

The Endsars Protest Movement as A Catalyst for Realigning Nigeria's Sustainable Development Goals with National Development Objectives

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Abstract

This paper examines the EndSARS protest movement in Nigeria as a pivotal moment in redefining the alignment between Nigeria's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its national development objectives. By analyzing the protest's underlying philosophy and its impact on socio-political discourse, this research explores how the movement sheds light on areas where the country's goals and actions for sustainable development require realignment. Drawing from an extensive review of protest-related literature and case studies, the study offers valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of sustainable development in Nigeria. The findings contribute to the ongoing national discourse and provide recommendations for reinvigorating Nigeria's commitment to achieving the SDGs. Using a phenomenological approach to analysis, the study comes to the conclusion that, given the trending nature of national consciousness, which is moving away from the national values and identities that we are known for as a people, it is strategically and resourcefully necessary to revisit and adopt the contents of EPP as a basis of national characters reformation for the positive realization of SND. This is necessary both politically and economically.

Key Words: *EndSARS Protest Philosophy (EPP), Sustainable National Development (SND), Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), National Development Objectives, Nigeria*

Introduction:

The EndSARS protest movement, which erupted in Nigeria in October 2020, was a watershed moment in the country's recent history. Rooted in widespread public outrage against police brutality, the movement quickly transcended its initial objectives and assumed the role of a catalyst for broader societal transformation. Amidst the fervour and resolute demands for change, the EndSARS protests sparked a nationwide conversation beyond policing issues. It raised questions about the overall vision for Nigeria's development and its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Nigeria, as the most populous country in Africa, has long grappled with the challenge of achieving sustainable development. The Sustainable Development Goals, a global framework

adopted by Nigeria in 2015, serve as a comprehensive roadmap for addressing various socio-economic, environmental, and governance challenges. Yet, the progress towards these goals has often been impeded by numerous structural and systemic issues. This thesis explores the EndSARS protest philosophy, its role in shedding light on the misalignments between the SDGs and Nigeria's national development objectives, and the potential for the movement to redirect the country's path towards sustainable development.

Many requests have been made over the years for Nigeria to rebrand, reform, or regenerate its development principles and dignity as a country whose identity is well-known around the world. We recall the EndSARS protests in the recent past, which called for a radical shift in political, cultural, moral, social, and economic perceptions and orientations as causal dynamics of development, particularly in the "Nigerian Police Force," in the interest of both national and international interests (NPF). The EndSARS protest introduced and pursued several goals as a national rebranding strategy for Nigerians' attitudes, particularly the battle against corruption and other forms of dehumanization. The fight against the dehumanizing practices of the NPF's "Special Anti-Robbery Squad" (SARS) unit served as the foundation for the sociopolitical concerns of "EndSARS Protest Philosophy" (EPP) for "Sustainable National Development" (SND). This platform served as EPP's revolutionary means of challenging the constitutional and organizational aspects of national civilization's developmental processes (Abosede, 2020; Abiodun et al., 2020; Isanbor & Ojebun, 2022). Nigerians still remember the socio-political "Rebranding Nigeria Campaign" (RNC) program due to the development of currencies. It aligns with the country's recent political and social realities and is rooted in the long-lasting EndSARS protest, which has become a symbol of the country's modern development history. Shodipe et al. (2022) state:

The need for national branding usually stems from a country's desire to take control of its narrative away from negative media portrayals or national stereotypes. Nigeria's image is perceived as bad due to corruption, selfishness, carefree attitude, and ignorance of both leaders and citizens. As such, there is a need to redeem the image through rebranding or national branding. This image laundering approach aims to change the negative narrative and perception held by the international community and instead promotes a better narrative based on what a country can offer and favours the government and its citizens. Countries adopt this approach, hoping other nations will change their attitudes and perceptions towards them from negative to positive and consequently invest their money in such countries.

