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Discourse Framing of Nigeria's Developmental Issues and Government's Interventionist Policies in Selected Televised National Addresses of President Muhammadu Buhari (2015 -2021)

Orungbeja, Babatunde Omowaiye
Prof. Ajilore, Kolade

Department of Mass Communication, Babcock University, Nigeria

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Abstract

Public addresses constitute potent platforms through which public figures review their policies and articulate their plans. They provide insights to the priorities of the government, elicit public sympathy and support for the government. Contrarily, there has been a seeming dissonance between the national addresses of President Muhammadu Buhari and the reality of the Nigerian citizenry. To this effect, this research purposed to conduct a critical discourse analysis of President Buhari's national addresses against the backdrop of development in Nigeria between 2015 and 2021. The research explicated the interplay between the concepts of language and ideology in text, for the enactment of human development. The general population of this research comprised all the 27 televised speeches delivered by President Muhammadu Buhari in Nigeria from 2015-2021. The targeted population of 20 national addresses were adopted using a purposive sampling technique. The addresses are the Inaugural Day address of 2015, all New Year's Day addresses, Democracy Day addresses and all Independence Day addresses. Coding sheet was used to gather data directly from the original full text discourses of the President, as presented to the citizenry. The research findings show that the President's discourses framed national development issues as direct and key responsibilities of the government which require

strategic, sincere and effective interventionist policies. They also revealed nine recurrent themes in the President's discourses to depict the President's intense focus on national development in tandem with his pre-election campaign slogan of Security, Economy and Anti-corruption (SEA). The research uncovered linguistic frames comprising pragmatic speech acts of locution, illocution and perlocution in the President's discourses, to highly and frequently reiterate his ideologies in ensuring national growth and development. The findings also revealed that the President's discourses framed and propagated ideologies, dissimilar to his military antecedents, for the advancement of his national development interventionist policies. The research concluded that the interplay among President Muhammadu Buhari's ideology and human development policies in the text of his national addresses between 2015 and 2021, consciously construed his administration's interventionist policies for the enactment of socio political development against the excruciating challenges in the Nigerian nation. Thus, this research recommended that political leaders should ensure that subsisting problems and those envisaged as the foundation of social order in their societies; the value systems appropriate for social justice, wealth creation and distribution, social efficiency with moral sensitivity and concern for the common good, as deduced from the knowledge of shared values with their citizenry, are pragmatically tackled not only in the discourses, but as well experientially. This research also recommended that politicians and their speech writers should effectively and positively adopt the use of discourse framing to promote societal progressive growth.

Keywords: National Address, Good Governance, Human Development, Ideology, Language

Introduction

Since independence in 1960, Nigeria has experienced thirty three (33) years of democratic rule with the last twenty two (23) years uninterrupted by any military incursion. Nigeria as the largest African economy is among the top thirty economies in the world based on nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) volume. Irrespective of its size as the largest black population in the world and Africa's largest producer of crude oil, it cannot be said to have maximized its socioeconomic indicators for the rapid transformation of the country (africa.businessinsider.com, 2020; BBC News, 2019).

Like many other developing countries, Nigeria has been unable to safeguard natural resource revenues in order to reduce fiscal volatility and promote a macroeconomic environment conducive to long-term investment. Nigeria's recent 'unbroken democratic period' from 1999 till date had witnessed three (3) administrations before 2015 when the incumbent,

President Muhammadu Buhari, was elected into office. The three administrations are those of Presidents Olusegun Aremu Obasanjo (1999 - 2007), Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (2007 - 2010) and Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (2010 - 2015). The administrations made several campaign promises on improvement in the socio-economic development of the citizenry via security, improved health care for all, quality education, infrastructure / social amenities, industrialization, job creation, women empowerment / gender equality, poverty alleviation, food provision, deregulation of the economy, privatisation and more.

However, Nigeria's capacity to positively and effectively transform its social, economic, cultural and political existence has been burdened by insurgency, religious disturbances, civil unrests, poverty, corruption, farmers and herdsmen bloody clashes, disregard for rule of law and fundamental human rights, the "natural resource curse", lopsided political appointments, banditry, clamor for restructuring and of self-determination. Despite her rating as the largest African economy and twenty sixth largest economy in the world, it has lately been vacillating between 'a failing and failed state' status due to a varied number of developmental challenges. In fact, the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) and the Harvard Kennedy School in the United States have said that "Nigeria has since moved from a weak state to a "fully failed state" having manifested all signs of a failed country, including the inability of government to protect the citizens, large scale violence and festering insurgency" (nationalpivot.com, 2021).

