
**Democracy And Political Party In Nigeria: A Study Of All
Progressives Congrss Under President Muhammadu Buhari's
Administration**

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Abstract

Democracy is a political system characterized by regular and free elections in which politicians organized into political parties; compete for power by right of the virtue of all adults to vote and by the guarantee of a range of political and civil rights. Abraham Lincoln offered one of the simplest definitions of democracy as “government of the people by the people and for the people”. In this wise, democracy is first and foremost people-centered. It also involves mass participation and basic individual freedom as its hallmark. The study is anchored on theory of participatory democracy. Jean Jacque Rousseau the exponent of popular sovereignty is regarded as the pioneer of participatory democracy. In his classical work, the social contract, Rousseau asserted that sovereignty not only originated with the people, it is also retained by the people in spite of their transition from the state of nature to civil society. Thus sovereignty cannot be represented because it cannot be alienated. Political parties should create an enabling environment whereby citizens are free to vote in their preferred choice of leaders, without feeling insecure, this however promotes true democracy and allows its citizens to practice their fundamental human right which is one the features of democracy. Nigeria practicing a multi-party system ,every registered political parties should have equal opportunity without been dominated by a one or two political parties, when this is done ,it creates equal chances and opportunity which gives individual the freedom and right to make different choices and the right to vote and be voted for.

Key words: Democracy, Political Party, Nigerian Democracy

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

The term democracy like most concepts in social sciences lacks a precise single definition rather; it is generally a matter of intellectual supposition. There are various

meanings, opinions, perceptions and definitions of the term by scholars and philosophers like Rousseau, Locke, Jefferson, Lincoln and Mills (Akindele, 1987). According to Elaigwu cited in Yio (2012), the concept of democracy is alien to

Africa and needs to be domesticated to Nigeria (Africa)'s local conditions and targeted to her peculiar problems. He went further to define democracy as: A system of government based on the acquisition of authority from the people; the institutionalization of the rule of law; the emphasis on the legitimacy of rules; the availability of choices and cherished values (including freedom); and accountability in governance. This definition brings out the principles of democracy and the core one being the residence of sovereignty with the people. As Yio (2012) had argued, from its Athenian origin, democracy is viewed as "Government by the people with full and direct participation of the people". But democracy in practice even in Athens was not inclusive in the absolute sense as it excluded women and slaves who were integral components of the Greek city states. Huntington (1996) argued that a political system is democratic; if its most powerful collective decision makers are chosen through fair, honest and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote. It also implies the existence of all those civil and political freedoms to speak, publish, assemble and organize that are necessary for political

debate and the conduct of electoral campaign. Also, Cohen (1971) noted that democracy is a system of community government in which by and large the members of the community participate or may participate directly or indirectly in making decisions, which affect them. This means that democracy could be seen as any system of government that is rooted in the notion that ultimate authority in the governance of the people rightly belongs to the people; that everyone is entitled to an equitable participation and share in the equal rights; and where equitable social and economic justice are the inalienable rights of individual citizens in the society. Chafe (1994) on the other hand, opined that democracy means the involvement of the people in the running of the political, socio-economic and cultural affairs of their polity. Schumpeter cited in Ukase (2014) sees democracy as a method by which decision-making is transferred to individuals who have gained power in competitive struggle for the votes of citizens. It is a situation in which people have the opportunity of accepting or rejecting the men who are to rule them. Also, Sand brooks cited in Ukase (2014), captures the concept thus: Democracy is a political system characterized by regular and free elections in

which politicians organized into political parties; compete for power by right of the virtue of all adults to vote and by the guarantee of a range of political and civil rights. Abraham Lincoln offered one of the simplest definitions of democracy as “government of the people by the people and for the people”. In this wise, democracy is first and foremost people-centered. It also involves mass participation and basic individual freedom as its hallmark. Ukase (2014) stressed that democracy demands that people should be governed on the basis of their consent and mandate; freely given to establish a government which is elected, responsive and accountable to the people. In spite of the differences in conceptualization and practice, all the versions of defining democracy share one fundamental objective, which is how to govern society in such a way that power, actually belongs to the people

The history of the formation of political parties in Nigeria dates back to the colonial era, before the advent of colonialism, the whole idea of political party was an alien phenomenon. Nigeria political parties are product of the country’s tumultuous political history, becoming the complex system dominated by the APC and PDP today. The .N.N.D.P was the first political party formed

in Nigeria by Herbert Macaulay in 1922, it was locally based in Lagos, it aims and objectives include self government within the British empire and to identify itself wholly with the interests of the people; its important members included Dr.C.C Adeniyi Jones, J.Egerton, Thomas Horatic Jackson J.T.White and J.T Claulrick. The Lagos women formed majority of its supporters and it contested and won all the three seats for Lagos at the elections to the legislative council from 1923 to 1938 and from 1943 to 1948 (see zik, 1960)

The 2015-2019 election focused more on the two dominant political parties in Nigeria, which are the APC and PDP, during this era Nigerians faced unemployment, mismanagement of resources, this is because the Buhair administration was a biased one, therefore promoting, inequality, tribalism, favoritism, nepotism, corruption. terrorists also threatened the freedom and right of the people, all because they want a Muslim man to rule the country, this became an instrument that was been used to manipulate the election from 2015-2019 ,therefore giving president Muhammadu Buhair an upper hand in the election ,no doubt, the election was not free and fair ,neither did it reflect the choice of the Nigerians as well as democrac

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

This study reviews relevant literature related to this study with a view to identifying and clarifying the gap in knowledge that this study seeks to fill. Accordingly, the literature review shall be based on relevant themes of the study such as: Democracy, Political party

Democracy

The word 'democracy' originates from two Greek words *demos* (people) and *Kratos* (rule/power). In a literal sense, it means 'rule of the people', 'the power of the people'. The origin of democracy can be traced back to the ancient Greece. Greeks originally used the idea to mean the 'poor' or the 'many'. By the 5th century BC, in the Greek city states, democracy was designed to allow citizens to have a voice in decisions that would affect all. This right was exercised at mass meetings and approximated to what we call today direct democracy.

However, Mbah (2006:132) noted that "the ancient Greek democracy, in the first place, excluded women and large army of slaves. Secondly, the *demos* acted as a collective or social body rather than isolated individuals. And thirdly, this kind of collective decision

making could work only as long as citizen body is relatively small and homogenous".

