayor entendimiento del lector en el siguiente cuadro[2]:

Tema	Resolución	Fecha
Agresión contra Ucrania	A/RES/ES-11/1	2/03/2022
Aplicación de las recomendaciones contenidas en el informe del Secretario General sobre las causas de los conflictos y la promoción de la paz duradera y el desarrollo sostenible en África	A/RES/66/287	23/07/2012
	A/RES/67/293	24/07/2013
	A/RES/68/278	16/06/2014
	A/RES/69/291	19/06/2015
	A/RES/70/292	7/07/2016
	A/RES/71/315	19/07/2017
	A/RES/72/311	10/09/2018
	A/RES/73/336	10/09/2019
	A/RES/74/302	3/09/2020
Declaración política sobre la solución pacífica de los conflictos en África	A/RES/67/259	26/04/2013
Día Internacional para la Eliminación de la Violencia Sexual en los Conflictos	A/RES/69/293	19/06/2015
Efectos de los conflictos armados en los tratados	A/RES/69/125	10/12/2014
	A/RES/72/121	7/12/2017
Fortalecimiento de la función de mediación en el arreglo pacífico de controversias, la prevención de conflictos y su solución	A/RES/66/291	13/09/2012
	A/RES/68/303	31/07/2014
	A/RES/70/304	9/09/2016
La capacidad civil después de los conflictos	A/RES/66/255	16/03/2012
Los diamantes como factor que contribuye a los conflictos: romper el vínculo entre el comercio ilícito de diamantes en bruto y los conflictos armados a fin de facilitar la prevención y solución de los conflictos	A/RES/66/252	25/01/2012
	A/RES/67/135	18/12/2012
	A/RES/68/128	18/12/2013
	A/RES/69/136	12/12/2014
	A/RES/70/252	22/01/2016
	A/RES/71/277	2/02/2017
	A/RES/72/267	7/03/2018
	A/RES/73/283	1/03/2019
	A/RES/74/268	3/03/2020
	A/RES/75/261	3/03/2021
Protección de la población civil palestina	A/RES/ES-10/20	13/06/2018
Situación de los Protocolos adicionales a los Convenios de Ginebra de 1949 relativos a la protección de las víctimas de los conflictos armados	A/RES/67/93	14/12/2012
	A/RES/69/120	10/12/2014
	A/RES/71/144	13/12/2016
	A/RES/73/204	20/12/2018
	A/RES/75/138	15/12/2020

[2] Elaboración propia a partir de la información presente en la página oficial de la Asamblea General de la ONU

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Siendo así, podemos identificar que los temas que han suscitado mayor pronunciamiento de la Asamblea General dentro de los últimos 10 años en materia de conflictos armados han sido el relativo a los diamantes como factor que contribuye a los conflictos; el del informe sobre las causas de los conflictos y la promoción de la paz duradera y el desarrollo sostenible en África; y la de la situación de los Protocolos adicionales a los Convenios de Ginebra de 1949.Dada esta mayor presencia de resoluciones respecto a los temas señalados, daremos alcances sobre los mismos, así como también respecto a la resolución de la agresión de Rusia a Ucrania dada su relevancia actual y que fue producto de un Período extraordinario de sesiones de emergencia.

a) *Los diamantes como factor que contribuye a los conflictos: romper el vínculo entre el comercio ilícito de diamantes en bruto y los conflictos armados a fin de facilitar la prevención y solución de los conflictos*

La importancia de este tema radica en que el comercio ilegal de diamantes era la causa de las diversas vulneraciones de los derechos humanos de niñas, niños, mujeres, entre otros, ya que eran explotados por los comerciantes que vendían estas piedras preciosas a fin de solventar los conflictos en Sierra Leona, África. Es a razón de ello que el propio Consejo de Seguridad, el año 2003, apoyó un sistema de certificación de nombre "Proceso de Kimberly", el cual se entendería que "apoyaría a la lucha contra el tráfico de diamantes de zonas de conflicto" (AG, 2005). Este apoyo como el desarrollo realizado por la Asamblea General no responde a una obligación, sino que los propios Estados han manifestado su voluntad política en apoyar con la implementación del referido sistema, lo cual conllevó a diversos avances. (ONU, 2020a).

Sin embargo, el Proceso también generó críticas, ya que algunos Estados como la República del Congo no contaban con las herramientas necesarias para poder prevenir el tráfico ilegal de mercancía. Asimismo, conforme a lo señalado por Amnistía Internacional, a través de una encuesta que realizaron, se pudieron percatar de que muy pocas joyerías tenían conocimiento del referido Proceso, por lo que no poseían las medidas suficientes para reconocer la procedencia ilegal de los diamantes provenientes de África (2007).

Dentro de las principales críticas al Proceso, se encontraron las relativas a que no todos los Estados han cumplido con adecuar su legislación interna y también a que algunos no han sido transparentes al momento de informar sobre el flujo del comercio de diamantes. En este grupo caben Venezuela, Sierra Leona y República Democrática del Congo. Así, por ejemplo, "Venezuela ocultó información sobre el contrabando de diamantes hacia Guyana y Brasil, y [también se dio] el caso de Zimbabue que mintió sobre el uso de diamantes para financiar a los grupos armados del gobierno" (Noroña, 2015, p. 92).

No obstante, la principal crítica en estos casos es que no existen lineamientos específicos de sanciones hacia quienes incumplen, más si la base ha sido un compromiso entre algunos Estados. Al respecto, no deseamos negar la voluntad y esfuerzos en la elaboración del Proceso para contrarrestar el comercio de diamantes con sangre de por medio, ya que se dio gracias al respaldo con el que cuenta la ONU, pero también es evidente que los acuerdos políticos no siempre tienen la eficacia esperada al no tener el carácter vinculante y, menos aún, coercitivo.

Lo señalado se puede apreciar también en la última sesión de la Asamblea General respecto al proceso de Kimberly, en el cual la Federación de Rusia, presidente del proceso de certificación, menciona que han existido ciertas trabas para poder avanzar debido a la afectación del Covid-19, pero que se hará lo posible en avanzar, por lo que presentó un proyecto al respecto. (ONU, 2021). No obstante, el Sr. Mobhongo, representante de Sudáfrica, si bien felicita a la Federación de Rusia por asumir la presidencia y también resalta los avances del Proceso, al señalar que luego de los 18 años de su existencia, los "miembros se encargan de aproximadamente el 99,8% de la producción mundial de diamantes en bruto" (ONU, 2021), hace hincapié en que "el comercio de diamantes conflictivos persiste y sigue siendo motivo de grave preocupación a nivel internacional".

Esto nos lleva a cuestionarnos acerca de la verdadera eficacia del Proceso de Kimberly y, por tanto, de la propia Asamblea General, toda vez que aún persiste, luego de casi dos décadas, el comercio de diamantes involucrados en conflictos armados. También nos genera incertidumbre el que el 98% del comercio de diamantes esté en manos de los Estados del comercio de diamantes, lo cual puede interpretarse como que se han centrado más en la comercialización en sí misma, que en el propósito principal: contrarrestar las violaciones graves de derechos humanos en los conflictos de los países de África.

b) *Aplicación de las recomendaciones contenidas en el informe del Secretario General sobre las causas de los conflictos y la promoción de la paz duradera y el desarrollo sostenible en África*

Como ya hemos apreciado en el punto anterior, en gran medida, Estados del continente africano se han encontrado inmersos en lamentables conflictos. Según el Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados, existen aproximadamente "25 conflictos y guerras africanas que afectan a millones de personas" (ACNUR, 2016). Al parecer es el continente que posee mayor cantidad de conflictos, toda vez que en otros como Europa y América no exceden el número referido

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(Escudero, 2022). En ese sentido, la Asamblea General ha trabajado este tema desde hace muchos años, por lo que viene tratando de impulsar que África sea libre de conflictos, así como reforzar el compromiso de la Unión Africana con el apoyo de los miembros de la ONU para que cobre eficacia el objetivo.

Es así que este tema es el segundo que más se ha tratado por la Asamblea General en esta última década y ha generado una resolución anual desde el 2012 (para efectos de nuestro espectro temporal de revisión, si bien el tema se viene trabajando desde antes) hasta el 2020, año en que se emitió la última resolución respecto a este tema. En ella, la Asamblea General utiliza términos de exhortación y recordatorio hacia los miembros respecto a involucrarse en los procesos que ayuden al mantenimiento de la paz, así como a la reconstrucción de África en cuanto a las consecuencias de los conflictos armados (ONU, 2020b).

Los esfuerzos durante dichos años han sido inmensos, pero al parecer no equitativos, ya que, si bien vienen décadas trazándose compromisos políticos, estos no han detenido los conflictos y, por tanto, la pobreza, el hambre y el estancamiento del desarrollo de la economía en África. Ante ello, la misma Unión Africana e incluso la ONU ha requerido en el año 2021 que se realicen "más acciones contra el hambre en África porque el número de personas que sufren ese problema sigue aumentando debido a los conflictos" (SWI, 2021). Incluso resaltan que la situación de África ha empeorado en demasía desde el año 2013 hasta la actualidad. De hecho, el mismo portal señala que en el referido continente existen aproximadamente 281 millones africanos desnutridos.

Lamentablemente, los avances de las recomendaciones de la Asamblea General también responden a la negación o imposibilidad de que brinden ayuda humanitaria a través de funcionarios de la ONU. Así, por ejemplo, Etiopía expulsó a siete altos funcionarios de la ONU, ya que consideraban que estaban entrometiéndose en asuntos internos, aunque, por lo que se puede observar, sólo estaban tratando de brindar apoyo humanitario en medio de un conflicto armado en Tigrey (Sardiña, 2021). Aparentemente, esto produjo que no llegue la alimentación correspondiente, así como que no se brinde la asistencia y medicina necesaria para los heridos del conflicto, así como a las personas víctimas de violencia sexual (HRW, 2021). No obstante, ante estos sucesos, que no son nuevos, es precisamente que la ONU debería comenzar a replantearse la forma de hacer llegar el apoyo y las medidas que en conjunto se deberán tomar para que haya efectividad logrando la mitigación de los conflictos en África.

c) Situación de los Protocolos adicionales a los Convenios de Ginebra de 1949 relativos a la protección de las víctimas de los conflictos armados

Este tema es el tercero más tratado en materia de conflictos en el marco de la Asamblea General en la última década hacia atrás, y, así como en los demás temas, las resoluciones contienen recomendaciones a los Estados miembros respecto a sus obligaciones asumidas en los tratados, así como a la exhortación en que, quienes aún no son parte, lo sean lo más pronto.

Es así que nos parece pertinente recordar que, como sabemos, el derecho a la guerra no existe actualmente, pero sí tenemos el derecho en la guerra. Al respecto, contamos con una serie de normas recogidas en fuentes como la costumbre internacional, principios generales del derecho internacional, así como tratados. Dentro de estas se encuentran los cuatro Convenios de Ginebra de 1949, así como sus Protocolos Adicionales de 1977; también contamos con las normas consuetudinarias del derecho internacional humanitario que han sido recopiladas en el año 2005 por el Comité Internacional de la Cruz Roja. Todas estas disposiciones buscan proteger a los combatientes, a los civiles, a bienes patrimoniales, así como niños, entre otros grupos, de los conflictos armados, tanto internacionales como no internacionales.

En el marco de lo expuesto es que en la Asamblea General ha emitido diversas resoluciones a fin de requerir que los Estados cumplan con las disposiciones de los Convenios de Ginebra, y que los que son parte de dichos tratados, también lo sean de los Protocolos Adicionales, por lo que, observaremos partes de las resoluciones que expresan lo siguiente:

> "Exhorta a todos los Estados partes en los Convenios de Ginebra que aún no lo hayan hecho a que consideren la posibilidad de hacerse partes lo antes posible en los Protocolos Adicionales […] Afirma la necesidad de hacer más efectiva la aplicación del derecho internacional humanitario y apoya que se siga fortaleciendo y desarrollando […]" (ONU, 2020c)

Al respecto, consideramos importante recordar que "during the Second World War, an estimated 50-60 million people were killed in the space of half a decade, and at least 20 million of those deaths were among the civilian population" (Brooks, 2017, p. 35). No obstante, si contabilizamos las muertes que se han suscitado desde la creación de la ONU, contando tanto las físicas como las muertes en vida (producto de violencia sexual, pobreza extrema, torturas, entre otros) por los conflictos, el número excedería evidentemente el que nos brindó la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Este hecho nos hace cuestionarnos si, en efecto, se ha cumplido el objetivo de la ONU a través de la promoción de los Convenios de Ginebra y sus Protocolos Adicionales. Consideramos que no ha sido necesaria la figura de una Tercera Guerra Mundial para señalar que sus

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mismos resultados se han terminado derivándose de otros conflictos armados menores.

d) Agresión contra Ucrania

No quisiéramos avanzar con el siguiente punto sin mencionar la última resolución de la Asamblea General respecto a la agresión de Rusia contra Ucrania el día 24 de febrero de 2022 por su relevancia actual para la comunidad internacional. Al respecto, el motivo principal de la referida resolución responde a que el Consejo de Seguridad no pudo adoptar ninguna medida respecto a la agresión de Rusia por el simple motivo de que Rusia es Estado Permanente del Consejo de Seguridad, por lo que activó el derecho a veto que existe para los cinco Estados permanentes y, por tanto, lo que se planeaba decidir sólo quedó en proyecto (ONU, 2022). En torno a ello, sin el poder coercitivo que confiere la Carta de la ONU al órgano antes mencionado, la Asamblea General emitió la resolución ES-11/1 el día 2 de marzo de 2022, aprobada por 106 Estados de los 193 miembros plenos que componen a la ONU, en una sesión de emergencia.

En la referida resolución, observaremos por primera vez, dentro de la década que estamos analizando, que la Asamblea General utiliza términos imperiosos y no diplomáticos, al condenar energéticamente y a exigir diversas acciones para Rusia. Es así que apreciaremos que la Asamblea General condena el ataque de Rusia, así como su decisión de querer mejorar el nivel de preparación de sus fuerzas nucleares. También resalta que, durante muchas décadas, en Europa no se había suscitado una agresión de tal magnitud. En esa línea es que le exige a la Federación de Rusia que "ponga fin de inmediato al uso de la fuerza contra Ucrania y se abstenga de recurrir a cualquier otra forma ílicita de amenaza […] [y] exige que retire de inmediato todas sus fuerzas militares del territorio" (ONU, 2022), entre otros aspectos como el que el referido Estado revierta lo más pronto posible la decisión que ha tomado respecto a regiones pertenecientes a Ucrania, como Donetsk y Luhansk.

Podemos apreciar que, en esta oportunidad, la Asamblea General no se pronuncia a través de términos de recomendación, sino de diversas exigencias, cuando en sí esta se limita a brindar sugerencias. En ese sentido, observamos que el órgano máximo de la ONU, si bien no puede adoptar medidas coercitivas, siempre ha podido brindar resoluciones que contengan dicho tino, es decir, que, aun sabiendo sus limitaciones, pueda imponer acciones diplomáticamente a través de sus declaraciones. Ante ello, esperamos que, ante situaciones similares, la Asamblea General siga siendo enérgica al momento de condenar agresiones e invasiones en territorios, más aún si se genera vulneraciones graves de los derechos humanos y de las normas del derecho internacional humanitario.

No obstante, nuevamente se nos evidencia que el peso de las resoluciones de la Asamblea General no alcanza para transcender más allá del instrumento internacional, ya que Rusia no ha cesado la situación bélica en Ucrania. Pese a ello, se debe resaltar el actuar de los 103 Estados miembros que votaron a favor de la resolución de tratar de involucrarse de alguna u otra manera para condenar el actuar de Estados como Rusia, miembro permanente del Consejo de Seguridad, imponiendo, como en este caso, sanciones económicas a fin de coaccionar a que cese el uso de la fuerza ilegal.

IV. Principales Temas Abordados Por el Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas en Conflictos Armados

Podemos observar que las resoluciones de la última década del Consejo de Seguridad, uno de los órganos de mayor trascendencia en el marco de la ONU en cuando a los conflictos armados son de menores cantidades que las emitidas en el marco de la Asamblea General. Esto responde a las propias atribuciones que el capítulo V de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas le brinda al primer órgano, ya que, al tener mayor grado de discreción, posee mayor nivel de restricción.

Sin embargo, el poder que posee el Consejo de Seguridad es bastante alto y lo podemos apreciar de manera sustancial en el capítulo VII de la Carta, toda vez que, en dicho espacio, se encuentran las disposiciones que le dan el poder de hacer uso de la fuerza y/o amenaza contra un territorio, lo cual, en principio, estaría prohibido conforme al artículo 2.4 de la Carta. Es en ese sentido que las resoluciones del Consejo de Seguridad de ese tipo, para que sean adoptadas, requerirán que no hayan votos en contra de los cinco Estados permanentes.

De manera similar a lo realizado con los temas vistos por la Asamblea General, hemos elaborado un cuadro[2], en el cual observaremos que las resoluciones sobre materias de conflictos armados son menos que las de la Asamblea General. Así también observaremos que sólo sobre dos temas respecto a conflictos armados el Consejo de Seguridad se ha pronunciado más de una vez: la protección de los civiles en conflictos armados, y los niños y los conflictos armados. Por otro lado, apreciamos que ambos temas han sido tratados por última vez el año 2021. Procederemos a continuación a desarrollar brevemente los dos temas con mayor recurrencia y el más reciente

[3] Elaboración propia a partir de la información presente en la página oficial del Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU

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que solo ha tenido un pronunciamiento hasta la fecha dada su mayor actualidad.

Tema	Resolución	Fecha
Consolidación de la paz después de los conflictos	S/RES/2282 (2016)	27/04/2016
La protección de los civiles en los conflictos armados	S/RES/2175 (2014)	29/08/2014
	S/RES/2222 (2015)	27/05/2015
	S/RES/2286 (2016)	3/05/2016
	S/RES/2417 (2018)	24/03/2018
	S/RES/2474 (2019)	11/06/2019
	S/RES/2475 (2019)	20/06/2019
	S/RES/2573 (2021)	27/04/2021
Las mujeres y la paz y la seguridad - La violencia sexual en los conflictos	S/RES/2467 (2019)	23/04/2019
Los niños y los conflictos armados	S/RES/2068 (2012)	9/10/2012
	S/RES/2143 (2014)	7/03/2014
	S/RES/2225 (2015)	18/06/2015
	S/RES/2427 (2018)	9/07/2018
	S/RES/2601(2021)	29/10/2021
Mantenimiento de la paz y la seguridad internacionales - Prevención de conflictos	S/RES/2171 (2014)	21/08/2014

a) *La protección de los civiles en los conflictos armados*

Este tema ha sido el más tratado por el Consejo de Seguridad, en específico, a través de siete resoluciones, siendo la primera de serie S/RES/2175 (2014) y la última la de S/RES/2573 (2021), en la última década. En los referidos instrumentos visualizaremos que el Consejo de Seguridad resalta la importancia de que los Estados respeten el derecho internacional humanitario y, por tanto, cumplan en todas sus medidas con los instrumentos vinculantes que habrían ratificado. No obstante, esta resolución se centra en específico en el requerimiento hacia los Estados para que cumplan con los Convenios de Ginebra de 1949 y sus Protocolos Adicionales de 1977 respecto a la protección hacia el personal humanitario cuya función es el de brindar soporte a las partes víctimas del conflicto. En ese sentido, condena todos los actos degradantes que se puedan suscitar contra ellos, como torturas, violaciones sexuales, hasta las muertes (ONU, 2014), ya que recordaremos que, por ejemplo, diversos Estados como Congo, el cual es "described the horrifying conditions that remained, where civilians were at the mercy of roving rival armed militias" (Clark, T. & Simeon, 2016, p. 4).

La resolución se extiende a pedir a los Estados que "velen porque los crímenes contra el personal humanitario no queden sin castigo […] [y el Consejo de Seguridad] expresa su determinación de adoptar medidas apropiadas para garantizar la seguridad del personal humanitario, el personal de las Naciones Unidas y su personal asociado" (ONU, 2014). Esto se extiende a que el Consejo de Seguridad exhorta a que los Estados tomen en consideración hacerse partes de la Convención sobre la Seguridad del Personal de las Naciones Unidas y el Personal Asociado, a fin de buscar garantías vinculantes para la protección del personal humanitario.

La siguiente resolución S/RES/2222 prácticamente requiere lo mismo, pero se enfoca en el personal de comunicación que se encuentra muchas veces reportando los sucesos de los conflictos armados, por lo que estipula que "condena enérgicamente la impunidad generalizada de las violaciones y abusos cometidos contra los periodistas, los profesionales de los medios de comunicación y el personal asociado en situaciones de conflicto armado" (ONU, 2015). De la misma manera se hace en la siguiente resolución, pero respecto a los actos de violencia, ataques y otros "hacia los heridos y los enfermos, al personal sanitario y el personal humanitario dedicado exclusivamente a misiones medidas, sus medios de transporte y equipo, los hospitales y otros establecimientos" (ONU, 2016).

En el último instrumento del año 2021 referido a este tema, el Consejo de Seguridad decide requerir básicamente lo mismo, pero centrándose en condenar el ataque a instituciones como colegios, las cuales no pueden ser utilizadas como centros militares o ser atacados, ya que exponen al peligro a las y los niños, así como a las y los docentes. Asimismo, la resolución en mención también abarca a exigir la protección de los centros de vacunación al ser un centro esencial en estos tiempos para que los civiles no se vean afectados

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por la no realización de la vacuna, y así evitar transgredir con sus vidas (ONU, 2021).

La actuación del Consejo de Seguridad en cuanto a la protección de la población civil como estudiantes, docentes, periodistas, personal humanitario, así como asistencia médica y de vacunación en épocas de pandemia, responden a que durante los conflictos armados muchas veces no se respeta el principio de distinción, es decir, se ataca a la población civil cuando esto está prohibido en los Convenios de Ginebra. Es así que podemos apreciar que, por ejemplo, en el 2020 existieron más de 500 ataques hacia las escuelas, los cuales significaron "un aumento del 17 por ciento en comparación con 2019" (UNICEF, 2020). Este suceso de aumento ha pasado también con el personal sanitario, médico, entre otros similares, toda vez que, conforme a lo manifestado por el Comité Internacional de la Cruz Roja, durante estos últimos cinco años "el acceso a la atención sanitaria sigue viéndose impedido por el incumplimiento del derecho internacional humanitario" (2021).

Entonces, estas estadísticas nos llevan a pensar en que, si bien las resoluciones del Consejo de Seguridad cuentan con términos imperativos en vez de diplomáticos, como en el caso de las emitidas por la Asamblea General, consideramos que en cierta medida no poseen la suficiente fuerza de coerción para contrarrestar la falta de protección en los conflictos armados. Afirmamos esto toda vez que no se ordena alguna acción en específico respecto a los referidos sucesos que van contra la vida del ser humano que no deberían estar involucrados en los conflictos, sean internacionales o no internacionales. En ese sentido, nos llama a la reflexión la necesidad de que, en virtud del poder coercitivo que posee el Consejo de Seguridad, este sea utilizado en beneficio del resguardo y protección de grupos indefensos que no poseen armas como los estudiantes, docentes, periodistas, personal humanitario y de asistencia médica.

b) Los niños y los conflictos armados

Sobre este tema, contamos con una cantidad menor de resoluciones del Consejo de Seguridad, respecto al primer tema, durante esta última década. Es así que observaremos que el primer pronunciamiento dentro de estos 10 años es la S/RES/2068 (2012), en el que el Consejo de Seguridad establece, bajo términos similares a los instrumentos del tema anterior, que los Estados se ciñan a proteger a los niños y a no usar los centros educativos como bases militares, lo cual, dicho sea de paso, ya es abordado en el tema anterior. Es así que las siguientes resoluciones, de 2014, 2015, 2018 y 2021, también versarán sobre lo mismo, pero añadiendo un aspecto adicional, el cual versa sobre el Covid-19. Las acciones del Consejo de Seguridad esenciales en los referidos instrumentos internacionales son los siguientes:

1. Requiere que el Grupo de Trabajo sobre niños tenga un plazo en específico a fin de brindar opciones que aumenten las presiones sobre Estados que persistan en violaciones y abusos contra niños.
2. Condena enérgicamente que los Estados no protejan la salud mental de los niños y que su educación se vea limitada.
3. Solicita que los gobiernos de los Estados, así como los órganos de la ONU, realicen coordinaciones para establecer compromisos concretos sobre la protección de los niños.
4. Alerta sobre la posibilidad de activar diversos mecanismos contra los Estados que no violen los derechos de los niños, en diversos temas, como en el uso de sus centros para bases militares.
5. Menciona su disposición para tomar medidas contra quienes perpetren crímenes contra los niños, los cuales se realizarían en los poderes que le confiere la Carta de la ONU.
6. También menciona sobre la necesidad de que los centros de asistencia médica respecto al COVID sean protegidos, en virtud de la vacunación que requieren los niños para no perjudicar sus estudios. (ONU, 2014, 2015, 2018 y 2021)

En efecto, este tema pareciera ser un subtema del punto anteriormente visto, pero sucede que el Consejo de Seguridad ha querido establecer uno en específico para los niños. Es en este espacio en el que podemos observar mayor coerción en sus pronunciamientos del Consejo de Seguridad, al establecer plazos en específico sobre las instituciones a cargo del seguimiento y protección de los derechos del niño, como es el caso del Grupo de Trabajo sobre niños. También alerta sobre las presiones que desea imponer a los Estados infractores y, además, en esta oportunidad menciona sobre la posibilidad de actuar directamente contra los Estados que no respeten el derecho internacional humanitario, en específico, sobre las disposiciones que protegen a los niños.

En cuanto a lo señalado, podemos observar que, en efecto, hay un ejercicio del poder coercitivo mucho más evidente en lo desarrollado, pero que, lamentablemente, no ha sido suficiente en cuanto se siguen suscitando ataques a los colegios de niños, así como sigue habiendo reclutamiento de menores de edad, entre otros aspectos, conforme a lo señalado en el punto anterior, en el que la UNICEF y el CICR se han pronunciado sobre los continuos ataques a colegios y a centros de asistencia médica que desean resguardar a los niños (UNICEF, 2022). Entonces, al saber que los efectos no son los adecuados, pese a los términos coercitivos, nos hace concluir que lo que se requiere en estos casos en donde la vida e integridad de grupos vulnerables como los niños están en riesgo es que no se exhorte o alerte, sino que se ejecuten medidas

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concretas contra los perpetradores, sin tener que repetir lo mismo en cada resolución, pues siguen pasando los años y las resoluciones siguen revelando lo mismo, solo que cada vez con un tono más coercitivo.

c) *Las mujeres y la paz y la seguridad - La violencia sexual en los conflictos*

En este punto veremos un tema novedoso dentro de los últimos años en el marco de las resoluciones del Consejo de Seguridad respecto a los conflictos armados: violencia sexual y de género. La resolución S/RES/2467 del 2019 emite similares términos que los ya vistos, pero esta vez enfocándose en su rechazo contra las agresiones sexuales conta las mujeres, por lo que reconoce la función del Grupo Oficioso de Expertos sobre las Mujeres y la Paz y la Seguridad, y resalta que estarán siguiendo sus análisis y recomendaciones. Asimismo, insta a que "los comités de sanciones existentes […] apliquen sanciones selectivas contra quienes cometan y ordenen actos de violencia sexual en los conflictos" (ONU, 2019), así como también requiere que se tome en cuenta los daños irreparables como los contagios de VIH hacia las mujeres y niñas en virtud de los conflictos armados.

Esto puede significar que "can be some constructive initiatives even within an incomplete peace process: forms of humanitarian aid and development, such as education to empower women." (Clark, T. & Simeon, 2016, p. 6). No obstante, nos alerta de sobremanera que sea la primera vez que el Consejo de Seguridad se pronuncie respecto a la violencia de género en los conflictos armados y que no se haya emitido algún pronunciamiento adicional al respecto, con sentido coercitivo, tomando en consideración que a la fecha existen millones de mujeres que han sido víctimas de violencia. Por ejemplo, en un solo Estado como Colombia, durante su último conflicto armando no internacional, se ha podido apreciar que ha existido un número ascendente a más de 20,000 víctimas mujeres, violentadas desde temprana edad, embarazadas, contagiadas de enfermedades de transmisión sexual como el VIH, entre otros aspectos (Unidad para la atención y reparación integral a las víctimas de Colombia, 2018).

En ese sentido, consideramos que el último pronunciamiento del Consejo de Seguridad no se condice a las actuaciones necesarias para contrarrestar el daño irreparable hacia uno de los grupos más vulnerables de los conflictos, los cuales abarcan incluso a niñas y niños que son sometidas a vejaciones sexuales por los militares, así como a explotación sexual y sometimiento durante las épocas de conflicto, sin tener en consideraciones las precariedades existentes que existen al momento de dar a luz o a abortar, así como el daño psicológico que no es protegido por ningún órgano.

V. Comentarios Respecto a las Actuaciones de los Órganos Analizados

Como podemos apreciar, los comunes dominadores de los temas expuestos que han sido desarrollados por la Asamblea General y el Consejo de Seguridad son los de vulneración a derechos humanos, en específico, hacia los y las niñas, mujeres en general, periodistas, asistentes humanitarios, entre otros, inmersos sin voluntad en un conflicto internacional de los diversos Estados miembros que componen la ONU. Ante dichas situaciones, hemos podido observar que las respuestas de los principales órganos han sido las de brindar recomendaciones y exhortar el cumplimiento de los tratados en el marco del derecho internacional humanitario. Al parecer, esto respondería en parte a un "traditional peacekeeping, limited to monitoring cease-fires and supporting political efforts to resolve conflicts." (Lilly, 2017, p. 316)"

Sin embargo, hemos apreciado la falta de coerción, lo cual se comprende en el ámbito de acción que posee la Asamblea General conforme a lo estipulado en la Carta, pero, en cuanto al Consejo de Seguridad, dicho órgano sí posee un especial poder para atender estas situaciones, cuya facultad se encuentra establecida en el artículo 42 del referido instrumento, el cual señala que:

> "Si el Consejo de Seguridad estimare que las medidas de que trata el Artículo 41 pueden ser inadecuadas o han demostrado serlo, podrá ejercer, por medio de fuerzas aéreas, navales o terrestres, la acción que sea necesaria para mantener o restablecer la paz y la seguridad internacionales […] (ONU, 1945).

No obstante, en virtud del derecho de veto es que en la mayoría de las veces el Consejo de Seguridad no puede tomar decisiones coercitivas que se ciñan a paliar los estragos de los conflictos y permitan actuar de manera inmediata. Un claro ejemplo de dicha situación fue lo suscitado recientemente en el proyecto de Resolución sobre la agresión de la Federación Rusia contra Ucrania, la cual no pude concretarse en una resolución por el derecho a veto del estado de Rusia (ONU, 2022).

Teniendo en consideración esta situación, en la que depende mucho de una pronta reforma de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas, nos encontramos en la imperiosa necesidad de trabajar con los recursos que podamos tener, por lo que, ante las graves vulneraciones de los derechos humanos, consideramos que la comunidad internacional debe estudiar en su conjunto la posibilidad de permitir que la intervención humanitaria de terceros Estados sea permitida, sin que se requiera la autorización del Consejo de Seguridad. Cabe precisar que esta intervención humanitaria, si bien no se encuentra avalada por el derecho internacional

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como una excepción a la prohibición del uso de la fuerza, ya ha sido efectivizada por diversos estados.

Si bien es complicado que los Estados no se vean involucrados en intereses personales, creemos que estos deben contar con ciertos criterios esenciales para su debido funcionamiento. Conforme a lo expuesto, coincidimos con los criterios que fueron planteados por Bermejo y López – Jacoiste y algunos que se ha considerado adicionar. Es así que, en principio, deberá existir una violación grave a los derechos humanos que sea de gran trascendencia, "que permita diferenciar a la intervención de cualquier interés político que pueda existir de por medio; será necesario, además, que se establezca otro requisito esencial, como el agotamiento de otros medios de protección de dichos derechos que no impliquen el uso de la fuerza armada" (2013, p. 31).

De manera adicional, mantenemos la postura de que "los Estados intervinientes deberán identificar el espacio en el que se esté ejecutando la vulneración de los derechos humanos, así como el actor que los esté cometiendo, a fin de que su actuar se encuentre delimitado territorialmente. Asimismo, resultaría importante que el Consejo de Seguridad se pronuncie previamente sobre la situación y, de no lograr adoptar una decisión que la solucione, deberá recién plantearse la posibilidad de que los Estados intervengan humanitariamente. Adicionalmente, consideramos que esta posible excepción tendría que ser temporal, es decir, que el actuar de los Estados dure solo el plazo necesario para frenar el actuar del Estado transgresor. Finalmente, los Estados que intervengan deberán respetar las normas y principios del Derecho Internacional Humanitario de manera irrestricta en la conducción de las hostilidades" (Roca & Velásquez, 2021).

Lo expuesto podrá ayudar a la traba existente en el Consejo de Seguridad respecto al derecho a veto, pero al ser por mientras una propuesta que requiere el reconocimiento de la comunidad internacional, se sugiere mientras tanto que en cuanto al Consejo de Seguridad, "they would have to decide on how to remedy any shortcomings, for example, by allocating resources or setting up subsidiary bodies specifically entrusted with matters of international humanitarian law"(Oberleitnet, 2015, p. 246). Asimismo, se sugiere que, en razón de las herramientas actuales que sí tenemos, la Asamblea General, si bien emite recomendaciones, siempre actúe bajo los parámetros con los que actuó en su última resolución de este año respecto a la agresión que sufrió Ucrania por Rusia, ya que es una de las pocas veces que utilizó términos imperativos. Incluso, se sugiere que siempre que el CS de seguridad no pueda adoptar una resolución por el derecho a veto, sea la Asamblea General quien proyecte o brinde la imagen de querer resguardar y proteger las graves violaciones de los derechos humanos. Esto toda vez que hemos observado que ha generado presión en la comunidad internacional, en específico, en los miembros de la ONU, al imponer sanciones económicas y, por tanto, ser Rusia el Estado más sancionado del mundo (PANDE, 2022). El impacto ha sido teóricamente positivo, en cuanto la ONU ha transmitido su reproche total contra las agresiones. No obstante, este actuar se requiere que sea igual para todos los Estados, sin distinción del Continente.

Por otro lado, se sugiere que la ONU realice una introspección al funcionamiento interno que posee, en cuanto a la ayuda humanitaria que se lleva hacia los Estados que se encuentran en conflicto. Hemos podido observar que diversos Estados se han rehusado a recibir asistencia humanitaria porque han considerado cierta intromisión en los asuntos internos del Estado. En ese sentido, en cuanto a este tipo de ayuda que se desea brinda, se sugiere un Protocolo a seguir entre la ONU y los Estados en donde se suscita el conflicto armado, el cual deberá recoger las culturas propias del Estado, así como la posibilidad de establecer espacios de diálogos previos, sin necesidad de imponer ninguna acción, sino con el interés de que prime el bienestar de los civiles en medio de los conflictos internacionales.