The concerns mentioned above by Shodipe et al. (2022) were similar to the social and economic causes of the EndSARS protest, according to numerous other social analyses of Nigeria's recent development challenges, as they projected the re-making/remaking of Nigeria's image and revaluation of national consciousness towards collective and common survival and development. Therefore, to achieve the RNC's progress goals, our personalities must be firmly and quickly free from the effects of bribery, corruption, and other social, political, moral, and economic wrongdoings (Adetolu, 2015; Arowolo & Akinola, 2018; Aina, 2020). It was designed to politically highlight the necessity of a national consciousness to achieve the reformation of people's values and character toward national cohesion and communal growth (Amadi 2017, Shodipe et al. 2022).

This study examines potential national image rebranding through the genuine application of EPP as a foundation for Nigerian history and a dynamic source of the revitalized hope for SND through the valuable periscope of RNC. Therefore, the questions are: What must be included in such a protest before it has the power to influence SND's direction? What, if anything, must be avoided while organizing such demonstrations in the future to further SND's

ability to influence the history of Nigerian progress as a people? Because of the potential answers to these concerns, the main focus of this study is on the potential use of EPP as a paradigmatic reminder of RNC's goals for SND.

Statement of the Problem:

Nigeria's commitment to the SDGs is enshrined in its national development agenda, but persistent challenges have marred the journey toward achieving these goals. The EndSARS protests highlighted critical issues within the country, spotlighting the divergence between Nigeria's developmental aspirations and the reality on the ground. This incongruity is at the heart of the problem this thesis seeks to address.

Firstly, there exists a pressing need to understand how the EndSARS movement, which initially focused on police reform, evolved into a broader social and political phenomenon. This transformation underscores a growing dissatisfaction with the status quo and reveals an underlying desire for change across various facets of Nigerian society. Analyzing the protest's philosophy and its demands will offer insights into the multifaceted nature of sustainable development in Nigeria.

Secondly, the challenge of aligning national development objectives with the SDGs in a developing country like Nigeria poses a critical question. The objectives articulated in the SDGs reflect a global consensus on the path to sustainable development. However, translating these goals into practical strategies and policies that resonate with the local context is a complex endeavour. The EndSARS movement, focusing on accountability, transparency, and good governance, spotlights this challenge. Thirdly, Nigeria's commitment to achieving the SDGs within the stipulated timeframe necessitates re-evaluating existing policies and priorities. The EndSARS protests exposed gaps and inconsistencies in the government's approach to socio-economic development and public welfare. Examining these discrepancies and proposing recommendations for policy realignment is crucial to guiding Nigeria's sustainable development journey.

In summary, the EndSARS movement has shaken Nigeria's socio-political landscape, and this thesis seeks to analyze its philosophy, role, and impact in addressing the misalignment between the SDGs and Nigeria's national development objectives. The thesis will delve into the broader discourse on sustainable development, governance, and social justice, offering a comprehensive exploration of the challenges and opportunities for realigning Nigeria's development trajectory with the global vision encapsulated in the SDGs.

Research Questions:

1. How did the EndSARS protest movement evolve from its initial focus on police reform to become a catalyst for broader discussions on sustainable development in Nigeria?
2. To what extent does the EndSARS movement reveal misalignments between Nigeria's national development objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?
3. What potential policy recommendations can be drawn from the analysis of the EndSARS protest movement to realign Nigeria's development trajectory with the SDGs?

Research Hypotheses:

H1: The EndSARS protest movement's philosophy and demands have significantly contributed to reshaping the discourse on sustainable development in Nigeria.

H2: The EndSARS protests have exposed misalignments between Nigeria's national development objectives and the SDGs, indicating the need for policy realignment.

H3: Analyzing the EndSARS protest movement will yield policy recommendations that can guide Nigeria toward achieving greater alignment with the SDGs in its national development strategies.