Hence, so many attempts have been made in defining the concept of democracy to reflect its global practices yet the effort at achieving an integrated definition is almost unachievable. Falaye (1998:97) attributed this to the elastic use of the concept of democracy. In the last two decades, democracy has been pervasive. But in spite of its acceptability, democracy appears to have fallen short of generally accepted definition. This is because democracy as practiced in ancient Greek city-states seems to have been performed with modernization. As Owolabi (1999:5) rightly observes, democracy has become in current usage, another word for political decency and civilization. Also, structural inadequacies, environmental and cultural imperatives inherent in recipient societies have continued to shape and reshape the principles and operations of democracy for adaptability making some scholars to ascribe attributes that qualifies a system of government as democratic.

Thus, Kalu (2018:43) noted that "democracy implies free and equal right of every person to participate in a system of government, often practiced by electing representatives of the people by the majority of the people. In

the words of Seeley (2011:22), "It is a government in which the governing body is comparatively a large fraction of the entire nation." Bryce as cited in Agarwal (2006:133), affirms: "Since the times of Herodotus, the word 'democracy' has been used to denote that form of government in which the ruling power of a state is largely vested not in any particular class or classes, but in the members of the community as a whole".

For instance, (Nnoli, 1986; Appadorai, 2004; Unah, 1993) have argued that democracy is a form of government that provides maximum opportunities for people to participate in the political process and determine who govern them through periodic elections. According to Nnoli (1986) democracy is a system of government usually involving freedom of individual in various aspects of political life, equality among citizens, and justice in the relations between the people and the government and the participation of the people in choosing those in government. In the same view, Unah (1993) explained that democracy is a state with unlimited opportunities for adult participation in political life. To Appadprai (2004), it may be described as a system of government under which the people exercise the

governing power either directly or through representatives periodically elected by them. He further explained that a state may, in political science, be termed a democracy if it provides institutions for the expression and, in the last analysis, the supremacy of the popular will on basic questions of social direction and policy.

Further, President Abraham Lincoln (1809 – 1865) as cited in Uwaifo (2007:77), a Republican and the 16th President of the United States of America, in his address at the dedication of the military cemetery at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on 19th November, 1863 defines democracy as: "The government of the people, by the people and for the people." By this definition, democracy implies that the ultimate authority of government is vested in the common people, so that public policy is meant to conform to the will of the people (Mbah, 2006). This research agrees with Lincoln's definition of democracy. The necessity of democracy in every polity cannot be over emphasized; there are indeed different and other kinds of democracy some of which Obiora (2008) as cited in Nwankwo (2008) treated as follows; Obiora (2008) as cited in Nwankwo (2008) "noted that a common denominator of all the definitions of democracy is that power belongs to the

people. The people can exercise this power either by themselves or through representatives. This gives rise to two types of democracy: direct and indirect”. He went further to state that in direct democracy, the individual is directly involved in political decision and that this was the system characteristics of ancient Greece where the people periodically meet to discuss and approve the laws required for the state. Every citizen took part in deciding the policies of the state, and their executions were carried out by those chosen by lot. The Athenians believed in the freedom and equality of all citizens hence they allowed every citizens direct active participation in government. This was what Mbah (2007) called classical democracy. Again, Obiora (2008) posited that ‘Greek democracy had three main elements. In the first place, supreme control of affairs was vested in the Assembly of citizens and all citizens took part in it by discussion and voting in the government of their own city. This assembly made laws, elected military, naval, diplomatic and civil officials, made decisions for or against war and peace and passed judgment on criminals. Secondly, every citizen enjoyed freedom of speech in order that all sides could be heard before a decision is taken. Thirdly, all political offices were open to all citizens,

who were chosen for these positions by lot. Furthermore, according to him, direct democracy was possible principally because the population of the city-states was relatively small and everyone knew every other person by name’.

In liberal democracy, power is vested in the people and its exercise is delegated to the elected representatives. For this sake, the principle of universal adult franchise is implemented and elections are held at regular intervals in a free and fair manner. There is a multi-party system and a number of interest group. This was what Dahl as cited in Johari (2013) prefers to call *Polyarchy*. The government is limited and accountable. It exists in the midst of the society. Right to dissent is respected and opposition has its honored place. In liberal democracy, “the voter exercises the same power in the political market as consumer does in the economic market” (Heywood, 2005). Such democracies are therefore, described as pluralist democracies: within them political power is widely dispersed among a number of competing groups and interests, each of which has access to government (Heywood, 2005)

Thus, liberal democracy today is distinguished from other forms of political system by certain principles and

characteristics, that is, its procedure and institutional arrangements. Institutions are necessary for the realization of principles; without principles, the institutions might be reduced to a mere formality. The two must go together.

It seeks to give a good name to the dictatorship of proletariat. As advocated by Marx, Engels, Lenin and their followers, it has its own model in which political democracy is sacrificed at the altar of what they proudly call social and economic democracy. The excellence of a discredited system of communism is justified in the name of social equality and eradication of great evils as poverty, exploitation, oppression and injustice which dominate the scene in a liberal democracy and what they denounce as ‘bourgeois democracy’ (Huntington, 1991). Social equality is possible only in a classless society in which economic equality can be established by abolishing private property system. Only then the meaning of the term ‘people’ may be a reality and the government may be like rule of the people (Johari, 2013).

Nevertheless, most people regard democracy as the best form of government. For this reason, every country claims that its government is a kind of democracy. This has brought a lot of confusion about the

meaning of democracy as every government claims to be democratic. For instance, we have communist and non-communist models of democracy. One must also mention here that after the demise of Greek civilization, many philosophers especially Aristotle maintained that democracy was not a good form of government because it often led to mal rule, ‘monocracy! For many centuries, many European monarchs and Oriental despots regarded democracy as mob rule because of the nature of increasing growth of disagreement encountered in dealing with state matters.