VI. Conclusiones

En estos tiempos en los que la comunidad internacional se encuentra inmersa ante nuevos desafíos como el que se ha presentado recientemente producto del Covid-19, creemos que, de igual manera, la ONU no puede perder el objetivo principal por el cual fue creada, es decir, respecto a las atrocidades y vulneraciones graves a los derechos humanos que se presentan durante los conflictos armados. Si bien no ha existido aún una Tercera Guerra Mundial, hemos apreciado que la afectación en cuanto a derechos humanos esenciales de niños, mujeres, personal médico, personal de ayuda humanitaria, personas que nunca decidieron ser parte de un conflicto humanitario, y otros grupos vulnerables, ha sido cada vez más grave y elevada.

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Pese a ello, los pronunciamientos de la Asamblea General y del Consejo de Seguridad sobre temas vinculados a conflictos armados en los últimos 10 años no han logrado tener un efecto significativo en cuanto a la reducción de conflictos armados o mitigación de sus consecuencias. En ese sentido, consideramos que la ONU debe mejorar ciertas prácticas que le permitan hacer mayores cambios a través de sus actos de manera general, como podría ser perfeccionar las vías de comunicación con los Estados que necesitan ayuda humanitaria a fin de que no consideren que la ONU interviene en los asuntos internos estatales.

En el caso de la Asamblea General, dado que su rol se limita a recomendar, puede iniciar por mantener el tino más imperativo que ha utilizado en su última resolución sobre la agresión de Rusia a Ucrania en futuras resoluciones sobre conflictos armados. En el caso del Consejo de Seguridad, ya de por sí cuenta con poder coercitivo, pero difícil de alcanzar dadas las diferencias políticas de los miembros permanentes que pueden concluir con el ejercicio del derecho de veto, por lo que, ante situaciones de ese tipo, deben explorarse nuevas salidas para el derecho internacional, como podría ser una eventual legalización de la intervención humanitaria, la cual requeriría de severos requisitos para poder enmarcarse dentro del derecho internacional actual.

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The Political Discourse on Fuel Theft in Mexico

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Abstract- This study seeks to analyze the discursive production of the Mexican political elites regarding fuel shortage and theft and the explosion of the oil pipeline located in Tlahuelilpan, Hidalgo, on January 18, 2019, where men, women and children died while they were stealing gasoline. Based on the theoretical-methodological scaffolding of the French School of Discourse Analysis, the article explores the ideological positions of the president of Mexico, the leaders of opposition political parties and the editorials of La Jornada, El Universal and La Razón newspapers to reveal the deep structure of the problem that has afflicted the country since the 1990s, when the state economy opened up as a result of NAFTA.

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The Political Discourse on Fuel Theft in Mexico

El Discurso Político Sobre El Hurto De Combustible En México

Graciela Sánchez Guevara [α] & José Antonio González Hernández [σ]

Resumen- El objetivo de este trabajo es el análisis de la producción discursiva de las élites políticas mexicanas en relación con el desabasto, hurto de combustibles y la explosión del oleoducto ubicado en Tlahuelilpan, Hidalgo, el 18 de enero de 2019, donde murieron hombres, mujeres y niños cuando estaban robando la gasolina. Con base en el andamiaje teórico-metodológico de la Escuela Francesa del Análisis del Discurso, interesa esencialmente analizar las posturas ideológicas del presidente de México, de los grupos parlamentarios y de los editoriales de los periódicos *La Jornada, El Universal* y *La Razón,* a fin de develar la estructura profunda del problema que ha aquejado al país desde la década de los noventa, cuando la economía de Estado se abrió a través del TLC.

Abstract- This study seeks to analyze the discursive production of the Mexican political elites regarding fuel shortage and theft and the explosion of the oil pipeline located in Tlahuelilpan, Hidalgo, on January 18, 2019, where men, women and children died while they were stealing gasoline. Based on the theoretical-methodological scaffolding of the French School of Discourse Analysis, the article explores the ideological positions of the president of Mexico, the leaders of opposition political parties and the editorials of La Jornada, El Universal and La Razón newspapers to reveal the deep structure of the problem that has afflicted the country since the 1990s, when the state economy opened up as a result of NAFTA.

I. Introducción

México es uno de los países más ricos en recursos naturales en el mundo (Bassols, 2006, p. 36; SEMARNAT, 2018). De las 32 entidades federativas, 17 tienen litoral con el Océano Pacífico, el Golfo de México y el Caribe. Contiene una gran variedad de ecosistemas, y por la complejidad topográfica es un país biodiverso con todo tipo de climas, además de tener energía, minería, flora, fauna, agua, suelos, montañas, yacimientos petroleros en aguas profundas y someras. Produce minerales, entre otros recursos renovables, no renovables e inagotables. "ProMéxico estima que en este país habita 12% de la diversidad terrestre del planeta, característica que lo hace estar dentro del selecto grupo de países llamados 'megadiversos'" (Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (Conanp)[1]).

En cuanto a energía, México se destaca por: a) generación potencial de energía eólica estimada en 40,268 mega watts, b) generación potencial de energía hidroeléctrica estimada en 53,000 mega watts y c) generación potencial de energía geotérmica estimada en 10,664 mega watts. México es el décimo productor de petróleo a nivel mundial y uno de los primeros países productores de cobre en el mundo, también produce minerales: plata, bismuto, arsénico, plomo, zinc, litio y uranio.[2]

México significa para propios y extraños un país muy atractivo para realizar cualquier tipo de negocios[3]. Por ello, interesa en este trabajo hacer un análisis del discurso periodístico a partir de que el recién electo Presidente, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (2018-2024), informara en su conferencia de prensa "La mañanera" sobre un plan estratégico para combatir la "ordeña de ductos".[4] A partir de entonces, hubo una crisis por desabasto de gasolina y a causa de la ordeña desenfrenada coyunturalmente devino la explosión de un ducto en Tlahuelilpan, Hidalgo (18 de enero de 2019), en donde murieron decenas de personas, lo cual representa la punta del icberg que terminó por develar las actividades ilícitas en las que han intervenido históricamente personal de Petróleos Mexicanos (Pemex): directivos, obreros, sindicato, contratistas en México y en el extranjero, así como los cárteles y parte del pueblo que a causa de la pobreza en la que vive, decidió *de mutuo propio* u obligados por el crimen organizado a cometer ilícitos en los distintos ductos de Pemex que cruzan a lo largo y ancho del país.

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[1] Conanp en https://www.gob.mx/conanp Consultado el 14 de noviembre de 2021.

[2] Para mayor información véase "México rico y megadiverso en Reto Social de la Banca, Banorte en https://forobanorte.com/mexico-rico-y-megadiverso/#:~:text=M%C3%A9xico%20es%20un%20pa%C3%ADs%20rico,de%20pa%C3%ADses%20llamados%20%E2%80%9Cmegadiversos%E2%80%9D

[3] Nos referimos a negocios legales o ilegales, éstos últimos dejan ganancias millonarias. Consultar dos investigaciones periodísticas serias y documentadas: Pérez M. Ana Lilia, (2019 [1ª. Edición 2017, 1ª. Reimpresión 2018, 2ª. 3ª. Y 4ª reimpresión 2019) *PEMEX RIP, Vida y asesinato de la principal empresa mexicana. El cartel Negro. Cómo el crimen organizado se ha apoderado de Pemex,* 2019.

[4] Urrutia, Alonso, "Por saqueo, fuerzas armadas toman el control de Pemex" Periódico La Jornada, viernes 28 de diciembre de 2018, p. 2 en https://issuu.com/lajornadaonline/docs/diario28122018.pdf-3

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El objetivo de este trabajo es el análisis del discurso periodístico relacionado con el objeto discursivo (tópico o tema): extracción clandestina de hidrocarburos en México. Al robo de combustible, coloquialmente en México se le llama huachicol[5]. Dicha investigación nos permitió identificar la estructura del discurso periodístico y la frecuencia con la que se aborda el tema, en cada uno de los diarios elegidos, mostramos la estructura profunda de esos discursos en los que emerge la existencia de dos tipos de poderes: el poder legítimo de Estado y el poder clandestino, el del crimen organizado, vinculado con algunos actores del poder legítimo, estamos hablando de una complejidad de doble gobierno sin precedentes en este país, además de la existencia de varios poderes legítimos o ilegales.

Con las teorías de la Escuela Francesa del Análisis del discurso, estudiamos el poder imbricado en las formaciones sociales, ideológicas y discursivas (Foucault, 1970, 1972; Pechêux, 1969) que encuentra sus materialidades en el sujeto a través del discurso periodístico, del discurso político y de las instituciones (Althusser, 1970; Van Dijk, 1990, Giménez, 1981; Poulantzas, 1969; Salgado, 2003, 2009). Tanto la prensa como *mass media*[6] y las instituciones consideradas Aparatos Ideológicos del Estado y también como aparato del poder del crimen organizado. La coyuntura socio-histórica (Robin, 1976, Foucault, 1972) implica lo que debe y no debe decirse en una circunstancia específica.

En primer lugar, construimos el corpus analítico con base en las producciones discursivas que circularon en la prensa digital: *La Jornada, El Universal* y *La Razón de México,* y la argumentación de por qué elegimos estos periódicos y no otros; posteriormente ofrecemos de manera sucinta el contexto histórico-social-económico de los sexenios presidenciales previos a la crisis de desabasto de combustible en los inicios del sexenio del actual presidente de la República Mexicana, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (2018-2024). En un tercer apartado abordamos la importancia de la prensa como fuente de comunicación, información y producción de sentido de los acontecimientos ocurridos en un lapso de tiempo entre el 28 de diciembre de 2018 y 19 de enero de 2019[7]. Por último, el análisis de los discursos periodísticos y políticos contenidos en el corpus analítico.

II. Discurso Sobre Hurto de Hidrocarburos: Corpus Analítico

Para el análisis del discurso periodístico-político acerca de la extracción, almacenamiento y comercialización de gasolina, diésel, turbosina, combustóleo y gas LP de manera ilegal[8], consideramos los siguientes criterios de selección: a) que el tema sea relevante para una sociedad, b) el tipo de diarios debido a su impacto en la sociedad, y su temporalidad, c) los tipos de sujetos: c.1) sujetos sociales (Van Dijk (2003) y sujetos históricos (Robin, 1973), c2) sujetos del discurso e ideológicos (Benveniste, 1966; Pechêux, 1978; Robin, 1973).

El tema es relevante dado que Pemex es una empresa a través de la cual el país se ha sostenido económicamente, de la misma manera expresidentes, directivos, sindicalistas se hayan enriquecido con los recursos financieros mal habidos a través de dicha empresa, situación que el actual presidente de México, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) durante su conferencia de prensa matutina, "[…] explicó que tras un estudio realizado por la actual administración se descubrió que 80 por ciento del robo de combustible se realiza desde el interior de Petróleos Mexicanos (Pemex) y sólo el 20 por ciento desde afuera.[9]

En cuanto al tipo de diarios para el estudio se eligieron *El Universal, La Jornada* y *La Razón de México*, por sus tendencias ideológicas, por su antigüedad y por el formato de difusión digital que implica mayor circulación y retroalimentación con los lectores. Este aspecto se desarrolla con mayor precisión en el ítem 2.1. Con base en estos tres diarios digitales se hizo una búsqueda del 28 de diciembre de 2018, cuando AMLO explicara la red de corrupción en Pemex, al 19 de enero de 2019, un día después del estallamiento del ducto en el Estado de Hidalgo. Se halló un total de 379 notas de las cuales 60 son de *El Universal, 241 de La Jornada* y 78 de *La Razón de México.* De las 379 notas, detectamos 177 debido a los criterios de selección por

[5] En sus orígenes, la palabra significaba acción de bajar fruta de los árboles, como manzanas, peras, guayabas, utilizando un huachicol o cuachicol que es una vara larga que lleva en un extremo una canastilla, quienes se dedicaban a esa actividad se les llamaba huachicoleros. También significa bebida hecha con alcohol adulterado. Actualmente el término significa el robo de gasolina por medio de perforaciones de ductos para después venderla. Diccionario del español de México en https://dem.colmex.mx/ consultado el 20 de octubre de 2021.

[6] Actualmente la prensa escrita no solo se difunde mediante papel, sino que a raíz del surgimiento de internet y redes sociales, circulan en sus páginas web, en Twitter, Facebook, con lo cual tiene un mayor alcance entre los lectores.

[7] El tema sobre sobre el crimen organizado en Pemex continúa vigente. Véase la detención, extradición a México y encarcelamiento del exdirector de Pemex, Emilio Lozoya, en: BBC News https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-51480950. Y en Animal Político. https://www.animalpolitico.com/2021/11/emilio-lozoya-audiencia-reclusorio-norte-sobornos-odebrecht/.

[8] "A tres años de la explosión en Tlahuelilpan, Hidalgo" en Centro Nacional de Prevención de Desastres (Conapred) en: https://www.gob.mx/cenapred/articulos/a-tres-anos-de-la-explosion-en-tlahuelilpan-hidalgo?idiom=es Consultado el 13 de noviembre de 2021.

[9] López, A. (28/12/2018) "Ejército entra a áreas clave de Pemex en acción anti-huachicol" en https://www.razon.com.mx/mexico/ejercito-entra-a-areas-clave-de-pemex-en-accion-anti-huachicol-robo-combustible-gasolina-amlo-refinerias-vigilancia-perdida-dinero/ Consultado el 22 de noviembre de 2021.

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relevancia del tema y las producciones discursivas clasificadas así: A) los discursos del Presidente de México, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), B) Los discursos de la crisis por desabasto de gasolina, C) los discursos emanados a raíz de la explosión en uno de los ductos en el Estado de Hidalgo y D) los discursos acerca de las soluciones a fin de evitar el robo de hidrocarburos. Para el análisis cualitativo, únicamente elegimos los discursos del Presidente y de sus opositores relacionados con la estrategia gubernamental contra el robo de combustibles, a la que le hemos denominado "guerra discursiva antihuachicol".

De las 177 notas y de acuerdo con la clasificación, hallamos 26 notas sobre el robo de gasolina o huachicoleo; 59 relacionadas con el desabasto; 25 con la explosión del ducto y un total de 67 sobre las soluciones al robo. (Véase el cuadro 1).

Cuadro 1: Distribución de noticias por subtema y por diario

Periódico	Subtemas				Total
Clasificación	A	B	C	D	
El Universal	4	26	8	8	46
La Jornada	18	29	13	18	78
La Razón	5	4	4	41	54
Totales	27	59	25	67	177

A. Denuncia por robo o huachicoleo, B. Crisis por desabasto y precio del combustible, C. La explosión del ducto y D. Solución al problema. Elaboración propia con datos de tres periódicos de circulación nacional: El universal, La Jornada y la Razón.[10]

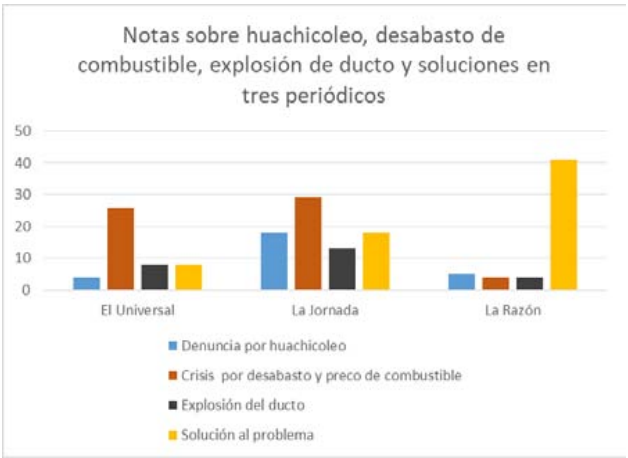

Grafico 1: Frecuencia periodística: robo de combustible[11]

La Jornada fue el diario que mayor cobertura dio acerca del tema con 78 noticias que representa el 67%, le sigue El Universal con 46 notas, 15%, y La Razón con 53 titulares, 18%. Los discursos periodísticos que tuvieron mayor frecuencia en los tres diarios fueron: crisis por desabasto con un total de 59 notas y la solución al hurto con 67. Mientras que los discursos de denuncia del robo y explosión la frecuencia está equilibrada en un 26% y 25%, notas respectivamente. Esto significa que para los periodistas la historia tuvo mayor importancia en relación con la falta de gasolina que impactó en la movilidad social, económica y comercial, lo cual conduce a una necesaria solución al problema, en el que está implícito acabar con el crimen organizado de robo de hidrocarburos, propuesta por AMLO. En el gráfico 2 observamos la distribución porcentual acerca de las notas sobre huachicoleo.

[10] La Jornada - jornada.com.mx https://www.jornada.com.mx/, El Universal https://www.eluniversal.com.mx/ La Razón https://www.razon.com.mx

[11] Elaboración del gráfico, Dra. Irene Sánchez G., Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Xochimilco.

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Gráfico 2: Distribución porcentual[12]

a) El discurso periodístico ¿Por qué La Jornada, El Universal y La Razón de México?

El análisis del discurso es interdisciplinario en virtud de que se interesa por el estudio de los distintos contextos socioculturales, por los procesos cognitivos de producción y de recepción, así como por las dimensiones socioculturales del uso de la lengua y de la comunicación. (Van Dijk, 1990 p. 14). El discurso es un entramado fino donde convergen también los aparatos ideológicos del estado como la escuela, la familia, la iglesia, los *mass media* (Althusser, 1970; Barbero, 1986,), que pasan necesariamente por los sujetos/actores sociales productores y reproductores de discursos políticos y periodísticos.

El discurso, independientemente de su tipología, es además de un conjunto de enunciados que emergen en determinadas formaciones sociales, dependientes de las mismas formaciones discursivas que constituyen roles de identidad (Foucault, 1992 [1970]), también está controlado, seleccionado y redistribuido por un "cierto número de procedimientos que tienen por función conjurar los poderes y peligros, dominar el acontecimiento aleatorio y esquivar su pesada y temible materialidad." (Foucault, 1970 p. 5). El discurso no solo es lo que se dice de manera verbal ya sea escrito u oralmente; implica reglas lingüísticas como sintaxis, semántica y pragmática; así mismo las condiciones en que se produce, se circula y se reciben los distintos discursos por parte de los lectores. De ahí las preguntas que en el análisis de los discursos resultan relevantes: ¿quién dice, qué dice, a quién dice, dónde lo dice, cómo lo dice, para qué y por qué lo dice? En este orden de ideas, los discursos representan un entramado de filigrana cuyo principal elemento analítico es el sujeto/actor social en el que a través de su discurso se materializa el poder y la ideología (Foucault, Van Dijk, 1990).

En relación con el discurso periodístico, la prensa es definida por Van Dijk como "[…] un portavoz "pasivo" de otras élites porque desempeña un papel muy poderoso y activo entre las demás instituciones de élite de la sociedad. (Van Djk, 2003: 232). Los lectores de periódicos "[…] pueden […] formarse opiniones algo distintas de las que se expresan o se insinúan en los mensajes mediáticos discernibles en dichos periódicos." (Van Dijk, 2003: 233). El lenguaje periodístico más que un simple efecto, reflejo o memoria de los procesos y de la organización social, es parte del proceso social. Constituye significaciones sociales y por ende prácticas sociales. Cuando se analiza el "discurso de la prensa nos acercamos al menos a una parte del contexto en el que se han originado y que van más allá del hecho periodístico." (Salgado, 2009 p. 18). Por su parte, los sujetos lectores conforme a sus mediaciones económicas, socio-culturales, políticas, religiosas (Martín Barbero, 1986; Althusser, 1970) construyen una ideología y pueden o no reforzarla a través de los periódicos que leen. Cada periódico tiene sus lectores, por lo tanto pueden formar su opinión conforme a lo que ya saben, a lo que les agrada en relación con lo que leen y sobre todo a quienes leen, cuando se trata de artículos de opinión, columnas y editoriales.

Históricamente la prensa en México ha representado un sólido poder, de ahí que se haya sostenido por mucho tiempo que ha sido el "cuarto poder"[13] El poder mediático, es "el procesamiento del discurso sobre comunicación y cognición sociales (que) define a los receptores mediáticos como usuarios de la información activos […] independientes, cuyas creencias se conforman estratégicamente y cambian

[12] Elaboración del gráfico, Dra. Irene Sánchez Guevara, UAM-X

[13] Los tres poderes legítimos en México son el Ejecutivo, Presiente de la República Mexicana; el Legislativo, representado por las Cámaras de Diputados y Senadores; y el Judicial, representada en la Suprema Corte de Justicia. El "cuarto poder" es la prensa porque influye en la opinión pública y mueve a las masas. Actualmente, aunque la prensa continúa ejerciendo poder, lo ha desplazado las redes sociales que son mucho más dinámicas.

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debido a múltiples procesos cognitivos, sociales y comunicativos […]" (Van Dijk, 2003: 232). En tal razón, es esencial el estudio de los discursos de los políticos sobre temas que atañen a la sociedad en su conjunto, y publicados en los distintos diarios de México y en el extranjero. El recorte mediático que realizamos se ha explicado arriba y ahora ofrecemos de manera sucinta, la tendencia ideológica de cada uno de los diarios que abordaron el tema sobre el hurto (huachicoleo) de combustible en Pemex.

El periódico *El Universal* fue fundado por el Congresista Constituyente de Querétaro, Ing. Félix Fulgencio Palavicini, el 1 de octubre de 1916. El objetivo fue dar la palabra a los postulados emanados de la Revolución Mexicana. La tendencia ideológica de la editorial es de derecha. El tiraje actual del diario es de 105 mil ejemplares y sus lectores diarios suman en promedio 285 mil según la consultora Ipsos EGM, que lo sitúa como líder nacional de los periódicos formales. En internet su página web reporta más de 18 millones de usuarios únicos promedio por mes y en la red social Twitter acumula más de 4 millones de seguidores. Es miembro del Grupo de Diarios de América y de la Sociedad Interamericana de Prensa (SIP).

El diario *La Jornada* se fundó 19 de septiembre de 1984 por Carlos Payán quien fue su primer director, después sería, hasta la fecha, Carmen Lira Saade. El diario se ha caracterizado porque ejerce un periodismo crítico y responsable, es un medio autónomo, por lo tanto no se somete a los mandatos del poder político, que por muchos años controló la información en los medios. Es un espacio que se construyó para expresar libremente la diversidad de pensamientos; no obstante, durante el sexenio de Miguel de La Madrid, este proyecto no fue bien visto y tuvo dificultades para desarrollarlo a falta de recursos económicos. El proyecto funcionó gracias al apoyo de artistas y grandes plumas: Rufino Tamayo, Francisco Toledo, Gabriel García Márquez, Vicente Rojo, Carlos Monsiváis, Elena Poniatowska, entre otros colaboradores. En 1995, aparece la versión en línea con acceso libre a todos los contenidos, incluidos los archivos. Tiene aproximadamente 287,000 lectores en Ciudad de México. El sitio web reporta aproximadamente 180,000 visitas diarias a la página.[14]

La Razón de México, diario fundado por el periodista Pablo Hiriart Le Bert con apoyo financiero del empresario tamaulipeco José Ramiro Garza Cantú. Hiriart dirigió el periódico del 18 de mayo de 2009 hasta el 18 de marzo de 2014 cuando presentó su renuncia. Dos aspectos importantes constituyen el alma del diario: uno, el hombre que financió la apertura y desarrollo del diario, es uno de los más poderosos del estado de Tamaulipas; debido a su fortuna económica e influencia política es considerado como uno de los hombres más poderosos de México. La especulación inmobiliaria, la construcción y los contratos con PEMEX son sus negocios principales. Su empresa, Grupo R, es la más completa para la atención en producción y exploración de petróleo y gas natural del país, a través de las firmas Perforación Marina, Exploración Marina e Industrial Perforadora de Campeche.[15] El segundo aspecto es la formación ideológica y discursiva de Pablo Hiriart, quien sistemáticamente ha atacado a AMLO.[16] La tendencia ideológica es conservadora y de extrema derecha. En su página web no se reporta el número de lectores ni de visitas. (Véase cuadro 2)

Cuadro 2: Tendencias ideológicas de fuentes de comunicación e información

Diario	Fecha de fundación	Fundadores	Seguidores	Tendencia ideológica
El Universal	1-10-1916	Constituyentes	285 mil lectores	Conservador
La Jornada	19-09-1984	Periodistas, científicos, artistas, profesionistas	287 mil lectores 180 mil vistitas diarias	Izquierda
La Razón de México	18 -05-2009	Empresarios	Sin datos	Derecha

Elaboración propia con datos de los diarios digitales

Las razones anteriores justifican los criterios de selección de los diarios para el análisis del discurso periodístico sobre el robo de hidrocarburos y aunado a los datos arrojados en la construcción del *corpus* analítico, observamos que *La Jornada* fue el periódico que más cobertura dio a las denuncias de AMLO sobre el hurto de combustibles, mientras que *La Razón* y *El Universal* destinaron únicamente cuatro y cinco notas respectivamente sobre este subtema. Por otro lado, en relación con la mención al presidente y la información comunicada por él en sus conferencias mañaneras, *La Jornada* mencionó 19 veces AMLO (entre el 28 de diciembre de 2018 y 19 de enero de 2019), y los diarios *El Universal* y *La Razón*, solo siete veces AMLO o Presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador. Con lo cual concluimos que *La Jornada* visibiliza más la figura del presidente de México y sus discursos; los otros dos diarios, procuran invisibilizarlo al menos en sus titulares. En consecuencia, *La Jornada* y *El Universal* tienen mucho mayor impacto político-social entre los lectores que *La Razón de México*.

[14] La información obtenida del periódico *La Jornada* se recuperó de la página web: http://www.jornada.unam.mx/info/

[15] Revista República de Veracruz. http://www.revistarepublica.com.mx/que-diantres-esta-pasando-con-el-periodico-la-razon/

[16] En #AlCierre se analiza el desempeño de los candidatos en el segundo debate presidencial. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3mo-TbC6Vs, 2018.

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III. La Presidencia de la Cuarta Transformación: Contexto Histórico-Social

Con el propósito de realizar el Análisis de los discursos políticos del presidente de México, y de sus opositores —dirigentes de partidos políticos, directivos de empresas—, es preciso ir a los antecedentes de manera sucinta de dos puntos esenciales: 1) Pemex y 2) La cuarta Transformación y AMLO.

a) Pemex es la empresa más importante de México. Con la producción de petróleo y sus derivados el país se ha sostenido más o menos económicamente. A principios del siglo XX fue expropiada de manos extranjeras (1917), y se promulgó el Artículo 27 Constitucional donde se establece que "corresponde a la nación el dominio directo de […] los yacimientos minerales […]; los combustibles minerales sólidos; el petróleo y todos los carburos de hidrógeno, sólidos, líquidos o gaseosos" (Universidad de Guadalajara, 2015, en Sánchez Guevara, 2018). Los trabajadores petroleros se organizaron y crearon su sindicato (1934). El histórico 18 de marzo de 1938, el presidente en turno, Lázaro Cárdenas nacionaliza el petróleo. En el sexenio de José López Portillo (1976-1982), en la sonda de Campeche se descubre un mega yacimiento de petróleo, de ahí la célebre frase del expresidente "debemos de acostumbrarnos a administrar la abundancia". Esa "gallina de los huevos de oro dio dinero a los gobiernos por décadas" [17]. Los sexenios de Vicente Fox (2000-2006) y de Felipe Calderón (2006-2012) del Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) continuaron desfalcando a la empresa. El expresidente Enrique Peña Nieto (2012-2018) promovió la Reforma Energética (Sánchez Guevara, 2018) dentro del conjunto de Reformas Estructurales que dio la estocada a Pemex. Enrique Peña Nieto, Emilio Lozoya Austin y Carlos Romero Deschamps representan la triada de la corrupción no únicamente para Pemex, sino para el país. El primero propone la Reforma Energética, el segundo como director general de Petróleos Mexicanos (4 de diciembre de 2012 al 8 de febrero de 2016), afiliado al Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) se corrompe al recibir sobornos de Odebrecht, OHL; es acusado por corrupción, lavado de dinero, tráfico de influencias y crimen organizado.[18] El tercero, líder sindical de Pemex, de 1993 a 2016, año en que renuncia. Afiliado al PRI, senador y diputado federal. Igual que Lozoya ha sido acusado de corrupción, delincuencia organizada, extorsión, fraude, enriquecimiento ilícito y tráfico de influencias.[19]

b) Andrés Manuel López Obrador ha sido y continúa siendo una figura importante en la historia reciente de México, para seguidores y opositores. Su vida política se ha caracterizado por su lucha en pro de la sociedad. Ha desempeñado varios cargos públicos en Tabasco y en la Ciudad de México como Jefe de Gobierno de 2000 a 2005; en 2004 la encuesta City Mayors lo calificó como el segundo mejor alcalde del mundo. "Fue tres veces candidato a la presidencia de la República en las elecciones de 2006, 2012 y 2018. En su tercera postulación para el cargo como jefe del Poder Ejecutivo en 2018, ganó la elección con el 53.19% de los votos, lo que le dio una ventaja de 17 millones 503 mil 363 votos frente a su contrincante más cercano."[20]

El 1º de diciembre asume el cargo de presidente constitucional de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos. En su discurso político en la toma de posesión como presidente electo, explicó la conformación de su proyecto gubernamental para llevar a cabo cambios sociales y estructurales a fin de iniciar, desarrollar y consolidar "La Cuarta Transformación" [21] con la que se combatiría esencialmente al crimen organizado, la corrupción, despilfarro del erario público, y la elevación del nivel económico de los pobres, de ahí su lema "*Por el bien de todos, primero los pobres*", AMLO sentenció en su primer discurso:

> *Estoy preparado* para no fallarle a mi pueblo […] *Ese es mi compromiso, no tengo derecho a fallar* […] Nada ha

[17] De 'administrar la abundancia' a 'se secó la gallina' en *Altonivel* https://www.altonivel.com.mx/empresas/administrar-la-abundancia-a-se-seco-la-gallina/

[18] Véase Pérez, Ana Lilia (2019 [2017]). *Pemex Rip. Vida y asesinato de la principal empresa mexicana.* México: Grijalbo, p. 212.

[19] Consúltese: Méndez, A. (26 de agosto de 2011). «La Jornada: Prescribió el delito del Pemexgate; la PGR no dio más pruebas contra Romero Deschamps». www.jornada.com.mx Consultado el 26 de julio de 2019. Ferri, Pablo (6 de septiembre de 2021). «El 'caso Romero Deschamps' se convierte en otra prueba de fuego para la Fiscalía». El País México. Consultado el 12 de octubre de 2021. Arista, Lidia; Flores, Linaloe (28 de junio de 2021). «Romero Deschamps y los millones perdidos del sindicato de Pemex». ADNPolítico. Consultado el 12 de octubre de 2021.

[20] Lic. Andrés Manuel López Obrador en: https://lopezobrador.org.mx /semblanza/

[21] *Primera Transformación* de México se vincula con la guerra de la Independencia de España en 1810. *La segunda* se relaciona con la dirigencia liberal preocupada por la modernización del país, la separación de la Iglesia del Estado, la constitución de una clase propietaria campesina y la estabilización de México como un país federal con el presidente Benito Juárez. *La tercera,* es la más larga y duradera. El cardenismo nos llevará desde la Revolución de 1910 hasta la década del '80. El largo laboratorio revolucionario va promoviendo algunas discusiones y políticas centrales. *La Cuarta,* promovida por el actual presidente AMLO, se refiere a la experiencia política que va surgiendo en los 80: no solo lo que deja la discusión sobre el nuevo federalismo como expresión de rechazo al poder absoluto del Estado, sino también toda la discusión política antineoliberal. (De Gori, Esteban, (16 de septiembre, 2020). *AMLO y las cuatro transformaciones de México.* En https://www.celag.org/amlo-y-las-cuatro-transformaciones-de-mexico/

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dañado más a México que la *deshonestidad de los gobernantes y de la pequeña minoría que ha lucrado con el influyentismo* (*sic.)* […] Esa es la causa principal de la desigualdad económica y social, y también de la inseguridad y de la violencia que padecemos […] No es *mi fuerte la venganza, no olvido,* pero *sí soy partidario* del perdón y la indulgencia […][22]

A partir del lunes 3 de diciembre de 2018, AMLO ofrece su conferencia "La mañanera" de lunes a viernes de 7:00 a 9:00 horas, transmitida en el Canal Once de televisión del Instituto Politécnico Nacional (IPN), el cual tiene una amplia cobertura del 40.11% para tener presencia en las 32 entidades federativas, además de tener señal internacional que llega a 2 millones y medio de suscriptores en Estados Unidos y Canadá.[23] El presidente ha invertido durante estos tres primeros años de gobierno, aproximadamente 8,300 días, 996,000 minutos frente a las cámaras de la televisora en mención. Desde Palacio Nacional, el presidente informa y comunica al pueblo mexicano y a los periodistas de distintos medios acerca de la corrupción de los anteriores gobiernos y de sus opositores a los que les dice "*los fifís", "los conservadores", la prensa fifí y conservadora*, *"mis adversarios".* También informa junto con su gabinete de los avances del proyecto gubernamental relacionado con sus proyectos: el aeropuerto internacional "Felipe Ángeles", el Tren Maya y la refinería "dos Bocas", así como el aumento a la pensión universal para personas adultas mayores, los apoyos económicos a los jóvenes a fin de que continúen con sus estudios, la construcción de 100 universidades, entre otros.

A 28 días de haber iniciado su gobierno, AMLO presentó un plan estratégico para combatir el robo de hidrocarburos en el país. La primera acción gubernamental fue la de ordenar el resguardo y toma del control de todos los accesos y sitios estratégicos de la refinería de Salamanca, Guanajuato, por parte del Ejército Nacional y de la Marina, acción que provocó escases de combustibles por el cierre de ductos que distribuían las gasolinas y la consecuente producción discursiva periodística. El presidente explicó que "tras estudio realizado por la actual administración se descubrió que 80 por ciento del robo de combustible se realiza desde el interior de Petróleo Mexicanos (Pemex) y sólo el 20 por ciento desde afuera" y abundó que:

> […] todos los días *son robadas* alrededor de 600 pipas con 15 mil litros cada una, lo que genera una pérdida estimada en 200 millones de pesos diarios o en 60 mil millones de pesos al año. No *hablamos* sólo del llamado huachicol, de la ordeña de ductos; *hablamos* de un plan que tiene vinculación al interior del gobierno y que se apoya en un sistema de distribución de combustibles; […] porque no es fácil vender 600 pipas diarias de gasolina. Por eso *decidimos* iniciar este plan, […] la cifra de combustible robado creció 500 por ciento en un *lapso de tres sexenios* (que) sabían del robo, pero en el 2000, 2003, *se aceptaba oficialmente que se robaban* 12 mil millones de pesos. Pero ahora *estamos hablando* de más de 60 mil millones de pesos; o sea, ha ido creciendo *sin que se haga nada* […].[24]

IV. Los Sujetos/Actores Que Hablan

Los sujetos o actores sociales son los que "intervienen en la construcción del discurso periodístico, quienes están limitados por una serie de mecanismos lingüísticos y semióticos, que a su vez obedecen a contextos socio-históricos específicos." (Salgado, 2003: 18).

En el caso estudiado seleccionamos los sujetos de acuerdo con los siguientes criterios: 1) los sujetos/ actores sociales corresponden a la sociedad en general y en particular (Van Dijk 2003), por ejemplo, las personas que hicieron largas filas para cargar gasolina, las personas que se acercaron al ducto en Tlahuelilpan, Hidalgo; este grupo también es un sujeto histórico, y en términos generales representan a un sector del pueblo que vive en condiciones económicamente precarias. 2) los sujetos del discurso e ideológicos (Pêcheux, 1969 Foucault, 1970; Althusser, 1970; Fossaert, 1978), que ejercen y ostentan poder son los de AMLO, de los dirigentes de los partidos opositores, de los gobernadores, de los directores de organizaciones, de los sindicalistas de Pemex.