Literature Review:

The EndSARS Movement and Sustainable Development in Nigeria

The EndSARS movement, which ignited in Nigeria in October 2020, drew international attention to the nation's challenges and aspirations. Emerging from the outcry against police brutality, the movement rapidly catalyzed broader discussions about Nigeria's path to sustainable development. This literature review explores the multifaceted dimensions of the EndSARS movement and its implications for aligning Nigeria's national development objectives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

To comprehend the significance of the EndSARS movement in the context of sustainable development, we must first understand the foundation upon which these discussions are based: the SDGs. These 17 global goals, adopted by Nigeria in 2015, encompass an array of economic, social, and environmental objectives. While Nigeria embraced the SDGs, the nation has faced persistent challenges translating these global goals into tangible outcomes. Within the literature, various scholars have explored Nigeria's commitment to the SDGs. Adu et al. (2018) shed light on the Nigerian government's efforts to integrate the SDGs into its national development agenda. They emphasize the importance of mainstreaming the goals to ensure meaningful progress. Conversely, Owoputi and Omolehinwa (2019) underscore the complexities of aligning Nigeria's development strategies with the SDGs, citing structural and systemic constraints.

EndSARS as a Catalyst for Change

The EndSARS movement's rapid evolution to protest police brutality to a symbol of broader social and political change has been a subject of keen interest. Odey (2021) provides a comprehensive analysis of how the movement's philosophy and demands expanded to encompass concerns about governance, transparency, and accountability. The movement's ability to mobilize a diverse group of protesters and spark national conversations underlines its potential as a catalyst for reform in Nigeria. The literature reflects the role of civil society organizations and the diaspora in supporting and amplifying the movement. Ugwuanyi and Ijewereme (2021) discuss how civil society organizations leveraged social media to spread awareness and garner international support for the EndSARS movement. Their study emphasizes the significance of transnational networks in modern social movements.

Misalignments Between National Development and SDGs

While Nigeria's commitment to the SDGs is well-documented, the EndSARS movement unveiled misalignments between the country's national development objectives and the global goals. Researchers have sought to dissect these discrepancies. Adebisi (2020) argues that the EndSARS protests shed light on governance deficiencies in Nigeria, which are central to the nation's sustainable development challenges. Furthermore, the alignment between the movement's demands and the SDGs has been scrutinized. Yusuf (2021) delves into the

EndSARS movement's calls for police reform, justice, and accountability, linking these demands to specific SDGs related to justice, reduced inequalities, and accountable institutions. This connection underscores the potential for policy realignment.

SARS and ENDSARS Protest's Thrust: Illustrating Nigerians' Bad Faith

The EndSARS Protest was a nonviolent public outcry and revolt against the illicit and dishonest actions of the NPF's SARS section. The NPF is a federal institution created by legislation to provide guard services and services for public and personal safety. Section 214 of the 1999 Constitution created the NPF. The Federal Republic of Nigeria's (FRN) Police Act (1990) outlines the purpose, composition, and methods of operation of the Force (Abiodun et al., 2020). 1943 saw the initial draft of the Act, which was revised in 1967. (See Police Act, Cap. 2004). The Inspector-General of Police (IGP), who is in charge of the police under his direction for public safety and the upkeep of public order, is appointed by the President of Nigeria, who also serves as the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (Ogbette et al., 2018). Similarly, the Federal Ministry of Police Affairs oversees the NPF's budgetary, administrative, and logistical management. SARS, a division of the Force Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (FCIID), was a notorious anti-crime unit of the NPF established in 1992 under the leadership of Anthony Ogbizi, the Deputy Inspector General of Police at the time. Simeon Danladi Midenda, a retired Commissioner of Police, added the term "Special" to the Anti-Robbery Squad, which was already in existence. SARS, a division of the Force Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (FCIID), was a notorious anti-crime unit of the NPF established in 1992 under the leadership of Anthony Ogbizi, the Deputy Inspector General of Police at the time. Simeon Danladi Midenda, a retired Commissioner of Police, added the term "Special" to the Anti-Robbery Squad, which was already in existence.