Political Party

The etymology of the word „party“ has been traced to the Latin word *partire* meaning “to divide”. This word however was not part of the vocabulary of politics until the 17th century. Prior to that, the idea „part“ had already entered the French language as *partager* which in English means “partaking”. By the time the word „party“ was finally formed, it replaced the word “sect” (Sartori 1976). Having known the origin of the word “party”, what then is a political party? According to Lawson (1976) “no definition of party is ever entirely satisfactory...” (Lawson, 1976:2). Nevertheless, scholars, especially those in

the discipline, Political Science, keep composing a definition that best captures the features and functions of a political party. According to the Irish political philosopher and statesman, Edmund Burke (1770), a “[p]arty is a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed” (Langford, 1981:317). To J. S. Coleman and C. G. Rosberg, political parties are associations formally organised with the explicit and declared purpose of acquiring and/or maintaining legal control, either singly or in coalition or in electoral competition with other similar associations over the personnel and policy of the government of an actual or prospective sovereign state (Coleman and Rosberg, 1964). A political party therefore is “any political group identified by an official label that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections (free or non-free), candidates for public office (Sartori, 1976:63). It can also be seen as “any group, however loosely organized, seeking to elect government office holders under a given label” (Epstein, 1967, 1980:9). Succinctly, a political party is “an organized attempt to get control of government” (Schattschneider, 1942:35).

Igwe, (2002) defines political parties as any group of people organized for objectives from time to time, publishing a manifesto, explaining its programme and canvassing for membership and support in its quest for power. Nnoli, (2003) defines political party as a group of people who share a common conception of how and why state power should be organized and used. This idea is sometimes expressed in a different way when it is argued that a political party is an organization concerned with the expression of preferences regarding the emergence of consolidation and use of state power. In other words, a political party is all about politics and contesting control of the chief policy-making offices of the government.

Appadorai, (2004) defines political party as a more or less organized group of citizens who act together as a political unit, have distinctive aims and opinions on the leading political question of controversy in the state, and who, by acting together as a political unit, seek to obtain control of the government. It is based on two fundamentals of human nature; men differ in their opinions and are gregarious; they try to achieve by combination what they can not achieve individually.

In other words, party structures are very crucial and important tools for determining

the strength and weaknesses of political parties. The Nigerian political parties had federalist structures. They all had similar structure. This research shall give one indebt knowledge of the structure of Nigerian political parties. Political parties in Nigeria have been said to lack ideological vigour. The comprador bourgeois who are members of the parties has influenced party ideologies in Nigeria. Scholars have made several attempts to define the term ideology.

Igwe (2007) define ideology as a philosophical worldview reflecting the material conditions of an epoc and defining and justifying the nature and character of the political society of the future that its adherents aspire to, and the means by which the goal may be attained.

Duverger (1968) regarded political parties as the process ofunifying a society, which tends to make it a harmonious citybase upon an order. Hedecidedmodern political partiesas a twentieth century mechanism designed to solve theproblem of how tobring “the people” the new mass votersinto thecommunity. However, bringing people the politicalcommunity may to certainextent constitute integration. Butthis is not a more amalgamation of the people into a political entity, rather it entails making them have a feelingof oneness and consciousness within

the polity. he furtherargued that to bring the masses to the political systemmeans to encourage parties that are notmerely aggregate oflocal and personal interest, but parties that give or professto give to the man in the street, a voice in politics.

Leeds (1968) view political parties as a group publicorganized with the aim of gaining political power as to carryout policies which it feels will serve the national interest. Rodee et al (1983) content that political parties acquiredtheir meaning in terms of the purpose for which they areformed, the character of membership, its structures orfunctions they perform. Ball (1983) regards political parties as structures within the political system that perform many functions. Among thefunctions are those of communicating the wishes of theelectorate to the government, informing the electorate animportant political issues and allowing a wide participationby more people in a political system. He believed thatpolitical parties bring together sectional interests, overcomegeographical distances and provide coherence to sometimesdivisive government structures.

Similarly, Igwe (2002) defines political parties as any groupof people organized for objectives from time to time,publishing a manifesto, explaining its programme

and canvassing for membership and support in its quest for Power. Nnoli (2003:7) defines political party as a group of people who share a common conception of how and why state power should be organized and used. This idea is sometimes expressed in a different way when it is argued that a political party is an organization concerned with the expression of preferences regarding the emergence of consolidation and use of state power. In other words, a political party is all about politics and contesting control of the Chief policy making offices of the government.

A political party is much more than an organization for seeking and controlling political power. More critically, it is an organization for expressing and harmonizing interests, and that intermediates between the citizens and political society, government and state (Ikelegbe, 2013). Political Parties
A political party is much more than an organization for seeking and controlling political power. More critically, it is an organization for expressing and harmonizing interests, and that intermediates between the citizens and political society, government and state (Ikelegbe, 2013). There are numerous types of political parties such as elite-based parties, mass-based parties, ethnic-based parties, electoralist parties and

movement parties (Gunther and Diamond, 2003).

When we consider popular attitudes on political parties around the world, many of them reflect strongly negative views held by the general public. Popular views on parties range from identifying parties as: power-hungry; corrupt; either excessively partisan or, on the other extreme, lacking in ideology; male-dominated; elite-dominated; lacking internal democracy; lacking meaningful connection to the grassroots; responsible for gridlock and obstructing the smooth functioning of government; and in some cases violent and dangerous (Carothers, 2006 cited in Deme, 2013).

A number of these views have not only been held by the general public but also such widely respected leaders as George Washington, who once said, “[political parties]...are likely in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion” (Deme, 2013). Political parties, despite all these drawbacks, however, fulfill a number of vital functions that help a multi-party democratic system

function. Parties serve essential functions including aggregating citizen interests, forming governments, developing and promoting policy positions and programmes, and grooming and selecting political leadership (Carothers, 2006).