El espacio-tiempo resulta fundamental porque es parte esencial del "... ritual (que) define las características que deben tener los sujetos que hablan, los gestos, los comportamientos, las circunstancias, y todo el conjunto de signos que deben acompañar el discurso; fija finalmente la eficacia supuesta o impuesta de las palabras, su efecto sobre aquellos a los cuales se dirigen, los límites de su valor coactivo…" (Foucault, 1970, p. 24). En la siguiente tabla se enlistan los sujetos/actores sociales que también representan élites que tienen el derecho y la circunstancia de habla.

[22] Villegas, Paulina. (1 de diciembre de 2018) "La toma de posesión de AMLO: combate a la corrupción, pero no perseguirá a los antiguos funcionarios" en *The New York Times* consultado el 18 de noviembre de 2022 en https://www.nytimes.com/es/2018/12/01/espanol/america-latina/amlo-toma-posesion.html

[23] Véase Once señal 11.1 en https://canalonce.mx/funcionamiento/cobertura#:~:text=Actualmente%2C%20El%20Once%20tiene%20una,del%20Estado%20Mexicano%20(SPR).

[24] López, Antonio (28/12/2018). "Ejército entra a áreas clave de Pemex en acción anti-huachicol" en Diario digital *La Razón de México*, consultado el 9 de octubre de 2020 en https://www.razon.com.mx/mexico/ejercito-entra-a-areas-clave-de-pemex-en-accion-anti-huachicol-robo-combustible-gasolina-amlo-refinerias-vigilancia-perdida-dinero/

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Tabla 1: Actores sociales y discursos sobre *huachicoleo*

Discursos sobre *Huachicoleo*	
Actores sociales en favor de la estrategia contra robo de combustible	**Actores sociales en contra de la estrategia gubernamental**
Andrés Manuel López Obrador (Presidente de México	Marko Cortés, dirigente del Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN)
Octavio Romero Oropeza, Director de Pemex: Palacio Nacional	Ángel Ávila, dirigente nacional del Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD)
Alejandro Gertz Manero, Fiscalía General de la República.	Banco de México, Banxico
Luis Cresencio Sandoval, Secretario de la Defensa Nacional	Gustavo de Hoyos, presidente de la Confederación Patronal de la República Mexicana (Coparmex)
Diego Sinhue Rodríguez Vallejo, Gobernador de Guanajuato	
Omar Fayad, Gobernador de Hidalgo	
Subprocuraduría Especializada en Investigación de Delincuencia Organizada (Seido)	
Empresarios gasolineros Organización Nacional de Expendedores de Petróleo (Onexpo)	
Omar Toledo, sindicalista opositor de Carlos Romero Deschamps	
Secretaría de Seguridad y Protección Ciudadana	

Tabla de elaboración propia con datos obtenidos de los diarios en estudio

V. Discurso, Ideología y Poder

El análisis del discurso es una herramienta teórico-metodológica que permite trabajar a partir del lenguaje lo explícito y fundamentalmente lo implícito así también, como hemos mencionado arriba, considera los contextos socio-culturales-históricos-ideológicos y las relaciones asimétricas de poder. Tanto la ideología y el poder hallan su materialidad en el lenguaje. La ideología para Thompson (1984) es un "sistema del pensamiento", "sistema de creencias" o "prácticas simbólicas" pertenecientes a acciones sociales o proyectos políticos dirigidos a la preservación o transformación del orden social. (pp. 2-6) Por su parte, Reboul (1986) afirma que la lengua "no es que sea coercitiva, sino que algunas de sus coerciones están al servicio de un poder, ya sea el de un grupo, el de una casta, una clase, una nación o un Estado." (p. 36). El lenguaje es un medio social de comunicación y los múltiples usos de ese lenguaje se intersectan con el poder que lo nutren, lo sostienen y lo decretan.

Las coerciones del discurso periodístico, de la misma manera que el político, están al servicio del poder ya sea del presidencial o de los dirigentes de partidos políticos o de algunas otras organizaciones que también ostentan poder, a través de sus editoriales, de artículos de opinión y de algunas notas que adjetivan los sucesos. Los *mass media*, desde la perspectiva de Althusser (1970) son Aparatos Ideológicos del Estado que adquieren su sentido desde el punto de vista de la lucha de clases, los aparatos no son la realización de la ideología, sino que ellos la materializan y la sostienen como dominante. Las ideologías son el producto de las condiciones de existencia de las luchas de clases y de sus prácticas sociales. (p. 99 y ss.). Bourdieu, por su parte, menciona que "El trabajo político se reduce, en lo esencial, a un trabajo sobre las palabras, porque las palabras contribuyen a construir el mundo social" (Eribon 1982).

Foucault (1988) propone analizar el poder desde el sujeto y cómo se objetiviza, esto es cómo se materializa el poder en el sujeto a partir de cuatro formas: a) conceptualización del sujeto, b) conocimiento de las condiciones históricas, c) conocimiento de la conciencia histórica de la circunstancia actual y d) el tipo de realidad que se está estudiando. En este orden de ideas, el poder en la figura de AMLO, se objetiva por su historia desde que se iniciara como actor político en su natal Tabasco y posteriormente por los cargos públicos en que se desempeñó, y también por haber recorrido a lo largo y ancho toda la República mexicana para conocer las condiciones de existencia de los pueblos. El objetivo principal "no es tanto atacar tal o cual institución de poder o grupo o élite o clase, sino más bien una técnica, una forma de poder" (p. 231).

Por otra parte, el poder no solo está en el sujeto sino también en las instituciones (Giménez, 1981) Lo que implica que el poder tiene varios lugares de constitución y uno de ellos es el del 'campo de las prácticas sociales de clase'. (Poulantzas, 1969: 117) Los 'sujetos' o actores sociales son los que mantienen el poder dentro de los 'lugares' o 'instituciones'. En este sentido, tanto el sujeto/actor social como la institución representan el binomio para materializar y ejercer tanto el poder como la ideología.

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En los discursos de AMLO y de otros se ha mencionado implícita o explícitamente a los siguientes actores sociales: Vicente Fox, Felipe Calderón; en el caso de Enrique Peña Nieto de manera implícita, Carlos Romero Deschamps, Francisco Labastida Ochoa, Candidato a la Presidencia por parte del PRI en 2012, líderes y funcionarios petroleros, Eduardo León Trauwitz, ex encargado de Pemex Seguridad que han tenido que ver directa o indirectamente con el crimen organizado.

Respondiendo a la pregunta respecto de qué se habla, los actores sociales hablan acerca del robo de combustible, de las consecuencias de la estrategia "anti-huachicol" propuesta por AMLO, y de la explosión de uno de los ductos de Pemex. Los sujetos/actores sociales se han referido a la extracción ilegal de hidrocarburos como: *huachicoleo, ordeña, hurto, delito, crimen organizado, saqueo, pillaje, actividad delictiva*. Enseguida ofrecemos los discursos de Andrés Manuel López Obrador respecto de la denuncia sobre el crimen organizado, estrategias antihuachicol y explosión:

a) Discursos sobre la estrategia anti-huachicol.

Los discursos del presidente se caracterizan por utilizar verbos en primera persona del plural, se trata de un nosotros inclusivo: *iniciemos, iniciamos, no nos vamos…, no abriremos ductos, nos duele mucho;* para denotar que el ejecutivo toma las decisiones en conjunto con los Secretarios de Estado, sobre todo con los de la Defensa Nacional y la Marina. Una de las primeras acciones que se ejercen, en los primeros días de enero de 2019, un mes después de haber tomado posesión, es la de tomar control de los ductos de Pemex y cerrarlos para evitar el robo de combustible, simultáneamente en sus conferencias matutinas explica cómo ha sido el robo mostrando gráficas y número de pipas robadas diariamente, "*600 mil pipas con 15 mil litros cada una*"; así como los millones de pesos robados, "*pérdida estimada en 200 millones diarios o en 60 mil millones anuales*"; estos discursos responden a argumentos de hecho, demuestra con números y gráficos cómo se comenzó con las prácticas ilícitas, desde los tres sexenios precedentes, y cómo fue creciendo durante los tres gobiernos que le antecedieron, " *sin que nadie hicieran nada".*

El 20 de diciembre el presidente anuncia la estrategia para evitar el robo de combustible. Los secretarios Defensa Nacional y de Marina tomaron el control de algunas refinerías[25]. Octavio Romero Oropeza, el director general de la petrolera mexicana, mencionó que "el 80% de las tomas clandestinas, desde el año 2016 al 2019, se han concentrado en siete estados: Hidalgo, Puebla, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Veracruz, Estado de México y Tamaulipas"[26] A partir de entonces comienza la guerra discursiva entre el presidente y sus opositores, como se puede apreciar en la Tabla 2.

Tabla 2: Discursos AMLO *vs. Opositores*

AMLO	Opositores
"Desde que *iniciamos el plan,* en total *se han robado* 8 mil 540 pipas menos, […], en dinero ha significado **un ahorro** de 2 mil 500 millones de pesos" (El Universal, 9/01/2019)	*Equivocado plan* contra ese ilícito/ combate al robo de gasolina no debe *ser excusa para el desabasto,* por lo que *exigimos* que el gobierno busque combatir este delito *sin que se afecte a la gente*. (La Jornada, 7/01/2019) (*Marko Cortés, Dirigente del Partido Acción Nacional PAN*)
"A pesar de que *nuestros adversarios, los conservadores y la prensa fifí, apostaron a que iba a haber incremento* en el precio de las gasolinas, *"se quedaron con las ganas",* respondió López Obrador." (El Universal, 3/01/2019)	López Obrador *regalará gasolinazo* en Año Nuevo (El Universal, 30/12/2018) (*Marko Cortés, Dirigente del Partido Acción Nacional PAN*)
"Me siento muy respaldado, así me lo han expresado, puedo estar en una gasolinera donde se están presentando molestias y lo que me dicen es: 'ni un paso atrás, no afloje', y yo lo que les contesto es que: 'el que se aflige, se afloja'. *No nos vamos a afligir para acabar con la corrupción en el país"* (La Razón 15/01/2019)	López Obrador *faltó a su palabra* de reducir los precios de las gasolinas y, por el contrario, *aplicar un incremento en los impuestos,* aumento que está en marcha, afirmó, puesto que Morena lo aprobó en la Ley de Ingresos 2019 (El Universal, 29/12/2018)/ (*Ángel Ávila, dirigente nacional del Partido de la Revolución Democrática PRD)*

[25] "Sabotaje a ducto de Pemex es la razón del desabasto de gasolina en la CDMX: AMLO" en El Financiero en https://www.elfinanciero.com.mx/nacional/escasez-de-gasolina-en-la-cdmx-fue-por-sabotaje-a-duc to-de-pemex-lopez-obrador/ (Consultado el 18 de noviembre de 2022.)

[26] Solís, Arturo. (23/01/2019). Los 5 estados con más huachicoleo durante 2018 en https://www.forbes.com.mx/los-5-estados-con-mas-huachicoleo-durante-2018/ consultado el 18 de enero de 2022

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"Sí funciona la estrategia contra el huachicol", (La Jornada 05/01/2019)/ *"Ni un paso atrás"* advierte AMLO en plan anti huachicol (La Jornada, 11/01/2019)/ "*No abriremos* ductos", resistan (La jornada 10/01/2019)/ *Se fortalecerá* la estrategia" (La Jornada, 19/01/2019)	En twitter escribió: "*Otra promesa incumplida* del Presidente @lopezobrador_, los impuestos a las gasolinas *seguirán elevándose* y los *terminará pagando la gente*. El #GasolinazoMoreno está en marcha. El @PRDMexico seguirá insistiendo en que baje el precio de las gasolinas, ésta es nuestra causa" (El Universal, 29/12/2018) (*Ángel Ávila, dirigente nacional del Partido de la Revolución Democrática PRD)*
"¿Ustedes creen que un director de Pemex actuó, en el caso de que se cometió un ilícito, por su cuenta? *Miren,* en el país, y *esto ya debe quedar claro*, un negocio jugoso ilícito siempre *lleva el visto bueno del Presidente.* Lo mismo en los estados. ¡Ya basta de hipocresía!"	…Habrá *inflación por desabasto* de gasolina. […] la actividad económica y la *inflación del país* podrían ser afectadas si continúan los *problemas* en la *distribución de combustibles.* (El Universal 11/01/2019) (*Gobernador del Banco de México (Banxico), Alejandro Díaz de León)*
Desde el gobierno del ex presidente *Vicente Fox* empezó el *saqueo de gasolina de Pemex dentro de las refinerías* y no sólo con la perforación de ductos para extraer ilegalmente el combustible.	*El desabasto* puede provocar que crezca la *venta ilegal de gasolinas,* (La Jornada, 08/01/2019)/
"…los anteriores directores de Pemex, desde hace *tres sexenios,* tenían conocimiento del robo de hidrocarburos por parte de *trabajadores de la misma empresa."* (El Universal, 28/12/2018)	*Desastrosa política* contra robo gasolina. Dejando constancia de ese apoyo a la intencionalidad y a la decisión política de enfrentar esta problemática, *debemos señalar* que la *planeación ha adolecido de graves errores y ha resultado extremadamente dañina* (La Jornada, 8/01/2019) (*Gustavo de Hoyos, presidente de la Confederación Patronal de la República Mexicana Coparmex)*
"No, no cambia, [la estrategia] esto *desgraciadamente demuestra de que hay que terminar con esta práctica que llevó a la tragedia, […] es una práctica que se fue arraigando"/ "más que detener la estrategia,* la lucha contra la ilegalidad y el robo de combustible, *se va a fortalecer*. Vamos a continuar hasta erradicar estas prácticas, dando opciones, dando alternativas a la gente para que no se vean obligados a tomar este camino riesgoso que lleva a tragedias"./ *"…(se) está resolviendo el problema del huachicoleo* con más vigilancia y con más atención de parte de la autoridad". (El Universal, 29/12/2018)	
"Es una tragedia que *nos duele* mucho" / "es que se va a verter, se va *decir toda la verdad,* no *se va a ocultar absolutamente nada"* acerca de esta tragedia (La Razón, 19/01/2019)	

Cuadro de elaboración propia con datos discursivos de los diarios estudiados.

El discurso de AMLO es peculiar. Desde su lugar discursivo, El Palacio Nacional y de su investidura como presidente hace uso de estrategias discursivas para, en la coyuntura histórica en la que se encuentra, decir lo que a su juicio puede y debe decir a periodistas, al público con lo cual legitima su poder y su ideología, avalado por más del 50% de votantes a su favor.

En primer lugar, constantemente se refiere implícitamente a sus *adversarios* sin nombrarlos, específicamente a Enrique Peña Nieto, pero a Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Vicente Fox y a Felipe Calderón los ha mencionado en pocas ocasiones. Sus adversarios son sus críticos y todos aquellos que están en contra de la Cuarta Transformación los ha llamado: *adversarios*, *fifís, neoliberales, conservadores*. En segundo lugar, siempre habla en primera persona del singular para referirse a sus compromisos personales con el pueblo: *Estoy preparado / Ese es mi compromiso/ No es mi fuerte/ sí soy partidario de/ Me siento muy respaldado, así me lo han expresado/ Les doy una buena noticia/ no voy a adelantar ningún juicio*. Por otra parte, Usa la primera persona del plural cuando trata asuntos sobre la estrategia anti-huachicol: *Desde que iniciamos/ No abriremos ductos/ hablamos/ estamos hablando/ Por eso decidimos/ vamos logrando/ Desde que iniciamos el plan/ necesitamos tener/ vamos a ser inflexibles.* Hay un juego entre la primera persona del singular y la del plural, donde se demuestra que hay un *continuum* de pensamiento personal y de su equipo de funcionarios y

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Secretarios de Estado. No obstante cuando se trata de una investigación acerca de algún personaje que haya estado involucrado en los ilícitos, se separa en su discurso utilizando la tercera persona del singular, lo cual hace impersonal el dicho: *Se fortalecerá la estrategia/ se está resolviendo el problema/ se investigará al general Eduardo León Trauwitz/* en este dicho contradice a su discurso de toma de posesión cuando dice "*no es mi fuerte la venganza, punto final, no habrá persecución"*, por ello se separa del hecho, y quien investigará será la Fiscalía General de la República, órgano autónomo. Las frases más importantes respecto del huachicoleo entre el 28 de diciembre de 2018 al 15 de enero de 2019, han sido:

> "*no jueguen a vencidas"* (7de enero 2019) "*El que aflige se afloja, y no nos vamos a aflojar*", (10 de enero de 2019) al defender su plan contra el robo de combustibles. / "*Si robaban arriba, pues cómo no iban a robar abajo*", (8 de enero). / "*Un negocio jugoso ilícito siempre lleva el visto bueno del presidente*", (28 de diciembre). / "*Tenemos gasolina suficiente, no hay problema de desabasto*". Esto lo ha dicho varias veces a raíz de las críticas a su estrategia. / "*El huachicoleo es tan grave que casi había un Pemex pirata*", (28 de diciembre.) / "*A ver quién se cansa primero*", (12 de enero), luego de acusar "sabotaje" de huchicoleros. / "*Me colmaron el plato*", (15 de enero), al referirse a quienes roban hidrocarburos. / "*Hay una acción deliberada para impedir que se normalice el abasto de gasolina*", (15 de enero.)[27]

De las funciones discursivas propuestas por Jakobson (1984)[28], las que predominan en el discurso del presidente son: la emotiva, la apelativa, la referencial.

Función referencial

Sí funciona la estrategia contra el huachicol

Función apelativa

¿Ustedes creen que un director de Pemex actuó, en el caso de que se cometió un ilícito, por su cuenta? Miren, en el país, y esto ya debe quedar claro

Función emotiva

"no jueguen a vencidas" / "*El que se aflige se afloja, y no nos vamos a aflojar*" / "*Me colmaron el plato*"

Se trata de un discurso coloquial que tiene como propósito identificarse con el pueblo, por ejemplo */me canso ganso/ /no jueguen a vencidas/ /a ver quién se cansa primero/ ya me colmaron el plato/*. El presidente se permite esas licencias discursivas para llegar a la población y continuar con la aprobación popular.

Por su parte, los discursos de los opositores del presidente, se caracterizan por la desacreditación a la toma de decisiones, en el caso del plan para controlar el robo de hidrocarburos fue ampliamente criticado sobre todo por los dirigentes de los partidos políticos de oposición (PAN y PRD). Los adjetivos calificativos al plan: *equivocado plan, faltó a su palabra, habrá inflación por desabasto, desastrosa política, inflación en el país por desabasto, ha resultado extremadamente dañina.* Con estos discursos se quiere generar, en la opinión pública, descontento, inseguridad, arrepentimiento de haber votado por AMLO. También usan la ironía al decir: *regalará gasolinazo en año nuevo,* de igual manera el presidente constantemente utiliza la ironía para responder a los discursos de sus adversarios al responder *se quedaron con las ganas.*

Esos discursos circulados en la prensa, en las redes sociales y en la televisión, provocaron caos entre los ciudadanos, quienes hicieron compras de pánico y en consecuencia la escasez del combustible. Aquí algunos titulares del periódico *El Universal*[29] *En al menos 6 estados, hay compras de pánico de gasolina/ Escasez desata compras de pánico de gasolina/ Fastidio y cansancio por desabasto de combustible/ Escala el desabasto de gasolina en las entidades/La gente se estresa; ya querían pelear/Se agudiza desabasto y llega al Valle de México/ Enojo y zozobra en 9 estados por falta de combustible/Caos en la ciudad por compras de emergencia/Duermen dentro de su combi por dos días/ Son las 09:40 y ya no hay gasolina.*

La guerra discusiva política y periodística finalizó pocos días después del estallido del ducto en Hidalgo, sin embargo los discurso de AMLO se han caracterizado por ser combativos y provocadores hacia sus opositores a través de los adjetivos calificativos peyorativos como prensa *fifi, los adversaros, los conservadores, los neoliberales.*

VI. Conclusiones

El análisis del discurso periodístico y político nos condujo a conclusiones interesantes en cuanto a los discursos de los sujetos/actores sociales que tienen el privilegio del habla como el Presidente de la República mexicana, líderes de partidos políticos opositores, presidentes de distintas organizaciones civiles, líderes sindicales y gobernadores.

La distribución del combustible se reestableció el 20 de enero de 2019, después de 13 días de crisis por desabasto, y de la explosión ocurrida el 18 de enero en Tlahuelilpan, Hidalgo, cuando varias personas

[27] 50 frases de AMLO en sus primeros 50 días de gobierno en: https://politica.expansion.mx/presidencia/2019/01/19/50-frases-de-amlo-en-sus-primeros-50-dias-de-gobierno Consultado el 11 de noviembre de 2021.

[28] Jakobson (1984) Funciones discursivas: Referencial, emotiva, apelativa o conativa, metalingüística, fática y poética.

[29] Notas de los días 7, 8, 9 y 10 de enero de 2019.

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robaban combustible en una fuga, y donde hubo 132 muertos y decenas de heridos.[30]

Con la anunciada *inflación en el país* por parte de Banxico y directores de Comparmex y los dirigentes de los partidos políticos opositores, situación que ponía nervioso al pueblo por la incertidumbre en la que se vivió. En las siguientes tablas y gráficos se muestra los aumentos que han tenido las gasolinas en el periodo sexenal precedente y en el actual. De 2012 a 2018 las gasolinas Premuim, Magna y Diesel tuvieron un aumento del 83%, 69% y 83% respectivamente; mientras que en lo que va del sexenio de AMLO las gasolinas mencionadas han tenido un aumento del 1%, 20% y 7% respectivamente. En efecto cuando aumenta el precio de los combustibles deviene una inflación y sube el precio de todos los productos y de la canasta básica, no obstante, el precio en el actual sexenio se ha incrementado en porcentajes no significativos como se puede apreciar en las tablas 4 y 5.

Tabla 4: Comparativo aumento de precio de gasolinas

Enrique Peña Nieto[31] Reforma Energética					
Premium		Magna		Diesel	
2012-2018					
$11.37	**$20.81**	$11.37	**$19.23**	$11.17	$20.76
$9.44+		$7.86+		$9.59+	
Andrés Manuel López Obrador[32] Plan estratégico contra huachicol/contra reforma energética					
Premium		Magna		Diesel	
Aumento a las gasolinas del 30 de noviembre de 2018 al 18 de febrero de 2022					
$21.02		$23.00		$22.23	
0.21+		**$3.77+**		**$1.47+**	

Tabla 5: Porcentajes comparativos de aumento de precio en gasolinas

	Aumento de la gasolina[33]	
	Durante el sexenio de Peña Nieto	durante tres años de López Obrador
Premium	83%	1%
Magna	69%	20%
Diesel	83%	7%

En el gráfico 3 se aprecia porcentualmente que los incrementos de las gasolinas es mucho mayor en el periodo sexenal de Enrique Peña Nieto y sobre todo a partir de la Reforma Energética cuando se liberan los precios para que cada empresa establezca el precio, el cual varía de acuerdo con la distancia que deben recorrer las pipas que da cuenta de salida-destino. El argumento para que se aprobara la Reforma Energética es que los consumidores pagarían menos. No obstante en el período de Andrés Manuel López Obrador, y pese a la estrategia política de cerrar ductos y tomar el control de las refinerías, el precio de los combustibles subió en mínimos porcentajes hasta el momento (febrero, 2022).

[30] Hace un año, los automovilistas hacían largas filas por el desabasto de gasolina (7/01/2020), *El Universal* en https://www.eluniversal.com.mx/metropoli/cdmx/asi-fue-el-desabasto-de-gasolina-en-el-2019 Consultado 17 de enero de 2022.

[31] *Dinero imagen,* ¿Cuánto subieron los combustibles entre 2013 y 2018? "El sexenio de Enrique Peña Nieto cerró con un aumento de entre 78 a 86% los precios de las gasolinas Magna, Premium y diesel." en https://www.dineroenimagen.com/economia/cuanto-subieron-los-combustibles-entre-2013-y-2018/105113 Consultado el 25 de noviembre de 2021.

[32] Página del Gobierno de México. Precios promedio diarios de gasolina regular, Premium, diésel y mezcla mexicana del 12 al 18 de febrero de 2022 en https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/FMfcgzGmvBjsksPcfbbBlPDRDTGdXNGX?projector=1. Consultado el 18 de febrero de 2022.

[33] Porcentaje elaborado por Dra. Irene Sánchez G. UAM-X, con datos proporcionado por la autora del artículo.

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Gráfico 3: Comparativo Porcentajes aumento de precio en gasolinas

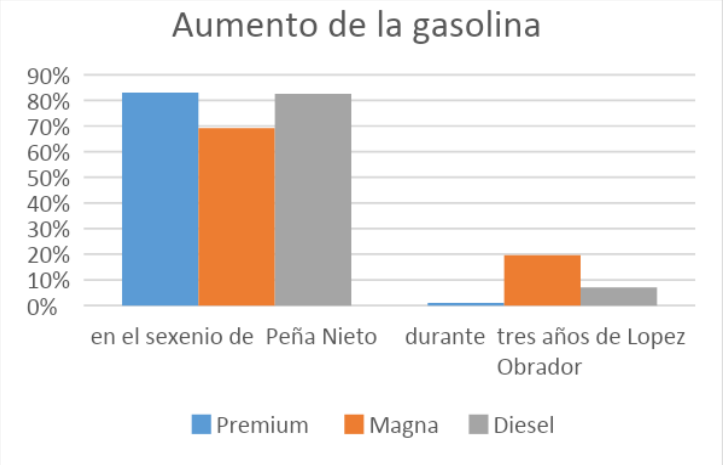

Gráfico elaborado por Irene Sánchez con datos de la autora

Otro parámetro de inflación es la paridad del peso frente al dólar estadounidense. En el periodo gubernamental de Enrique Peña Nieto, el tipo de cambio en 2012 era de 12.92 unidades por dólar, lo que significa una depreciación de 56.81 por ciento. A la salida de su administración, el tipo de cambio se ubicó en 20.26 pesos por dólar.[34] Por otra parte, en el registro del Banco de México (BdeM), cuando el gobierno actual tomó el mando, el primero de diciembre de 2018, el tipo de cambio interbancario se ubicaba en 20.30 pesos por dólar, y ahora se ubica en 19.80 unidades, es decir, tras dos años se ha apreciado aproximadamente 2.5 por ciento.[35] El precio del dólar fluctúa a diario por pérdidas y revaluación del peso, al día de hoy 19 de febrero de 2022, el tipo de cambio interbancario se ubica en 20.25 pesos por un dólar y a la venta 20.48 pesos por dólar.[36] Dicho sea de paso, la fluctuación se debe a problemas internos y externos, y la pandemia es un factor importante, no solo en México sino en el mundo.

Concluimos que el discurso periodístico también es político, en razón de que tiene su postura ideológica frente a los acontecimientos y a lo dicho por los políticos comenzando por el presidente de México, por los dirigentes partidistas, por los directivos de organizaciones, entre otros. El discurso periodístico mantiene su objetividad en cierta medida, pero la subjetividad de quien escribe emerge de una u otra forma, ya sea en la posición donde se coloca la nota; también las editoriales toman una postura ya sea a favor de las medidas gubernamentales tomadas frente al crimen organizado, o en contra o simplemente es neutral.

López Obrador sabía que había mucha corrupción en Pemex, por ello en su campaña política prometió acabar con la corrupción, que fue creciendo como una bola de nieve al infiltrarse el narco.

> Los contratistas de Pemex aprenden pronto cuáles son los fetiches de los directores, qué les gusta comer, beber y cuáles son sus ambiciones; el tipo de joyas y relojería que prefieren los líderes sindicales, sus esposas e hijos […] Los contratistas son cómplice, encubridores, compinches. Y en el estrecho mundo petrolero nadie delata —al menos de frente— aunque ellos permanentemente libran una guerra intestina con golpes bajos de todo tipo. El mundo de los proveedores es un nido de connivencias que a la petrolera ya lo costó fraudes, quebrantos, saqueos y la infiltración del crimen organizado. (Pérez, 2019 p. 348)

La petrolera está infiltrada por los expresidentes, como dijo AMLO, por los líderes sindicales que gustan de llevar una vida de millonarios como Carlos Romero Deschamps, directivos, caso Emilio Lozoya quien recibió sobornos; de los intendentes que dan la salida a las pipas, en suma de los huachicoleros de dentro de la empresa y de fuera, tal como lo denunciara López Obrador. El tema tabú del que no habla AMLO es el de los narcos, para quienes el negocio de los hidrocarburos les deja mayores ganancias que la misma droga (anfetaminas, cocaína, marihuana, etc.). No solo roban los hidrocarburos y la venden, sino también "cobran piso" es decir los derechos por vender legalmente la gasolina que los franquicitarios compran ilegalmente.

> …Pemex dejó de ser paraestatal y devino "empresa productiva del Estado". Los Zetas y el resto de cárteles eran ya la principal competencia para las gasolineras mexicanas y extranjeras que —tras la liberación del mercado de refinados derivada de la reforma energética— comenzaron a instalar expendios. (Pérez, 2019 p. 352).

[34] José Antonio Rivera. (29/11/2018) "El sexenio de Peña Nieto y la caída del peso" en https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/mercados/El-sexenio-de-Pena-Nieto-y-la-caida-del-peso-20181129-0091.html Consultado el 12 de enero de 2022.

[35] Carbajal, Braulio. (12/07/2020). Peso sufre menos con AMLO que con Calderón o Peña, en La Jornada https://www.jornada.com.mx/notas/2020/12/07/economia/peso-sufre-menos-con-amlo-que-con-calderon-o-pena/ Consultado el 12 de enero de 2022.

[36] Tipo de cambio peso-dólar en https://www.eldolar.info/es-MX/mexico/dia/hoy Consultado el 19 de enero de 2022.

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El cártel de Los Zetas, el Cártel de Sinaloa, el Cártel Jalisco, Cártel Nueva Generación, el Cártel del Golfo y la Familia Michoacana están al frente del mercado negro de los carburantes. Esto significa que con los años se ha ido perfilando un poder ilícito del cual nadie menciona ni AMLO, ni los opositores. A pregunta expresa del reportero Antonio López del periódico *La Razón de México,* si no tenía miedo con respecto a combatir la corrupción en Pemex, López Obrador respondió "*tengo miedo, pero no soy cobarde*" (*15/01/2019)*. El implícito se relaciona con el crimen organizado que denominamos de abajo, porque también están los delincuentes de cuello blanco para referirse a expresidentes, directivos como Emilio Lozoya Austin, que actualmente se encuentra en la cárcel.

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Free & Fair Election & Representative Government in Nigeria: Some Legal Options

By Michael Eyo
Obong University

Abstract- The rights of individuals in any democratic society are guaranteed in constitution and the various International Conventions on Civil and Political Rights instrument including the right to vote and be voted for in an election. Free and fair election means that every adult citizen of 18 years and above has the right to be registered as a voter, right to vote and stand for election, right to become a member of any political party, right to express his opinion, move freely and the right to associate and assemble with others, and should not be deprived of these rights except under the prescription of the law or in the execution of the judgment of court of competent jurisdiction. This study proposed that in-spite of legal instruments, elections in most countries of the world are often marred by violence, imposition of candidates, impunity, violation of fundamental freedoms and other forms of illegalities perpetuated by political actors. This study seeks to examine these electoral malfeasances and proffer some legal options that promote free and fair election in Nigeria. The work adopts the Doctrinal Research Method which seeks to analyze the concept, free and fair election. Materials for this work were sourced from secondary sources.

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Free & Fair Election & Representative Government in Nigeria: Some Legal Options

Michael Eyo

Abstract- The rights of individuals in any democratic society are guaranteed in constitution and the various International Conventions on Civil and Political Rights instrument including the right to vote and be voted for in an election. Free and fair election means that every adult citizen of 18 years and above has the right to be registered as a voter, right to vote and stand for election, right to become a member of any political party, right to express his opinion, move freely and the right to associate and assemble with others, and should not be deprived of these rights except under the prescription of the law or in the executionof the judgment of court of competent jurisdiction. This study proposed that in-spite of legal instruments, elections in most countries of the world are often marred by violence, imposition of candidates, impunity, violation of fundamental freedoms and other forms of illegalities perpetuated by political actors. This study seeks to examine these electoral malfeasances and proffer some legal options that promote free and fair election in Nigeria. The work adopts the Doctrinal Research Method which seeks to analyze the concept, free and fair election. Materials for this work were sourced from secondarysources. Findings from the work show that it is not because there are no laws to ensure free and fair and indeed reprimand perpetrators of election malpractices, but because most countries of the world have weak institutions and strong individuals who manipulate the electoral process in their favour with impunity particularly in countries often afflicted by endemic corruption. The work recommends that Nigeria should build strong institutions, adopt electronic voting system, criminalize election malpractices and corruption and ensure independence of the INEC and the judiciary, as panacea for free and fair elections in the country.

I. Introduction

Democracy, to large extent, is synonymous with representative government, usually instituted through free and fair elections as guaranteed by the electoral law, the constitution of the country concerned and the requirements of International Law. Election, therefore, is a democratic channel for political recruitment, an opportunity for popular participation of the people in the governance process which offers political parties ample opportunity to mobilize support to form the government for effective service delivery and improvement in the standard of living of the people.

Election may make or mar a democratic setting; make democracy, where there is a non-partisan and impartial body saddled with the responsibility to manage and conduct elections[1] based on universal human suffrage, where the citizens are free to vote and be voted for, where elections are held at regular intervals in accordance with electoral law and the constitution mar democracy if it is characterized by fraud, violence, suppression of fundamental rights and freedom, fear and intimidation, where political parties are formed along ethnic lines that where the electoral system does not reflect the geo-political environment and other forms of electoral malpractices which are illegal acts done with corrupt fraudulent or sinister intentions to influence election in favour of a candidate[2]. In other words, where the country is ethnically segmented and the major political parties derive their membership and supports mainly from the major ethnic groups in their regions where non-indigenes are discriminated against by being barred from voting thus excluding them from participation in the political process[3].

As succinctly put by Schedlers[4] elections malpractice which the author tag menu ofmanipulations range from vote buying and selling falsification of elections results, ballot box and ballot paper snatching, violence. Nay election that lacks credibility could certainly lead to voter's apathy and crisis of confidence in the declared process. Anti-democratic practices such as falsification of voters register, under- age voting, snatching of ballot boxes, denial of voting rights to qualified physically challenged persons and deliberate falsification of voters' figures to favour a particular candidate have greatly bastardized the democratic process. Consequently, political leaders who emerged from such flawed and jaundiced election conduct themselves as hirelings, seeking only self and interest of their god-fathers and cronies which further impoverish and subjugate the already poverty stricken and dejected voters and depleting the already depleted and ailing economy. Election malpractice is a process by which rules and regulations that governs the conduct of

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[1] Lain McLean and Astair McMillan *Concise Dictionary of Politics* (London: Oxford University Press, 2009) P.165.

[2] B.O. Nwabueze.

[3] E.E. Osaghae, *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Indepnece (Ibadan: John Archers Publishers Ltd, 2011). P.9.*

[4] A. Schedler A, Election without Democracy: the menu of manipulation, in Journal of Democracy Vol. 13 No. 12, 2002.