Varied studies have uncovered that the attention given the challenging issues in the Nigerian state have been 'radically flawed', entreating the 'inessential and superficial'. These flawed attention depict Nigerian leadership's lack of understanding of how concepts connect development for positive transformation of the society (Charteris-Black, 2018; Oladipo, 2008). Moti (2019) echoes that development plans have failed in Nigeria at every stage, from conceptualization to eventual monitoring, evaluation and feedback, more as a result of dissonance between the idiosyncratic dogmas and biases of the Nigerian leadership, on human development, and the reality of the citizenry.

Knowing fully well that national development "is continuously negotiated with words....It is a conversation...that is very largely about persuasion, because it is negotiated and innovative and above all because it is about a future to which we are vulnerable" (Herrick, 2015, p. 4), there was a need to investigate the Nigerian President's emotions and thoughts and how these are transmitted through the national discourses (on interventionist policies) to the citizenry, in order to influence their decisions or actions (Herrick, 2015). More so, with an understanding that the typology of Presidential national addresses, as an offshoot of political speeches, can be

classified into policy / political decisions formulation and establishing shared values (Charteris-Black, 2018), it was expedient to examine the recurrent themes of President Muhammadu Buhari's national addresses (from his 2015 inauguration day address to the 2021 independence day address) to decipher his dispositions to national development.

Charteris-Black (2018) elucidates that national addresses must take the citizenry into cognizance, such that the themes and language are influenced by the assumptions on the contextual knowledge of the audience, as well as by the understanding of the national media for the "maximum effect" of the addresses on the citizenry through the media. National addresses need be effectively deployed in communicating ideologies and values to large audiences, convincing and inspiring the citizenry, offering hope to the hopeless, appealing for strength and unity in a disharmonious milieu, "establishing political legitimacy by creating social and moral purpose" among many others, via an effective relationship with the media.

This research was, thus, necessitated by the seeming dissonance between President Muhammadu Buhari's discourses on national development, the corresponding emotions (body language) displayed during the televised broadcasts and the reality of socio-political development in Nigeria from 2015 -2021. The research sought to examine the national addresses of President Muhammadu Buhari within the period, using critical discourse analysis frameworks of Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak and Teun van Dijk to depict the discursive interplay between President Muhammadu Buhari's ideology and human development policies.

Conceptual framework

The research sought to investigate the function of President Muhammadu Buhari's ideology, through his discourses, in exerting power and influence for shaping the citizenry's sentiments towards national development between 2015 and 2021. Through his linguistic frames, the researchers hoped to determine how he addressed the citizenry's expectations in connection with national development and good governance.

National Development in Nigeria

Development involves the creation of enabling environments for people to individually and collectively live happy, long and healthy in which their potentials for leading productive and creative lives, in accord with their needs and interests, are fully developed (UNDP, 1990). This in turn necessitates the establishment and implementation of long term plans that ensure sustainability of the desired living standards in a conducive environment for the people.

Todaro and Smith (2006; as cited in Kingdom & Maekae, 2013, p.314) explicate that national development, not GNP or GDP based, “is a multidimensional process which involves the sustained elevation of the entire society and social system towards a better or humane life”. It is the total effect of all citizens, forces and addition to stock of physical, human resources, knowledge and skill (Bluemington.com, 2018). It represents the capacity of a nation or society to positively and effectively transform its social, economic, cultural and political existence via a process of national, systemic and planned programme intervention and improvement. Since national development aims at elevating the entire society and social system to a humane life, as well as the successful implementation of whatever effective economic and fiscal policies the government adopts, it is better regarded as human development and measured by the human development index (Moti, 2019; UNDP, 1990).

This human development concept, which emerged in 1990, countered parochial definitions of development by emphasising the empowerment of people “to identify and pursue their own paths for a meaningful life, one anchored in expanding freedoms”(UNDP, 2020, p.6). It involves the formation of human capabilities (healthy living and education) and the ‘free’ use of these capabilities. It upholds that development has to be impactful in societies via indicators such as sustainable access to basic goods and services, principal health and education; descent and durable jobs; and economic opportunities that are created for the majority of the population. Needless to reiterate that implementation of a development plan is critical in any society.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (sdgs.un.org/2030 agenda). These sustainable development goals embrace the so-called triple bottom line approach to human wellbeing. Almost all the world’s societies acknowledge that they aim for a combination of economic development, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion, but the specific objectives differ globally, between and within societies.