Political parties perform functions that include; mediating between citizens and state institutions; recruiting and preparing individuals for political leadership; organizing election campaigns; aggregating societal interests, and providing a participatory, responsive relationship with the people; political recruitment and training; education, socialization, breeding consensus, providing alternative world views and political communication among others (Pogoson, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

For the purpose of this research work, this study is predicated on the theory of participatory democracy, which formed the theoretical framework of analysis. Historically, the concept of participatory democracy has a long and interesting development. Between the 8th and 7th centuries B.C in the archaic period of the Greece, political power was tenaciously held by few royal families; it was exclusive and informal, and unevenly distributed across

various structures the villages and minor communities. But this, soon, began to be displaced with collectives of oligarchs and nobles, who seized power as the villages and communities merged into city-states (*poleis*) (Andekannbi, 2018). The new oligarchs who took the reins of government in respective city-states soon created unfriendly socio-economic and political atmospheres, rife of tensions. There were much hardship and discontent among the common people, and many had to mortgage their land due to debts and poverty. By 600 B.C. Solon, a great Athenian lawgiver was appointed as the leader. He was to later initiate certain reforms that not only limited the power of oligarchs, but also establish a government which partially reflected some of participatory democracy – a democracy which allowed certain decisions to be taken by a popular assembly composed of all free male citizens (Akinboye, 2018). By 500 B.C, the Solonic reforms were further enhanced by Cleisthenes to embrace more direct participation of free adult male citizens in governmentⁱ. Following the conquest of Alexander the Great, the Athenian Greek participatory government came to an end in 322BC. By the time participatory democracy was reawakened as a political system about 2000 years later,

after the Middle Ages, decisions were made by representatives rather than by the people themselves. It was in the 20th century that practical implementations of participatory democracy, once again, began to take center place, albeit mostly on a small scale but, attracting considerable academic attention by the 1980s. Since then, new variants of participatory democracy in numerous states have been evolved and these include: anticipatory democracy, associative democracy, Consensus democracy, deliberative democracy, grassroots democracy, representative democracy etc (Adekannbi, 2018).

Jean Jacque Rousseau the exponent of popular sovereignty is regarded as the pioneer of participatory democracy. In his classical work, the social contract, Rousseau asserted that sovereignty not only originated with the people, it is also retained by the people in spite of their transition from the state of nature to civil society. Thus sovereignty cannot be represented because it cannot be alienated. The people's deputies are not, and could not be, their representatives. They are merely agents of the people. Government is only an instrument to carry out the instructions of the general will. The people must constantly

deliberate on public policy and issue necessary to the government. They should make sure that government does not depart from these instructions; otherwise, it should be revoked and replaced immediately.

Method of Data Collection:

The study shall rely heavily on the qualitative method of documentary research. Qualitative method aims at a holistic investigation and employs a narrative or descriptive techniques in its reportage, logical process, insight, intuition or imagination of the researcher to generate data and set up relationships. Secondary sources of data will be used and had been defined by scholars as a set of data gathered or authored by other persons; archival works, either in the form of documentary or survey results, published and unpublished, coded books/materials, produced for the purpose other than the benefit of the present investigator (Nwane, 1981, Asika, 2006:27).

The study also shall rely on institutional and official documents/reports namely; the reports of some various House committees at the two chambers of national assembly. The information obtained from these

documents was complemented by data from other sources such as; textbooks, journals, seminars, conference papers, Government investigative reports, internet materials and other relevant literatures.

MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM AND ITS ROLE IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

The PDP is the ruling (dominant) party since 1999. It is a centrist and multi-ethnic party, but operates more as a catch all organization that houses a range of political positions. It has espoused economic liberalism in office, overseeing privatization process and deregulation of some key sectors (notably the telecommunications sector). It holds conservative view on social issues. At the same time, it is attached to a discourse well Its main welfare protection. Its main strength, however, lies in the fact of being the incumbent in office, and the breadth of its patronage network and control of state resources.

The ANPP was created in 1999, (although there was an earlier political party of the same name, but which was outlawed following the 1984 military coup). It is a conservative party with strong presence in the north and is the largest opposition party. In the

elections of 2003 and 2007 it was lead by the ex military rule, Muhammadu Buhari.

Action Congress, was formed in 2006, and is the outcome of a merger of several other parties in 2006, including defectors from the PDP. To some extent, it profiles itself as a liberal party. It has a number of governorships, and its regional strengths lie in Lagos, the south west generally and in the north central regions.

The AGPA is an Igbo dominated party, with a strong regional base in the east. Finally, the Labour party is perhaps the most programmatically distinctive with a social democratic identity

The northern Elements Progressive union founded by the late Alhaji Aminu Kano, it was a radical party oriented towards liberating the northern Talakawas and opposing the Aristocratic (N.P.C.) Its greatest strength lay in kano where it always won all the electoral seats .it broke away from the N.P.C.

The U.M.B.C; United Middle Belt Congress was led by Joseph Tarka and aimed at obtaining a separate state for the Non-Muslim Middle –Belters of Nigeria .During the 1959 election it went into alliance with the Action Group (A.G.) and won most of the seats in the middle belt area.

The B.Y.M; Bornu Youth Movement ,was based in Bornu and aimed at achieving a separate state for the Kanuri- speaking area of the north – The North –Eastern state. It won few seats in elections in its area of influence.

The Dynamic Party (D.P.) ;This was founded by the famous mathematician ,Dr.Chike –Obi, it was national in its ideology aiming at developing Nigeria after the fashion of Ataturk in turkey ,but its influence did not go far beyond the university of Ibadan campus. The number of political parties registered in Nigeria has jumped from three in 1999 to 91 in 2019, creating immense challenges for regulation and management of party activities and processes. Today, the dominant political parties are the P.D.P which held the presidency and majority of seats in the national assembly from its founding in 1998 until 2015 and the A.P.C, which was formed in 2013 out of three opposition parties and won the presidency two years later with the election of current president Muhammadu Buhari.

The formal institutional framework was noted by both donor individuals and party members interviewed to be problematic for political party development.

Firstly, all party candidates must compete through political a party (which eliminates the possibility of independent candidates).

But at the same time the registration of political parties faces few real entry barriers. A party needs to register a copy of its constitution with INEC, and in principle have inclusive membership, a headquarters office in Abuja and its internal rules need to be democratic.