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elections are manipulated in favour of some persons to the detriment of others[5].

Given the latest scenario, can election marred by these flaws ever enthrone a truly representative government? What are those critical factors that make for free andfair election? And how can free and fair election be sustained in a democraticsetting? These and other questions are what this work seeks to provide answers to. This work adopted the Conceptual or Doctrinal theoretical framework which is based on concept or abstract ideas and seeks to analyze these ideas, words, concepts, doctrine with a view to developing new ideas or further establishing or re-interpreting existing ones[6].

The study adopted the Game theoretical framework as enunciated by John Von Neumann and John Nash and Oskar Morgentem[7]. This theory involves game which derives from the actions of two or more players (politicians, election managers and the voters) who adopt strategies to favour them. They derive benefits (payoffs) if their strategies succeed and assume authority to allocate resources in the political system using available information or guidelines such as electoral law, and the Constitution. Free and fair election obtains where the guidelines are not manipulated, there is an unbiased team of managers of the electoral process, the electorate are free to compete with one another and the results reflect the true positions in the field[8].

This study proposes that representative democracy is enthroned where there is free,fair, credible and competitive elections.

Consequently, materials for this paper were sourced from primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include the laws on the particular issue of research as well as decisions of superior courts of record on the same issue including but not limited to the constitution and cases. While secondary sources involve books, journals, seminar papers, workshops, reports of panel, newspaper and internet materials[9].

II. Conceptual Clarifications

a) Fair and Free Election

The legitimacy of any government in a democratic dispensation is predicated upon the general will of the people, usually expressed through the electoral process. In other words, the people, particularly, those of voting age, usually 18 years and above should be free to participate in the entire process ranging from belonging to any political party of their choice, should be card carrying voter, political party should be protected by law.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights[10], has specifically provided for the right of all adult citizens[11], irrespective of sex, religion or ethnic background, to participate in governance of his country directly or indirectly by freely choosing their representatives, voting in election by secret ballot, the right to be voted for and express their candid opinions.

Free and fair election is that election that expresses the will and opinion of the people, an election in which the voting population (electorate) has the opportunity to freely choose their representatives without fear of intimidation in election conducted at interval and vote cast in secret and based on universal suffrage. These opportunities or rights are only protected in representative government that is responsive and accountable to those who elected it. For an election to be free and fair, the need for the provision of and guarantee of certain fundamental freedoms such as right of assembly, speech, expression, movement, association is unarguably inevitable. This has been ably captured by Diamond[12] (1995) that free and fair election should comply with three requirements viz; periodic competition among individual and groups, high and inclusive level of political participation in the process by the electorate and substantial degree of freedom as well as sustainedcompliance with electoral Rules or Acts.

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria[13], provides that every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impact ideas and information without interference.

In the American political process, ten critical elements to free and fair election include but not limited to credible electoral administration; effective oversight of

[5] S.I. Ebirin The effect of Electoral Malpractices in Nigeria's Democratic Consolidation (1999-2003 in Journal of PublicPolicy and Administration Research, Vol. 4 No. 2.

[6] O. Ben Igwenyi, *Practical Text on Law Research Methodology* (Abakaliki: Omega print Media and Publishing Co 2016) p.7.

[7] J. Neuman, Vaud, et el ated in S.B. Vatma (ed) Modern Political Theory S.B Varma (ed) (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 2009).

[8] Ibid.

[9] A. Schedler Elections without Democracy: The Menu of manipulation, in Journal of Democracy, Vol. 13. No. 12., 2002.

[10] United Nation Declaration of Human Rights Resolution 219A (III), 10 December, 1948.

[11] UN International Covenant and Civil Rights, Resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December, 1966.

[12] L.L. Diamond. Politics of Developing countries: Comparing experiences with Democracy (Boulder: Leynne Lienner, 1995).

[13] Section 39 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

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electoral process; informed and active citizenry; representative and competitive multi-party system; effective governance by elected officials and strong institutions, inclusion of women and disadvantaged groups[14]; effective transfer of powers through election at regular intervals; consensus and confidence buildingand sustainable local engagement.

This is aptly captured by the Inter American Commission on Human Rights, when it states that "to verify with respect to these rights, whether holding of periodic, genuine elections, with universal, equal and secret suffrage, takes place within the framework of the necessary constitutional guarantees so that the results represent the popular will, including the possibility that the voters could, if necessary, effectively take appeal of an electoral process that they consider fraudulent, defective and irregular or that ignores the right to access, under general conditions of equality, to the public function of their country[15].

In Nigeria, free and fair election further entails respect for human rights, Rule of Law, acceptance of results of credible election by political parties and individuals. For instance, in Constitutional Rights and Civil Liberties Organization v. Nigeria[16] The African Commission on Human and People's Right rejected the annulment of the 1993 Presidential Election in Nigeria in which M.K.O. Abiola[17] won by very wide margin as well as the ousting of the court jurisdiction to entertain the objection that arose there from.

Free and fair election, invariably, provides the pivot on which good governance, political stability, economic development and prosperity of the society revolve.

b) Representative Democracy

Democracy implies that the ultimate authority of any political system is vested or resides in the people. The people have the sovereign power which is expressed in the constitution and expressed through the elected officials. Bryce[18] sees democracy as the right of the people expressing their sovereign will through the votes or the rule by the majority who determine the aims and aspirations of the government and monitor and check the exercise of authority by elected officials. The most popular definition of democracy is that given by former Americanpresident Abraham Lincoln who sees it as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. Whatever perspective the definition may take, it is pertinent to note that democracy signifies constitutional or representative government in which every adult participate in the political process and decision making through elected officials periodically selected by the people to represent them at policy and decision making levels.

In most developing countries, representation is usually territorial in which the electorate in the political system are grouped into electoral constituencies. Each constituency elect representative who represent them in the legislative and executive arms of the government. Representative democracy is therefore the form of government in which the governing officials are elected or the representatives of the different electoral constituencies elected by the constituents to participate in the legislative and executive processes in their legislature and executive arms of government consult, express their views and demands and account to them at regular intervals.

The term government relies almost exclusively on the power of the electorate and treats their representative as their agents or messengers, who instead of using their own judgment, must only translate the judgment of their constituents into concrete policies and action.[19]

Put differently, the representatives take input demands/support from the constituents to the government and participate in processing those demands and support and get the results in the form of output (polies and decision) which they feed back to the constituents[20].

III. Electoral Malpractices

Scholars seeking to define and categorize practices that undermine electoral process have generally used one of two basic approaches termed inclusive and restrictive. They conceived inclusive (Fraud, Malpractice and Manipulation) to be as broad as possible, no matter the imprecision. Some writers in this category situate their definitions on normative findings; that electoral wrongdoing violates domestic norms or internationally accepted standard for free and fair elections.

Electoral malpractices which are either pre-election, election period and post-election period involve

[14] A. Azocar , V. Chile, Report No. 137/99 case 11,863, December 27, 1999.

[15] J. Courtney, "International Law in J. C. Courtney (ed) Registering Voters: Comparative Perspective" (Havard:The Centre for International Affairs, 1991) pp.1-2.

[16] See African Commission on Human and People's Right Report No. 10293 (1998) para. 47.

[17] M.K.O. Abiola, who was assumed to have won the 1993 presidential general election under what was seen as thefreest and fairest election in Nigeria.

[18] J. Bryce (1921) Modern Democracies New York: Oxford University Press.

[19] O.P. Guaba, (2007) An Introduction to Political Theory New Delhi: MacMillan Ltd, p.432.

[20] D. Easton. An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems: World Politics, Cambridge University Press, 1957).

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"the manipulation of rules, the manipulation of voters and manipulation of voting[21]. Manipulation is either of rules, electoral law are distorted so as to favour a contestant in the elections for example when the rule "prevent certain political persons from contesting elections, or when large sectors of the adult population are excluded from voting", or manipulation of voters to distort voter's preferences and sway preferences for the favourite. The first one involves "illicit forms of tactics that are deceptive and that violate campaign finance laws orsevere bias media coverage of the election". The second form, consist of alteration of the manner of preferences are expressed at the polling station through vote buying or intimidation with the aim of increasing the vote of a specific political candidate. Voting manipulation or electoral maladministration, involves ballot – box stuffing, mis-reporting, "under-provision of voting facilities in opposition strongholds, lack of transparency in the organization of the election, bias in theway electoral dispute are adjudicated in the court.

Electoral malpractices are undoubtedly an impediment to the democratization process. This is especially true in countries that have scaled the hurdle of transitioning from authorization to democratic regimes. Having gone through the bitter experience of electoral corruption since 1999, there are a number of ways Nigeria has been affected or will be affected by the problems created by the conduct of elections devoid of transparency and these include: -

Electoral malpractices tend to accelerate the level of voter apathy in a population. People may refrain from voting in subsequent elections if previous or current polls are 'won' through rigging, false declaration of losers as winners, and bribing of electoral officials. In the 2011 general elections in Nigeria, the 26 April 2011 Gubernatorial/State Houses of Assembly polls had a very low voter turnout because of the real or perceived duplicity that had taken place in the 9 and 16 April National Assembly and Presidential elections respectively. The general feeling among Nigerian voters was that their votes were not going to count. Their fear was that whether they voted or failed to vote, 'winners' would emerge through 'politricks'[22]. This trend is dangerous for the maturity of Nigeria's democracy.

In a democratsing society, frequent recourse by politicians to fraud to win elections defeats the raison d'etre of elections as the basis for legitimizing the occupation of political office, and the exercise of political power and authority that accompanies it. Elected political office-holders who won election through rigging will, forinstance, be lethargic about accountability to the electorate. This results from the notion that they bought their way through with money, were not voted into office. This tendency illustrates why 'the much anticipated "democracy dividend", whether construed as improvements in governance, stability, or economic welfare, has not materialized' since 1999. There has therefore been concerted grumbling among Nigerian voicing their dissatisfaction with the performance of their elected public office – holders, as evident in the 9 January 2012 mass agitation to protest the hike in fuel prices by the administration led by President Jonathan.

The perception of political office as an investment by politicians with the hope to recoup once they win elections and enter office[23], heighten the tendency for larceny from the public treasury. It follows that democracy dividends can never be delivered to the electorate, because money meant for public projects is diverted into private pockets as rent, pre-bends and rewards to 'godfathers'.

Continous reliance on corrupt practices such as rigging, intimidation and violence to obtain victory in elections can ignite political protest. Such protests can either rapidly or slowly degenerate and metamorphose into full-fledged anarchy. This is what has heightened level of violence and terrorism that exacerbated insecurity in Nigeria.

Furthermore, where elections are fraught with malpractices, the value of political parties as vehicles for peaceful transfer of power is also defeated. This is always the case where there exists a strong ruling party whose control of the system weakens other opposition parties because of its political might. At a point, members of these opposition parties cross carpet to join the ruling party. This trend makes politicians evermore less principled in their political conduct because the obsession to acquire political power in order to amass illegal wealth outweighs all other considerations, including integrity and reputation of parties. It suffices to reiterate that electoral malpractices are antithetical to democratic ethics; they emasculate the very foundation on which democracy is established and diminish the prospects of moulding the framework for its workability for in all democratic regimes the principal officers of government should be chosen through competitive elections in which the bulk of the population can participate.

IV. Some Critical Legal Options in Free and Fair Election

The right to vote demonstrates that eligible voters have unfettered freedom to maketheir choice and vote for the candidate or political party so chosen without intimidation or fear; parties registered under the

[21] S. Birch. Electoral Corruption Institute of Democracy and Conflict Resolution (IDCR) briefing paper INP –Content/upload 5/9/20.

[22] R. Lustig Elections and Politricks: Nigeria's Style in New Statesman of 10th December, 2008.

[23] J. U. Illo "Political finance regulations in Nigeria: The Legal Framework in N. Obnorah (ed) Political Finance and Democracy in Nigeria: Prospects and Structure for Reforms, Centre for Law and Social Administration, Lagos.

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law have equal right to contest election and campaign for support in their electoral constituencies, hold rallies, meetings and debate; individuals of voting age can register and vote, the votes also count. Free and fair election means every adult person is free to choose his representatives, votes in election by secret ballot, has equal opportunity to be candidate and is entitled to his view on election matters.

Consequently, the critical issues or options in free and fair election involve the electoral system, electoral law, the presence of an impartial/independent electoral body, respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, the presence of multi-party system, the absence of electoral violence, the presence of women in politics and election litigations.

a) Electoral System

Free and fair election is achieved through proportional representative system in which seat are won based on the electoral strength of the party. Electoral constituency is determined by the equality of the voting power.

However, in creating constituency, the electoral body takes into account the presence of means of communication, the topography of the area and the population. This is to ensure that no segment of the population is disenfranchised or discriminated against either on the bases of race, sex, or religion. Effective representation in democratic setting is guaranteed where the state is delineated into electoral constituencies depending on electoral system inuse. For instance, Nigeria being a multi-party system, is divided into 109 senatorial districts for equal representation of the states, 360 House of Representatives constituencies based on population. The 36 states of the federation are also delineated into a number state constituencies according to the population, all geared towards the expression of the people's will and ensuring that the different segments of the country and states are not disenfranchised.

The US congress is made up of 100 senatorial districts, two senators per state chosen by popular votes for six years. The House of Representatives in the US is composed of 436 constituencies elected for two years according to population. This is in contrast to the senate that has equal representative[24].

In the Uk, the Upper House or House of Lords is appointive, restricted specifically to the Nobles and Peers based on hereditary. It consists of 900 members. The House of Commons or the Lower House has 635 constituencies elected at a irregular interval, that is without specific tenure. This is because a government that suffers a vote of no confidence in the parliament may be dissolved irrespective of the time it has been in power after being elected[25].

b) Electoral Law

Every person with the right to vote also has the right to stand for elective office hence, the need to put in place and maintain voters register with the names ofall eligible voters to prevent electoral abuse and fraud by individuals, special interest groups, political parties and government. This is widely accepted as an authoritative and legitimate means of ascertaining the voting population of the country. The voter's register is updated at regular intervals preferable, yearly to avoid manipulations. Beside the voter's register should be published to enable errors detected to be corrected.

In Nigeria the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has the responsibility to maintain and update register of voters on continuous basis. The register contains the names of persons entitled to vote in Federal, State and Local Government or Area Council elections.

Furthermore, a person shall be qualified to be registered as voter if he is a citizen of Nigeria, has attained the age of 18 years, is an ordinary resident, works in, originates from the local government or area council or wards covered by the registration center, present himself to the registration officer of the commission for registration as a voter, and is not subject to any level of incapacity to vote under any law, rule or regulation in force in Nigeria.

Proper updating of voters' register yields confidence and ensures free and fair election, strives where electoral law promotes the right of the electorate to freely choose their representatives in election conducted on the basis of universal adult suffrage, secret balloting and at regular intervals. For instance, in Nigeria, the Governor, and the state Houses of Assembly are conducted every 4 years. In the United Kingdom, it is conducted every 5 years, in the U.S.A[26] every 2 years for the members of the congress and 4 years for the president.

Furthermore, Sections 47, 48, 49 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria[27] provides that there shall be a bicameral legislature (National Assembly) made up of the Senate and House Representatives, the Senate shall consist of 3 senators from each state and 1 from the Federal CapitalTerritory. The senate shall be made up of 109 members, while the House of Representatives shall be 360 members.

[24] A. A Appondoria, the Substance of politics (New Delhi: np, 1994) pp. 332-334.

[25] M. J. Eyo, Groundwork of political Science (Port Harcourt: Publishers, 2016), pp.

[26] G.S. Godwin- Gill, *"Free and Fair Elections (Geneva: Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2006)"*, P.114.

[27] Section 7, 48, 49 1999 Constitution of the FRN as amended.

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c) *The Right to vote*

Here, all adult citizens have the right to participate in governance through election, i.e the right to vote and be voted for guaranteed by the law, the right tojoin any political party of their choice, to hold opinion without interference, seek, receive and impart information and make their choice, right to move freely for campaign for election, campaign for a chosen political party or candidate; right to ventilate their views, rights to security of life and property, right of protection by the law and remedy for violation of their rights.

These rights should not be restricted except as provided by the law and necessary in the interest of national security, public order, protection of public health or consistent with state obligations under International law or in execution of judgment of the court. No party or candidate shall engage in violence, thuggery, they shall willingly accept the result of free and fair electionand respect the rights of others.

Every adult citizen from the age of 18 years has the right to vote in election, without fear, intimidation or discrimination on the basis of colour, sex, religion, or ethnic group. To achieve free and fair election, there should be impartial and non-discriminatory procedures for registration of voters. Granting of the right to vote instills confidence in the electorate. Some countries base such rights on a number of factors including but not limited to age, residency, tax and citizenship. In Nigeria the voting age is 18 years and above. In an attempt to widen franchise to include citizens in the diaspora, Nigeria is about to relax discrimination based residency.[28] The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, provides that all adult Nigerians are eligible to vote, without emphasis on residency.

d) *Presence of an impartial/Independent Electoral Body*

There should be an independence body to regulate electoral process including the political parties which should always demonstrate the readiness to accept both the process and outcomes of the election. The presence of an independent judiciary is key to free and fair election. The electoral body should be made up of men of impeccable character and integrity and ever ready to be impartial in their actions. Nations have setup independent bodies to handle elections, the result of which determine whether the body is fair, neutral, independent and impartial, or has the tradition of integrity and charged with the function of organizing, preparing and conducting election. In Nigeria, section 153(f) of the 1999 Constitution as amended provides for the Establishment of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) a body corporate with perpetual succession which can sue[29] and be sued, charged with the responsibility of conducting elections, voters and civic education, promoting knowledge of sound democratic election, processing and conducting any referendum pursuant to the provision of the 1999 constitution or any law or Act of the National Assembly. Furthermore, section 1 of the Electoral Act, 2010 also spells out the Independent National Electoral Commission as a legitimate body to conduct and manage elections in Nigeria[30].

e) *Respect for Fundamental Rights and Freedoms*

It is the responsibility of the state to respect and guarantee the observance of human rights of individual citizens. Consequently, the government should ensure that freedom of movement, assembly, association and expression are respected particularly in the context of political rallies and meetings, parties andcandidates are free to communicate their views to the electorate and enjoy equality of access to state media, state and public media should avoid bias and remain non-partisan in their reportage.

State should ensure that political parties and candidates enjoy reasonable opportunities to present the electoral platforms, the principle of secret balloting is respected and voters are able to cast their ballot freely without fear orintimidation.

Again, the state should guarantee the safety of both political parties and individuals, guide against all forms of election fraud or other illegality, that the integrity of the process is guarantee, that counting of ballot is undertaken by trained personnel subject however to independent monitoring and impartial verification. There should be transparency and accountability of the process of election making use of party agents and independent election monitors or observers.

Free rallies, absence of violence and intimidation, free access to public media, availability of code of conduct in which the candidates agree to adhere to prescribed rules to forestall violence and acrimony and communicate with each other, monitoring of election results, secret balloting and avoidance of double voting should not be encouraged to ensure free and fair election.

Besides fundamental rights and freedoms, rule of law is an important ingredientfor improvement of free and fair elections. The rule of law here means the supremacy of the law i.e the observance and supremacy of civil law; the equality before the law i.e equality of citizens before the law and not favoritism; all actions/policies must be according to the law, respect for human right and the institutionalization of constitutional and democratic governance

In Amakiri v. Iwowri[31] in the words of Allagoa, Ag. C.J. of rivers state, the rule of law in practical terms

[28] Section 25 1999 Constitution of the FRN as amended.
[29] Section 153 (f) of the 1999 Constitution of the FRN as amended.
[30] Section 1 Electoral Act LFN 2010.
[31] (1974) IRSLR 5.

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means no person, however highly placed, is beyond the law and it implies due consideration for other and a true fear of God. The courts are watchdogs of these rights and the sanctuary of the oppressed and will spare no pains in tracking down the arbitrary use of power where such cases are brought before the court… the fruits reaped by respect for the Rule of Law is stability, and efficient. Persons in authority and government functionaries should by their good example command and not demand respect.

Furthermore, in Pats-Acholonu JCA, in Guardian Newspaper Ltd. V.A.G. Federation[32] defines the rule of law when he said that the federal military government is not above the law. Until such a law is abolished or repealed, it must abide by it.This is part of the Rule of law. It must therefore conduct its affairs according to the law. That will bring certainty and order.

f) Presence of Multi-Party System

Democracy is more sustainable in a multi-party system, that is where there are more than 2 political parties. This is to ensure that everybody of voting age is given the opportunity to vote and belong to any political party of his own choice. Nigeria and the USA, for instance, are multi-party system. At present Nigeria has about 66 political parties with different ideological inclinations. This avail the various rural communities and areas to register and belong to those political parties that capture the aspiration of the local communities.

The party system may be categorized according to the number, nature, characteristics, functions or ideological orientation of the political parties operating in the political system. Some are classified as one-party, two-party or multi-party system.

A multi-party system is one in which there are more than two political parties for the interest of individuals, cultural groups, organization, socio-economic groups that prefer direct but distinct political representation for programme of their own specific objectives rather than join a large coalition of many interest. Thus there may be separate parties for peasants, minority, religious, occupational groups. Multi-party system is consistent with democratic-principle of allowing the citizens the widest possible choice of alternatives in the realm ofpublic policy.

The multi-party reflects almost the entire units, interest, groups, sections of the country in the legislature making them have that sense of belonging for having their view, interest expressed and realized; multi-party system does not easily degenerate into authoritarian or dictatorship. No single party is so powerful to dictate to other parties; it makes for compromise and/or coalition which enable the system to maintain some form of stability; multi-party system is ideal where proportional representation as a method of representation, is adopted.

g) Absence of Electoral Violence

State must ensure peaceful conduct of elections as well as ensure that every party candidate and voter enjoys equal security and steps should be put in place to checkmate electoral violence and thuggery. State should ensure violation of human rights and complaints relating to election are determined promptly either by Election Appeal Tribunal or the regular court of competent jurisdiction.

For any election to be free and fair, there should be some mechanism to properly deal with disputes arising there from, particularly those bothering on substantial compliance with the electoral law and the constitution.

For instance, in Nigeria, the Electoral Act provides that any person who snatches or destroys any election material commits an offence[33], any person who directly or indirectly makes use of or threaten to make use of force, violence or restrain inflicts or threaten to inflicts himself with injuries, damages,harm or abduct or impede free use of voters, commits an offence[34].

An election may be questioned on any of the following grounds: that is to say that a person whose election is questioned was, at the time of the election, not qualified to contest; that the election was invalid by reason of corrupt practices or non-compliance with the provisions of Electoral Act; that the respondent was not duly elected by majority of lawful votes cast at the election; or that the petitioner or its candidate was validly nominated but was not lawfully excluded from the election[35].

Where an election tribunal or court nullifies an election on the ground that the person who obtained the highest votes at the election was not qualified to contest the election or that the election was married by substantial irregularities or non—compliance with the provision of the act, the Election Tribunal or Court shall not declare the person with the second highest votes or any other person as elected, but shall order a fresh election[36].

h) Women in polities

It has been generally observed that in most countries of the world, women are not fully integrated into political, economic and education sectors against the spirit and letter or Article 7 of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Discrimination Against women[37] which provides that nations should take all

[32] (1995) 5 NWLR PT. 398. P 103 AT 741 CA.

[33] Section Electoral Acts, 2016.
[34] Section 131 (a) (b) (c), Electoral Act, 2010.
[35] Section 138 (a) (b) (c), (d) Electoral Act, 2010.
[36] Section 14 (2) Electoral Act, 2010.
[37] UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Dissemination Against Women, Report 1992.

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appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in political and public life, ensure gender equality, guarantee them the right to vote and be eligible to stand for election into any office, the right to participate in the policy formulation and implementation in government and hold and perform public functions at all levels.

Furthermore, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995[38] is pushing for support for the rights of the women to fully and actively participate in policy machinery of the nation. Nigeria has since keyed into this by adopting the affirmative action that makes it mandatory for 35 percent of seats in the legislature and executive position to be set aside for women.

For instance, in Argentina, the women are given preferential treatment in the government. For instance in Maria Marciadri Morni v. Argentina[39].

An Argentine political party failed to allocate offices to women as prescribed by law. This was challenged in the law court. The court held that it was binding responsibility of all public institution including political parties to provide adequately and respect the right to vote and be voted for make any election freeand fair.

Furthermore, in Nigeria in Wilson v. A.G Bendel State[40] Nnaemeka-Agu JSC stated thus; courts have a duty to protect vested rights, as otherwise lawlessness will reign. So they have always taken the view that any attempt by a competent authority to take away citizens' vested rights must be done in strict compliance with the law and laid down procedures therefore.

i) Political parties, Campaign and Political Education

Free and fair election is ultimately predicated on the nature of election campaign. For credible election to strive, such fundamental freedoms as right of assembly movement, association and expression must be guaranteed during campaigns. There should be free access to the media particularly public media, the government should offer equal opportunity to parties, candidates and supporters to be protected such that at the end of the day, voter cast their votes in a free and fair manner in secret without fear of intimidation and where international observer groups are handy to observe every relevant aspect of organization and conduct of the election based on national laws. Campaign should be devoid of intimidation, violence, brutality, repletion and other forms of illegality.

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria[41], provides that only political parties registered with INEC shall canvas for votes in any election in Nigeria. The programmes of the political parties shall conform with the stipulations by INEC and the provision of chapter 2 of the 1999 Contribution of the Federal Republic on the fundamental objectives and directives principles of state policy[42]. Similarly, the Electoral Act, 2010[43] provides that the political association registered with INEC shall be regarded as a political party. The commission also has the power to deregister any political party on the grounds of bridge of the requirements for registration.

Political party funding has also been regulated. Consequently, any political party that keeps fund or get funds outside Nigeria shall commit an offence punishable under the law. Electoral Act has also put ceiling to funding of election by political parties. For the presidential election, the ceiling is 1 billion naira, for governors 200 million Naira, senate 40 million naira, House of Representatives 20 million naira and state assembly 10 million naira[44].

Political education involves the use of poster, radio and television programmes, flyers, and pamphlet should be widely circulated on the rights of the voters, the process of election and abuse and the consequences thereof. This is central to free and fair election to be achieve.

j) Election Litigation

In every election process there are usually complaints and contention over election results by the competing political parties. In other to insure free and fair election, there must be an independent judiciary or tribunal to hear and determine the veracity of such complaints. Where this is not available, election cannot be said to be fair.

The Electoral Act[45], provides for petition against any election. Such petition shall be handled by election tribunals and the regular courts. For any election to be credible, the court must be independent with firm and impartial judges.

V. Conclusion

Representative democracy is a constitutional government in which officials are elected on the consent of the people and accountable to the people and serve as trustees of the power vested in the people for the protection of their rights, liberty and property. It involves political inclusiveness and periodic elections.

[38] Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Report 1995.
[39] Argentine Law Report, case 11.307, Report no. 102/1999.
[40] (1985) NWLR PT. 4, P. 572 AT 654 SC.
[41] Section 221 of the 1999 Constitution of the FRN as amended.
[42] Section 79 of Electoral Act 2010.
[43] Section 78 (1) of Electoral Act 2010.
[44] Section 91 (2) (3) (4) Electoral Acts, 2010.
[45] Section 133 Electoral Act, 2010.

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Free and fair election is the only avenue to sustain democracy. Where election is marred by violence, brutality, suppression, snatching of election materials, the use of force and discrimination on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion, there is no secret balloting, universal suffrage is not upheld, there is no free and fair.

Elections in Nigeria are usually characterized by malpractices and scarcityreflected the will of the people. This negative phenomenon has dampened the emergence of an enduring democracy in Nigeria. The voting system in Nigeria does not guarantee free and fair election due to inherent weakness such as rigging, falsification of result, multiple voting, underage voting, electoral violence often manipulated by the politicians to their own advantage. Lack of credibility during election has ultimately led to voter's apathy and lack of confidence in the electoral process by the people.

Beside, where there is one political party which is invariably in government where the electoral body is made up of corrupt and partial officials and where there are flagrant violations of fundamental rights and freedom, and disrespect for court order, free and fair election is a far cry and the stability of the society is seriously threatened and at the verge of extinction.

VI. Recommendations

We wish to recommend that in order to promote free and fair election andsustain democratic ideals:

- The government should adopt steps to guarantee freedom of instructional framework to conduct periodic free and fair election in observing with their obligation under international law.
- The sitting government should establish effective, impartial and non- discriminatory institutions, procedure and clear criteria for the registration of voters, based on age, citizenship, residence.
- Provide for formation of viable political parties with national outlook.
- Regulate the funding and electoral campaign fund of political parties,
- Ensure the separation of the party from the state and establish conditions for vying for legislative position on equitable basis.
- Carry out voters' education to make the electorate familiar with election procedures and issues.
- The state should ensure that those responsible for various aspects of the election are trained and act impartially and that coherent voting procedures are established and made known to the voting public
- The country should build and strengthen its institution
- There should be complete independence of the judiciary and INEC
- Electronic voting should be adopted in all elections.
- Ensure updating of electoral registers, balloting procedures with the assistance of national and international actions observers.
- Encourage parties, candidates and media to accept decisions of electoral body in every election that was transparent in accordance with the recommendation of international election observers.
- Adopt a code of conduct to govern the election campaign and the polling period, ensure the integrity of the ballot through appropriate measures to prevent multiple voting or voting by those not entitled to vote and ensure the integrity of the process for counting of votes.
- The police and other state security agencies should remain as neutral as possible during election.
- All sectional or ethnic oriented political should be-registered.

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Women Empowerment

By Pratik Bose
Rice Education

Abstract- Throughout the history of mankind, women have been treated as subordinate beings in comparison to their male counterparts. Right from the childhood days women are patterned to live in a way which would benefit the men and accept the hegemony of men in the society. To come out of this misery women first need to generate a feeling within themselves that they are not born to remain as a puppet in the hands of men, they have their own identity, their own goals and desires to fulfill. This can only happen through female education and awareness which would generate a sense of developing their identity in the society. In the 21st century undoubtedly women throughout the world have covered a lot of ground in a way towards their upliftment and growing their independent voice in the society. But still there is a lot to go in the process of empowering women to be at par with men. Woman Empowerment should not be contextualized in a country specific way. Women irrespective of their Nationality, form a world community as their problems and interests are common in a lot of way.

Keywords: empowerment, hegemony, feminism.

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WOMENEMPOWERMENT

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Women Empowerment

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Abstract- Throughout the history of mankind, women have been treated as subordinate beings in comparison to their male counterparts. Right from the childhood days women are patterned to live in a way which would benefit the men and accept the hegemony of men in the society. To come out of this misery women first need to generate a feeling within themselves that they are not born to remain as a puppet in the hands of men, they have their own identity, their own goals and desires to fulfill. This can only happen through female education and awareness which would generate a sense of developing their identity in the society. In the 21st century undoubtedly women throughout the world have covered a lot of ground in a way towards their upliftment and growing their independent voice in the society. But still there is a lot to go in the process of empowering women to be at par with men. Woman Empowerment should not be contextualized in a country specific way. Women irrespective of their Nationality, form a world community as their problems and interests are common in a lot of way. Though country specific problems do exist due to the cultural and religious diversities as well as the difference in the levels of literacy and economic conditions of people which vary amongst different countries and requires to be addressed individually. The basic essence of empowerment is equality and individuality, which would make women become coterminous with the men and in a way this would lead to a healthy human society where both men and women would work and contribute equally to make the world a better place to live!

Keywords: *empowerment, hegemony, feminism.*

I. Introduction

The term "Empowerment" means to have the authority or the entitlement to do a particular thing as per ones own desire and without depending on anyone. When we add this term in the context of 'Women' it means the fulfillment of every women's right to have their own voice, own identity and self reliance in the society. Women Empowerment if achieved fully means the end of "Patriarchy" and also the withering away of the male dominated society. In this text an attempt has been made to show how a society patterned my men affects the lives of women and how a woman faces them and the progress of woman empowerment throughout the world.

II. Related Study

Recently the term Women Empowerment has become extremely popular and several scholars have given their views and expressions over it. Duflo (2012) suggests that women empowerment and economic development of women are directly related to each other. Dr. Sundaram, Dr. Sekar and Dr. Subburaj (2014) have explained that Women Empowerment can only be achieved if women have the awareness and will power to achieve it and this can only happen if women acquire the proper spirit of education. It is the most effective tool for uplifting women. KC Mandal (2013) have expressed that Women Empowerment has many dimensions and it does not depend on one factor. It has many factors like Social, Educational, Political, Economic and Psychological. If women can uplift themselves in all these areas then only can women empowerment happen in its fullest extent. Goel and Gupta (2019) interestingly says that the growth of technology especially the dependency on smart phones have empowered women whether working or housewife especially in India to connect with the outside world which in a way contributed to their empowerment. Dr. Moon (2011) observed that the Indian Government's programme to link Self Help Groups with Banks have helped women to have access over their savings as well as control over their credit and income. Felix and Ojo (2006) found that distance education helped the women in Africa to gain access to education which contributed towards empowering them in the African society. Arum (2010) have stressed on the role of NGO's in creating awareness over Women Empowerment in Nigeria. Sethuraman, Lansdown and Keith (2006) have said that eradication of Malnutrition level in rural areas amongst women can contribute to their empowerment. The gap still noticed is the failure to implement equal pay and the studies have not highlighted on involving women in the defence sector giving them equal responsibility and power which men enjoy can also lead to women empowerment.

III. Obstructions Towards Women Empowerment

All around the world there are several obstructions towards women empowerment. In many societies in Asia, Africa women still are looked down upon if they try to become working women or seek higher education. These societies are still dominated by 'Misogyny' and there the women themselves are patterned to believe that men are superior than them. This Patriarchal hegemony is still prevalent in many societies. These sort of societies act as an impediment towards female upliftment. These can be only eradicated if women unite themselves against these false narratives and work collectively towards their empowerment.

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IV. Women in Defense Services

A serious way of achieving women empowerment is to allow women to have equal share in the Defense services with their male colleagues. In many countries women still are bared from joining the Armed forces or going to combat areas but slowly this narrative that women cannot fight for their Nation is turning into a Myth. The recent Supreme Court verdict in India has allowed Women to get themselves enrolled in the National Defence Academy and also to seek permanent commission in the Army. Women today are becoming pilots of Fighter Planes which was unimaginable a few years back. So women empowerment is gaining a lot of grounds in this 21st century.

V. Conclusion

Women empowerment can be achieved in letter and in spirit if women irrespective of Religion, Race, Caste, Creed and Nationality join hands and make way for their own development in every sphere of their lives. They must have the feeling of "One for All and All for One". The world community like the U.N. should continuously monitor the needs and interest of women throughout the world. The Feminist Movement towards achieving Equality is gaining popularity throughout the world and their voice towards wrongdoings over women is gaining strength like the "Me Too Campaign". The Governments of different countries should also promote the essence of equality and ensure equal participation of women in every sphere of life. Only then Women Empowerment can be achieved in full vigour and vitality.