One of the difficulties faced by Nigeria's civilian administration, which took office in 1999, was upholding the protection and preservation of human rights, which had been violated during the previous military regime, according to Amnesty International (2016). This problem has arisen at the same time as a surge of crime and violence that has continued to sweep across the country. One of the many wrongdoings that include excessive force by security personnel—particularly the police—against members of the public is called brutality. One of the difficulties faced by Nigeria's civilian administration, which took office in 1999, was upholding the protection and preservation of human rights, which had been violated during the previous military regime, according to Amnesty International (2016). This problem has arisen at the same time as a surge of crime and violence that has continued to sweep across the country. One of the many wrongdoings that include excessive force by security personnel—particularly the police—against members of the public is called brutality. In the global system, this transgression is present in many states and territories, although it is particularly prevalent in poor nations. When police officers or security personnel purposefully employ excessive force against the people of a state, it is referred to as police brutality (Abiodun et al., 2020). According to empirical research, torture and other violent mistreatment are inefficient at getting trustworthy information during questioning and may have long-term harmful impacts on both victims and offenders. Torture has been claimed to be often employed in police custody throughout Nigeria, despite official bans against it and custodial misbehaviour by the police; this is a primary cause of fatalities in custody (Aborisade & Obileye, 2018). Torture and abuse, particularly of young people, have spread throughout states, with many individuals being persecuted daily and labelled as criminals at first sight.

The issue of poor faith has negatively impacted the EndSARS protest nationwide and angered Nigerians, particularly the youth, who had hoped for constructive socio-political thrusts from SND. Being a Nigerian requires denying one's existential reality and maybe looking for socio-political comfort in something that does not exist, which is morally highly wrong. However, it is in bad faith to be politically denied the developmental necessities that all Nigerians are inherently and democratically endowed with. The issue of bad faith is easily understood in the context of the oppressive political, religious, ethnic, and economic conditions that exist in Nigeria. It is also incompatible with one's national authenticity as a citizen of that country and is primarily caused and maintained by corruption and the mishandling of public funds (Abosedo, 2020; Abiodun et al., 2020; Isanbor & Ojebun, 2022). As a result, the panoptical nature of the imperial self of wholeness is applied to Nigerian humanity, raising the crucial question of how humanity is surviving in the face of dehumanizing circumstances like a high unemployment rate, insecurities, underemployment, hunger, starvation, street begging, inadequate healthcare, non-payment of salaries and wages, and so forth. As the foundation for accomplishing SND, the EndSARS protest was perceived as being driven by the prevalent conditions of poor faith for Nigerians who want a better, dynamic, and sustainable Nigeria as a nation.

The RNC Foundation for Understanding EPP

In 2017, Nigerians launched a social media campaign with the hashtag *#EndSARS* to document private and public abuses and extortions by SARS officers and demand the total overhaul and abolition of the Unit (Ujene & Orji-Egwu, 2018). The nationwide demonstrations against Police officers of SARS continue to gain momentum across States (WANEP 2020). In October 2020, the campaigners moved from social media using the *#EndSARS* to organized, peaceful protests in Abuja, Lagos, Ibadan, Osun, Benin, Ughelli, Warri, Ilorin, Ogbomosho, Owerri, Jos, Kaduna, Calabar and other Nigerian cities and states, threatening to continue if the government refused to disband the force (WANEP 2020). According to Vanguard Newspaper, the protestors made a five-point demand to be met by the Federal Government of Nigeria (Vanguard, 2020). Topping the list was the immediate release of all the persons arrested during the protests, as well as justice and compensation for all who died through police brutality in Nigeria. Next to the above is an independent body to be set up within ten days to investigate and prosecute all reports of police misconduct. Also, the psychological evaluation and retraining of SARS operatives before they are deployed to any other police unit. Finally, the protesters requested an increase in the salaries of officers in the Nigerian police. It is important to note that the *#EndSARS* protest was a means some Nigerians used to unleash their anger against not only the brutality of the Nigerian Police but also poor governance, which has led to excruciating poverty that caused hardship in the country.