However the enforcement of internal democracy is practically non-existent. Secondly, all registered parties are entitled to state funding. This has led increasingly to the view that public funding of political parties should be eliminated in an effort to reduce the number of political parties. The view is that many of the irrelevant parties would cease to exist if they did not have access to state funding for elections. One interviewee noted that the problem is not that parties receive public funding for electoral purposes, but that there is currently no appropriate threshold. Moreover, INEC's poor public image suggests that it would currently be poorly placed to impose any threshold credibly. Thirdly, despite the excessive fragmentation of registered parties, the FPTP system encourages the consolidation of dominant party rule. It is in

fact the main formal mechanism that limits access to elective office for the smaller opposition parties. The formal rules, then, establish some constraints and incentive structures that impact on political parties. But parties in Nigeria are perhaps more the product of informal institutions, guided by the phenomenon of ‘godfatherism’ and neo-patrimonialism, which operate within the power structures of a centralized oil economy in a regionally diverse society (Egwu et al 2008; Skar et al; Zasha et al 2007). Moreover, there is a broad agreement that overall, the INEC has not been seen to enforce or implement the Electoral Act effectively. So, for instance, while the legal framework explicitly prohibits parties from retaining political militias or thugs, the high number of incidents of violence at the polling station indicates a lack of capacity and/or will for the INEC and security authorities to police political party conduct and enforce this law. Alongside these institutional features, there are a number of party-level weaknesses. These include firstly that political parties tend not to practice internal democracy, despite the fact that the party constitutions stipulate it. For instance, primary elections in many cases do take place but the final list of candidates is

decided by the reigning ‘godfather’ or party leadership of the state or locality. This responds directly to the patrimonial system of rules that structures the logic of power and elite bargaining within parties and the broader political system. Moreover, political parties are not programmatically coherent, and there is no clear ideological distinction between them. Several of the interviewees agreed that this is a historical trend that has deteriorated over the decades. Thus electoral choices are mostly made on the basis of personality, or ethnic or regional loyalties, or in the hope of acceding to the fruits of Patronage. However, as one report notes, the logic of patronage and clientelism in Nigeria is not effectively redistributive; instead the spoils of office tend to be shared by elite groups (Egwu et al 2008). This has the effect of further aggravating the sense of legitimacy crisis that Afflicts the party system. Overall political parties are seen as predominantly electoral vehicles which have the objective of mobilizing voter support, to secure exclusionary elitist bargains.

IMPACT OF ALL PROGRESSIVE CONGRESS TO NIGERIAN DEMOCRACY

The All Progressives Congress (APC) is the Nigerian ruling party but how far the party has gone in deepening Nigerian democracy under the watch of President Muhammadu Buhari's administration is a major concern to Nigerians. It becomes imperative to x-ray some factors in our democratic journey of APC under Buhari's Administration. Some of these factors are;

Security

Insecurity is the greatest challenge facing the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari, since the return to democracy in 1999, traditional security threats such as violence conflict, armed robbery and kidnapping have assumed worrisome dimensions in Nigeria. Evolving threats such as insurgency and terrorism have further complicated the situation.

Human rights have been violated, abuse by criminal gangs such as Boko Haram, abuse by private individuals /vigilante justice the killings of the Biafra protesters, criminal gangs such as Boko Haram, suspected Fulani herdsmen and bandits are continuously violating human rights of Nigeria citizens, including the abduction of the Chibok girls and again the girl child gaining access to education. The security situation can be said to be challenging. "The

country can boast of relative peace, when the situation is viewed from a national perspective" (Radio Nigeria, 2014). No place in the country, regardless of how one tries to picture the scenario, is secure. Hardly do Nigerians wake up to good news as regards their security. It is either that it is the news of abduction and killing of some people, especially children in states like Borno, Yobe, Kano and Bauchi or the senseless massacre in the name of protesting an election result or the invasion of some communities in Zamfara by unknown violent men or the occasional OPC and MASSOB disturbances or the Niger Deltans' militancy or the usual religious/ethnic oriented conflicts or the insurgency transferring the borders of Benue, Nasarawa, Adamawa, Plateau, Taraba and Kogi states or the Boko Haram terror attacks in the North, multiple explosions within the country have been recorded recently. These explosions go off at a rate which will soon make them look like a normal occurrence. Coupled to these, these miscreants and terrorists called Boko Haram, under the command of Abubakar Shekau are not relenting in their bid to making Nigeria, and now, her neighboring countries like Cameroon, Niger

and Chad, restive. Their method has not only developed sophisticatedly but also, unsuspectingly in their deploying of young girls to cause these explosions. In fact, with violence and terror Abubakar Shekau had tried creating an independent state for himself within the country. A move that will have a devastating effect on the national stability of Nigeria, if allowed to be. So terrible is this situation of insecurity that many in Nigeria are hopeless of any forthcoming panacea to this seemingly intractable state of insecurity that looms large in the polity and as such, have disposed themselves into expecting the worst of the situation. In all this, one is constrained to ask: what has the Nigerian government done to proffering a lasting solution to the security issue of the country? The government of the country seems clueless as regards resolving the security problem. Not that the government is not working towards resolving this issue, its action has been predictable and quite negligent enough to give these miscreants causing mayhem and various atrocities breathing space to regroup and re-strategize on their next line of dastard action. Adejumo (2011) talked of this negligent attitude of the government when he recalled President

Jonathan Goodluck's response to 2011 UN House Bombing: "Terrorism is a global phenomenon. May be it is Nigeria's turn." As further interpreted by Adejumo, it seemed that the supreme leader of the country was saying that, "Why not, it's our turn to start getting blown up." How much should one expect? It is not that this security problem was a new phenomenon to the present government of Nigeria. As Adejumo (2011) rightly observed, "security was a driving issue in the last presidential campaign following bomb blast by Niger Delta militants and attacks of police by members of the extremist Islamic group, Boko Haram in the Northern part of the country. President Jonathan campaigned very hard to convince Nigerians that his government was meeting those security challenges. But the rioting, mostly in the North that followed immediately after his election raised questions, which are still unanswered, about security preparedness." Yet, the President is not at loss with what his duty was, for he said, "As president, it is my solemn duty to defend the constitution of this country. That includes the obligation to protect the lives and properties of every Nigerian wherever they choose to live" (Adejumo, 2011). First of all is the failure of

security agencies in the country. In particular, the failure of the intelligence services to contain the recurring security breaches. These security agencies appear incapable of matching the sophisticatedness of these miscreants. They discharged their duty unprofessionally and unmotivated. One wonders how they can veritably help the Nigerian government in restoring security to the country. In fact, the current trend of violence is imprinting on the psyche of Nigerians that the government security apparatus is incapable of guaranteeing the security and safety of its people. Another security challenge comes from the judiciary arm of government of the country. In Nigeria, the Judiciary has occasionally compromised cases that concern insecurity and thereby making the law not to act as a deterrent again. This challenge needs to be speedily resolved since many Nigerians have become conditioned to the acts of carnage, brigandage, looting, massacre, butchery and bestiality. Indecisiveness on issues bothering on insecurity from the part of the Nigerian government is another security challenge. This indecisiveness is not peculiar to the present Nigerian government but it has been an attitude of every federal government since the first republic. The