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Abstract- The paper examines the political and socio-economic implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on developing countries, taking Nigeria as a case study. It adopts an exploratory research design, and the qualitative method, relying on secondary data and document analysis. Findings show that the COVID-19 pandemic has had negative and positive implications for developing countries. On a negative note, it has seen to the disruption in economic activities, resulting in sharp decline in government revenue, loss of jobs, household food insecurity, and fallen crude oil prices; and disruptions in the democratic and political process, midwifing new circumstances for electoral process, low citizen participation, and controversies over tenure of incumbent governments. Positively, the pandemic has opened new opportunities for the deployment of technologies for political activities; exposed the weakness in the economy and health system of developing countries; and exposed the risk of over-dependence on crude oil. The paper concludes that the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 outbreak must be taken seriously, and necessary adjustments should be made in order to be prepared for future endemics, epidemics, and pandemics.

Keywords: *political, socio-economic, covid-19, developing, nigeria.*

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Harrison Adewale Idowu [α] & Wole Oluwasuji [σ]

Abstract- The paper examines the political and socio-economic implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on developing countries, taking Nigeria as a case study. It adopts an exploratory research design, and the qualitative method, relying on secondary data and document analysis. Findings show that the COVID-19 pandemic has had negative and positive implications for developing countries. On a negative note, it has seen to the disruption in economic activities, resulting in sharp decline in government revenue, loss of jobs, household food insecurity, and fallen crude oil prices; and disruptions in the democratic and political process, midwifing new circumstances for electoral process, low citizen participation, and controversies over tenure of incumbent governments. Positively, the pandemic has opened new opportunities for the deployment of technologies for political activities; exposed the weakness in the economy and health system of developing countries; and exposed the risk of over-dependence on crude oil. The paper concludes that the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 outbreak must be taken seriously, and necessary adjustments should be made in order to be prepared for future endemics, epidemics, and pandemics.

Keywords: political, socio-economic, covid-19, developing, nigeria.

I. Introduction

Over the history of pandemics, political and socio-economic activities have always suffered some setbacks. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is no gainsaying the fact that virtually every facet of humans and nations' lives have been adversely impacted in diverse ways. While this effect could be devastating for individuals, the effect of the pandemic on national politics and economies, especially those of developing countries, could be more devastating. This is because the individual livelihoods which is often a reflection of the general state of national economies, are adversely affected by the pandemic. This paper thus, examines the political and socio-economic implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the politics and economies of developing countries, taking Nigeria as a case study.

As reported by Imperial News (2020); Aljazeera (2020); and Rediff Realtime News (2020), the pandemic has negatively impacted global economies, especially with respect to travel restrictions, and disruptions in tourism. These duo have meant a reduced economic output globally. According to the United Nations Trade and Development Agency (UNCTAD), the global economic cost in terms of losses imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic amounts to about 2 trillion US dollars (UNCTAD, 2020, as cited in Stanley, Nkporbu & Stanley, 2020). These losses were largely as a result of the lockdowns, and a cut in global demand for crude oil, and the consequent fall in crude oil prices (Stanley, et al. 2020). This had further plummeted the world into recession.

While COVID-19 has impacted adversely on global economies, Lanchimba, Bonilla-Bolanos and Diaz-Sanchez (2020), and OECD (2020) argue that the effect will be more felt by developing economies. According to the authors, this is due to the fragility of the health system, and economies of developing states, compared to their European and much developed counterparts. Ozili and Arun (2020) also ascribed this worse effect among developing countries to the effect of globalisation, and spill over effects of the COVID-19 pandemic to developing economies due to their over-dependence on developed economies. These impacts could be noticeable at the levels of firms and households. Firms may be affected by adapting their mode of operation in order to remain in the market, or maintain growth; or leave the market temporarily. At the household level, consumption preferences may be affected because of the shutdown of most businesses, and the shortfall in incomes (Lanchimba, et al. 2020). At the socio-political level, migration movements, gender violence, and the flow of remittances are affected at household levels. Both the impact at firms and household levels combine to create national socio-economic consequences.

Although COVID-19 has adversely impacted global economies, it should be noted that there was an already stressed and declining global economy prior to the outbreak of the pandemic. For instance, CEPAL (2020, as cited in Lanchimba, et al. 2020) posits that between 2011 and 2019, global economic growth rate was at barely 2.8 percent on the average. This is a decline from the 3.4 percent growth rate recorded between 1997 and 2006. Also, the report shows that the

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global economy grew by only 2.5 percent in 2019 – signalling the worst growth rate since 2007. World trade volume had also fallen to a low of 0.4 percent in 2019 – the first decline since the last in 2008/2009 (CEPAL, 2020). In the same vein, economic crises were not new in developing economies, and that of Nigeria specifically prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2019. This is as Nigeria experienced, and had managed an economic crisis between 2016 and 2019 (Ozili, 2020). The implication of these pre-COVID evidences emphasises the fact that the pandemic came in the middle of a global economic strain, thereby making matters even worse.

Global supply and demand have been adversely impacted. Supply of goods and services has been affected by the infections which has in turn reduced labour productivity and supply; and by restrictions in movement, social distancing policies, and business closure (Vitenu-Sackey & Barfi, 2021). On the other hand, loss of jobs and income, reduced household consumption, and firms' investments owing to bad economic prospects have disrupted demand (Chudik, et al. 2020).

Politically, the COVID-19 pandemic has not also spared countries, as it has caused changes in the political environment and status quo of several countries, including those of developing countries. Albert-Makyur, et al. (2020) aver that the pandemic has affected the political structure of over 85 countries across the world, resulting in the modifications in electoral procedures, election postponements, suspension or postponement of other political activities, and the death of politicians. All the elections conducted amidst the pandemic, including those of the United States witnessed new modus operandi, and guidelines/safety protocols to guide the elections. In some cases, political participation has also been adversely impacted by the pandemic.

From the foregoing background, correct to aver that the political and socio-economic implications of the COVID-19 pandemic has been widely studied, albeit, the focus has often been on developed economies of the West, and the Asian Tigers. Studies appraising the implications for developing countries are scanty, where they do exist, the focus is often on economic implications alone, without a consideration of the political aspect. Hence, the need for this research intervention. This paper therefore, seeks to, through the eyes of the Nigerian economy (being the largest in Africa), appraise the political and socio-economic implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on developing countries. This is important because any attempt to resolve the national political and socio-economic crisis occasioned by the pandemic, requires a clear understanding of the enormity and magnitude of such impacts. This paper thus aims to midwife policy recommendations that will guide government, and policy makers on how to resolve the political and socio-economic crises occasioned by the pandemic, and get the economy and political activities back on track through policy actions.

II. Research Method

The paper adopts an exploratory research design, and the qualitative method, relying on secondary data and document analysis as sources of data. Data was thus, retrieved from relevant literature on the subject matter such as textbooks, journal and magazine articles, official documents and gazettes, Newspapers, and the Internet. Data so collected was subjected to content analysis.

III. Results and Discussion

a) *Political and Socio-economic Implications of Pandemics for Developed and Developing Countries*

Evidence shows that throughout the history of mankind, endemics, epidemics, and pandemics had had adverse political and socio-economic implications on nations. This is so because the health of a nation in terms of life expectancy, mortality rate, etc. is directly related to growth and development of such a nation (Bhargava, et al. 2001; Haacker, 2004; Robalino, et al. 2002). These implications cut across those of rich, average and poor economies. Nevertheless, rich and developed countries are often better prepared and well positioned to respond to pandemics (Lanchimba, et al. 2020), hence, they experience less severe political and socio-economic consequences than poor developing countries.

Haacker (2004) avers that through various dimensions (such as increased business cost, and changed labour supply decisions), HIV/AIDS has had negative consequences on households, businesses, and national governments. Surveying 8,719 firms, the World Economic Forum (2004) found that HIV/AIDS had adverse effect on workforce and other operations within the business. While 16 percent of the firms in high income countries expected the HIV/AIDS pandemic to have adverse impact on their businesses; 35 percent of those in low income countries, and 45 percent in sub-Saharan Africa expected the pandemic to have adverse impact on their businesses respectively. With respect to the SARS epidemic of 2003, Lee and McKibbin (2004) found that despite the somewhat few number of deaths recorded, the epidemic still had dire economic consequences among countries where it had spread. This manifested in the drastic reduction in the consumption of goods and services, and skyrocketed costs of running businesses, among others. Chou, et al. (2004); Hai, et al. (2004); and Sui and Wong (2004) also found the same impact of the SARS 2003 on the national economies of Taiwan, China, and Hong Kong respectively.

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The Influenza pandemic also left its mark on global economies. For instance, Meltzer, et al. (1999) found that the Influenza pandemic had adversely impacted on the U.S. economy. They estimated the economic impact of Influenza on the U.S. economy to be between 73.1 and 166.5 billion US dollars. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) of the United States (2005) also estimates the economic impact of the Influenza on the U.S. It found that at the mild level of infections, the U.S. GDP contracted by 1.5 percent, whereas at the severe level, the GDP experienced up to 5 percent contraction. On a global scale, the Influenza pandemic was found to have cost global economy between 300 million and 4.4 trillion US dollars (McKibbin & Sidorenko, 2006). In the same vein, Bloom, et al. (2005) found a 0.6 percent reduction in global GDP, 2.5 trillion US dollars contraction in the global trade of goods and services, equivalent to a 14 percent contraction due to the avian influenza strain. The Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) which broke out in South Korea in 2015 has been held accountable for the infection of 200 people, 38 deaths, and over 8.5 billion US dollars loss (Okenna, 2020).

With specific reference to COVID-19, and having continued to spread across the world for over a year, the political and socio-economic effect have been recorded, and still counting. The COVID-19 pandemic has been held responsible for severe social and economic implications for both individuals and national economies (Aljazeera, 2020; Imperial News, 2020), leading to a contracted global economy (Deloitte Insights, 2020; Impey, 2020). Lanchimba, et al. (2020) found an adverse impact of COVID-19 on the economies of Latin American countries (LAC), with Argentina, Ecuador, and Venezuela being the worst hit. They found that this impact was felt by both firms and households in the LAC region. Ozili (2020) avers that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the global economy in two major ways. One is in the area of shutdown of businesses and financial markets occasioned by social distancing policy; while the other is in the area of reduction in consumption and investment due to uncertainties created by the pandemic (Ozili & Arun, 2020). Indeed, the pandemic has not failed predictions about its ability to throw the world into recession (Financial Times, 2020).

More succinctly, Baldwin (2020) captured how the COVID-19 pandemic is adversely impacting national economies. According to him, as households get lesser income, consumption and savings are consequently reduced. The declined saving inevitably results in drastic drop in capital stock. Also, the pandemic has caused a reduction in household demands for imports – this reduces income for the countries of the world, and reduces their exports. Baldwin (2020) further aver that the shocks in demand and supply occasioned by COVID-19 disrupts domestic and international supply chains. Lastly, these shocks and disruptions lead to a decline in output, and an inevitable reduction in the deployment of factors of production, in which labour is the worst affected.

In the fourth quarter of 2020 alone, Baker, et al. (2020) found that COVID-19 shock on global economy had resulted in a GDP contraction by 11 percent. With specific reference to the U.S., Coibion, et al. (2020) found that the lockdown occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a sharp decline in consumption, employment, mortgage payment, etc. To study the economic impact of COVID-19 on the U.S. economy, Lewis, Mertens and Stock (2020) used a weekly economic index (WEI) to track the impact. They found that one a weekly basis, specifically between March 21 and 28, 2020, the WEI dropped by 6.19 percent. They attributed this to factors such as fall in the sale of fuels, a drop in consumer confidence, and a rise in unemployment insurance claims, among others. COVID-19 has also adversely impacted the economies of crude oil producing and dependent nations like Angola, Venezuela, and Nigeria. These countries are still experiencing shocks as a result of a fall in demand for crude oil, and a subsequent crash in global crude oil price (Ozili & Arun, 2020). Ozili and Arun (2020) also observed that the economies of import dependent economies of developing countries have suffered massive setback from the COVID-19 pandemic. This lack of access to import goods led to an increase in the prices of old imported stocks, despite the decline in demand. The UNDP (2020) reports that owing to a decline in production and demand, restrictions in movement, and increased trade barriers occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been high levels of unemployment and job losses in Asia and the Pacific.

Politically, Repucci and Slipowitz (2020), Atkinson, et al. (2020), and the Commonwealth (2020) aver that pandemic can drastically reduce citizen participation in the national political process. This is correct to the extent that during pandemics, elections are postponed, and legislative activities suspended; and citizen mobilisation restricted. The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) (2020) posits that many elections especially at subnational levels, were postponed indefinitely and to future dates in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak. These incidents of election postponement thus, resulted in litigations and questions as to the legality of tenure elongation for those incumbents whose tenure had come to an end (Ellena, 2020). In cases where elections were held, Wahab and Ojedokun (2021) posit that such elections were held under new and unfamiliar guidelines that threw up controversies in some democracies. For instance, the increase in mail ballots as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic during the 2020 U.S. presidential elections, meant that vote results were delayed for up to four days

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– this raised serous controversy in the U.S. electoral/political process (Fessler, 2020).

In the history of pandemics, they have been found to have adverse political effects in areas such as low voter turnout, disrupted supply chain for electoral materials, fear, litigations on the legality of election postponement and modification of the electoral process, reduced citizen participation in the political process, and disinformation, among others (Buril & Darnolf, 2020; Commonwealth, 2020; Ellena, 2020; IFES, 2020). Beall, Hofer and Schaller (2016) found that Ebola had adverse effect on voter behaviour and decision making during the 2014 U.S. federal elections. For fear of contracting the disease, ad hoc electoral officials are often difficult to recruit during national elections, thereby, impacting on electoral man power (Behrens & Rouan, 2020). In Niger Republic, COVID-19 resulted in the dis-information of the electorate about the electoral process, which had eventually disrupted the electoral process (Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendant, 2020). Dis-information occasioned by pandemic are capable to disrupt democratic process. Murillo (2020) also observed with respect to Latin America, that the COVID-19 pandemic dealt a blow to elections and protests – the two most important tools for ensuring democratic accountability.

In a study of 192 democracies across the world, a Freedom House Report shows that democracy has been weakened in 80 countries owing to the COVID-19 pandemic (Repucci & Slipowitz, 2020). Among 24 elections studied, the report also shows that electoral credibility was in question in Trinidad and Tobago, and Belarus, while Singapore banned political rallies. The Commonwealth (2020) posits that the pandemic also constitute a strain in the operations of election management bodies (EMBs) across the world, with EMBs from developing countries with weak crisis management plans, more affected. The COVID-19 pandemic had also adversely impacted the political structure of over 85 countries the world over, including the postponement of parliamentary activities and death of politicians (Albert-Makyur, 2020).

Conversely, and on a positive note, writing on the socio-economic impact of epidemics on national economies, Simonsen, et al. (1998) posit that epidemics are harshest on youth and elderly population. This trend thus, tends to reduce dependency ratio, which the authors claim may have positive impact on economies. This results in fewer non-income earners, and fewer dependents for income earners, thereby, increasing the chances for a rise in per capita income (Bloom & Canning, 2006). For instance, Bell and Lewis (2004) aver that the Black Death which hit Western Europe in the 14th century, wiping out a fourth of the population, had positive impacts on incomes. In England and France, Bloom and Mahal (1997) found that the Black Death had little or no effect on incomes. Also, while although the 1918 Flu killed millions of people across the world, it had positive effect on the U.S. economy (Brainerd & Siegler, 2003). In India, Bloom and Mahal (1997) found an insignificant effect of the Black Death on the economy. Bloom and Canning (2006) explains the factors responsible for insignificant effect of epidemic on national economies. For them, flexible and resilient economies, coupled with adaptation to unforeseen economic changes were key. Also, they aver that while most epidemics claim many lives, they may not stay around long enough to cause long term damages on the economy. Nevertheless, remove these factors, epidemics sure have negative effects on individual households, families, firms, and national economies.

b) Political and Socio-economic Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Nigeria

As it is the case the world over, and among other developing countries, the COVID-19 pandemic has had its toil on the Nigerian political and socio-economic atmosphere. While the COVID-19 had implications for all the political activities conducted amidst its outbreak, including political campaigns, and elections, it also constituted nuisance for the economy. The fact that the mainstay of the Nigerian economy – crude oil, experienced a drastic fall in price, had naturally translated into huge economic disaster for the country. Like its counterparts around the world (Reuters, 2020), Nigeria had had to adjust and re-adjust its national annual budget, including the presentation of supplementary budgets, in order to come to terms with the reality of the fallen crude oil price. The COVID-19 pandemic had met Nigeria in the middle of efforts to savage the economic shock already experienced since the sharp decline in crude oil price of 2016 (Ozili, 2020; Reuters, 2020). This situation had somewhat worsened the economic crisis in Nigeria as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the fact that economic crisis is not new in Nigeria, the COVID-19 had damaging and far more damaging effect than previous economic crises in the country. Ozili (2020) attributes this to the fact that the relevant stakeholders/agents that could have helped the economy to bounce back, were not able to engage in economic activities due to the lockdown and restrictions occasioned by the pandemic, and fear of contracting the virus. The economic crisis occasioned by COVID-19 had led to fear that the Nigerian economy was at the verge of collapse, which invariably resulted in the stock pile of essential foods and commodities, panic buying, drastic decline in consumption, hoarding of foreign currency, and reduced operating costs, among others (Ozili, 2020: 3).

Ololo, Madueke and Iheorun (2020) aver that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Nigerian economy in three main aspects, viz: decline in consumption and supply chain; decline in financial flows in terms of remittance; and the impact on health and

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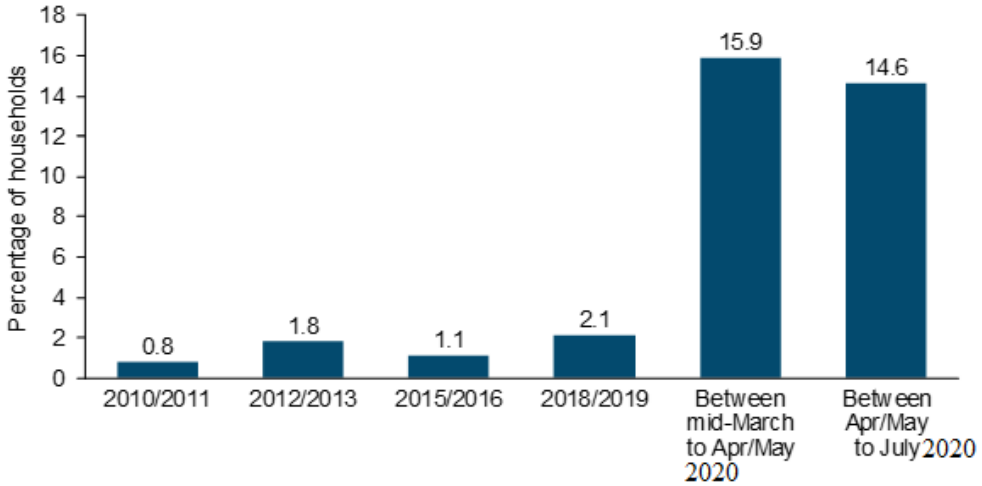
tourism. While these three components are very germane to the economic progress of any country, they were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria, thus, resulting in dire consequences for the economy. The closure of businesses had invariably led to a sharp decline in consumption and supply. While remittance from abroad constitute a major source of economic growth and viability in Nigeria, this was adversely affected by COVID-19 restrictions. Health care system was over-burdened, and there was a total clamp down on tourism – another source of income for the economy. All of these stunted economic growth in the country. Socio-economically, Oludayo (2020) posits that the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria impacted on citizens' livelihoods; caused food insecurity, and a decline in federal government revenue.

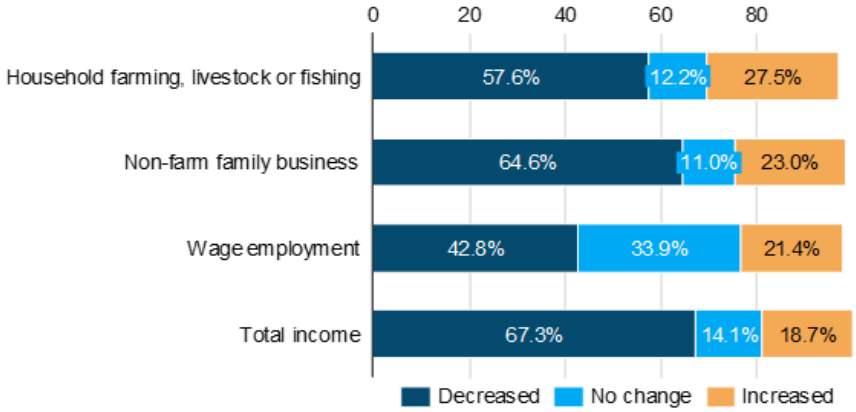
On a national scale, Ozili (2020) is of the opinion that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the Nigerian economy in at least five different areas. The first is in the area of a decline in borrowers' capacity to service loans which had resulted in skyrocketed non-performing loans, which in turn drastically reduced bank earnings, and stability. Also, global crude oil demand, and shock resulted in an unprecedented fall in global crude oil price, which left devastating effect on the revenue of government. Thirdly, is in the area of global supply shocks, and inevitable reduction of imports into the country, leading to a short fall in import goods in the country. Furthermore, national budget was also not spared by the pandemic. Whereas, the 2020 budget was initially planned with a benchmark of crude oil price at 57 US dollars per barrel, with a decline in oil price to 30 US dollars per barrel, it implied that the budget had to be readjusted. The fifth area identified by Ozili (2020: 9), is that of the Nigerian stock market as investors lost over 2.3 trillion naira (5.9 billion US dollars) only three weeks into the pandemic. This had led investors to pull out their investments.

The graphs below shows clearly some impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Nigerian economy.



Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2020)

Figure 1: Household Reporting Job Losses in the Wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria



Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2020)

Figure 2: Change in Income by Source, Compared to August 2019 (% of Households and Source of Income) in the Wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria

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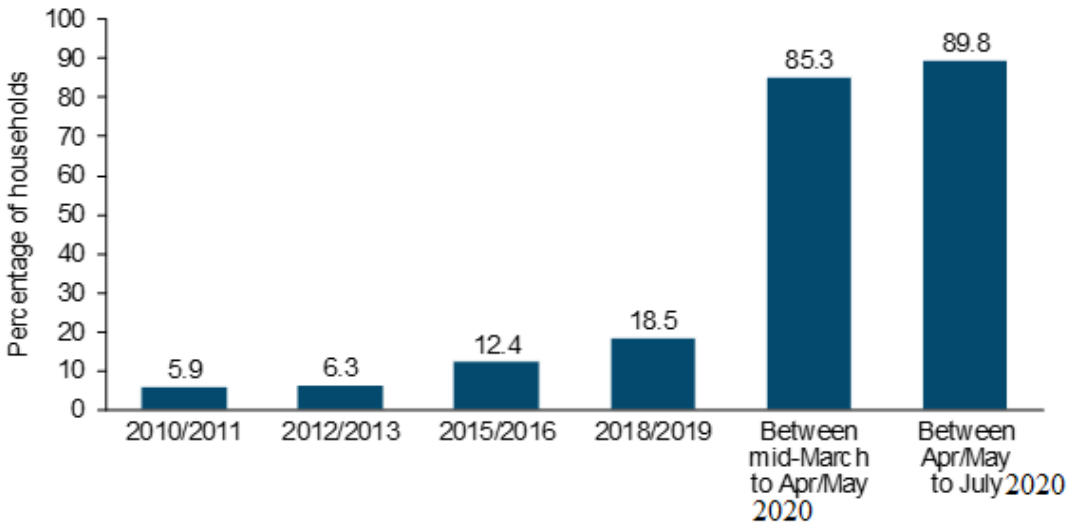
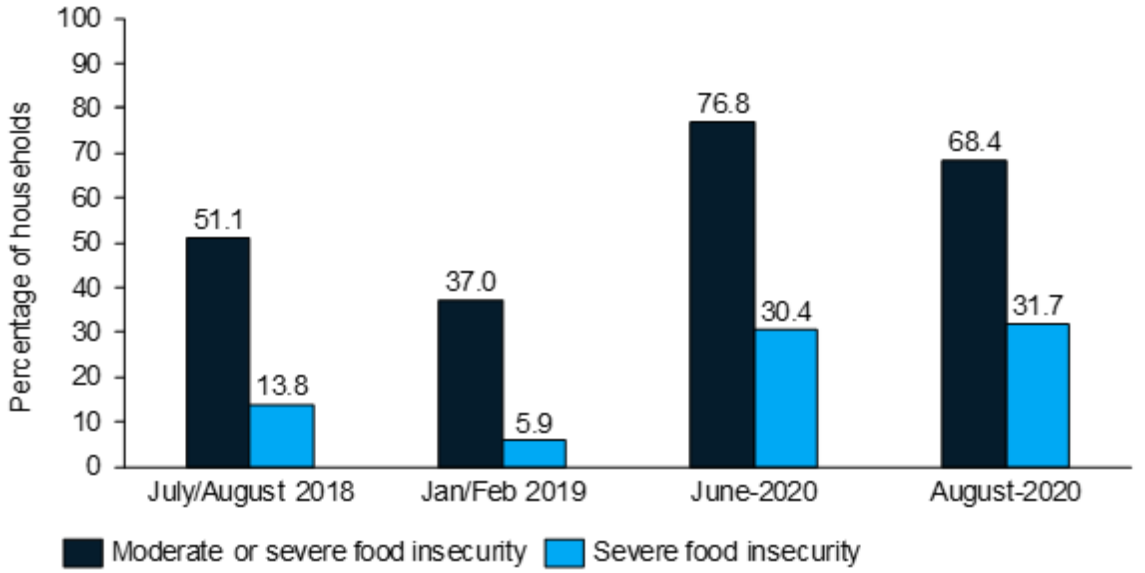


Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2020)

Figure 3: Households Experiencing Shock of Increase in Price of Major Food Items Consumed in the Wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria



Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2020)

Figure 4: Households Food Insecurity Experience in the Wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria

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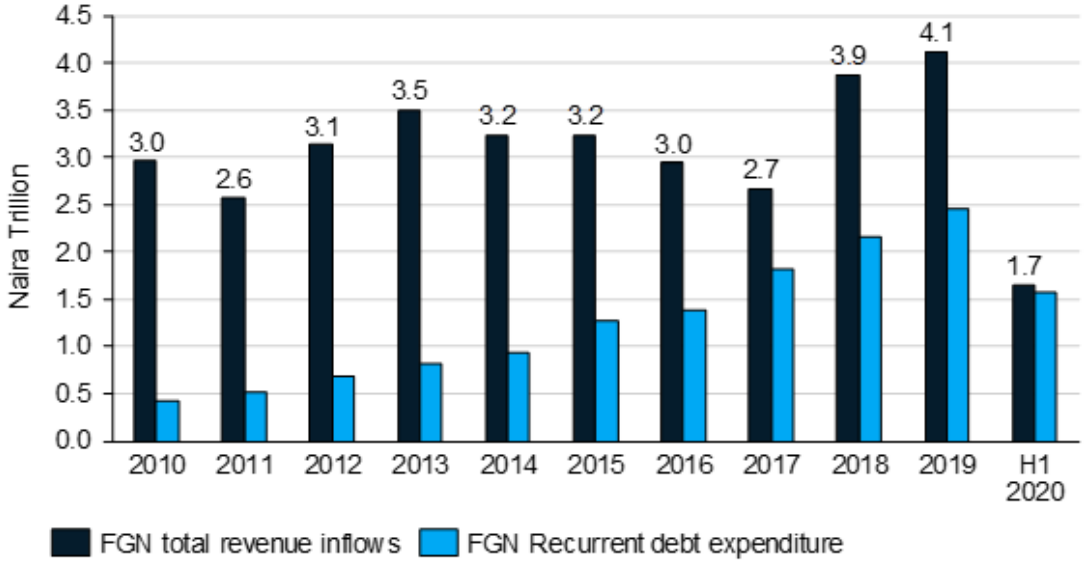

Source: Budget Office of the Federation, Federal Ministry of Finance (2020)

Figure 5: Federal Government Revenue Inflows and Recurrent Debt Expenditure in the Wake of COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria

Politically, political activities were grounded in the country due to COVID-19 outbreak. The Nigerian Parliament was under lock and key, abandoning legislative business for a while, owing to the COVID-19 outbreak (Albert-Makyur, et al. 2020). This had left serious and urgent national, and legislative matters and bills unattended to within the periods. The Federal Executive Council (FEC) could no longer meet regularly and physically, turning meetings into virtual platforms. Idowu (In Press) also highlighted how the COVID disrupted the democratic process in Nigeria, in terms of electoral process, and human rights protection. Owing to the COVID-19 outbreak, several subnational elections had been postponed, with others held under new guidelines. In an attempt to curtail the spread of the pandemic, the COVID-19 also saw the flagrant abuse of human rights in the country during the period.

While most elections and political campaigns were postponed in Nigeria, Wahab and Ojedokun (2021) aver that the two state elections (Edo and Ondo) held amidst the pandemic were conducted using new safety protocols to keep both voters and electoral officials safe. They also report a sharp decline in voter turnout for the two elections compared to previous elections in the state – a factor the authors' however acknowledged may be due to a complexus of other factors and not necessarily the COVID-19 pandemic alone. Nevertheless, it is worth mention that the inability of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to conduct the continuous voters' registration which was supposed to precede the elections, had a way to affect citizen participation. Also, there was high rate of uncollected permanent voters' card by eligible voters, owing to the restrictions, and the fact that INEC offices were closed as a result of the pandemic. The delay in the conduct of the elections as a result of challenges posed by the pandemic also threw up litigations as to the elongated tenures of the incumbent governors of the states (Wahab & Ojedokun, 2021).

Furthermore, the pandemic is also impacting the preparations for the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. While the continuous voters' registration in preparations for the elections was previously slated to resume in 2020 (The Guardian, 2020), the COVID-19 pandemic had ensured that this had to be put on hold until the second quarter of 2021. The exercise has now also been taken online, rather than the physical approach it had taken in the past, pre-COVID.

IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper has been able to appraise the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on political and socio-economic activities of developing countries, taking Nigeria as a case study. Like their counterparts all over the world, and like every other pandemics, the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely impacted the political and socio-economic affairs of developing countries, cum Nigeria. It has seen to the disruption in political and economic activities, resulting in sharp decline in government revenue, loss of jobs, household food insecurity, and fallen crude oil prices, among others. It has also resulted in disruptions in the democratic and political process, midwifing new circumstances for electoral process, low citizen participation, and controversies over tenure of incumbent governments, among others.

Conversely, and on a positive note, the pandemic has also opened new opportunities for the

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deployment of technologies for political activities in the country – a feat which was not thinkable pre-COVID. For instance, government activities can now been done online, including the registration of voters, rather than having citizens queue under the scorching heat of the sun, and go through cumbersome process to partake in the exercise. It has also exposed the weakness in the economy and health system of developing countries, including that of Nigeria, thereby serving as a reawakening call for developing countries to build strong and viable economy and health infrastructure. It has also exposed the risk of over-dependence on crude oil for a country like Nigeria, as such, a wakeup call to build a diversified national economic base.

The paper recommends that as things begin to return to normal, the government of Nigeria, and those of developing countries at large, must put frantic efforts in place to revive the economy, and restore political events to the norms prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, while retaining the positive lights, like technological deployment for political activities. Sincere efforts must be made to recover, and fix the adverse impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on the political and socio-economic activities in the country. There is an urgent need for Nigeria, and indeed other crude oil-dependent developing countries to begin to diversify their economies away from crude oil. The lessons learnt from the COVID-19 outbreak must be taken seriously, and necessary adjustments should be made in that light, in order to be prepared for future endemics, epidemics, and pandemics.

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Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations in Ethiopia: A Critical Analysis of the Political Challenges of Federal-Afar Interaction (1991-2020)

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Abstract- The objective of this paper is to analyze the intergovernmental relations between the Ethiopian federal government and the Afar regional state and their implications for the underdevelopment of the Afar region. The data for this paper were gathered through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, as well as review of published and unpublished documents. Specific tools for primary data collection include observation, focus group discussion, and key informant interviews. Electronic recording was used in the process of gathering appropriate data from the various categories of people in the region and federal officials. The quantitative data was gathered through the administration of a questionnaire. Intergovernmental relations are a ubiquitous dimension of federal systems, despite differences among federations. True federalism and its implementation necessitate consistent intergovernmental relations principles and practices. The cooperation effort among the different levels of government needs to be backed by well-designed and institutionalized intergovernmental relations.

Keywords: federalism, intergovernmental relations, federal government, afar regional state, party channel, special support board, and socio-economic development.

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Abstract- The objective of this paper is to analyze the intergovernmental relations between the Ethiopian federal government and the Afar regional state and their implications for the underdevelopment of the Afar region. The data for this paper were gathered through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, as well as review of published and unpublished documents. Specific tools for primary data collection include observation, focus group discussion, and key informant interviews. Electronic recording was used in the process of gathering appropriate data from the various categories of people in the region and federal officials. The quantitative data was gathered through the administration of a questionnaire. Intergovernmental relations are a ubiquitous dimension of federal systems, despite differences among federations. True federalism and its implementation necessitate consistent intergovernmental relations principles and practices. The cooperation effort among the different levels of government needs to be backed by well-designed and institutionalized intergovernmental relations. Different researches indicate that the formal vertical and horizontal structures of Intergovernmental relations in Ethiopia are characterizeds by un-institutionalized structures due to the absence of an institutionalized intergovernmental relations system. The party channel, relations between the legislative and executive branches of the two levels of government, and the provision of special support to developing regional states have all served as intergovernmental relations mechanisms in Ethiopia. The paper concludes that the affiliation relationship between the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front and Afar National Democratic Party has undermined the autonomous status of Afar Regional State and the special support provided to Afar Regional State has not helped to bring the intended socio-economic development in Afar Regional State.

Keywords: federalism, intergovernmental relations, federal government, afar regional state, party channel, special support board, and socio-economic development.

I. Introduction

Intergovernmental relations have become a notable feature of federal political systems. Federations create various structures and arrangements to facilitate interaction between the central government and constituent units. This article tried to examine the power relations between Afar National Regional State and the federal governments. Accordingly, the article is organized into six sections, including of Ethiopia this introductory part. Section two sheds light the concept and importance of intergovernmental relations (IGR) in federations. The third section provides highlight regarding IGR in the Ethiopian federation. The fourth section assesses the mode of relations between Afar Regional State and the Federal government such as the party channels, the legislative bodies and executive institutions of the two levels of governments. The fifth section provides an overview of the horizontal relations between Afar Regional State and Tigray Regional State and the final section draws the conclusion.

The article concluded that IGR in Ethiopia didn't bring the intended transformation in Afar Regional State due to the categorization of political parties as members of EPRDF and affiliated parties of which undermine the role of the Afar National Democratic of Party in co-determining national policy issues with the federal government; absence of an independent institution in charge of consolidating IGR and inadequate support provided to Afar Regional State by the national party, legislative and executive branches as well as Tigray Regional State through the twinning arrangement created between regional states for this purpose.

II. Intergovernmental Relations in Federations

Federations are composed of two (or more) orders of government operating within a constitutional framework, with one order providing shared rule through common institutions for certain specified purposes and with the other order (or orders) providing regional or local self-rule through the governments of the constituent units for certain specified purposes (Watts, 1996: 1). This signifies that federalism divides the sovereignty of the state between the central and regional governments, which requires some sort of interaction to work in cooperation for the mutual benefits of the two levels of government (Cameron, 2001). Similarly, Nigussie (2015) stated that the existence of two levels of government and the division of political powers between federal and state governments are essential features of federations. In an attempt to explain the inevitable interactions between levels of government in federations, Assefa (2009) asserted that the division of political power between the federal government and the

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constituent units in federal systems gave rise to a complex set of relationships among several actors.

Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) can be broadly defined as "interactions *between government units of all types and levels within a political system*" (Watts, 2001: 23). According to Kandel (2020), IGR refers to the interaction among the various levels of government or understanding the roles and responsibilities of each level of government and developing effective relationships to improve their ability to meet their expectations. The term IGR captures "the working connections that tied central governments and the constituent units that enjoy measures of independent and interdependent political power, governmental control, and decision-making' (Agranoff, 2004:26). Similarly, Brian (2001:129) defined the term "IGR" as the "*relations between central, regional, and local governments (as well as between governments within any one sphere) that facilitate the attainment of common goals through cooperation.*" In short, IGR focuses on how different orders of government in federal political systems communicate and collaborate with each other, encompassing the complex and interdependent relations among various spheres of government in legal, financial, and administrative matters and policy coordination (Nigussie, 2015).

IGR is a ubiquitous dimension of federal systems, despite differences among federations. The system of IGR has vertical and horizontal dimensions. The vertical dimension refers to the relations between the federal government and the constituent units on issues of common interest, and the horizontal dimension has to do with the relations among the constituent units of a federation (Cameron, 2001, Assefa, 2009, Poirier and Saunders, 2015). Although both kinds of relations have a profound role in shaping the way in which a particular federation functions, the relations between the central government and the constituent units of a federation have primary importance (Cameron, 2001).

Through IGR, the levels of governments "*share information, pool power and resources, and negotiate and implement cooperative arrangements that determine who does--or should--do what*" (Poirier and Saunders, 2015:2). Several institutions and processes are involved in this interaction through which federal partners enter into relations with each other (Ibid). But the institutions and processes that federations have developed to manage the intergovernmental relationship vary widely in several dimensions. They vary from federation to federation and within federations between different time periods and different policy areas (Simeon, 2001). To put it in plain words, different federations exhibit different structures and features of intergovernmental relations because the mechanisms of IGR are the results of the bounded rational preferences of the political actors and the issues they need to address through intergovernmental relations (Haileyesus, 2014).

There is no single federal model that is applicable everywhere (Watts, 2003), and as a result, each federation has followed a distinctive path based on its own particular circumstances and conditions (Cameron, 2001). According to Watts (2003), federations vary in their institutional design, the character of the diversity within their societies, their degree of economic development, and their policy agendas. Similarly, Cameron (2001) elaborated that the size of the country, the size of the population, and the distribution of the population within the territory may all affect the structures and processes of intergovernmental relations. He further mentioned that the following factors have paramount importance in determining the nature of IGR structures and processes: *social and cultural factors* (the racial, religious, linguistic and cultural composition of a given country), *historical factors* (the force of tradition and common political experience), *constitutional and institutional factors* (the number and relative size of the units in a federation, the degree of asymmetry among them, and *the degree of institutionalization* (whether the IGR is highly institutionalized, with formal structures and processes that channel intergovernmental activity, or it may be conducted in an informal, ad hoc fashion, depending heavily on the nature of the circumstances and the preference of the particular political actors). Therefore, as Watts (1996) put it, in order to understand the factors that have shaped the distribution of powers in each federation requires an examination of the historical and cultural context that led to its original creation, that influenced the drafting of its constitution, and that continued to influence the subsequent operation of the federation.

Although there are variations among federations, IGRs are an integral and significant part of every federal system (Poirier and Saunders, 2015). One of the common features of federations is the simultaneous existence of two sets of powerful motives: *(1) those seeking united action for certain purposes and (2) those seeking the autonomy of the distinctive constituent units of government for other purposes (Watts, 1996: 2). The other* common feature among federations has been the need for effective internal intergovernmental arrangements. All federations are responding to the same functional requirement, namely to find ways of managing the interface among governments (Cameron, 2001 and Watts, 2003).

Federations create various structures and arrangements to facilitate interaction between the central governments and constituent units (Cameron, 2001). Various authors have explained the importance of IGR in many ways. McEwen (2015) mentioned that IGRs are essential to all political systems with multi-level government. Similarly, Kandel (2020) explained that the IGR coordination mechanism in the federal system is crucial for development delivery from sub-national

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governments in a coherent way based on the concurrent functions. He further elaborated that the prime goal of intergovernmental relations is to bring effectiveness and efficiency to public service delivery. According to Sharma (2011), the aim of IGR mechanisms is to achieve "policy coordination" by facilitating interactions among the executives of the two orders of governments.

IGR power-sharing facilitates inter-governmental cooperation or federal-regional and inter-regional cooperation and coordination (Watts, 2003 and Bolleyer, 2006). In this regard, Nigussie (2015) mentioned that IGR forums facilitate negotiation, non-hierarchical exchange of information, and cooperation between the institutions of the two levels of governments. He further explained that IGR regulates and enhances communication between the institutions of thes two levels of governments that have defined jurisdictions and are supreme within their respective powers.

III. Intergovernmental Relations in Ethiopia

Following the collapse of the military rule in 1991, the government of the EPRDF introduced a federal political system organized on the basis of the recognition and institutionalization of the right of ethno-territorial communities to self-determination, creating primarily ethnic-based territorial units and providing for the option of ethnic "secession" (Alem, 2004 and Hashim, 2010). The federal arrangement paved the way and created the opportunity to undertake political and constitutional transformation and to devolve state power along ethno-linguistic lines (Hashim, 2010). The idea of federalism presupposes the existence of levels of government with defined competence and dominion of jurisdiction on the same land (Solomon, 2008).

In a federal system, the powers and functions of each government are outlined as part of the division of power and maintenance of their sovereignty (Balcha, 2007). In this regard, the 1995 FDRE Constitution clearly establishes two levels of government and obliges each level to respect the other's constitutional powers (Art. 50 (8)). Both the federal government and regional states have legislative, executive, and judicial powers within their respective jurisdictional limits (Art. 50(2)). Article 51 and 52 of the constitution list the exclusive powers of the federal government and regional states, respectively. The constitution also establishes a symmetrical federal system in that the powers, functions, and prerogatives given to the member states of the Ethiopian federation are uniform (Art. 49(4)).

IGR are the responses that have been developed to facilitate cooperative policy making among divided governments within a federal system. They are supposed to play a "bridge-building" role to bring a degree of coordination and cooperation to divided powers and provide the mechanism by which different levels and branches of governments interact with one another in the process of meetings the needs and interests of the public (Dessalegn, 2014). The cooperation effort among the different levels of governments need to be backed by well-designed and institutionalizeds intergovernmental relations. IGR is a vital norm and continues to be widely shared as one of the most common characteristics of any federation (Nigussie, 2015). The very existence of a federal structure and the constitutional entrenchment of different levels of governments working in the same territory and serving the same people necessitate the conduct of relations between the different levels of governments (Haileyesus, 2017). According to Assefa (2009), IGR can achieve the desired objectives only when its structures and processes are guided by important principles. IGR regulates and enhances communication between the institutions of the two levels of government that have defined jurisdictions and are supreme withins their respective powers (Nigussie, 2015).

The economic, political, socio-cultural, and environmental objectives stipulated in the FDRE Constitution (Art 88–92) make intergovernmental cooperation inevitable between the federal government and regional states. However, the Ethiopian Constitution is silent when it comes to the principles that guide the system of IGR and the necessary institutions that make it work (Assefa, 2009). In Ethiopia, lack of formal vertical and horizontal IGR mechanisms necessitates some level of institutionalization of IGR (Assefa, 2009, Nigussie, 2015, and Ketema, 2018). Academics and practitioners agree that IGR in the Ethiopian federation is in need of some level of formal institutionalization, and the implementation of coherent IGR principles and practices is required for the realization of genuine federalism. The argument for the institutionalization of IGR generally aims to ensure that regional states participate and make their voices heard in federal legislation and policies. This is because IGR is a mechanism for consultation with and inclusion of regional interests in federal legislation and policy formulation prior to their implementation (Ketema, 2018).

In Ethiopia, there is lack of an independent institution in charge of consolidating IGR, and this in turn has created gaps in the regularity, continuity, and effectiveness of vertical and horizontal interactions (Nigussie, 2015). Absence of institutionalized IGR is one of the factors that weakened devolution of power and the ability of regional states to actively participate in setting national objectives (Tesfaye, 2002). Rather, a patron-client type of relationship was established between the federal government and regional states through which the central leadership dominated political power and resources throughout the country by placing local clients at sub-national levels (Ibid).

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The system of IGR put in place in Ethiopia for the last two decades was the one in which the federal government predominate the relationship between levels of government and was largely informal. The Ethiopian federation lacked coherent principles, guidelines, and institutional systems for governing IGR schemes (Assefa, 2009). Federal institutions with mandates related to IGR, such as the House of Federation (HoF) and Ministry of Federal Affairs, have underlined the need for formal institutionalization and policy frameworks (Assefa, 2009 and Ketema, 2018).

The formal vertical and horizontal structures of IGR in Ethiopia are characterized by a few un-institutionalized structures such as the Special Support Board, ministers and Bureau Heads, forums of different offices of line ministers and regional bureaus, as well as regional bilateral and multilateral forums between regional governments. Moreover, the Ethiopian IGR is characterized by the dominance of the federal government in formulating national policies in the light of the ethos of "developmental state" that is envisioned by the incumbent party for the country (Haileyesus, 2017).

The practice on the ground is different from the constitutional rhetoric regarding the powers of regional state governments because they remain dependent on the federal government to be able to carry out their duties (Aalen, 2002). Regional state governments followed all policies adopted by the EPRDF without questioning (Turton, 2006). TPLF cadres were assigned as advisors to monitor the locally elected administrators who had to ensure their accountability to the TPLF unit to remain in their position (Abbink 2006; Aalen 2002).

There is a need for a central/focal institution responsible for designing policies on IGR and coordinating and guiding the entire IGR system in Ethiopia. The absence of such an institution has been the concern of the Ethiopian government. The Proclamation 471/2006 issued to re-determine the duties and responsibilities of the executive organs in Ethiopia gave the MoFA the power to strengthen IGR. According to Art, 21(6) of the proclamation, MoFA was decreed to be the focal institution to establish good relations and cooperation between the federal government and regional states. Similarly, the Proclamation 691/2011 issued to re-determine the duties and responsibilities of the executive organs has reapproved the previous powers of MoFA (MoFA, 2013).

One of the institutions competing to assume the role of IGR in the Ethiopian Federation is the Ministry of Federal Affairs. The establishment of the Intergovernmental Relations Directorate General under MoFA may indicate the government's interest in formalizing the IGR system in Ethiopia. For instance, two of the duties and responsibilities of the IGR Directorate General of MoFA are undertaking studies on the establishment of transparent and detailed systems of relations between the federal and regional governments; the gaps, weaknesses, and problems of government relations; and preparing policy and strategy proposals that would create firm ground for IGR (MoFA, 2011).

IV. Mode of Relation between Afar Regional State and the Federal Government of Ethiopia

a) *Party Channel as Mechanism of Relation*

After the EPRDF took control of state power in 1991, Ethiopia adopted ethnic federalism and restructured the constituent units of the federation along ethnic lines (Teshome and Zahok, 2008; Alem, 2010). The institutionalization of ethnic federalism as an organizing principle encourages political parties to organize along ethnic lines, and the party channels function as the main vehicles of IGR (Alem, 2005). According to Haileyesus (2014), the mechanisms of IGR in the Ethiopian federation have been shaped predominantly by the party system.

The government of EPRDF has undermined regional autonomy through its centralized party system (Aalen, 2006). The party organization has created different kinds of relations among political parties. The parties administering the four major regional states (Amhara, Oromia, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, and Tigray) were members of the ruling EPRDF coalition front. On the other hand, the ethnic political parties administering the peripheral regions (Afar, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, and Somalia) were not members of the coalition. Even though these affiliated parties were not members of the ruling coalition front, EPRDF, they voted with it on important issues that came before the federal government (Alem, 2004). The vertical and horizontal IGR have been relatively smooth because the multiethnic ruling coalition and its affiliated ethnic parties have enjoyed a monopoly of power at all levels of government in their respective regional states (Alem, 2010). However, the affiliated parties have not been allowed to be members of EPRDF because they were not considered mature enough to join the coalition (Alem, 2004).

Participants of the study interviewed during the fieldwork in December 2018 and March 2019 mentioned that the affiliation relationship has no constitutional ground. According to one official of the House of Peoples Representatives, affiliation indicates the level of relationship created between EPRDF and the political parties administering the Developing Regional States. He asserted that the justification behind the creation of this kind of relationship originated from the analysis of the socio-economic conditions of the nations, nationalities, and peoples when federalism was introduced in Ethiopia. He further explained the situation as follows:

> *When EPRDF came to power in 1991, it understood that the socio-economic development of the people living in*

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Developing Regional States was incompatible with the ideology and the socio-economic and political programs of the EPRDF. The program of EPRDF wishes modern and developed production relations with clear division of labor, which is appropriate to the development of capitalist system. Contrary to this, the production relations of the pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities have been based on clan. The livelihood of pastoralist communities has been based on animal production and a mobile way of life. Absence of permanent settlement is the hallmark of backwardness, and hence the development of these communities had to be accelerated with the provision of special support before being made members of the ruling coalition, EPRDF. Thus, the affiliation relationship was intended to stay until these communities reached the level of socio-economic development compatible to the capitalist production relationship, which the federal government aspires to establish (Interview on 16 March 2019, Addis Ababa).

Another federal official working in the EPRDF's Foreign Relations Office further strengthened the above idea when he stated:

Political parties have to set their social, economic, and political programs they aspire to achieve. Moreover, they need to have ideologies that can guide their activities. In this regard, the EPRDF has been guided by the ideology of Revolutionary Democracy. On the other hand, clan is the social foundation of pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities in the Afar Region, which is unsuitable for the ideology of revolutionary democracy. For instance, leadership in clan-based societies has been transferred from fathers to sons across generations. Thus, in such societies, being born to a family of a certain clan leader is enough; there is no need to plan to achieve certain political objectives and programs. Knowledge, capacity, experience, commitment, and other requirements have not been given due consideration when someone is empowered to occupy a certain position. Therefore, the living conditions and political thinking of pastoralists have to be significantly transformed to enable them to move out of clan mentality and adopt the culture and working procedures of political parties before being accepted as members of the EPRDF establish (Interview on 12 February, 2019, Addis Ababa).

Moreover, one of the members of the HPR standing committee explained that class is the social basis of the Revolutionary Democracy by which EPRDF has been guided. He further elaborated that class based societies like peasants, proletariat, city bourgeoisie and the educated have relatively better ground to establish capitalist system which EPRDF set as its destination. It is in this context that the EPRDF came up with the idea of categorizing political parties as members and affiliated. The intention was to accelerate the socio-economic development of clan-based societies living in the peripheral regional states and transform them into class-based societies. (Interview on 11 January 2019, Addis Ababa).

The federal government believed that the provision of all-round support to developing regional states could accelerate the socio-economic development of their people. However, several years passed without bringing the intended social transformation in the Developing Regional States. One of the interviewees explained the mismatch between the rhetoric development and political practice in the Developing Regional States as:

Political training has been provided to the leaders of the affiliated parties to help the people living in developing regional states move out of clan thinking and uphold the ideology of Revolutionary Democracy. However, the efforts made so far have not brought significant change in this regard. The leadership in regional states administered by the affiliated parties from region to Woreda level has been elected in a manner to accommodate clan representation. The culture of electing leaders based on their merit and political commitment has not yet been put into practice. The efforts made so far to accelerate the socio-economic development of these regional states are not up to expectations because of the absence of clear boundary between clan leadership and modern administration (Interview on 7 December 2018, Addis Ababa).

There were different parties in the Afar region, such as the Afar Liberation Front (ALF), Afar National Liberation Front (ANLF), Afar National Democratic Movement (ANDM), Afar National Revolutionary Front (ANRF) and Afar Revolutionary Democratic Union Front (ARDUF). Participants of the interview mentioned that these political parties participated in the 2005 elections and won few seats in the Regional State Council. However, the Afar People's Democratic Organization (APDO), which won the 2005 regional election, played dominant role in the regional politics. According to interviewees, the Regional State President, the Vice President, and the Head of the Regional State Peace and Security Bureau were playing key roles both in party politics and in the regional state government. These regional leaders were given the nick name, *"the Trinity"*. The various parties in the region united together and formed the Afar National Democratic Party (ANDP) on November 3, 1999. This party administered the regional state until it became a regional branch of the newly established Prosperity Party in December 2019.

The shared agreement among the participants of the interviews was that the affiliation relationship between the regional ruling party, ANDP, and EPRDF did not benefit the Afar region as expected. Rather, it has undermined the autonomous status of Afar Regional State due to federal intervention in its jurisdiction. They underscored that this form of relationship made the affiliated party members instruments for the advancement of EPRDF's agenda because they could not maintain their position in their own region without the goodwill of the leaders of the national party/front. As one educated Afar reflected:

The categorization of political parties as members of the EPRDF or affiliated parties is a deliberate marginalization of Afar and other regional states administered by affiliated parties in many ways. First, the national policies and strategies have been designed by the coalition members of

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the ruling party, EPRDF, which, as a result, such policies and strategies reflect the interests of the agrarian societies in the four regional states but fail to address the affairs of pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities. Secondly, the leaders of the four regional states (EPRDF members) decide on the national development policies and strategies without considering the voice of the affiliated party. Thirdly, the regional state party, ANDP, was made a mere recipient of the orders coming from the federal government, which undermined the prerogative of the party. Fourth, the federal government has continued to indirectly rule the Afar region through the cadres assigned to the region as advisors in the name of capacity building, which is in practice violating the self-rule right of the regional state (Interview on 22 March 2018, Semera).

The same idea was reiterated by another interviewee:

The federal intervention in the Afar region has been challenging the autonomous status of the regional state. Key positions in the regional state were given to loyal leaders who had to work to enhance the interests of the national ruling party. For instance, the former president of Afar Regional has stayed in power and office for more than twenty years because he administered the region in a manner that respected the interests of the federal government at the expense of the interests of the people in the region. In a performance evaluation conducted in 2010, the president was criticized in furthering the interest of the federal government at the expense of interests of the people in the region. This accusation was shared by many members of the Regional State Council. However the, two officials from the federal government who were leading the evaluation strongly defended the position of the regional president. Moreover, one key employee of EPRDF warned that if the regional council discharged the president, EPRDF would not work in cooperation with ANDP which as a result the President sustained his Position for several years (Interview on 21 April 2018, Semera).

One of the regional officials asserted that the above kinds of federal intervention in the mandates of the regional state are contradictory to the powers and responsibilities of the regional state enshrined in the national constitution. The 1995 FDRE Constitution made clear that regional states have the power to establish a "state administration that best advances self-government, a democratic order based on the rule of law" (Art 52 (2)). Moreover, Art. 37 (2) of the 2002 Revised Constitution of Afar Regional State revealed that the Afar region has the right to self-determination, self-administration in its own region, as well as the right to have appropriate and fair representation and to have effective participation in the federal government. However, the federal intervention has been threatening the power of the Afar Regional State when viewed in the light of the contradiction between the above constitutional provisions and its implementation on the ground.

The involvement of the federal government in implemented on the ground regional politics, presented and described above, was further corroborated by the quantitative data. Table 1.1. below depicts the role of the federal government in placing regional leaders who could satisfy the interests of the federal government.

Table 1.1. The Political Right of Afar in Electing Top Level Regional Leaders

The Afar have been empowering (electing) their top level leaders without the involvement of the federal government		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	89	25.4
	Disagree	167	47.7
	Undecided	9	2.6
	Agree	61	17.4
	Strongly Agree	24	6.9
	Total	350	100.0

As we can see from Table 1.1. above, the percentage of respondents who believed that key positions in Afar Regional State have been held based on the good will of the federal government is greater, 256(73.1.6%) than others who think the other way, 85(24.3%) and very few, 9(2.6%) respondents were unable to decide. This indicates that the federal government has been stretching its hands in deciding who should hold key positions in the Afar Regional State.

During the field work in Zone three of Afar Region in November 2018, the researcher observed one of the officials of the Zone administration distributing the newsletter of EPRDF, *Addis Ra'e* which literally mean "*New Vision*". According to this official, the Zone administrations receive newsletters from the regional state administration and distribute it to each Woreda on Quota basis. The newsletter provides information on various issues of the national party and it is one of the instruments through which the party indoctrinate its ideology, Revolutionary Democracy and the principle of democratic centralism.

According to one educated Afar, the party administering Afar Regional State has been committed to implement orders of the federal government. Afar Regional State government has to implement the programs of the regional party. This relationship shows how the system makes the regional state subordinate to

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the federal government. Still another regional official explained how the system of relationship established between the national ruling party, EPRDF and affiliated parties like ANDP made Afar Regional States disadvantaged as:

> *The national policies did not give due consideration to the affairs of pastoralist communities. There was no pastoralist development policy, pastoralist agriculture package and pastoralist health extension package for the last twenty-six years. We have been complaining to have policies, strategies and packages which could address the problems of the pastoralists and agro-pastoralists. Now the Pastoralists Development Policy is formulated but not yet adopted. This shows how the interests of the pastoralist communities have been marginalized at policy level. This in turn has its own impact on the pace of the socio-economic development in our region (Interview on 22 March 2018, Semera).*

Through the examination of the working relation between EPRDF and ANDP is helpful to understand the role of affiliated parties in deciding on national policies and the political support provided by EPRDF. According to one federal EPRDF official, few representatives of Afar Regional State have been participating in EPRDF Council meetings that discussed on national policy agendas. However, Afar participants attend council meetings as observers with no right to vote on issues discussed in meetings because ANDP is not member of the ruling party, EPRDF. This participation therefore helps the leaders of Afar Regional State only to know what is going on at the national level. The above sentiment has been voiced by one of the regional official as:

> *Few regional officials have been participating in the meetings of EPRDF Council and EPRDF Executive Committee. They also attend quarterly and annual evaluation meetings. However, they have no right to debate and to be part of the decisions passed in such meetings. Moreover, in such meetings, participants of the developing regional state have no opportunity to properly reflect the problems and interests of their people in the EPRDF meetings. In several occasions leaders of ANDP were complaining that member parties of EPRDF alone should not decide on national issues. As Ethiopians, the affiliated parties representing the Developing Regional States need to have their say on national agendas which one way or another affects the lives of the people in their respective regions (Interview on 10 March 2018, Semera).*

The role of Afar Regional State in determining national policy issues presented and described above was further complemented by the quantitative data. Table 1.2. below portrays the respondents' opinion regarding the position of Afar Regional State government in co- determining national policy issues with the federal government.

Table 1.2. Participation of Afar Regional State in the National Policy Making Process

The Afar Regional State Government co-determined national policy issues with the federal government			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	67	19.1
	Disagree	174	49.7
	Undecided	9	2.6
	Agree	46	13.1
	Strongly Agree	54	15.4
	Total	350	100.0

As we infer from Table 1.2. above, the percentage of respondents who argued that the government of Afar Regional State have not been determining national policy issues with the federal government, 241(68.9%) is greater than others who believed the other way 100 (28.6%). Few respondents 9(2.6%) were unable to decide. Therefore, this quantitative data strengthened the qualitative one. Therefore, the responsibility of the leaders of Afar Regional State is to implement policies adopted by the federal government.

The Provision of training was the other mechanism of relationship between EPRDF and ANDP. Quota was given to affiliated parties to participate in training where few members of ANDP were participating in trainings organized by EPRDF. According to one Afar Regional Party official, the focus areas of trainings provided were on issues related to the experiences of the four regional parties which form the ruling party, EPRDF. He questioned, as to whether the federal government want to bring social transformation in the Developing Regional States. He further stated:

> *had the federal government genuine concern to raise the political consciousness and to induce party politics among regional leaders of Developing Regional States, it would have provide continuous training to members of ANDP on issues which have direct bearing on the livelihood of pastoralists.*

Another interviewee has also similar sentiment as stated:

> *The member parties of EPRDF and affiliated parties have different political culture and experience in the area of party politics. The constitutional objective of building one political and economic community in Ethiopia cannot be achieved without transforming the people administered by affiliated parties. The ANDP cannot embrace the ideology of Revolutionary Democracy unless the regional state leaders*

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are adequately supported to move out of clan thinking. Therefore, continuous trainings have to be given to members of ANDP on party politics which would help them to accelerate the development of their region to catch up the relatively developed regional states (*Interview 17 February 2019, Addis Ababa).*

The provision of special (support to Developing Regional States is one IGR mechanism between EPRDF and ANDP. Several federal institutions has been providing capacity building support to similar sector Bureaus and Offices in Afar region. The EPRDF is one of the federal institutions which have been supporting Afar Regional State by sending professionals. One of the federal official working in the EPRDF Office mentioned that the political support have been given to Afar region based on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between EPRDF and ANDP. Accordingly, four cadres representing the relatively developed four regional states (member parties of EPRDF) have been sent to Afar region. Office of EPRDF has been paying the salaries and other incentives to these cares. He further elaborated that the main activities of these cadres have been coordinating members of EPRDF living in the region and motivate them to support the regional state, performing party capacity building activities to indoctrinate EPRDF's ideology, Revolutionary Democracy, supporting the officials of ANDP by consulting on how to planning the activities of the party, preparing discussion documents and brochures of the party, introducing the culture of EPRDF and democratic ways of evaluating tasks performed.

The dominance of the federal government in formulating policies presented and described above was further corroborated by measuring the extent of respondents' agreement or disagreement regarding the role of Afar Regional State in formulating policies. Table 1.3. below portrays whether Afar Regional State leaders formulate and execute policies and strategies reflecting the region's specific condition.

Table 1.3. Policy and Strategy Making and Execution Experience of Afar Regional State

The regional state formulate and Properly execute economic, social and development policies, strategies and plans which are suitable the regional specific contexts

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	29	8.3
	Disagree	236	67.4
	Undecided	15	4.3
	Agree	29	8.3
	Strongly Agree	41	11.7
	Total	350	100.0

As we infer froms Table 1.3. above, the relative percentage of respondents who expressed their disagreement regarding the role of Afar Regional State in formulating and executing policies suitable to the regional specific context is greater 265(75.7%) than those who expressed their agreement 70(20%) and the remaining 15(4.3%) of the respondents were unable to decide. As discussed in the qualitative data, policies have been initiated by member parties of EPRDF (parties ruling mostly agriculturalist communities) which as a result they failed to reflect the condition of pastoralists. Members of affiliated parties simply accept such policies without contextualizing them with the reality of the regional states.

b) Legislative Bodies as Mechanism of Relation

The 1995 FDRE Constitution made clear that the House of Peoples Representatives and Regional State Councils have the highest authorities and power of legislation on matters falling under their jurisdiction. Common discussion forum among the legislative bodies of the two levels of governments is important to create conformity between the federal constitutions and the laws enacted by regional states. However, participants of the interview mentioned that, there was no discussion forum between the legislative bodies of the federal government and regional states for more than a decade.

One of the members of the HPR Legal Service and Administration Standing Committee explained about the importance of organizing forums where the legislative organs of the two levels of governments discuss on various activities in the country like sharing experiences, making decisions and giving directions on common affairs (Interview, 12 December, 2018, Addis Ababa).

The data obtained from available institutional documents support the above information. According to MoFA (2013) the legislative branches of the two levels of governments started their relation by organizing the first discussion forum between the speakers of HPR and Regional State Councils in 2004. The document made

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clear that the first forum did not perform tangible tasks beyond conducting inaugural meeting and adopting rules of procedure.

The speakers of the federal and Regional State Councils conducted their second conference in 2006. The participants of the conference were the speakers and deputy speakers of the House of People's Representatives and Regional State Councils, selected members of the HPR Standing Committee, chairman of the Regional State Council standing committees and few professionals of the regional state organizing the forum. The rules of procedure indicated that the discussion forums of councils have been conducted twice a year *(Ibid)*.

According to the regulation number 1/2007 adopted by the common discussion forum, the objectives of forums include working for the existence of procedures which could reflect public representation in each council, enacting related laws in conformity with one another, discharging its responsibility in the effort of creating one economic community and enhancement of rule of law and good governance by discussing on tasks to be performed by member councils, discharging its responsibility to strengthen the parliamentary system through experience sharing, support and capacity building practices in a coordinated manner.

According to the objective and regulation of its establishment, the reforms and capacity building activities performed by the common forum include accomplish reforms on the organization and procedures of each council which would enable them achieve their mission successfully, making improvements made by the councils consistent and standardized, performing capacity building through wide experience sharing, providing training to members of the councils and professionals on legislative and control procedures as well as reform tasks and supporting in creating conducive work environment by solving lack of equipments and facilities of the councils.

The common discussion forum has been organized every six month in the nine regional states and the two city administrations on round basis. One of the interviewees mentioned that the common discussion forums of the legislative organs of the two levels of governments have been lead by the speaker of the federal parliament and the speaker of the regional state organizing the forum. According to him, discussions were focusing on improving the legislating practice and proper implementation of oversight over the activities of the executive branches of federal and regional state governments. One of the members of Afar Regional State Council interviewed during the field work explained the procedural approach of forums as:

> *In between the forums the speaker of the Regional State Council which will organize the next forum has to make all the necessary preparations in consultation with the speaker of the federal house. In the conference, speakers of the nine Regional State Councils and the city administrations present their working performances. Then the strength and weaknesses of the works of each council have been discussed in detail. The council which performed best has been held as a model and others are encouraged to share the experience of that regional council. Regional State Councils which showed less performance are advised how to correct their weakness (Interview 24 March 2019, Semera).*

Despite of such practices, the forum had several limitations and has failed to strictly perform its activities in accordance with the rules of procedures. According to an interviewee, one of the problems has been lack of motivation on the part of speakers of Regional State Councils to use the comments provided during discussions as an important input to improve the working performance in their respective regional states.

Supervisions conducted by members of the HPR Pastoralist Standing Committee have been serving as mechanism of through which the federal government planned to support Afar Regional State. The standing committee provide feedback to the regional state council about strengths and weaknesses observed during field observation. Nevertheless, such relation between the two legislative organs did not help to accelerate the development of the regional state. In line with this, one of the members of the HPR Pastoralist Committee reflected:

> *The standing Committee of the HPR has been conducting field observation in Afar Region. However, several constraints have limited the support provided by the federal government. Irregular conduct of supervision by the federal government (once every year/ every two years and sometimes not at all for instance in 2017), capacity limitation and prevalence of conflicts as well as misappropriation of resources on the part of the regional state (Interview 18 May 2019, Addis Ababa).*

c) Executive Institutions as Mechanism of Relation

There have been multidimensional relations among the executive organs of the federal government and regional states. Such vertical relations have been made between sector offices of the federal ministries and their counterpart Bureaus and offices in regional states. According to the report on IGR practice in Ethiopia, some of the federal executive organs have signed memorandum of understanding with sector Bureaus of regional states. The main functions and responsibilities of the consultation forums of each sector is clearly stipulated (MoFA, 2013). The relation between two Ministries and their counterpart Regional Bureaus namely Health and Education are discussed below just to show how executive institutions have been serving as a mechanism of relation between the federal government and Afar Regional State.

According to one of the interviewees from Health Bureau of Afar Regional State, the focus areas that the Ministry of Health agreed to work in coordination with the Afar Regional State Health

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Bureau, Zonal health departments and Woreda health offices are increasing the number of mothers giving birth in health institutions with the support of health professionals; identify pregnant women in each Kebele with the support of development team leaders and make them visit health posts every month to consult with health professionals; prepare experience sharing forums among development teams and work in coordination with leaders of health sectors from Region to Woreda levels in order to conduct forums with religious fathers, traditional midwives and community elders on quarterly basis.

Another interviewee further elaborated that the Ministry of Health has been working in coordination with the Regional Health Bureau in constructing health stations and health posts as well as in fulfilling medical equipments for health stations and expanding health extension programmes. He also mentioned that the Regional Health Bureau conduct implementation evaluation with the Ministry of Health twice a year.

According to the explanation of a health professional working in the regional Health Bureau, reduction of maternal death in the region is one of the positive outcomes of the coordination efforts between the Ministry of Health and the Regional Health Bureau. However, the report on the IGR Practice in Ethiopia, revealed that factors like capacity limitation in the Regional Bureau, inability to present implementation reports timely, problem of completing tasks according their plan and absence of systems of accountability on those who failed to implement their plans in accordance with the agreement reached have been adversely affecting the relation between the ministry and the regional Health Bureau *(MoFA, 2013).*

The Ministry of Education has been working in cooperation with Education Bureau of Afar Regional State. The Ministry has been coordinating consultation forums on education and training. One of the Directorates of Afar Regional State Education Bureau reported that consultation forums have been organized irregularly although the plan was to conduct on quarterly basis. He explained that participants of forums are heads of all Regional Education Bureaus and educational professionals. He further mentioned that the main focuses of the discussion/consultation forums include implementing national education standards; providing professional, material and capacity building supports; contextualizing and integrating national educational and training plans to the regional reality; designing and implementing common programmes; sharing good practices and experiences; and finding solutions to the problems encountered in the education sector through discussion etc...

Discussion forums have been organized alternatively in different regions where the Regional Education Bureaus evaluate plan implementations on quarterly basis. Although such forums are important in creating common understanding and sharing of experiences, there are problems adversely affecting the relation between the Ministry and regional Education Bureau such as inability to implement some of the common affairs agreed in the discussion forums; failure to implement the federal rules and regulations; inability to complete activities/tasks according to plans scheduled; and above all absence of legal institutional framework which could guide the relation between the federal and regional executive institutions.

The contribution of the cooperation between the federal and regional executive branches in improving the social and economic services in Afar Regional State presented and described above was further corroborated by quantitative data. Table 1.4. below portrays the extent of respondents' agreement/ disagreement as to whether the cooperation between the federal and regional executive branches has helped to improve the services provided in the regional state.

Table 1.4. Federal Executive Support to Afar Regional State Executive Branches

The cooperation between the federal and Afar Regional state executive branches has enabled the Afar people to get improved social and economic services			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	69	19.7
	Disagree	175	50.0
	Undecided	8	2.3
	Agree	52	14.9
	Strongly Agree	46	13.1
	Total	350	100.0

As Table 1.4. depicts above, the proportion of respondents who believe that the cooperation between the federal and regional state executive branches didn't help to improve the delivery of social and economic services is greater 244(69.7%) than others who believe the opposite 98(28%) and the remained 8(2.3%) undecided. Therefore, from the data indicated that the supports provided by the federal executives (ministries) could not enable the Afar people to get improved social and economic services.

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d) The Provision of Special Support as Mechanism of IGR

All regions of the country were not at similar level of political and socio-economic development when Ethiopia was restructured following the introduction of ethnic federalism in 1991. When EPRDF took power in 1991 and restructured the country through federal arrangement, it became obvious that the peripheral areas of the country mostly inhabited by pastoralists lagged behind others. In this regard, *Yohannes and Mahmmud (2015)* mentioned that Ethiopian pastoralists are one of the groups who lag behind others in terms of their socio-economic and political development because of negligence and marginalization by past governments.