The police criminality and brutality, poor government's decision making and lack of trust in the political officeholders were seen as the basis of the *EndSARS* protest. The protesters, mainly youths, recognized that, usually, every government that values its image would prevent protests of this kind because it gives a bad image of the country in the international environment, especially how the protest was dismissed by the government's commanded military shooting at the protesters at the Lekki Tollgate in Lagos (Isanbor & Ojebun, 2022). It was a massacre that should have attracted the attention of the International Court of Justice, but the Federal Government dismissed the action as mere political propaganda and rumour. Moreover, the *EndSARS* protest is clear evidence that there is a wide gap between the

government and young Nigerians who still feel disgruntled over the way and manner the government handled the call to end Police criminality and brutality before the protest. However, before RNC, there was the 'Heart of Africa' (HOA) Project, which was launched by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo's Presidential Administration in the year 2005. This was initially launched in 2004 as the Nigeria Image Project (Amadi 2017, Shodipe, Ifekristi & Omolade 2022). The HOA failed in known times as customary of many political initiatives and programmes. According to many Nigerian political and social thinkers, HOA failed because

- Proper image analysis was not examined by the agencies concerned,
- There was no solid political will to make the project work at first, the stakeholders involved were not directed to the actual brand to be achieved, and ultimately,
- The media needed to be induced appropriately or contracted to project the ministerial initiatives towards achieving such social, economic and political reforms.

As a revitalization of the HOA Project's objectives on the re-making remaking of Nigeria's Image in the face of the increasing phenomena of corruption, bribery, and miscarriages of justice, RNC was thought of as a better socio-political platform for the projected national re-engineering of minds towards the attainment of SND.

RNC was a project ministerially initiated by Prof (Mrs) Dora Akunyili. RNC was designed and championed by her as a Minister of Information under Umaru Musa Yar'Adua's presidential administration. RNC was launched at the Shedu Musa Yar'adua Centre Abuja on the 9th of February 2009. The logo of the campaign, which was: "Nigeria: Good People, Great Nation," was unveiled on the 17th of March 2009 (Amadi 2017, Shodipe et al., 2022). For national media outfits and politicians, it was a good slogan as a logo to revive the faith and trust of Nigeria as a country and Nigerians as a people, especially in the development perceptions of many international and diplomatic bodies and agencies. However, according to Vanguard's Viewpoint on the 19th of July 2010, with the title: "Rebranding: The Journey so far," many Nigerians may have thought that the slogan should have been: "Nigeria: Good People, Corrupt Leaders" or "Nigeria: Good People, Failed Nation." This criticism as a cynical suggestion indicates that the weighty influences and effects of bad and corrupt leadership have been a foundation for Nigeria as a failed nation, which has been occasioning the mindsets of many Nigerians historically.

From all indications, the ministry initiated the program to re-market the fundamental values of Nigerian national identity in the global perceptive indexes of development (Adetolu, 2018; Arowolo & Akinola, 2018; Aina, 2020). This project was directed toward fighting the roots of corruption in the minds of many Nigerians, especially those who have sunk deep into it and those who were and are intending to go into it as a way of financially and monetarily alleviating and elevating themselves and ultimately, as a way of life (Kunde, 2014; Isanbor & Igboin, 2020). With such development, there were socio-philosophical calls for or drives toward character orientating and positive value rebranding or re-making in the institutionalization of the principles of common good and solidarity in the minds of many Nigerians that have been bedevilled by the effects of insecurity, secessionist agitations, electoral flaws, immigration crimes, corruption, smuggling, arms dealing, a weakened economy, poverty, ill-functional public amenities, structural unemployment, advance fee fraud '419', human trafficking amongst other vices. (Amadi 2017, Shodipe et al. 2022). As such, there have been cries and agitations for national reformation embedded in re-making or rebranding our characters and values towards attaining SND. Then, RNC was anchored on this tripod objective toward achieving a positive change in the perceptual index of SND:

1. Attitudinal change (Re-orientation)

2. Revival of Old Cultural Values
3. Instilling of Patriotism in the citizens

The objectives of RNC were centred on redesigning the valued images of Nigeria as a product in the world's market, competing among other countries (Kunde, 2014). It is on this basis of reshaping and re-marketing the Nigerian national image, at home and abroad, that the youth positively and non-violently revolted as a form of protest against the criminal and brutal activities of the personnel of the SARS unit of the NPF. These activities were heavily unreasonable and marked with bribery, corruption, robbery, extortion and extrajudicial killings by the personnel of SARS. However, after the protest, as part of the demands of the protest, the Federal Government, through the Police Commission and Ministry of Police Affairs, submitted to establish a Special Weapon and Tactical Team (SWAT) in replacement of SARS for better and more refined representation of NPF. The masses greeted this as part of rebranding the image of Nigeria in global affairs. But, over two years after the protest and the pronouncement of the establishment of the SWAT unit of NPF, no evidence of its existence and operations are visible to the eyes of any Nigerian; somewhat, the resurgence and resurfacing of the same SARS in different unclassified nomenclatures of the old pattern of operations.

From the limitations of development occasioned by the increase of internal insecurity, social brutality, criminality, and extrajudicial killing, the *EndSARS* protesters, mainly as youths, developed the tranches of philosophy of SND along the ironical valuation of *EndSARS* as it is peculiar to Nigerian development history (Isanbor & Ojebun, 2022). Taking as a basis of analytical interest, this essay calls for the rebranding of EPP for possible, vibrant, viable and conscientious-oriented change for the realization of SND. As unanimously recognized, according to the protesters, the *EndSARS* will necessarily lead to or come to represent developmentally the following points of national reformation and rejuvenation, especially in the face of the current demands for SND:

- **E**- Education and Economy Reforms
- **N**- National Constitution Reforms:
- **D**- Debt Accountability
- **S**- Security Reforms
- **A**- Anti-People Policies Cancellations
- **R**- Restructuring
- **S**- Save Cost of Governance

With these social and political reforms, the *EndSARS* protest remains a collective concern for SND. It became a social incident that has always remained fresh in the minds of many Nigerians, as it agitated against the ill-treatment meted upon Nigerians by SARS, ranging from police brutality to molestation and so on (Abosede, 2021; Abiodun *et al.*, 2020; Isanbor & Ojebun, 2022). Charitably, during the *EndSARS* protest, many people lent their support to the movement through items of cash and kind, and a remarkable factor was when a group took charge of the finances and, through a transparent system of records, gave daily accounts of the expenditure at the protest ground. This is because there was a collective common interest in rebranding the national image and the achievement of collective survival in the faces of social alienation, subjugation and suppression by persons and agencies that were supposed to protect them (see Isanbor & Ojebun 2022). It was characterized initially by a peaceful agitation but ended violently as a result of the extrajudicial killings that later emerged. Amid these agitations and the arousal of patriotic spirit in these youths, a corresponding reaction which would have helped in addressing the concerns of these agitators would have been expected from the

government. The response from the government was rather spontaneous, as seen in the Lagos Tollgate massacre and the seeming replacement of SARS with the SWAT of NPF.

Such a response on the part of the government questioned the call for a historical national consciousness on human values and for respect for the development placement of the youths in national survival consciousness along with the importance of the history of development associated with the culture of social uprisings, violence, and conflicts. According to Isanbor and Ojebun (2022: 214): Through the *#EndSARS* protest, the government's denial of the Lekki tollgate massacre has the indispensable level of political corruption and the lack of democratic culture in Nigeria, simply due to the lack of the values of truth and the imposing influences of national insincerity and dishonesty. It was merely the factual separation of truth from the faulty relations between politics and democracy, a union of governmental insincerity. Such deficiency has increased the level of political deceit, betrayal, politically motivated violence, and abuse of political power and privileges since the politicians are very sure to do anything, irrespective of its moral and ethical questionings, can go away with it without fears of sanctions. These are matters of truth for national development. The *EndSARS* protest was about telling the national truth to realize vibrant and integral national unity and development.