leaders of this country need to cultivate strong political will to oversee this security problem and not appear ever clueless, negligent and predictable. Unemployment appears to be the strongest security challenge of the Nigerian government. So alarming is the rate of unemployment in this country. Many Nigerians of whom are in the youth bracket are not gainfully employed. This situation has continually fanned the embers of insecurity in Nigeria to flames. These youths are frustrated by their unemployed state into perpetrating crimes of various degrees. Another of these security challenges is the issue of lop-sided development of the country. The final and not the least of these security challenges is the nefarious and virulent activity of the Islamic sect cum terror-group, Boko Haram. This terror-group has constituted itself a thorn in the flesh of the current government of Nigeria. The group has claimed responsibility for most bomb explosions and mayhem experienced within the country in recent times. The sheer lawlessness and carnage carried out by these renegade of Islam have heated up the nation and made the country less secure.

Human Rights

This work begins by stating very emphatically that no system of government guarantees respect for human rights more than a democratic government. Hence, when power shifted from the Military to the democratically elected government in 1999, Nigerians were full of confidence that human persons will now begin to enjoy these rights that are fundamental to them. However, Nigerians were shocked to observe that the violation of human rights that obtained during the Military dictatorship never abated. What we still have is gross violation of human rights with unprecedented crescendo in every aspect of it. In this paper just few instances of this violation are noted.

In February and May 2016, security forces were accused of killing at least 40 members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB). The groups were and are advocating for the separation of Biafra – mainly made up of Igbo speaking of the southeast and south-south and the release of Nnamdi Kanu, the IPOB leader detained and undergoing trial for treason since October 2015.

Despite all these noticed and noted human rights violation in a democratic Nigerian

government, the one that goes on everyday but is not talked about is that of the dignity of the human person expressed in the right to descent environment. The violation is carried out by both the agencies of the government and ordinary citizens in different aspects. In democratic Nigeria it has become a common thing to observe with dismay incessant and unauthorized blaring of sirens by government and quasi-government officials and some ordinary citizens as well. As a follow up to this is indulging in actions offensive to innocent eyes and mind such as:- (a) abuse of other road users by these self acclaimed superior citizens. These people don't observe traffic laws and even drive against the flow of traffic unchallenged. The military and police are the worst culprits in this regard, instead of carrying out their statutory responsibility of maintaining law and order. (b) again, so often the Nigerian citizen is helpless and endure painfully the loud noise coming from loud speakers mounted in some of the churches and mosques and those from merchants of music in the neighborhoods. Freedom of worship enshrined in the constitution is never freedom of noise making.

Painfully, government has no regulation in this regard. (c) Dumping of refuse/wastes along our roads and streets. So many cities in Nigeria today are known for this ugly and unfortunate trend despite the facts that the citizens pay their taxes to the government to take care of this kind of responsibility. (d) Another despicable practice in this regard is the indiscriminate urinating along our high ways and other exposed areas. This is an indecent exposure that offends against innocent eyes and minds. Government should take up the responsibility of providing convenient spots along our high ways for her citizens. (e) Nigerian citizens should realize that unreasonable overloading of vehicles, throwing out wastes from moving vehicles and jumping of queues in public places, etc, constitute violation of right to decent environment which is derived from that of human dignity and invariably to that of life which is a fundamental right. Succinctly put, human rights violations especially that of Life and Human dignity by governmental agencies and private citizens, thrive in these instances obtain in Nigeria; menace of Boko Haram insurgency and other acts of terrorism, Militancy in the Niger Delta region, Kidnapping, Bribery and Corruption,

Government insensitivity, Unemployment, Inflation, poverty, Police and Military brutality on civilians and the likes (Ogoloma, 2014).

Amongst different varieties of governments or regimes, democratic government is the greatest upholder and respecter of human rights. As such, expression of human rights blossoms most in a democratic setting. In Nigeria, democratic practice and its consequent protection of human rights are not what they ought to be. The flagrant violation of human rights in democratic Nigeria by so many governmental agencies casts doubt on the tactility of real democratic practice in Nigeria. Respect for human rights enriches democracy and makes it the best option among many others. The Nigerian democracy is stripped of its one of its beauties, (upholding human of rights), by the rulers and their cohorts. These people see themselves as above the law and have no regards for due process and rule of law. People should be answerable for both their actions and inactions immediately and not after vacating offices. One of the beauties of democracy is the rule of law..

Human rights are basic rights and freedom that all people are entitled to regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin,

race, religion, language, or other status. It includes civil and political rights, such as the right to life, liberty and freedom of expression and social, cultural and economic rights including the right to participate in election, to work and receive education.

Human rights are the fundamental features of any true democratic setting because the essence of democracy itself is based on the idea of human rights. Human rights are mostly viewed as the inalienable rights of people (Enebe, 2008). They are the legal entitlements which every citizen could enjoy without fear of the government or its fellow citizens. They are those rights which cannot be said to have been given to man by man but are earned by man for being a human because these are necessary for his continuous happy existence with himself, his fellow man and for participation in a complex society (Kaluge, 2013, p.4).

The basic issues involved in fundamental human rights according to Ndifon (2013) are (a) freedom rights – freedom from oppression in its various forms, (b) participation rights – in the decision making processes in various sphere of life, (c) benefits right – to food, work, medical care, education, etc. In a study of the development and evolution of human rights (Enebe, 2008;

Nwaofor, 2010; Kaluge, 2013; Ndifon, 2013) classified the stages in the growth of human rights into three generations: civil and political rights; economic, social and cultural rights; and solidarity or community rights.

It must be noted that in a democratic society, the basic rights of the citizens are guaranteed. That is why every modern constitution contains some formal guarantees of civil rights. Nevertheless, there is a great disparity at the level of sincerity that these rights are protected by different countries. This prompted Austin Ranney to remark that, "the mere presence of formally guaranteed rights in any nation's constitution means at least that the framers, for whatever reason, deemed it desirable to pay at least lip service-and perhaps more to the idea of the rights of men" (Ranney, 1975 :528).