Cognizant of the existing regional disparities the preamble of the 1995 Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia stipulated the need to rectify the existing imbalance and to work hard to promote the interests of the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia with the intent of building one political and economic community, the common destiny of Ethiopians. It seems with this understanding that the government of EPRDF gave constitutional consideration to the historically disadvantaged societies of the country at least in principle (FDRE-Constitution Article 89 (4)).

The rationale for the provision of special support to the Developing Regional States is presented in some detail by the Ministry of Federal Affairs. Accordingly, the support is based on the following grounds: First, the federal government has constitutional responsibility (Art.89/4) to support nations, nationalities and peoples that are least advantaged in their socio-economic development. Second, the existing capacity and development gaps among regional states necessitate positive intervention for the realization of the long term plan of the country, building one political community. Third, the interest of the developing regional states to get support from the federal government in order to accelerate their socio-economic development is the other rational. Fourth, the District Level Development Programme (DLDP) started during the Transitional period (1991-1995). The DLDP was one of the strategies set by the government of the FDRE in 2000, to realize the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP) (MoFA, 2017).

Institutional arrangements were made for the Provision of Special Support to the four Developing Regional States. First, the federal government organized an office called "*Office of Regional Affairs*" within the Prime Minister's office. Until 2001 this sector supported the establishment of government structures in the regional states and its support was focusing on the construction of offices, elementary schools, hospitals and health stations as well as improving the implementation capacity of the Developing Regional States by providing trainings and practicing experience sharing *(MoFA, 2016).* However, the supports provided could not bring substantial changes in terms of building the implementation capacity of the regional states. In line with this view one of the directorates of *the MoFA stated:*

> *There was an obvious gap between the efforts made and the changes brought in building the implementation the capacity of the Developing Regional States. In 2002 the ruling party (EPRDF) thoroughly examined the support provided and sort out the reasons for the limited achievements. It was found that the technical advisors and professionals deployed to the Developing Regional States were performing tasks on behalf of the respective sector offices and administrators where they were assigned rather than focusing on building the capacity of workers and administrators. This had its own adverse effect on the purpose of the provision of the special support to the Developing Regional States. The government decided to change its approach of providing support which as a result the Office of Regional Affairs was replaced by the Ministry of Federal Affairs which was believed to foster the development efforts in the Developing Regional States (Interview, 24 December 2018).*

Later, the Special Support Board was established in 2004 to coordinate the efforts of the federal government in providing special support to the Developing Regional States *(Haileyesus, 2014).* The Board was established by the Council of Ministers Regulation No. 103/2004 to provide affirmative support for "less developed regions". This regulation was amended by the regulation No.128/2006 and the latest regulation of the Council of Ministers No. 24/2011 repealed the 2006 regulation. The Ministry of Federal Affairs (MoFA) is in charge of coordinating the special supports provided by members of the Special Support Board (MoFA, 2016). It was first established under proclamation N0.256/2001 that defined the powers and duties of the reorganized executive organs of the FDRE. Hence the core processes of MoFA ought to bring equitable development in the Developing Regional States, prevent and resolve conflicts, strengthen the federal system, uphold federal-regional relations in the country, and maintain good relations, peace and tolerance among different religions and beliefs (Ibid).

The purpose of the special support provided to various sector offices in Afar Regional State is to enhance the capacity of planning and executing socio-economic developments, enhancing public participation, ensuring good governance and supplying quality government services to the community. Supports have been provided to build the required capacity with the intent of fostering development and enabling the regional state to stand by its own after certain years. However, inability of the leadership to enhance the implementation capacity comparable to the support provided is remained to be the unresolved problem *(MoFA, 2016).*

The institutions forming the Special Support Board are the Ministry of Federal Affairs, Ministry of

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Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resource, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, Ministry of Public Service and Human Resource Development. According to the bulletin published in June 2011 by its Public Relation Office, the vision of MoFA is to "*realize lasting peace, strong intergovernmental relations and equitable development in Ethiopia by 2020*". However, one of the technical advisors working in the head office, Addis Ababa, asserted that this vision could not be attained given the inadequate support which have been provided and the existing capacity limitations in the Developing Regional States. Further building on this assertion, one of the directorates of the MoFA reflected:

> *The vision of MoFA was not set based on the common agreement among support providing and support recipient organs. It was set without considering the commitment of member institutions of the Special Support Board and the existing tangible implementation capacity limitations in the Developing Regional States. Later based on the experiences gained, the time required for the realization of the vision was extended to 2025 to make it compatible to the vision of the country, achieving middle income status by 2025... to a more open, inclusive, equitable and democratic society (interview 23 December 2018).*

All member ministries of the Special Support Board have assigned their own technical advisors to provide support to Afar Regional State. The technical advisors of the MoFA have been coordinating the activities of other technical advisors at regional, Zonal and Woreda levels. The technical advisors of MoFA assigned at Zonal and Woreda level are known as cluster coordinators. The official document of the Ministry of Federal Affairs showed that in 2018 fiscal year the total number of federal technical advisors deployed in Afar Regional State was 54 out of which 51 were from the seven ministries forming the Special Support Board and the remain 3 were from EPRDF office. Therefore, two kinds of advices have been given for the Regional State *(MoFA, 2018)*. According to the regional coordinator of MoFA, the technical advisors supporting the regional state are known as '*development team'*.

Each technical advisor provides support to their respective sector Bureaus or Offices where they are assigned. For instance, technical advisors deployed by the Ministry of Education, provide support to the Regional Education Bureau and to the Woreda Education Office. They work in cooperation with their respective Bureaus and Offices. They also attend the management meeting of their respective sector Bureaus and Offices to discuss on activities done and evaluate gaps. Technical advisors were expected to play an important role in areas identified as development sectors (Education, Water, Health, Agriculture and Natural Resource and Civil Service and Capacity Building).

The institutional arrangement and deployment of technical advisors have not been able to accelerate the development of Afar Regional State due to several challenges. One of the challenges related to the Special Support Board is lack of coordination among members of the Federal Board institutions. The 2016 report of the Ministry of Federal Affairs substantiate the above idea:

> *There has been problem of coordinating the political and development supports. Although efforts were made to incorporate the responsibilities to be discharged by members of the Federal Support Board institutions at the plan level, the support provided failed to be effective because the coordination and implementation evaluation of the support provided has not been lead by strict discipline. (MoFA, 2016: 24).*

The other problem of the Board is the deployment of small number of technical advisors. In this regard Participants of the interview asserted that the manpower resource deployed in Afar region is too small compared to the support needed to bring about meaningful change in the region. The same idea was reiterated by the regional coordinator of the Ministry of Federal Affairs:

> *The efforts of member Ministries of the Special Support Board ministries in enhancing the implementation capacity of Woredas in Afar region have been constrained by lack of adequate manpower (technical advisors). For instance, the MoFA has assigned only one cluster and one Woreda coordinator in Zone five. Therefore, they cannot effectively, coordinate the activities of other technical advisors who have been supporting sector offices in the five Woredas of the Zone.* (*Interview, 8 February 2018, Semera*).

The other problem is related to the capacity of technical advisors providing support to the Developing Regional States. Participants of the interview asserted that some of the technical advisors lacked experience and the required capacity. Therefore, lack of experience and limited capacities on the part of technical advisors has its own impact on the effectiveness of the support provided. One of the authorities working in the Office of the ruling party, EPRDF, further strengthened the above idea when he stated:

> *There are still gaps in the changes scored in Afar Regional State despite of the deployment of professionals to support the development efforts in the region. The change after several years of support is not as such significant. The role of advisors sent from the center in bringing the anticipated rapid change and development is still very slow. I doubt whether these professionals have been carefully selected and deployed to the region (Interview, 8 January, 2018, Addis Ababa).*

The other problem was failure of member ministries of the Board to create conducive working environment to technical advisors deployed to Afar Region in order to maximize their support to the regional state. According to the views of the interviewees, the conditions in which the technical advisors have been living and working has its own adverse impact on their

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motivation and commitment. In this regard one of the cluster (Zonal) coordinator in Afar region asserted:

> *The Federal Board institutions have wide gaps in providing incentives and in fulfilling the necessary facilities for us (technical advisors deployed in the region). For instance, we do not have our own offices which as a result, we have been forced to share offices of Zonal and Woreda workers. Such working environment has been significantly affecting our privacy and comfort. Lack of transportation has constrained our movement to Woredas. Moreover, we have been using our own personal laptop to keep the required data. Had the respective Federal Board ministries provided us different incentives and facilities, we would have fully engaged in building the capacity of the regional leadership at different levels (Interview, 22 January 2018, Awash 7 Kilo).*

The shared agreement among technical advisors interviewed during the field visit in 2017 and 2018 was that Afar Regional State leaders at different levels lacked commitment and initially they did not wholeheartedly accept the importance of the special support given to the regional state. Similarly, most interviewees mentioned that lack of serious concern on the part of the regional leadership to the support provided by the development team is the other problem. Some of the leaders at different levels have not been participating in the quarterly evaluation of the implementation performance of the support provided. Participants of the interview mentioned that rent seeking mentality on the part of the leadership is one of the problems which reduced the contribution of the supports provided for the development of Afar Regional State. In line with this view, one educated Afar reflected:

> *Leaders of the regional state have been prioritizing their own interest at the expense of the benefits of the community. Some of the leaders give the clan lands to rent seeking investors, own land for themselves or in the name of their families instead of using the support they have been given by different stakeholders. Leaders have not been trying to maximize the contribution of technical advisors. The prevalence of rent seeking mentality among Afar Regional State leaders has been hindering development in the region which as a result ensuring the benefit of the community has become difficult (Interview,22 January 2019, Semera).*

The special support provided to Afar Regional State by the various stakeholders presented and described above was further substantiated by the quantitative data obtained through the administration of questionnaire. Table 1.5. below depicts the respondents' judgment regarding the role of the special support in the socio-economic development of Afar Regional State.

Table 1.5. The Contribution of Special Support to Afar Regional State

Do you believe that the special support provided to the Afar Regional State has brought significant change in the socio-economic development of the region?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes I believe	94	26.9
	No I do not believe	256	73.1
	Total	350	100.0

Survey data collected by the researcher, 2019

As we infer from Table 1.5. above, the percentage of respondents who believed that the contribution of the special support for the socio-economic development of Afar Regional State is insignificant, 256(73.1%) is greater than others who do not believe in that way. Through cross tabulation respondents who contend that the provision special support to Afar Regional State did not bring significant change in the socio-economic development of the region or were asked to explain the reasons behind the less contribution of the special support to the socio-economic development of Afar Regional State.

Table 1.6. Problems in the Provision of Special Support in Afar Regional State

If your anster to the above question (Table. 7.1.) is no, what are the factors adversely affecting the provision of special support in Afar Regional State?

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		F	Percent	
Not Believe	Limited capacity of the technical advisors (professionals) deployed in the region to support different sectors	187	24.2%	73.0%
	Lack of coordination among professionals supporting the various sectors in the region	172	22.3%	67.2%
	Limited awareness of the community about the purpose of the provision of the special support to the region	196	25.4%	76.6%
	Lack of motivation and commitment among the leaders of the regional state at different levels	217	28.1%	84.8%
Total		772	100.0%	301.6%

Survey data collected by the researcher, 2019

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As we infer from Table 1.6. above, 187(73.0%) of the respondents argued that limited capacity of the technical advisors deployed in the region to support different sectors has its own impact for the less contribution of the special support to the socio-economic development of the Afar Regional State. Others 172(67.2%) of the respondents argued that lack of coordination among technical advisors supporting the various sectors in the region is the cause for the less contribution of the special support to the region's socio-economic development. Moreover, 196 (76.6%) of the respondents asserted that limited awareness of the community about the purpose of the provision of the special support to the region is cause for the less contribution of the special support for the socio-economic development of Afar the region. Moreover, 217(84.8%) of the respondents argued that lack of motivation and commitment among the leaders of the regional state at different levels is the main factor why the special support provided to Afar Regional State is not translated into meaningful socio-economic development.

V. Conclusion

This paper shades light on the power relation between Afar Regional State and the federal government. The mechanisms of IGR between the two levels of governments have been the party channel, the legislative and executive organs as well as the provision of special support. However, this multidimensional relation did not help to transform the socio-economic development of Afar Regional state due to several reasons. The affiliation relation between EPRDF and ANDP which deny the regional state to co-determine on national policies and strategies, the federal intervention in the regional jurisdiction, conduct of irregular supervision by the federal government, inadequacy of the support provided to the regional executive branches. Finally, the special support provided by various stakeholders to Afar Regional State did not bring the expected change in the socio-economic development in the region. The rhetoric change scored in the region is far from the reality on the ground. There is a big gap between the reality and the development hope that was promised when the provision of special support started.

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Impact of 2009 Amnesty Programme on Youth Development in the Niger Delta

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Abstract- The amnesty programme was proclaimed by the then-president Umaru Ya'adua in June 2009 to grant pardon to all persons who directly or indirectly participated in militant activities in the Niger Delta region and were willing to surrender their weapons and renounce armed struggle against the federal government. The amnesty programme sought to disarm, demobilize integrate the repentant militants into the society through skill acquisition, human capital development, financial empowerment, micro-credit facility and placement programme which had started and is ongoing. This work seeks to ascertain the impact of the amnesty programme on the youth and development of the Niger Delta Region. It adapts the historical approach and its materials were derived from secondary services. The study also adopts the resource curse theoretical framework. Finding from the study shows that environmental despoliation, destruction of land and Rivers/creeks in the area render the traditional occupation of farming and fishing impossible, hardship on the people, unemployment, disease and death as a result of activities of oil multinational companies have not been addressed. The study then recommends environmental mitigations and rejuvenation, repeal of obnoxious oil industry laws, timely release of funds for the programme, assuage the youths from further militant activities in the Region.

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I. Introduction

The Niger Delta, comprising of Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta and the Edo States, is blessed with huge oil and gas deposits which are the main sources of revenue contributing 95% of export revenue to the federal government. Nigeria is Africa's largest producer of oil and gas and the country earned more than $26 billion in revenue in the first and second quarters of 2018 (Asu, 2018). Despite its enormous contribution to the Nigerian economy, the Niger Delta has suffered neglect and social deprivation which has given rise to youth restiveness, insecurity, kidnapping, arm robbery, oil theft, piracy, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

In response to the poor socio-economic conditions of the area, various militant groups, notably the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) Niger Delta People Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV), Joint Revolutionary Council (JRC) and many others emerged in the early 2000s intending to protest violently and possibly destabilize the economy against neglect by vandalizing oil installations and kidnapping local and expatriate oil workers in the area. This resulted in a huge reduction in oil production and a sharp decline in foreign exchange earnings and local investment.

Noting the impact of militancy on the economy of the country, the administration of late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, in June 2009, initiated and made a proclamation of the Amnesty Programme to pardon all persons who directly or indirectly participated in militant activities in the Niger Delta and were willing to surrender their weapons and renounce armed struggle between 6th August and 4th October 2009 (Uguanyi, 2014). Besides granting reprieve, the amnesty programme sought to reintegrate the repentant militant into the society through skill acquisition, financial empowerment, placement programme, micro-credit facility and human capital development. The scheme has been sustained with each participant earning ₦65,000 monthly. It is estimated that the sum of ₦243 bn was spent by the government in the first five years (2009-2014) of the programme. The federal government also budgeted the sum of ₦70 billion for the programme in the 2019 appropriation, which failed to bring an end to an upsurge of militant attacks in recent years.

As has been stated above, with over 60 years of oil production in the Niger Delta and the billions of naira revenue realized by the government, the region is still plagued by abject poverty and a lack of critical infrastructures such as water, electricity, roads and bridges. The environmental impact of oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta region has contributed immensely to the destruction of the fragile ecosystem of the region regarded as one of the worst petroleum-polluted environments in the world. The emergence of various militant groups, all indulging in violent agitations, deploying various shades of criminal activities such as hostage-taking, oil bunkering, pipeline vandalization, piracy, drug and human trafficking, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons against the government and multinational companies. The impact of militancy on the nation's economy was quite acute and devastating leading to low production of oil between 2006 and 2009. However, due to the amnesty programme and its sustenance by successive administrations, oil output has today risen to about 2.2 million bpd. The programme which commenced in 2009 was initially scheduled to end in 2015. The attempt by the Buhari administration to discontinue the scheme in 2016 did not succeed. Despite the huge gains recorded since the

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inception of the programme particularly in minimizing tension and youth restiveness, the amnesty programme has failed to enthrone lasting peace as there are still renewed militant hostilities in the region.

Given this development, what is the impact of the amnesty programme on the youths of the Niger Delta, has the amnesty programme helped in bringing sustainable peace in the area? to what extent has the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the ex-militants been achieved, what are the challenges confronting the amnesty programme and how can these challenges be addressed? These are the questions that this work sought to address.

This work seeks to ascertain the impact of the amnesty programme on youths in the Niger Delta, find out whether the amnesty programme has brought about sustained peace in the area, examine the extent to which the disarmament and demobilization and reintegration of ex-militant have been achieved, and examine the challenges confronting the scheme to proffer solutions to them.

This work, will contribute immensely to the body of the existing literature on the amnesty programme, provide useful input to policymakers on Niger Delta issues and give insight into the challenges facing the programme as well as stimulate further research in the area.

II. Relative Deprivation Theory

The work adopts the Resource Curse Theory as enunciated by Gelb, (1988), Auty, 1993, also called the paradox of plenty Karl. For many people living in poor but resource-rich countries, the natural resource wealth is not a risk but has long become a fact with disastrous consequences. This is especially the case in the World's poorest resource-rich region. Many of those exporting oil has some of the worst development indicators in the world. In areas like Nigeria's Niger Delta, for example, decades of oil production have virtually destroyed the environment, many people's livelihoods and their hopes for a better future (Roll, 2011).

This study adopted the Relative Deprivation theoretical framework which emphasizes socio-economic in politics, the expectations of the people vis-a-vis the stark reality on the ground. The main proponents of the theory of relative deprivation include Emile Durkheim, Robert Gurr, Samuel Stoutfer, Robert K. Merton W.G Runciman, many others. The accessing to the theory violence and counter result from deprivation, neglect frustration, marginalization and inequality in a given society with shared lusting experience Robert Gurr (1970) in his treatise comparing groups expectations and actual access to economic and political power, has covered that violent breakdown of peace, unity and cohesion of a political community occurs when some people are denied their basic ignites including social amenities, oppressed deprived and frustrated while others live in affluence at the determent of the oppressed.

Relative Deprivation – feeling of people of a common liturgical and socio-economic background of being excluded marginalized, oppressed frustrated and consequently exposed to hardship, hunger, disease and death. A deprived person is an alienated and angry individual. He feels humiliated when suppressed by the powerful in the society or a group that feels deprived in comparison with other groups within the same state or nation in the allocation of values is when its expectations are not met (Folarin, 2007). It is the actual or perceived lack of or inequality in the distribution of resources required to maintain quality life in other words.

Folarin (2007) captured relative deprivation as an economy of objection induced by environmental despoliation and dislocation, destruction of the mean of livelihood (farmland, River, streams) without remediation, lack of critical infrastructure, lack of empowerment and empowerment opportunities. Relative deprivation is the feeling of demands and alienation from the commonwealth by a segment of the state. A population who infer from the mode of distribution of amenities that they have been unfairly treated or worse off compared with others. It is a factor that drives social disorder including grievances, noting, looting, kidnapping, banditry terrorism, piracy, oil theft, robbery, insurgency and militancy, the proliferation of small arms and high weapons, drug and human trafficking must make a living.

Relative deprivation explains the Niger Delta situation where the people are subjected to all kinds of frustration and deprivation and neglect in the oil companies and the federal government of Nigeria. Their environment had been mercilessly degraded, they lack critical infrastructure –roads, budges, electricity, clean water, neat and educational facilities, means of communication. The region is invaded by abject poverty. Their means of livelihood have been destroyed by activities of multinational oil companies through an oil spill, gas flaring, seismic operations and effluence discharges. All this and lack of empowerment and unemployment has refilled in the upsurge of violent crimes, poverty, ill-health, lack of infrastructures, agitative, protests and militancy which the amnesty programme granted by Yar'adua's administration sought to address.

III. Origin of Niger Delta Crisis

The Niger Delta has unique geographic and ecological characteristics that have made development difficult but have abundant natural resources, particularly oil and gas which constitute more than 90% of revenue to Nigeria. The region is noted for several neglected settlements divided by some swamps, creeks

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and rivers, oppressed and marginalized minorities, ravaged by poverty, hopelessness, disease, violent agitation for separate regions before 1965. It was because of these topographical peculiarities that the colonial Government set up the Willink Commission in 1957 to look into ways that could be adopted by the government to bring development to the area and give the people a sense of belonging. The commission noted the difficult terrain of the region and recommended the creation of a special body to be in charge of the development of the Niger Delta region. This recommendation gave rise to the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Board, but the issue of the creation of a separate Niger Delta Region was jettisoned, and this did not silence agitation for the creation of the region in the area.

Today, having been broken into Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta States, agitation is no longer for state creation, but resource control, following gross neglect of the region that sustains Nigeria.

Consequently, the Niger Delta crisis predates the discovery of oil in the later part of 1957. Oil was first discovered in commercial quantity in 1956 at Oloibiri, Bayelsa State and exploration began in February 1958. There were 24 oil fields by 1967 with a production capacity of 582,025 barrels per day (bpd) (Etekpe 2007). The discovering of oil promised development to the areas but instead of a blessing, it brought agony and penury to the people. The Niger Delta has used a plethora of means such as petitions, civil agitations and now militant agitation to ventilate their grievances. For instance, Adaka Boro resorted to revolts to seize the state power to affect the development of the Niger Delta. On February 23, 1966, he declared the Niger Delta Republic but the federal government quickly quelled the insurrection within twelve days.

In 1990, the emergence of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the activities of his group, Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) gave much leeway to the conflict. For Ken Saro-Wiwa, it was a struggle and quest for self-determination. The arrest and death of Ken-Saro-Wiwa gave the Niger Delta struggle an international status and instead of deterring others, myriad militant groups sprang up. According to Ikelegbe (2010), the turning point in the transformation of demands into political and volatile ones in the militant agitation was the Kaiama Declaration of December 1998 made by Ijaw youths. It was this declaration that put resource control on the front burner and marked the beginning of militant agitation and the formation of more deadly militia groups.

These militant groups took up arms to press home their demands. After waiting for over fifty years, they realized that oil has brought untold misfortune and severe misery, their land has been overtaken for exploitation and exploration, their rivers and waters polluted, their occupation, fishing and growing of crops has become practically impossible without any alternative. The grievances of the region have been numerous. These have included disinheritance by federal government laws, loss of control over their resources, marginalization in the oil economy, marginalization within the Nigerian federation and militarization and repression through the military and security agencies. Concerning the multinational oil companies, the region complains of environmental pollution, mistreatment, poor compensation practices, poor benefits, unfulfilled promises, failures to implement memoranda of understanding and inadequate employment and representation in the oil industry without redress.

Other grievances are poverty, deprivation, high youth unemployment and hopelessness, the location of head offices of TNOCs outside the region and the takeover of oil benefits and oil blocks by non-indigenes of the region. The response of the government and the TNOCs led by the Shell has been more crisis, severe repression, suppression, subjugation and inhumane.

IV. General Causes of Niger Delta Crisis

Consequently, the main causative factors of crisis in the Niger Delta are anchored on the structural deficiency of the Nigerian federation, poverty/deprivation of the masses, environmental degradation, lack of development and unemployment, distortion of the social and economic fabric of the local societies, poor governance and corruption, divide and rule tactics of oil companies and insincerity on part of the government.

i. *Structural deficiency of the Nigerian federation:* One of the factors responsible for the Niger Delta crisis is the structural injustices that led to the marginalization of the Niger Delta region.

Historically, Nigeria was dominated by three large ethnic groups- the Yoruba, Igbo and the Hausa-Fulani. The British colonial government exploited this situation by ruling through the existing aristocracy, thereby reinforcing the historical imbalances already present. Invariably, the postcolonial Nigeria that inherited this structure has been marked by massive instability, including military coup d'etat, as a result of conflict between these three groups. The smaller ethnic groups in the Niger Delta were systematically excluded from power-sharing. Furthermore, under the 1999 Federal Constitution, the Mineral and Mining Act, all minerals are owned and controlled by the federal government, a structure that has been responsive to the Niger Delta grievances. This informed the various declarations like the Ogoni Bills of Right, Kaiama Declaration of the Ijaws, Akakalaka Declaration that requested self-determination and resource control (Marcellus, 2005).

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Almond (2004) remarks that one of the most critical challenges facing political systems all over the world is their inability to build a common identity and a sense of community among their citizens. Conflicts over various resources and factors such as finance, ethnic and religious identities are among the most explosive causes of political turmoil. Most remarkable plural societies like Nigeria are worse for this assertion. Nigeria is a pluralistic nation with more than 200 ethnic nations, with diverse cultures and customs. All her people did not have much in common before British colonialism, the country is sharply divided between Muslims, mainly in the north and Christians who populate the South, there is a significant class division based on income levels creating a high degree of inequality.

These various plural characteristics interact in different ways and are usually exploited by politicians to engineer conflicts. Issues bordering on marginalization and neglect often snowball into youth restiveness and sporadic raging ethnic and religious conflicts that re-emerge in various parts of the country at the least provocation. There is also the problem of political conflicts present at the threshold of any election in the country. The list of these challenges is innumerable.

These challenges persist and in some cases degenerate into more serious crises because of the quest for resource control by the people and environmental degradation, marginalization and neglect.

ii. *Poverty/Deprivation:* Despite huge revenue to the government over the past 50 years the local people have remained in abject poverty and deprivation as they lack basic amenities like water, electricity, hospitals and schools. The World Bank views poverty as one of the key causes of conflict in oil-producing countries. The Bank has asserted that "the key root cause of conflict is the failure of economic development such that many of the world's poorest countries are locked in a tragic vicious cycle where poverty cause conflict and conflict causes poverty" (Shakleman, 2006). Nigerians have little or no access to adequate housing, food, or health care. They live in an unsafe and unhealthy environment, lack access to clean water, which does not make for a decent living. Because of incessant communal clashes and youth restiveness. Niger Delta has been described as a region of frustrated expectations and deep-rooted mistrust. Though the long years of neglect could be adduced for this, it has implanted in the community, a mentality and feeling of hopelessness, and persistent violence has become the order of the day.

iii. *Environmental Damage:* The social and environmental costs of oil production have been very extensive. They include destruction of wildlife and biodiversity, loss of fertile soil, pollution of land, water and air, i.e drinking water, degradation of farmland and damage to the aquatic ecosystem, all of which have caused serious health problems for the inhabitants in oil-producing areas. Environmental regulations are often not respected by the oil companies and resorting to court for redress by the people is difficult due to the lack of the means to institute such a process by the affected communities. As a result, oil companies often evacuate inhabitants from their traditional homelands to strange areas and further marginalize them. The system of oil production in Nigeria is skewed in favour of the Multi-Nationals and government elite who are the direct recipients of oil production revenue. Environmental damage due to the activities of the oil companies has caused other serious environmental problems. Flooding; destruction of the natural ecosystem; fisheries depletion caused by dredging; spilling of toxic waste into the rivers are common phenomena in the region. The local people can no longer take to farming and fishing which are their major occupations. The UNO has warned of the impact of oil activities on the environment and the ecosystem of the region, are pushing the Delta towards ecological disaster".

The consequence of oil resource extraction on the environment of the Niger Delta has been very glaring in terms of its negative effect on the region. Eteng (1997) stated that "oil exploration and exploitation has over the last few decades impacted disastrously on the socio-physical environment of the Niger Delta oil-bearing communities, massively threatening the subsistent peasant economy and the environment and hence the entire livelihood and basic survival of the people."

> *"the slow poisoning of the waters and the destruction of vegetation and agricultural land by spills which occur during petroleum operations", and observed further that "since the inception of the oil industry in Nigeria, there has been no concerted effort on the part of the government, let alone the oil operators, to control the environmental problems associated with the industry"*

Oil spillage which is a major source of environmental degradation in the Niger Delta has also resulted in the loss of lives and property. For example, the Jesse pipeline explosion fire that killed over 1000 people and the oil-spill fire in Kalabileama community in Nembe Local Government Area of Bayelsa State on September 17, 2003. Also was the Eket oil spill of 1997 which destroyed property with billions of naira.

Most pipeline explosions take place due to drilling activity at the new site, an accidental bursting of pipeline work taking place around the pipeline, an old pipeline that has not been checked for maintenance, vandalization by angry youths and members of the host

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communities, oil bunkers who steal crude oil by intentionally breaking the pipelines. As a result of the consequences of the oil explosion to lives, property and the environment, people of Niger Delta have consistently blamed the oil companies and the federal government of Nigeria for showing a non-challant attitude and lacking any systematic mechanism to address the menace and come to the aid of its citizens when emergency assistance is needed. It was alleged that Government does not respond immediately in most cases to assist those affected like it would have been done in Western and industrialized countries (Torulagha, 2001).

iv. *Lack of Development and Unemployment:* The Niger region is underdeveloped in all its ramifications, although it is the breadbasket of Nigeria. According to Whittington (2001) because of its economic dilemma, "the oil region in Nigeria seems to be stuck in a time warp, with little real change since oil was discovered more than 60 years ago. Away from the main towns, there is no real development, no roads, no electricity, no running water and no telephone". The underdevelopment is indeed severe and the youths of the region are the hardest hit by lack of development. This is why many of them have resorted to militancy to focus national and international attention on their plight. Despite all the claims by the oil companies to be involved in the development of the region, it is the contrary. "The government and oil companies have profited by hundreds of billions of dollars since oil was discovered, yet most Nigerians living in the oil-producing region are living in dire poverty". Also, the anger of the people of the region, especially the youths, derives from the fact that other parts of the country, sometimes the arid regions, are built to the standards comparable to similar cities in the developed world with revenue from the Niger Delta. They have bridges built over dry land and good quality roads, while most of the Niger Delta communities are only accessible by boats and seriously in need of bridges. Unemployment is very high among the people of the Niger Delta as the oil companies do not hire their employees from the region that produce oil, but from the non-oil producing region of Nigeria. Brisibe (2001) has noted that "the majority of the youths from the region are unemployed. They do not benefit from the presence of multinational corporations operating in their communities. Less than five per cent of the oil company workers are people from the Niger Delta. The majority of workers in these companies, who are the beneficiaries are from other parts of Nigeria".

The critical issue in the Niger Delta is not only the increasing incidence of poverty but also the intense feeling among the people of the region that they ought to do far better. This is based on the considerable level of resources in their midst, and the brazen display and celebration of ill-gotten wealth in Nigeria, most of which derives from crude oil wealth by corrupt politicians. Today their farmlands are damaged and fishing grounds destroyed making the traditional occupations such as fishing, farming, lumbering, crafts and small-scale agro-based activities impossible. This has contributed to the indignation, social discontent and frustration, changing deprivation into collective violence by militias.

v. *Distortions in the Social and Economic fabric of the Local societies:* The oil companies have major distorted the social and economic fabric of the local societies. According to Hutchful (1985), "Shell and other companies have perpetuated regional and class inequalities by creating oil colonies in local areas where oil executives live quite lavishly in comparison to the impoverished conditions of the local communities". Besides the oil industry requiring highly skilled workers, local villagers are either forced to migrate to the urban centres after being economically displaced, or become low-skilled workers' depending on the oil company. This structural change in the economic life of the local communities is often along the ethnic line. The new economy that emerged, as a result, coexisted with the depletion of the natural environment by activities of the oil companies.

The heightened pace of construction activities in the burgeoning oil and industrial cities created huge and unprecedented demands for land and construction materials such as sand, clay and wood. Local people are easily seduced by the lure of easy money in the growing urban centres. The large rubber and palm plantation, in fact, general agriculture, was abandoned and subsequently trespassed by local people. They sold the land to speculators in the urban periphery and contractors for quarrying sand, clay and other construction materials. Some local landowners turned into contractors themselves. Thus, the local farmers and landowners mortgaged their future by destroying their land inheritance and throwing away perhaps forever, their means of livelihood. More so, the demand for high-quality fine sand also led to the mining of river channels. River sand mining destroys the aquatic habitat and disrupts the hydraulic capacity and relationships in the river channels. The fishing communities suffer as a result, in addition to the destruction caused by the oil industry.

More so, the migrants from other parts of the country who relocated to both the cities and rural areas of this region, seeking opportunities in the related activities, aggravated the pressure on land and water resources because most of the migrants relocated for economic reasons and hence are less concerned about

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issues of resource conservation and environmental protection.

The consequences of these dislocations are environmental deterioration, poverty and under-development which this region has been experiencing since the past six decades of intensive exploration/ exploitation of oil and gas.

vi. *Human Rights Violations:* Violations of the human rights of the local populace can be cited as one of the factors responsible for the militancy in the Niger Delta region. The human rights of the people are constantly violated by security forces, at the behest of the companies. For instance, in an attempt to suppress the Isaac Boro rebellion in 1966, Nigerian troops terrorized entire communities including the raping of innocent women. The peoples of the region viewed all these as assaults and an attempt to annihilate the people because they belonged to ethnic minority groups in the Nigerian federation. The Udi tragedy is another example of deliberate infringement of the people fundamental rights.

vii. *Bad Governance/Corruption:* The Niger Delta is riddled with bad governance/corruption on the parts of government officials, both at the state and local government levels. Under section 16 of the 1999 constitution, all revenues of the Federation are paid into the Federation Account.

Among the principles for the distribution of the funds in the Federation Account are derivation (not less than 13%), equality of states, internal revenue generation, landmass, terrain, population density and ecological damage. These revenues are shared vertically among tiers of government and horizontally among states and local governments. It has been argued that if government officials in the region have judiciously utilized their monthly allocations, to better the lots of the ordinary people, through the creation of jobs, and infrastructural development of the region, the situation would have been better than the current sorry state. Rather, the monthly allocations are spent on frivolous items that have no corresponding bearings on the life of the people.

viii. *Divide and Rule Tactics of Oil Companies:* One of the reasons that have been adduced for the Niger Delta crisis is the divide and rule tactics of some oil firms operating in the area. The oil companies rather than involve themselves in the development of their areas of operations prefer to give financial gains to some local chiefs which usually result in crisis. This informs why local and other prominent people of the Niger Delta bankrolled by oil companies' ever criticized or condemned the oil companies policies even if such policies directly affect their people, health, environment or the youths who are supposedly leaders of tomorrow.

ix. *The insincerity of the Government:* The alleged insincerity of the Federal Government of Nigeria to develop the region in partnership with the state governments is one of the factors responsible for the Niger Delta crisis. The government set up a commission like the Oil Minerals Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC) and Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to bring development to the communities. However, the activities of the agencies were and are hampered by a lack of funds which become an obstacle in pursuing the goal of developing the region. Furthermore, these commissions are riddled with endemic corruption. Of particular note is the embezzlement of more than ₦81bnby officials of the Interim Management Committee of the NDDC in 2020 for which the NASS instituted a public inquiry and its report indicted the officials of ministry for Niger Delta and NDDC management.

V. Government Intervention

Several efforts, beginning even before independence, have been made by the Federal Government to end conflicts in the region. In 1957, the government established the Willink Commission to look into the problems of the minorities, and this Commission acknowledged the utter neglect of the region and, among other proposals, recommended the creation of the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB). This Board could not achieve its aims for many reasons, one of which was the fact that its headquarters were located in Lagos, far from the problem area. With the creation of twelve states in 1967 and the establishment of the Niger Delta River Basin Authority (NDRBA), the NNDB became moribund. In the second Republic, 1.5% of the Federation Account was allocated for the development of the Niger Delta region. This was grossly inadequate and no meaningful result was achieved.