For the Nigerian nation, which between independence in 1960 and 2020 churned out about six various national development plans, the path towards impactful development has been more of a mirage. There has been a consistent record of failed national development plans. Governments abandon the plans due to divergent self-interests and defective strategies adopted (Ugwuanyi, 2014). Government policies and governance have remained the bane of Nigeria. The policies are often too elitists and far from the understanding and interests of the masses. There are no stakeholders buy

in, no sincerity of purpose from the leadership and as such, lack of capacity or interest to take ownership (Lawal & Oluwatoyin, 2011).

Since the capacity of a nation for impactful human development rests on good governance, this foray briefly illustrated good governance principles and how these represent not just the capacity of a nation or society to positively and effectively transform its social, economic, cultural and political existence, but more the resilience of national leadership (against all odds) to produce, educate and communicate (by interaction and participation) a new form of competence and policy contextualised for the nation.

The Concept of Good Governance

There is no single and exhaustive definition of good governance, nor is there a delimitation of its scope, that commands universal acceptance. The term is used with great flexibility. It is ascribed to governing systems which are capable, responsive, inclusive, and transparent. It is the responsible conduct of public affairs and management of public resources that all countries, developed and developing, need to work continuously towards (Council of Europe, 2018; Reinert, 2001; United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, n.d.). It was acknowledged in the outcome document from year 2010's millennium development goals (MDG) summit that "good governance at the local, national and international levels is essential" for development.

Good governance involves more people having more of a say in the decisions which shape their lives. It also represents a nation's ability to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the government, such that the nation attains a high level of global credibility and admiration (Clark, 2011; lyoha, 2015; Omona, 2010).

Good governance, which has become a phenomenon promoted by World agencies like United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, UNESCO, has also been hugely attended to by the various continental charters because of the essential role in transforming the well-being of nations and their citizenry. Lending credence to this, the erstwhile and now late Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, declared that 'good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development'. In a similar vein, the World Bank group President Jim Yong Kim submitted that "as demand for effective service delivery, good infrastructure, and fair institutions continues to rise, it is vital that governments use scarce resources as efficiently and transparently as possible. This means harnessing private sector expertise, working closely with civil society, and redoubling our efforts in the fight against corruption.

Without better governance, our goals of ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity will be out of reach” (World Bank, 2017).

Not surprisingly, the 1999 Nigerian constitution in Section 16 (1) a, b, c, and d, and Section 16 (2) specifies some of these elements of good governance. The implementation of same is another subject of enquiry distinct from this discourse. Sebudubudu (2010) espoused that there is a positive correlation between good governance and national development. Nigerians regard and require it being “the sine qua non for peace, progress, stability, free and fair elections. In fact, it is viewed as the only passport to delivering the dividends of democracy”(Ogbaki, 2011, p. 126).

Adetiba and Rahim (2016), further described good governance as the management of society by the people, or as the exercise of authority to manage a country’s socio-political affairs and resources. It is guided by twelve (12) principles - openness and transparency; fair conduct of elections, representation and participation; rule of law; strategic vision; responsiveness; equity and inclusiveness; effectiveness and efficiency; accountability; human rights; cultural diversity and cohesion; ethical conduct; inclusive governance and communication for development (Council of Europe, 2018).

i. Transparency and Accountability: This is one of the core principles of good governance. It involves the use of due diligence in the taking and enforcement of decisions to the extent that government institutions can be monitored and evaluated by the citizenry (Ajogwu, 2016; Dunu & Ugbo, 2014). Transparency and accountability require that public officers be open to scrutiny to prevent corruption and institutional recklessness that put the economy and polity in jeopardy. The media enhances government’s responsiveness and relations with the citizens, by helping citizens to assert their voices and campaigning against public tolerance of corruption or poor governance (Deane, 2016). The citizens must be able to follow and understand the decision-making process. Thus, transparency and accountability in governance stimulate citizens’ increased knowledge and capacity to observe, interpret and store knowledge about government’s policies and actions which should foster better interactions between the citizenry and political actors (Clark, 2017).

ii. Fair conduct of elections: As a vital element of good governance, fair conduct of elections requires the government of any democratic state to establish, fully endow and encourage the mechanism to conduct free, fair, peaceful and credible elections in the country. The government must ensure encumbrances along the way of fair conduct of elections are eradicated, measures enforced to ensure that all eligible voters are not hindered from making their choices and the process of elections not tampered with. Many democratic nations have laws guiding these processes. In Nigeria, the amended 1999 constitution (in sections 40, 65,105 and 131) addresses this

while the Electoral Act 2010 and INEC Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of Elections, 2019 set up and address the mechanism for fair conduct of elections. However, there have been many challenges in the way of fair conduct of elections in Nigeria. There have been cases of multiple voting, snatching of ballot boxes, issuance of fake ballot boxes, underage voting, tampering with electoral results and other various forms of electoral fraud. These challenges have been adduced to the country's size, large population, terrain, and ethno-religious diversity (Jega, 2012).