Rebranding Nigerian Minds: *EndSARS* Protects as a Paradigm for New Nigerian History

The thrust workability of rebranding protest of a national entity like Nigeria is about telling and accepting the truth about us as a people and then striving for influential change by monitoring the responsible actions and valued choices we exercised (Isanbor & Igboin, 2020). To achieve EPP, we must remind ourselves of the challenges of RNC, which could have been more pragmatically and socially different from that of *EndSARS*. This is to move the needle of development and growth to a significant vantage point, which democracy as a mode of government demands from the people and the leaders to examine themselves over time periodically. For example, it requires that Nigeria needs leaders who are knowledgeable as well as the masses who can discern their future by properly electing their leaders for the achievement of SND. The challenges have been that:

- We are faced with a lack of national cohesion and patriotism, which have been from the weighty influences of ethnicity, tribalism, nepotism, religious particularistic bigotry and intolerance, and personal interests as against national interests.
- Lack of a creative and peaceful environment for the ease of business, especially for external and international investors.
- Fundamental increases in the socio-economic effects of unemployment, underemployment, hardship, insecurities of all kinds and poverty. These are increasing fraud, robbery, banditry, human trafficking, illegal and forced migration, ritual killing and the like.
- Corruption in public service and governmental administration. These have made managerial looting and embezzlement of public funds straightforward and pleasant for the perpetrators and then detrimental to national growth and development.
- Lack of reformation approach to the values of national unity and development by the government, in which they have been neglecting the interests, initiative and demands of trade and labour unions, educational agencies, NGOs, research agencies and the media.

The EPP projected the undying need for reviewing the national constitution that will indispensably guarantee the restructuring process and policy for SND. For EPP, these are courses for socio-political changes to be made in the National Constitution, especially the courses of the dissolution of powers from the central to the states for controlling their states' owned resources and management and then contributing to the management of federal government characters. This existing Federal system that is constitutionalized is said to be regretted by many ethnic groupings, governmental actors and agencies as many of the ethnic groupings and interest groups are said to be governmentally neglected or abandoned by the Federal Government due to poor allocation and under-funded projects or presences in their constituencies. Nigerian political leaders lack the understanding of commerce and financial technology favourable to the economic development of the country. In other words, the majority of our political leaders need to be qualified for the task ahead of them, and this becomes worse each day as political positions are now seen solely as a means of self-enrichment and no interest is placed in the true essence of service.

With the mindset for the possible implementation of EPP for SND, there is a clarion call on all the Nigerian youths and all well-meaning Nigerians that it is high time we held the bull by its horns. It is high time we all went out to bell the cat by ourselves. It is high time we showed these leaders of ours that there is the youthful spirit that can help in developing our country. As demanded by RNC, it is high time we expressed our patriotism to our government by defending it from the flaws that bedevil it. If this is not done, posterity will never be our friend but our accuser. This can only be done when we all trope out *en masse*, just as we did in the protest to end the operations of SARS, to participate reasonably and purposefully in the 2023 election and ensure that bad leaders are ousted and vote leaders that will possibly implement EPP for SND; then and only then, will the youthful spirit replete in us be effectively used, and indeed the justice the youths seek for the youths killed at the Lekki tollgate be actualized. It is high time we went back to the drawing board and ensured that we changed the political trajectory by reasonably electing our leaders and by making sure we shun all sorts of vote buying, election apathy and political thuggery and corruption. Nigerian youths and all well-meaning Nigerians, just as they did in the *EndSARS*, troop out en-masse in the forthcoming elections slated for 2023 and allow their voices to be heard in the votes they render.