To demonstrate its commitment to ending the crisis and ensuring the development of the area, the Federal Government established some other Commissions such as the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) which was in operation from 1992 to 1999. OMPADEC was set up by the Ibrahim Babangida Administration under the chairmanship of Chief Albert Horsefall. Like its predecessors, it failed to achieve its mandate owing to official profligacy, corruption, excessive political interference and lack of transparency. After this, the Niger Delta Environmental Survey was set up in 1995, followed by the Niger Delta Development Commission, established in 2000 by President Olusegun Obasanjo to offer a lasting solution to the socio-economic difficulties of the Niger Delta Region' and a mission 'to facilitate the rapid, even and sustainable development of the Niger Delta into a region that is economically prosperous,

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socially stable, ecologically regenerative and politically peaceful' (Niger Delta Development Commission 2000). The government also put in place other mechanisms such as the Task Force on Pipeline Vandalisation (April 2000) operated by the Nigeria Police Force in collaboration with the NNPC. Similar task forces were also set up by the navy, Army and State Security Service (SSS) in various states of the Niger Delta. The Special Security Committee on Oil Producing Areas was also set up by the Federal Government in November 2001 to address the prevailing situation in the oil-producing areas. Other efforts include the convening of the First Niger Delta Peace Conference in Abuja in 2007, a Joint Task Force (JTF) in 2008, and a Technical Committee made up of stakeholders and the Niger Delta ministry in 2008. In other words, the response of the government to the plight of the region started with the Willink Commission and has been going on at a small speed.

Following criticisms of the military option, especially when it became obvious that the use of force by the JTF was aggravating rather than resolving the conflict, an amnesty programme was proclaimed on 25 May 2009 by President Umar Musa Yar'Adua. Amnesty was the Federal Government's effort towards bringing enduring peace, security, stability and development to the region.

It involved granting unconditional pardon to all armed militants in the Niger Delta region, who in turn, were to surrender their arms and ammunition, sign an undertaking not to return to the creeks and continue with the struggle.

Amnesty followed the recommendations contained in the 2008 report by the Niger Delta Technical Committee (NDTC) initially established by the Federal Government, and chaired by MOSOP president Ledum Mitee, to assess initiatives taken in the Region and provide for a comprehensive report and recommendations. The 45-member committee was inaugurated on 8 September 2008 to collate and review all past reports in the Niger Delta, appraise their recommendations and make other proposals that will help the Federal Government achieve sustainable development, peace, human and environmental security in the Niger Delta Region. The amnesty programme included disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes. The actualization of the initiative was carried out by the Amnesty planning committee chaired by General Godwin Abe and the author was a member and later Akwa Ibom coordinator of Amnesty.

The first stage of the programme led to 26,808 ex-combatants accepting the offer. Of this figure 20,192 accepted the offer on or before 4th October 2009 and 6 616 in November 2009.

The second stage involved the government setting up demobilization camps for the demilitarization and rehabilitation of the ex-militants; while the third stage involved the government's engagement with the. the leadership of the ex-combatants, as well as non-combatant youths, for employment and empowerment, thus reducing drastically the bombing and kidnappings in the region, Despite this seeming success, amnesty was still to be riddled with cases of corruption which five years later new militant groups emerged in the region, namely; the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA), The Joint Niger Delta Liberation Force (JNDLF), the Niger Delta Red squad (NDRS), the Adaka Boro Avengers (ABA) and the Niger Delta Greenland Justice Mandate (NDGJM). In response, the Federal Government deployed 3 000 military personnel to the region with a projected deployment of 10000 more by the year 2017 in addition to launching Operation Crocodile Smile aimed at restoring peace in the region (Utebor, 2016). Criticisms have however trailed the deployment of troops and, particularly, the use of maximum force in the region. Critics are of the view that the new security measures will further worsen and escalate the security situation in the Region and therefore call for dialogue. In response to this call, the government proposed a $10 billion (N4 trillion) ultrastructural rebirth investment programme for the region. Leaders and stakeholders from the region rejected this because they were not consulted before it was proposed (Omotayo, 2016). In addition, the Federal Government in November 2016, convened a peace dialogue in which President Buhari met with leaders from the region in Abuja to discuss the way forward. At the meeting, leaders of the region led by Edwin Clark presented a 16-point agenda to the Federal Government and although the president welcomed the requests, peace remains elusive. Some critics have attributed the rise in militancy to the failure of the 13% derivation principle and amnesty to product development in the region. The result has been pressure and a call for 'resource control' or 'fiscal federalism' (Akintunde and Hile, 2016).

VI. Prospects and Challenges of the Amnesty Programme

Reports from the government indicate that following the relative peace ushered in by the cease-fire as a result of the amnesty; the country's oil output rose to 2.3 million barrels a day in 2010 from 800,000 barrels per day (in the 2006—2008 period) and there was a tremendous improvement in security in the oil region. A good number lot of oil companies have even engaged in meaningful turn-around maintenance of their facilities. The Amnesty Programme has improved human capital development in the oil industry in the country. The Human Development Index (HDI) had valued Nigeria to have a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living in 2011 at 0.459, positioning the country as the the156th out of 187 countries and territories (UNDO, 2011).

The Amnesty programme in Nigeria could serve to negate the 'resource curse' theory that resource-rich

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economies such as Nigerian, Congo, Angola, are more prone to mismanagement, underdevelopment and violence. The curses from the resources from the Niger Delta Region is avoidable if there are strong institutions, good, governance, equitable distribution of income, respect for the social, economic and political rights of the citizens.

Notwithstanding the achievement of the programme, reports from the panel set up in January 2010 to review the rehabilitation aspect of the DDR revealed some inadequacies which were responsible for the criticism by the citizens of the area for allocating about 80 per cent of the budget for payments to consultants and contractors, 20 for rehabilitation of the ex-militants; over a bloated number of registered ex-militants; the continued detention of several militant leaders; lack of equipment at the training centres. Other challenges include, the irregular release of funds, paid and unpaid allowances, huge disparities between payments made to foot soldiers and former militant commanders, limited access to rehabilitation training and allowances for those who surrendered weapons after the deadline, inappropriate training provision, limited employment prospects, the absence of a broader political settlement involving the broader Niger Delta population that bore the costs of conflict, and the politically motivated staffing of bodies responsible for implementing and coordinating the amnesty programme, are among the numerous flaws constraining the smooth implementation of the programme.

The Federal Government on 2 December 2009 scrapped the Presidential Committee on Disarmament and Amnesty for Militants in the Niger Delta and in its place set up five new committees to handle the Post-Amnesty Programmes and fast track development in the region. These were the Presidential Monitoring Committee on Amnesty; the infrastructural Committee; the Disarmament and Reintegration Committee; the Oil and Gas Assets Protection Committee; and the Environmental Remediation Committee.

One of the major challenges of the amnesty package is in the area of poor implementation. The amnesty programme was not implemented as recommended in the report of the Niger Delta Technical Committee. Rather than engaging in Open negotiations or a formal agreement with the militants, the consultations made up the officials of the Federal government, Niger Delta elites/elders and top government officials of Niger Delta origin who negotiated rather with the militant's Commanders (Obi and Rustad, 2011). This top-down non-inclusive approach, through the militant commanders who were only interested in what could come into their pockets, or for their aggrandizement, is a serious challenge to the Amnesty programme as the militants on the ground felt cheated and sidelined by the government. It shows that the Nigerian government has not learnt any lesson from the previously failed development programme such as the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB), Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (NDBDA), Oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC), which have failed to deliver based on a top-down approach and even the current NDDC.

Furthermore, the total number of ammunitions/ weapons handed in by the militants totalling 1,798 riffles, 1981 guns of various types, 70 RPGs, 159 Pistols, one spear and six cannons were certainly not all, when compared with 26,358 militants that registered for the amnesty programme. The region is still ridden with arms and this is evident in the various attacks that have been carried out even after the disarmament exercise. The recent spate of bombings across the region shows that all is not well with the Amnesty Programme. For instance, MEND set off two car bombs on 15 March 2010 in Warri, the Delta State Capital, where a post amnesty dialogue was being held and this left one person dead and several others injured (Eyo, 2010) Also important is the October 1, 2010 Car bombing that killed about 12 people and disrupted the Nigeria 50th anniversary celebrations. This led to the trial, arrest, prosecution and conviction of the leader of MEND; Henry Okah in South Africa. His brother Charles Okah also suffered the same fate alongside three others before the Abuja Federal High Court on suspicion of involvement in the dastardly act. Also on 4th February 2012, the militant group bombed a trunk pipeline at Brass in Bayelsa state belonging to Italy's EniSPA, from which about 4,000 barrels per day of 'equity production were lost in the incident. The group further claimed responsibility for the bombing of the Ogbogbabere country home of the Minister for Niger Delta, Elder Godsday Orubebe in Burutu local government area of Delta State on 28 January 2012.

Most importantly, Amnesty is exclusive, it targets only militants without consideration for the victims of militancy and hostage-taking in the region (Akinwale, 2010) Mothers and Children who had lost fathers and sons and homes and have been displaced by the conflict were not included in the amnesty package presumably as a result of their non-involvement in militancy. The surrender of arms and renunciation of violence by the militants have not brought an end to the frustration of the entire population and the citizens suffering from the loss of loved ones and property. The attention given to the ex,-militants is rather reinforcing the frustration of those who did not take up arms against the country. Violence could rear up or reoccur in the region if the frustration that reinforces insurgency is not resolved. Resolving these frustrations is, therefore, a requirement for peace-building in the region". (Ibaba, 2011).

The amnesty package should not be seen as a stand-alone act but must be carried out within a

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comprehensive peace process, as recommended by the Technical Committee. Thus, the government must not only publish the white appearance on the recommendations of the Niger Delta Technical committee but also embark on a holistic rather than the current fractured approach to the implementation of the report. The report is believed "to offer an opportunity to reduce the violent conflict significantly and begin long term regional development in the oil-rich region and could help to 'save the region from further violence and organized criminality.

Efforts should be taken to remove the Niger Delta people from what Sacs (2005) refers to as a poverty trap, a situation in which degraded environment, poor health, poor education, poor infrastructure and poor standard of living reinforce one another (Ogege, 2011).

In addition, it was revealed that some of the rehabilitation centres are lacking in even the basic facilities for the proper impartation of knowledge and skills. Shortages of space, beds and other basic facilities in some of the centres made only a few militants be accommodated (Ikelegbe, 2010). Also in compliance with the UN code of DDR, it is expected that in the implementation of the DDR programmes, the ex-militants should be taken to a neutral environment quite far away from their natural habitats for transformation and reintegration purposes. Three requirements are complied with.

Amnesty, it has been observed, is incapable of yielding sustainable results. This is because the few militants who have handed in their weapons only turn-in rusty and old ones and these are not from the major militant groups. Again, the main actors in the vociferous and nefarious militant groups are still very adamant in their struggles. There is no guarantee that the oil facilities and the workers are free from attacks by militants in the Region.

Deprived of unemployment, hungry and angry youths of the Niger Delta Region decided to pick up arms against oil companies operating in the area by initially asking them to stop petroleum prospecting in the region since their operations with attendant sophisticated technologies have not only caused the inhabitant their farmlands/fishing creeks but also short-changed the suffering people of the Region without providing alternative sources of livelihood. Many Niger Deltans have been killed, maimed, harassed, molested, extorted, raped, and several villages and communities have been sacked by the Nigerian security operatives attached to oil companies and deployed to the Niger Delta Region.

The existing relationship amongst the oil-bearing people of Niger Delta, the multi-national oil companies and the Government is getting tensed up daily, like three strange bedfellows, of which without urgent investigation of the causes towards finding a concrete solution, may result in anarchism. As Ibeanu (2000:1), aptly captured the situation: the Niger Delta, a sensitive ecosystem rich in biodiversity, has witnessed considerable violence as a result of the tense relationship among oil companies, the Nigerian State, and oil-bearing communities. The environmental damage from the extraction and movement of fossil fuels is a central point of dispute among the parties while the precise extent of ecological damage remains unknown.

VII. Conclusion and Recommendations

The amnesty programme has immeasurably assisted in empowering and developing the youths, particularly the ex-militants, by offering scholarships for training in both local and foreign tertiary institutions in various academic and professional areas; as well as vocational training in agriculture, pipeline welding. Besides, peace had been restored in parts of the Niger Delta. However, the cardinal objective of the second phase of the programme name, rehabilitation and reintegration are yet to be accomplished, and this has forced the ex-combatants back to the creeks, as a meaningful development of the area is still on the drawing board. Despite this, kidnapping, pipeline vandalization, armed robbery, oil theft, piracy are at the increase. Besides, those who did not participate in the militancy were left over and they are also looking for an opportunity for engagement with the multinational corporations and the governments for their benefit.

However, the amnesty programme would still impact the youth gainfully if the following recommendations are adopted by the governments.

Providing all persons affecting militant activities with the opportunity to earn a sustainable livelihood.

Implementation of policies and strategies that promote adequate and sustainable levels of funding, and focus on integrated human development policies, including income generation, increased local control of resources.

1. Developing all poor areas through integrated strategies and programmes to ensure sustainable management of the environment, mobilization. poverty eradication and alleviation, employment and income generation, women and youths empowerment.
2. The total number of weapons handed is were fee less than the number of ex-militant who registered by the programme. This presupposes that more arms and ammunitions are still in circulation the Niger Delta government should devise a mechanism to meet up the vast catch or arms in the area.
3. The ex-militants who have undergone disarmament and demobilization should be properly integrated into the society and exposed to skill acquisition

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particularly in oil and gas-related aversive skill requisition should be adequately funded and provided with the relevant equipment.

4. They should be regularly in the payment of allowances to the ex-militant and about 70% of the provisions for the programme should be for allowance and the outstanding 30% to the consultants.
5. Leaders of the ex-militant groups who are still incarceration by the security agencies should be released and made to sign undertaking those of good conduct and denounce militancy.

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We typeset manuscripts using advanced typesetting tools like Adobe In Design, CorelDraw, TeXnicCenter, and TeXStudio. We usually recommend authors submit their research using any standard format they are comfortable with, and let Global Journals do the rest.

Alternatively, you can download our basic template from https://globaljournals.org/Template.zip

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Unless specified in the notification, the Editorial Board's decision on publication of the paper is final and cannot be appealed before making the major change in the manuscript.

Acknowledgments

Contributors to the research other than authors credited should be mentioned in Acknowledgments. The source of funding for the research can be included. Suppliers of resources may be mentioned along with their addresses.

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Authors can submit papers and articles in an acceptable file format: MS Word (doc, docx), LaTeX (.tex, .zip or .rar including all of your files), Adobe PDF (.pdf), rich text format (.rtf), simple text document (.txt), Open Document Text (.odt), and Apple Pages (.pages). Our professional layout editors will format the entire paper according to our official guidelines. This is one of the highlights of publishing with Global Journals—authors should not be concerned about the formatting of their paper. Global Journals accepts articles and manuscripts in every major language, be it Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, French, German, Dutch, Italian, Greek, or any other national language, but the title, subtitle, and abstract should be in English. This will facilitate indexing and the pre-peer review process.

The following is the official style and template developed for publication of a research paper. Authors are not required to follow this style during the submission of the paper. It is just for reference purposes.

Manuscript Style Instruction (Optional)

- Microsoft Word Document Setting Instructions.
- Font type of all text should be Swis721 Lt BT.
- Page size: 8.27" x 11'", left margin: 0.65, right margin: 0.65, bottom margin: 0.75.
- Paper title should be in one column of font size 24.
- Author name in font size of 11 in one column.
- Abstract: font size 9 with the word "Abstract" in bold italics.
- Main text: font size 10 with two justified columns.
- Two columns with equal column width of 3.38 and spacing of 0.2.
- First character must be three lines drop-capped.
- The paragraph before spacing of 1 pt and after of 0 pt.
- Line spacing of 1 pt.
- Large images must be in one column.
- The names of first main headings (Heading 1) must be in Roman font, capital letters, and font size of 10.
- The names of second main headings (Heading 2) must not include numbers and must be in italics with a font size of 10.

Structure and Format of Manuscript

The recommended size of an original research paper is under 15,000 words and review papers under 7,000 words. Research articles should be less than 10,000 words. Research papers are usually longer than review papers. Review papers are reports of significant research (typically less than 7,000 words, including tables, figures, and references)

A research paper must include:

a) A title which should be relevant to the theme of the paper.
b) A summary, known as an abstract (less than 150 words), containing the major results and conclusions.
c) Up to 10 keywords that precisely identify the paper's subject, purpose, and focus.
d) An introduction, giving fundamental background objectives.
e) Resources and techniques with sufficient complete experimental details (wherever possible by reference) to permit repetition, sources of information must be given, and numerical methods must be specified by reference.
f) Results which should be presented concisely by well-designed tables and figures.
g) Suitable statistical data should also be given.
h) All data must have been gathered with attention to numerical detail in the planning stage.

Design has been recognized to be essential to experiments for a considerable time, and the editor has decided that any paper that appears not to have adequate numerical treatments of the data will be returned unrefereed.

i) Discussion should cover implications and consequences and not just recapitulate the results; conclusions should also be summarized.
j) There should be brief acknowledgments.
k) There ought to be references in the conventional format. Global Journals recommends APA format.

Authors should carefully consider the preparation of papers to ensure that they communicate effectively. Papers are much more likely to be accepted if they are carefully designed and laid out, contain few or no errors, are summarizing, and follow instructions. They will also be published with much fewer delays than those that require much technical and editorial correction.

The Editorial Board reserves the right to make literary corrections and suggestions to improve brevity.

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Author details

The full postal address of any related author(s) must be specified.

Abstract

The abstract is the foundation of the research paper. It should be clear and concise and must contain the objective of the paper and inferences drawn. It is advised to not include big mathematical equations or complicated jargon.

Many researchers searching for information online will use search engines such as Google, Yahoo or others. By optimizing your paper for search engines, you will amplify the chance of someone finding it. In turn, this will make it more likely to be viewed and cited in further works. Global Journals has compiled these guidelines to facilitate you to maximize the web-friendliness of the most public part of your paper.

Keywords

A major lynchpin of research work for the writing of research papers is the keyword search, which one will employ to find both library and internet resources. Up to eleven keywords or very brief phrases have to be given to help data retrieval, mining, and indexing.

One must be persistent and creative in using keywords. An effective keyword search requires a strategy: planning of a list of possible keywords and phrases to try.

Choice of the main keywords is the first tool of writing a research paper. Research paper writing is an art. Keyword search should be as strategic as possible.

One should start brainstorming lists of potential keywords before even beginning searching. Think about the most important concepts related to research work. Ask, “What words would a source have to include to be truly valuable in a research paper?” Then consider synonyms for the important words.

It may take the discovery of only one important paper to steer in the right keyword direction because, in most databases, the keywords under which a research paper is abstracted are listed with the paper.

Numerical Methods

Numerical methods used should be transparent and, where appropriate, supported by references.

Abbreviations

Authors must list all the abbreviations used in the paper at the end of the paper or in a separate table before using them.

Formulas and equations

Authors are advised to submit any mathematical equation using either MathJax, KaTeX, or LaTeX, or in a very high-quality image.

Tables, Figures, and Figure Legends

Tables: Tables should be cautiously designed, uncrowned, and include only essential data. Each must have an Arabic number, e.g., Table 4, a self-explanatory caption, and be on a separate sheet. Authors must submit tables in an editable format and not as images. References to these tables (if any) must be mentioned accurately.

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Figures are supposed to be submitted as separate files. Always include a citation in the text for each figure using Arabic numbers, e.g., Fig. 4. Artwork must be submitted online in vector electronic form or by emailing it.

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Although low-quality images are sufficient for review purposes, print publication requires high-quality images to prevent the final product being blurred or fuzzy. Submit (possibly by e-mail) EPS (line art) or TIFF (halftone/ photographs) files only. MS PowerPoint and Word Graphics are unsuitable for printed pictures. Avoid using pixel-oriented software. Scans (TIFF only) should have a resolution of at least 350 dpi (halftone) or 700 to 1100 dpi (line drawings). Please give the data for figures in black and white or submit a Color Work Agreement form. EPS files must be saved with fonts embedded (and with a TIFF preview, if possible).

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Tips for writing a good quality Social Science Research Paper

Techniques for writing a good quality homan social science research paper:

1. Choosing the topic: In most cases, the topic is selected by the interests of the author, but it can also be suggested by the guides. You can have several topics, and then judge which you are most comfortable with. This may be done by asking several questions of yourself, like "Will I be able to carry out a search in this area? Will I find all necessary resources to accomplish the search? Will I be able to find all information in this field area?" If the answer to this type of question is "yes," then you ought to choose that topic. In most cases, you may have to conduct surveys and visit several places. Also, you might have to do a lot of work to find all the rises and falls of the various data on that subject. Sometimes, detailed information plays a vital role, instead of short information. Evaluators are human: The first thing to remember is that evaluators are also human beings. They are not only meant for rejecting a paper. They are here to evaluate your paper. So present your best aspect.

2. Think like evaluators: If you are in confusion or getting demotivated because your paper may not be accepted by the evaluators, then think, and try to evaluate your paper like an evaluator. Try to understand what an evaluator wants in your research paper, and you will automatically have your answer. Make blueprints of paper: The outline is the plan or framework that will help you to arrange your thoughts. It will make your paper logical. But remember that all points of your outline must be related to the topic you have chosen.

3. Ask your guides: If you are having any difficulty with your research, then do not hesitate to share your difficulty with your guide (if you have one). They will surely help you out and resolve your doubts. If you can't clarify what exactly you require for your work, then ask your supervisor to help you with an alternative. He or she might also provide you with a list of essential readings.

4. Use of computer is recommended: As you are doing research in the field of homan social science then this point is quite obvious. Use right software: Always use good quality software packages. If you are not capable of judging good software, then you can lose the quality of your paper unknowingly. There are various programs available to help you which you can get through the internet.

5. Use the internet for help: An excellent start for your paper is using Google. It is a wondrous search engine, where you can have your doubts resolved. You may also read some answers for the frequent question of how to write your research paper or find a model research paper. You can download books from the internet. If you have all the required books, place importance on reading, selecting, and analyzing the specified information. Then sketch out your research paper. Use big pictures: You may use encyclopedias like Wikipedia to get pictures with the best resolution. At Global Journals, you should strictly follow here.



6. Bookmarks are useful: When you read any book or magazine, you generally use bookmarks, right? It is a good habit which helps to not lose your continuity. You should always use bookmarks while searching on the internet also, which will make your search easier.

7. Revise what you wrote: When you write anything, always read it, summarize it, and then finalize it.

8. Make every effort: Make every effort to mention what you are going to write in your paper. That means always have a good start. Try to mention everything in the introduction—what is the need for a particular research paper. Polish your work with good writing skills and always give an evaluator what he wants. Make backups: When you are going to do any important thing like making a research paper, you should always have backup copies of it either on your computer or on paper. This protects you from losing any portion of your important data.

9. Produce good diagrams of your own: Always try to include good charts or diagrams in your paper to improve quality. Using several unnecessary diagrams will degrade the quality of your paper by creating a hodgepodge. So always try to include diagrams which were made by you to improve the readability of your paper. Use of direct quotes: When you do research relevant to literature, history, or current affairs, then use of quotes becomes essential, but if the study is relevant to science, use of quotes is not preferable.

10. Use proper verb tense: Use proper verb tenses in your paper. Use past tense to present those events that have happened. Use present tense to indicate events that are going on. Use future tense to indicate events that will happen in the future. Use of wrong tenses will confuse the evaluator. Avoid sentences that are incomplete.

11. Pick a good study spot: Always try to pick a spot for your research which is quiet. Not every spot is good for studying.

12. Know what you know: Always try to know what you know by making objectives, otherwise you will be confused and unable to achieve your target.

13. Use good grammar: Always use good grammar and words that will have a positive impact on the evaluator; use of good vocabulary does not mean using tough words which the evaluator has to find in a dictionary. Do not fragment sentences. Eliminate one-word sentences. Do not ever use a big word when a smaller one would suffice.

Verbs have to be in agreement with their subjects. In a research paper, do not start sentences with conjunctions or finish them with prepositions. When writing formally, it is advisable to never split an infinitive because someone will (wrongly) complain. Avoid clichés like a disease. Always shun irritating alliteration. Use language which is simple and straightforward. Put together a neat summary.

14. Arrangement of information: Each section of the main body should start with an opening sentence, and there should be a changeover at the end of the section. Give only valid and powerful arguments for your topic. You may also maintain your arguments with records.

15. Never start at the last minute: Always allow enough time for research work. Leaving everything to the last minute will degrade your paper and spoil your work.

16. Multitasking in research is not good: Doing several things at the same time is a bad habit in the case of research activity. Research is an area where everything has a particular time slot. Divide your research work into parts, and do a particular part in a particular time slot.

17. Never copy others' work: Never copy others' work and give it your name because if the evaluator has seen it anywhere, you will be in trouble. Take proper rest and food: No matter how many hours you spend on your research activity, if you are not taking care of your health, then all your efforts will have been in vain. For quality research, take proper rest and food.

18. Go to seminars: Attend seminars if the topic is relevant to your research area. Utilize all your resources.
Refresh your mind after intervals: Try to give your mind a rest by listening to soft music or sleeping in intervals. This will also improve your memory. Acquire colleagues: Always try to acquire colleagues. No matter how sharp you are, if you acquire colleagues, they can give you ideas which will be helpful to your research.

19. Think technically: Always think technically. If anything happens, search for its reasons, benefits, and demerits. Think and then print: When you go to print your paper, check that tables are not split, headings are not detached from their descriptions, and page sequence is maintained.

20. Adding unnecessary information: Do not add unnecessary information like "I have used MS Excel to draw graphs." Irrelevant and inappropriate material is superfluous. Foreign terminology and phrases are not apropos. One should never take a broad view. Analogy is like feathers on a snake. Use words properly, regardless of how others use them. Remove quotations. Puns are for kids, not grunt readers. Never oversimplify: When adding material to your research paper, never go for oversimplification; this will definitely irritate the evaluator. Be specific. Never use rhythmic redundancies. Contractions shouldn't be used in a research paper. Comparisons are as terrible as clichés. Give up ampersands, abbreviations, and so on. Remove commas that are not necessary. Parenthetical words should be between brackets or commas. Understatement is always the best way to put forward earth-shaking thoughts. Give a detailed literary review.

21. Report concluded results: Use concluded results. From raw data, filter the results, and then conclude your studies based on measurements and observations taken. An appropriate number of decimal places should be used. Parenthetical remarks are prohibited here. Proofread carefully at the final stage. At the end, give an outline to your arguments. Spot perspectives of further study of the subject. Justify your conclusion at the bottom sufficiently, which will probably include examples.

22. Upon conclusion: Once you have concluded your research, the next most important step is to present your findings. Presentation is extremely important as it is the definite medium though which your research is going to be in print for the rest of the crowd. Care should be taken to categorize your thoughts well and present them in a logical and neat manner. A good quality research paper format is essential because it serves to highlight your research paper and bring to light all necessary aspects of your research.

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Informal Guidelines of Research Paper Writing

Key points to remember:

- Submit all work in its final form.
- Write your paper in the form which is presented in the guidelines using the template.
- Please note the criteria peer reviewers will use for grading the final paper.

Final points:

One purpose of organizing a research paper is to let people interpret your efforts selectively. The journal requires the following sections, submitted in the order listed, with each section starting on a new page:

The introduction: This will be compiled from reference matter and reflect the design processes or outline of basis that directed you to make a study. As you carry out the process of study, the method and process section will be constructed like that. The results segment will show related statistics in nearly sequential order and direct reviewers to similar intellectual paths throughout the data that you gathered to carry out your study.

The discussion section:

This will provide understanding of the data and projections as to the implications of the results. The use of good quality references throughout the paper will give the effort trustworthiness by representing an alertness to prior workings.

Writing a research paper is not an easy job, no matter how trouble-free the actual research or concept. Practice, excellent preparation, and controlled record-keeping are the only means to make straightforward progression.

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Specific editorial column necessities for compliance of a manuscript will always take over from directions in these general guidelines.

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- Submitting a manuscript with pages out of sequence.
- In every section of your document, use standard writing style, including articles ("a" and "the").
- Keep paying attention to the topic of the paper.
- Use paragraphs to split each significant point (excluding the abstract).
- Align the primary line of each section.
- Present your points in sound order.
- Use present tense to report well-accepted matters.
- Use past tense to describe specific results.
- Do not use familiar wording; don't address the reviewer directly. Don't use slang or superlatives.
- Avoid use of extra pictures—include only those figures essential to presenting results.

Title page:

Choose a revealing title. It should be short and include the name(s) and address(es) of all authors. It should not have acronyms or abbreviations or exceed two printed lines.

Abstract: This summary should be two hundred words or less. It should clearly and briefly explain the key findings reported in the manuscript and must have precise statistics. It should not have acronyms or abbreviations. It should be logical in itself. Do not cite references at this point.

An abstract is a brief, distinct paragraph summary of finished work or work in development. In a minute or less, a reviewer can be taught the foundation behind the study, common approaches to the problem, relevant results, and significant conclusions or new questions.

Write your summary when your paper is completed because how can you write the summary of anything which is not yet written? Wealth of terminology is very essential in abstract. Use comprehensive sentences, and do not sacrifice readability for brevity; you can maintain it succinctly by phrasing sentences so that they provide more than a lone rationale. The author can at this moment go straight to shortening the outcome. Sum up the study with the subsequent elements in any summary. Try to limit the initial two items to no more than one line each.

Reason for writing the article—theory, overall issue, purpose.

- Fundamental goal.
- To-the-point depiction of the research.
- Consequences, including definite statistics—if the consequences are quantitative in nature, account for this; results of any numerical analysis should be reported. Significant conclusions or questions that emerge from the research.

Approach:

- Single section and succinct.
- An outline of the job done is always written in past tense.
- Concentrate on shortening results—limit background information to a verdict or two.
- Exact spelling, clarity of sentences and phrases, and appropriate reporting of quantities (proper units, important statistics) are just as significant in an abstract as they are anywhere else.

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The introduction should "introduce" the manuscript. The reviewer should be presented with sufficient background information to be capable of comprehending and calculating the purpose of your study without having to refer to other works. The basis for the study should be offered. Give the most important references, but avoid making a comprehensive appraisal of the topic. Describe the problem visibly. If the problem is not acknowledged in a logical, reasonable way, the reviewer will give no attention to your results. Speak in common terms about techniques used to explain the problem, if needed, but do not present any particulars about the protocols here.

The following approach can create a valuable beginning:

- Explain the value (significance) of the study.
- Defend the model—why did you employ this particular system or method? What is its compensation? Remark upon its appropriateness from an abstract point of view as well as pointing out sensible reasons for using it.
- Present a justification. State your particular theory(-ies) or aim(s), and describe the logic that led you to choose them.
- Briefly explain the study's tentative purpose and how it meets the declared objectives.

Approach:

Use past tense except for when referring to recognized facts. After all, the manuscript will be submitted after the entire job is done. Sort out your thoughts; manufacture one key point for every section. If you make the four points listed above, you will need at least four paragraphs. Present surrounding information only when it is necessary to support a situation. The reviewer does not desire to read everything you know about a topic. Shape the theory specifically—do not take a broad view.

As always, give awareness to spelling, simplicity, and correctness of sentences and phrases.

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This part is supposed to be the easiest to carve if you have good skills. A soundly written procedures segment allows a capable scientist to replicate your results. Present precise information about your supplies. The suppliers and clarity of reagents can be helpful bits of information. Present methods in sequential order, but linked methodologies can be grouped as a segment. Be concise when relating the protocols. Attempt to give the least amount of information that would permit another capable scientist to replicate your outcome, but be cautious that vital information is integrated. The use of subheadings is suggested and ought to be synchronized with the results section.

When a technique is used that has been well-described in another section, mention the specific item describing the way, but draw the basic principle while stating the situation. The purpose is to show all particular resources and broad procedures so that another person may use some or all of the methods in one more study or referee the scientific value of your work. It is not to be a step-by-step report of the whole thing you did, nor is a methods section a set of orders.

Materials:

Materials may be reported in part of a section or else they may be recognized along with your measures.

Methods:

- Report the method and not the particulars of each process that engaged the same methodology.
- Describe the method entirely.
- To be succinct, present methods under headings dedicated to specific dealings or groups of measures.
- Simplify—detail how procedures were completed, not how they were performed on a particular day.
- If well-known procedures were used, account for the procedure by name, possibly with a reference, and that's all.

Approach:

It is embarrassing to use vigorous voice when documenting methods without using first person, which would focus the reviewer's interest on the researcher rather than the job. As a result, when writing up the methods, most authors use third person passive voice.

Use standard style in this and every other part of the paper—avoid familiar lists, and use full sentences.

What to keep away from:

- Resources and methods are not a set of information.
- Skip all descriptive information and surroundings—save it for the argument.
- Leave out information that is immaterial to a third party.



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Results:

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The page length of this segment is set by the sum and types of data to be reported. Use statistics and tables, if suitable, to present consequences most efficiently.

You must clearly differentiate material which would usually be incorporated in a study editorial from any unprocessed data or additional appendix matter that would not be available. In fact, such matters should not be submitted at all except if requested by the instructor.

Content:

- Sum up your conclusions in text and demonstrate them, if suitable, with figures and tables.
- In the manuscript, explain each of your consequences, and point the reader to remarks that are most appropriate.
- Present a background, such as by describing the question that was addressed by creation of an exacting study.
- Explain results of control experiments and give remarks that are not accessible in a prescribed figure or table, if appropriate.
- Examine your data, then prepare the analyzed (transformed) data in the form of a figure (graph), table, or manuscript.

What to stay away from:

- Do not discuss or infer your outcome, report surrounding information, or try to explain anything.
- Do not include raw data or intermediate calculations in a research manuscript.
- Do not present similar data more than once.
- A manuscript should complement any figures or tables, not duplicate information.
- Never confuse figures with tables—there is a difference.

Approach:

As always, use past tense when you submit your results, and put the whole thing in a reasonable order.

Put figures and tables, appropriately numbered, in order at the end of the report.

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If you put figures and tables at the end of some details, make certain that they are visibly distinguished from any attached appendix materials, such as raw facts. Whatever the position, each table must be titled, numbered one after the other, and include a heading. All figures and tables must be divided from the text.

Discussion:

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Position your understanding of the outcome visibly to lead the reviewer through your conclusions, and then finish the paper with a summing up of the implications of the study. The purpose here is to offer an understanding of your results and support all of your conclusions, using facts from your research and generally accepted information, if suitable. The implication of results should be fully described.

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- Give details of all of your remarks as much as possible, focusing on mechanisms.
- Make a decision as to whether the tentative design sufficiently addressed the theory and whether or not it was correctly restricted. Try to present substitute explanations if they are sensible alternatives.
- One piece of research will not counter an overall question, so maintain the large picture in mind. Where do you go next? The best studies unlock new avenues of study. What questions remain?
- Recommendations for detailed papers will offer supplementary suggestions.

Approach:

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References	Complete and correct format, well organized	Beside the point, Incomplete	Wrong format and structuring

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