Theoretical framework

Development Theory

Development theory is a fallout of the challenges that bedeviled the 'transplanting' of the sophisticated elements of normative theories into the less technologically developed and culturally diverse atmospheres of the third world. Pieterse (2010) posits that proponents of the theory view it from two perspectives. The first perspective is that it is primarily a 'part of social science and thus emphasizes the influence of classical economic and social thought and others'. The second is 'mainly as ideology'.

The framework for this discourse combined both views of the development theory to describe the sociology of national development in Nigeria as articulated in the national addresses of President Buhari. The framework relied on the 17 principles of the United Nations sustainable development goals 2030:

No poverty; zero hunger; good health and well-being; gender equality; clean water and sanitation; affordable and clean energy; decent work and economic growth; industry, innovation and infrastructure; reduced inequalities; sustainable cities and communities; responsible consumption and production; climate action; life below water; life on land; peace, justice and strong institutions; partnerships for the goals (Biermann, 2017).

One of the key propositions of this theory is that the media's freedom must be guaranteed, so that the media can function as a catalyst for national development in line with nationally established policy. The media's content must be focused on the national culture and languages; news and information to links with developing countries, which are close geographically, culturally or politically (McQuail, 2005). According to Nwabueze (2005), to execute transformational development and be seen by the citizenry in that light, governments require vibrant and active mass media to effectively and professionally channel information, education and entertainment between the government and its citizenry.

The people need be mobilized to partake in governance by informing them of the nature, plans, strategies of developmental programs, what is required by the government from them, the benefits and challenges of the programs and the perception of the people about the intended programs. The media needs to serve the general good of a nation as government instruments for achieving economic growth, political stability, national sovereignty, and cultural development (Omenugha, 2014).

Even though this theory has been unable to rise up to its billing in the developing countries due to the technological, socio-political and cultural challenges faced in these nations, in Nigeria a bit of this is being practised by the government owned broadcast media at the national and state levels. They are controlled and censored by the governments to promote the development activities of the government. The challenge here, as evident in the criticisms against this is the lack of balance in their reporting which seems only pro government.

Unfortunately, the tenets of this theory seem to have turned the media in some developing nations to mere megaphones of their owners, who could be the government or private people who often have some form of political, ethnic or religious leanings. Given the political scenario in Nigeria, the distinction between the state and those who control it becomes blurred. This Nigerian situation and other similar situations across Africa, clearly negate the principles of the development theory. In spite of its relative under-prioritisation in development assistance, few dispute the power of communication, and in particular the catalytic role of the broadcast media, in influencing governance relationships and processes.

Communication advocates hold that the development theory has already provided a bearing for the concepts of development communication and development journalism, which can be found with slightly different names and explanations in different contexts (Folarin, Oyero & Ofulue, 2018). They also argue that the strategic use of political communication tools and methodologies can influence the attitudes, opinions and behaviour of key stakeholders and secure the political will necessary for reforms to be successful on the ground.

The implicit assumption was that there was one form of development, as expressed in developed countries, which underdeveloped societies needed to replicate. The government must create demand for services and use the media as an instrument to shift behavior, educate the people on vision, strategy, implementations and engage the citizenry for feedback. The media needs mediate between various legitimate interests to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the whole community and on how this can be achieved. They need to ensure the government's decisions are taken according to the will of the many, while the rights and legitimate

interests of the masses are given equitable consideration. Yagnik (2018) affirmed that the ultimate goal of “development communication” is to raise the quality of life of populations, including increase income and well-being, eradicate social injustice, promote land reform and freedom of speech, and establish community centers for leisure and entertainment.

Thus, communication processes are central to broader empowerment practices through which people are able to arrive at their own understanding of issues, to consider and discuss ideas, to negotiate, and to engage in public debates at community and national levels for national development purposes. This helps distinguish communication for development from other forms of Communication (McCall, 2011). The media must mediate between various legitimate interests to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the whole community and on how this can be achieved.