There is no doubt that Nigerian Constitution contains expound arrangements conceding essential rights to Nigerians. There is likewise no uncertainty that the said arrangements were in congruity with global common freedom instruments with the point of developing majority rule administration in the nation. What has anyway raised concerns was the degree to which

progressive governments especially the current government have advanced and watched the arrangements.

Arbitrary Arrests

By April 2017, the military detained more than 4,900 in extremely overcrowded facility in Giwa Barrack.

Disease, dehydration and starvation killed at least 340 detainees.

At least 200 children, as young as four were detained in children's overcrowded cell.

Hundreds of women believed to be related to Boko Haram members were held by the military.

In September 2017 the Office of Attorney General announced mass trial of Boko Haram suspects.

Unlawful Killings

At least 12 IPOB members were killed by soldiers in Umuahia in Abia state on September 14, 2017.

There was outrage over activities of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), and after huge pressure, police agreed to reform the squad.

Communal Violence

Lingering violence between herdsmen and farmers claimed more than 549 and displaced thousands in 12 states.

In February 21 villagers were killed by suspected herdsmen in Atad, Kaura district, Kaduna State.

Twenty one people were killed by suspected herdsmen in Ancha village of Miango, Plateau state.

An attack by suspected herdsmen lead to the death of 27 people in Nkyie-Doghwro, Plateau state.

In December herdsmen attacked 5 villages in Demsa LGA Adamawa State, killing up to 57 people.

On 25 July, Police in Kano city prevented a group of women from protesting against the persistent rape of women and children in the state.

Nigeria has seen human rights abuses since its inception, but our focus is limited to the first term of President Buhari from 2015-2019. Based on this, the World Report (2019), asserted that the heightened political tensions ahead of the 2019 elections in which President Muhammadu Buhari sought re-election defined Nigeria's rights landscape in 2018. Despite notable military advances, and apparently premature proclamations of Boko Haram's defeat by government forces, the group remained a threat to security in the northeast region. Accordingly, Utomi (2018), argued in the

same direction when he opined that abductions, suicide bombings, and attacks on civilian targets by Boko Haram persisted during this period under study

In a related development, Ajasin (2018), averred that although Boko Haram's territorial control shrank to small pockets of villages around Lake Chad as a result of sustained government military action, factions of the insurgency group continued to carry out attacks against civilians in the region.

Rule of Law

A democratized political system is accountable, upholds the principles of rule of law and separation of powers and it governs based on the provisions of constitutions that are freely made and adopted to guide public conducts and actions of political leaders and the citizenry equally. It allows the existence of opposition parties and platforms and free expression of public sentiment and views through free, responsible and independent media establishments in a society of sound economy with high participant political culture.

The Mohammadu Buhari first tenure of civilian administration came on board in May, 29 2015 after he has defeated the

seating president – *Good luck Ebele Jonathan* in an historic election held in 2015 (Cinjel & Chujor 2018). The government came with a lot of vigor and energy to tackle number of issues ranging from corruption, insecurity and economic wellbeing of the people. A lot of measures were introduced to mitigate the mentioned issues and thus series of conflict arises on what the executive government sees as national interest and what the judiciary on the other side sees as the breakdown of rule of law. There were several instances th at these issues were contested between the executive, judiciary and legislature (Bello, 2017). In 2018, the United State of America gave 20th February as a deadline for the payment of *12A2Q Tucano Aircraft* and considering the limited time given, the president order the release of \$408 million dollars to secure and meet the deadline without the approval of the National Assembly (Oyoubaire, 2019). It has resulted to a serious skirmish between the National Assembly and the Executive. Party's tune of the song became beam and colourful; those in the opposition like senators *Mathew Vroghide, Chukwuka Utazi*, and others along the other divide were calling for impeachment and using section 143 and 80 of the operating

constitution(1999 as amended) to defend their course. Vroghide in a legislation session on April 26, 2008 maintained that the president had breached section 80 of the operating constitution (1999 as amended) which provides that all government's spending must be approved and appropriated by the legislature and thus urged the senator to invoke section 143 of the constitution against the president over his action. In the same direction senator Chukwuka Utazi in the plenary session enthused: A time has come when this senate has to rise up and do the job which the constitution has stipulated that we have to do. If we have a chief executive who doesn't want to behave according to the constitution, we follow the constitution to handle such chief executive. There is no other name to call this than this is an impeachable offence. It's an impeachable offence and we cannot allow that. We cannot stay here and this assembly will be taken for granted (Chukwuka Utazi, a plenary session, 20th April, 2018).

Senator Shehu Sani seems to be in-between. He sees the president payment of the jet to fight insurgent as an important thing but he does not follow the breath and eye of the law. He stressed "I believe that monies that are spent on security worth it" and at the

same time called for the refund. He clearly put it in this direction: But we should be calling for due process to be followed. We have seen so much bloodshed but there is the need for us not to circumvent the laws of the land. I believe that we should not impeach the president but asked that the money be returned and due process be followed (Shehu Sani, Plenary session on April, 2018).

Another incidence of negligence of rule of law can be seen in the case of Sambo Dasuki and El-Zazaky. There were several court orders by federal court, granting bail to *Dasuki* and *El-Zazaky* but the government and the executive specifically refused to adhered to the order; stressing security as serious issue of national interest (Oyoubaire, 2019). *El-Zazaky* and his wife (*Zeenah Ibraheem*) were arrested by the military on December 14, 2015, after a clash between his followers and officers of the Nigerian Army. During the clash, 347 Shiites were killed with no army officer charge for the crime ever since. *El-Zazaky* and his wife have been in detention following the event. On December 2, 2016, the federal high court in Abuja ordered *El-Zazaky* and his wife to be released from detention, citing that the continual detention violates their rights and

is against section 35(1) of the constitution which provided: “Every person shall be entitled to his personal liberty and no person shall be deprived of such liberty save in the following cases and in accordance with a procedure permitted by law”. Despite all the legal battle and other issues like ill – health, and continuous outcry of the press, civic group, member of the Shiites and several court orders, *El-Zakzaky* was still left in detention under the custody of department of state security (DSS). The federal government through the minister of justice – *Abubakar Malami* kept citing national security as issue that is paramount and of national interest (Offiong, 2019).