The *EndSARS* protest is a pilot scheme that test-ran the socio-political powers of the Nigerian youth community. It is the beginning of a development revolution, reformation and renaissance from positive and effectual rebranding and re-engineering Nigerian mindsets towards the set goals of SND. Little wonder, an erstwhile President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, asserted in 2017 that "we are sitting on the keg of gunpowder when it comes to the youths." In 2022, the youths came out strong to defend their rights in the *EndSARS* protest; it is expected that in 2023, they will come out *en masse* to oust self-recycling bad leaders who have failed them as a people. Thus, the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson become apt at this point, namely that "the world belongs to the energetic." Such a philosophy of social reformation and engineering recognizes that Nigerian youths are vibrant and intelligent. When reasonably and purposefully coordinated, they can bring the needed growth in this country as a people with shared interests and survival.

Research Hypotheses:

H1: The *EndSARS* protest movement's philosophy and demands have significantly contributed to reshaping the discourse on sustainable development in Nigeria.

Findings: The analysis of the EndSARS protest movement may reveal a transformation from a singular focus on police reform to a broader emphasis on issues such as good governance, transparency, and accountability. This suggests that the movement has played a significant role in reshaping the discourse on sustainable development in Nigeria.

H2: The EndSARS protests have exposed misalignments between Nigeria's national development objectives and the SDGs, indicating the need for policy realignment.

Findings: Findings may indicate a substantial gap between Nigeria's national development objectives and the SDGs, with the EndSARS protests serving as a powerful indicator of this misalignment. The demonstrations may underscore the need for the government to revisit its development priorities and policies in light of the global SDGs.

H3: Analyzing the EndSARS protest movement will yield policy recommendations to guide Nigeria toward achieving greater alignment with the SDGs in its national development strategies.

Findings: The research may lead to a set of policy recommendations that address the discrepancies highlighted by the EndSARS movement. These recommendations could include reforms in governance, law enforcement, and social justice, with the ultimate aim of realigning Nigeria's development trajectory with the SDGs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the EndSARS movement, sparked by concerns about police brutality, has resonated far beyond its original scope. It has become emblematic of broader societal aspirations and is a critical juncture for discussing sustainable development in Nigeria. The movement has exposed misalignments between national development objectives and the SDGs, offering valuable insights for policy realignment. As this literature review demonstrates, the EndSARS movement has ignited discussions on sustainable development and raised questions about the nation's path toward achieving it.

Based on the above, we have evaluated EPP's development values as a helpful reminder of RNC's goals for achieving SND. Aware of the need to maintain national cohesion and progress, we remind ourselves of the importance of the EndSARS demonstration, considering the nation's problems with crime, extrajudicial executions, and insecurity—all of which have been linked to the operations of the NPF's SARS units. Due to established concerns about insecurity and other significant levels of corruption in the nation, investors find little incentive to stake their firm, resulting in variances in important indicators assessing national political, social, and economic progress. As a result, EPP's awareness of SND makes it a symbol of hope for a potential rebranding of Nigeria's sociopolitical landscapes and image. It also helps to create an autonomous society where innovative ideas are encouraged rather than a place where promises are made without any thought of following through on them.

Policy Implications and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made as modes of achieving EPP:

- Governments must ensure that the EPP is not politically marginalized, as in the past when they enabled political mediocrity and indifference to triumph over it.

- To restore public trust in the NPF about reforming and rebranding the country's image for SND, the government should keep its word on the institutionalization of SWAT as a substitute for SARS.
- The EndSARS protests, which had legitimately given young people more influence on social change and engineering, shouldn't be allowed to fade or end. The social resolve of the youth is essential to altering the nation's socio-political norms and landscape to realize SND.
- As a people with a single purpose for standard change, we need to be realistically aware of what unites us rather than what divides us to change the political trajectory of the nation, notably the management of our shared resources.

Analyzing the EndSARS movement's impact on Nigeria's development agenda generates policy implications and recommendations. Adewole (2022) discusses the need to re-evaluate Nigeria's development priorities and policies in light of the global SDGs. He highlights the importance of mainstreaming the principles of justice, accountability, and transparency into governance and public administration.

Policy recommendations stemming from the movement's philosophy and demands include enhancing police reform, strengthening judicial independence, and promoting transparency in government. These proposals serve as a roadmap for addressing the gaps between national objectives and the SDGs.

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