Perceptions of Anti-Corruption War

The word “perception” has been defined to mean the ability to see, hear or become aware of something through senses of the human body. (<https://en.Oxforddictionaries.com> perce). Two of the senses of human body could be deployed to determine, examine, assess or appraise the utilitarian value of public policies formulated, implemented or enforced. The same applies to laws and regulations made by the State. These two senses are sight and hearing. Indeed, such senses are of vital important in intelligence

gathering, investigation, decision making and value judgment. However, due to innate and mundane factors such as inherent human treacherousness, ethnicity, nepotism, clannishness, religious bigotry, fears and corruptibility, a good number of persons and indeed, Nigerians overtly or covertly deploy these senses selfishly and/or parochially against otherwise laudable public policies, actions, programmes, laws and regulations aimed at promoting collective pursuit of nation building.

Consequently, the perception about President Buhari’s anti-corruption war shows that the war has been on trial within and outside Nigeria. In Africa, President Buhari’s anti-corruption war has become a brand and a model to other African countries hence the recent acknowledgment of President Buhari by the African Union (AU) as the champion of anti-corruption fight in Africa. However, there is a negative perception by members of the PDP family, media, a section of the political elite and statesmen. For instance, the Transparent International (TI) has just released its report which reveals that the anti-corruption war remains a concept or mere policy document. Indeed, critics of this policy have averred that the methodologies of implementing the

anti-corruption war of the President Buhari administration are not only faulty but they are also whimsical and selective. Recently, a list of alleged looters of funds in Nigeria has been released in batches showing only alleged members of the PDP looters and leaving out alleged looters of other political parties including the governing APC party. This action by the Federal Government has fundamental defects as it violates the judgment of Justice Hadiza Rabi Shagari to wit that only the list of funds looters, the moneys and the circumstances of such recoveries should be published and not any list of alleged funds looters before the courts. Therefore, the media publication of alleged funds looters undermines the powers of the courts to determine such ongoing corruption cases and it also violates the right of those persons listed in such publication. This has raised issues of holistic and impartial anti-corruption war by the President Buhari's administration. Be that as it may, opinions are in unison that the personality, leadership quality and stance of President Buhari, a handful Nigerians have become conscious of corrupt practices and with time, such consciousness will translate to the reduction of the rate of corruption in public and private lives in Nigeria. It has

also been observed that the Constitution³⁷ empowers the President to perform all his executive powers alone, except subject to the provisions of the Constitution or an Act of NASS, which can make the President to delegate his executive powers to other persons. In view of such latitude of powers, President Buhari on assumption of office, failed, refused and/or neglected to appoint his Ministers after 29th May, 2015 and for upwards of six months. (Allison, 2018). The perception therefrom is that the delay and failure or negligence to do so contributed to the great recession that Nigeria experienced from 2016 to 2017. However, when the President finally named his cabinet members, they were made up of persons who were members and leaders of the different political parties that came under a coalition and subsequently collapsed to form the APC and that eventually went into 2015 elections and defeated the PDP government at national and the majority of states. Curiously, the persons so appointed as ministers were assigned portfolios in contradistinction to their learning and training. The perception therefore has been that these misaligned portfolios cannot lead to effective government policies formulation and implementation as well as enforcement

of laws and regulations against corruption in particular.

On a larger scale and broader appraisal, there is also the perception and perspective that President Buhari deliberately chose to use such appointments of his political associates and friends as well as decampers from the opposition parties due to fear of persecution and prosecution in fathom anti-graft cases, to compensate them. (Unini, 2018). To this end, the appointment will afford these political jobbers the opportunity to recover their investment in the President's 2015 election. Equally, it has been alleged that during the absence of Mr. President on health ground for a long period in London hospital, a body euphemically called "Kitchen Cabinet" or "Cabal" procured, aided and/or facilitated certain appointments in some key federal agencies such as the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) to mention a few. Some of such appointees no sooner than later became corrupt and the Federal Government promptly suspended them to enable investigations to be carried out by the appropriate anti-corruption agencies. In a similar circumstance, there have been graft allegations leveled against some cabinet members of President Buhari

particularly from Governors of the PDP controlled States. Equally, the federal civil service has been inundated with allegations of recruitments racketeering and of related lopsided appointments in the paramilitary services relating to strategic official positions in favour of a section of the country. As noted earlier, corruption is not only committed with monetary gains in view. It also now involves acts of nepotism and favouritism especially to the disadvantage of others, who are citizens of the same country.

Nevertheless, the anti-graft agencies such as the EFCC, ICPC, DSS and indeed, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) deserve some level of commendations in the anti-corruption war. The EFCC in particular, has performed remarkably well in spite of its obvious expansive operational scope, limited resources and dearth of human and physical capitals. Nevertheless, the body can still do more especially so with the enactment of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA)³⁸ and laws³⁹ adopted therefrom by different States in Nigeria. The ACJA has unambiguous provisions with which to enable the EFCC to carry out its investigation and due prosecution of cases to

reduce the rising number of cases it has been losing on a continuous basis.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, it is suggested that political parties should only promote individual participation and freedom of choice, Nigeria practicing a multi party system should give every political parties in Nigeria an equal right and opportunity, to prevent a particular political party from dominating the others, Since voting is done on the basis of residence and not ethnicity or other primordial sentiments, then none should be denied of the opportunity accruing from it on account of the place of origin or religion. The citizens should be given equal rights and freedom, democracy should be practiced and not just a name. There should be value reorientation. Nigerians need to see themselves as equal, important and partner in progress rather than a threat to one another. Political parties should create an enabling environment whereby citizens are free to vote in their preferred choice of leaders, without feeling insecure, this however promotes true democracy and allows its citizens to practice their fundamental human right which is one the features of democracy. Nigeria practicing a multi-party system ,every registered political

parties should have equal opportunity without been dominated by a one or two political parties, when this is done ,it creates equal chances and opportunity which gives individual the freedom and right to make different choices and the right to vote and be voted for. The rule of law which states that nobody is above the law, should be applicable to everyone, this helps to prevent corruption, and misuse of power and authority.

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