The relevance of this theory was subsumed in the essence of the President's communication processes with the citizenry becoming more inclusive and open-ended, to provide an avenue to directly address structural problems and contextualised for the articulation of the citizenry's needs. These must also depict the President's interventionist's plans and ideological dispositions to human development. In its national development drive, the government must enable / engage the media to function as governments' interventionist instruments for achieving economic growth, political stability, national sovereignty, cultural development and invariably, national development. The media are to ensure the President's national development programmes are taken according to the will of the citizenry, while the rights and legitimate interests of the masses, the marginalized and the underprivileged are given equitable consideration (Deane, 2016; Omenugha et al., 2014)

Framing Theory

Framing theory, which is sourced from multiple research spectra, has over the years attracted a lot of debates and disagreements due to its lack of clear conceptualisations, operationalisations, as well as its varied approaches and theoretical positions (Borah, 2011). It is said to describe what people talk or think about by examining how they think about issues in the news, how they develop a particular idea of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue. It “organizes everyday reality” by providing “meaning to an unfolding strip of events” and promoting “particular definitions and interpretations of political issues”. It is thus regarded as a cognitive theory of media effects, which accounts for the audiences' active processing of media content (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p.106; Kepplinger, 2012; McCombs, 1997).

Consequently, a dual nature of framing is deduced; the sociological and psychological approaches. The sociological approach involves daily

framing of news. Here, trends in issue definitions are identified, coverage across media outlets and variations across media types are examined. The way that an issue or a piece of information is presented can have a great effect on an audience. This framing effect occurs when small changes, usually related to the use of positive or negative language, are made in the presentation of an issue but not necessarily an indicator of beliefs that are held. Littlejohn and Foss (2008; as cited in Pritchard, 2014) uphold their focus on the content, declaring that it is a basic organizational pattern used to define a series of activities. The psychological approach, on the other hand, involves frames in the minds of the audience; how they perceive, make meaning out of and interpret all they are exposed to daily (Borah, 2011; Chong & Druckman, 2007).

In this discourse, attempts were made to look at how President Muhammadu Buhari framed his messages, and to analyse them by emphasising on the sociological frames, through the critical discourse approach and development media theory principles, in order to decipher his disposition to certain issues on national development. In essence, this research deployed the “emphasis” approach of sociological frames to exemplify the ideologies in his discourses on national development and the meaning deducible from same.

The theory is relevant to this research more because of the appeal, in perceiving, thinking, understanding and communicating the multimodal experience of the socio-political situations or events referred to in President Buhari’s discourses on national development. The cognitive structures, socially shared attitudes, and interactional structures of this theory described how the President through his discourses interpreted the Nigerian context to frame his addresses, how he understood the citizenry’s messages and used same to formulate and implement policies for national development (Brekhus, 2015; Dijk, 2016).

Methodology

The researchers adopted the qualitative research design in this study. The qualitative research design is “any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification” and “well suited to exploring issues that hold some complexity and to researching processes that occur over time” (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 3).

This research involved socio-political discourses that do not require statistical analyses, because there was a need to understand the discursive contexts or settings in which the Nigerian President addressed the issue of national development in Nigeria, against the phenomenon that discourses cannot be separated from the context in which they are delivered.

Consequently, textual analysis was adopted for this inquiry to describe the phenomenon of Presidential addresses in Nigeria, using President Muhammadu Buhari's national addresses on human development. "Textual analysis is all about language, what it represents and how we use it to make sense of our lives. Language is a basic element of our human interactions and it is through language that the meanings of our social realities are constructed"(Brennen, 2017, p. 203). It involves an appraisal of the varied meanings deducible from texts and how written, visual and verbal language function as 'extraordinary sensitive indicators of sociocultural processes, relations and change'.

The method of textual analysis in this research is discourse analysis, using the critical discourse analysis approach in an exploration of the Presidential addresses, deconstructing and subsequently reconstructing them in relations to human development in the Nigerian context. The research sought to identify the recurrent themes in the national addresses of President Muhammadu Buhari, determine how he framed contemporary development issues in his national addresses and uncover how President Muhammadu Buhari responded to popular agitation through his national addresses.

Validity and Reliability

This research was premised on internal validity. To assure the quality of the instrument, the phenomenon of Presidential national addresses was captured directly from the original full text discourses of the President, as presented via national television stations to the citizenry. The data were also identified, categorized and thematically coded to reflect the simple cognitive meanings deducible by the audience which evidential data reinforce.

On the other hand, reliability is "the stability and consistency of a researcher, research tool, or method over time. Reliable studies are those that can be replicated in exactly the same way, no matter who is conducting the research. A reliable instrument always works the same way" (Tracy, 2013, p. 229). Taherdoost (2018) also noted that reliability ... concerns the extent to which a measurement of a phenomenon provides stable and consistent results (p. 33). The phenomenon of President Buhari's full text national addresses from 2015 -2021 are confirmable from all the Nigerian television houses and the library of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs. They are also trustworthy and dependable as sources since the Presidency distributes press releases of the President's national addresses to the broadcast media and the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, as well as to other national media outlets. The findings in this research are replicable with similar samples of the President's national discourses within the same period even though Tracy (2013) posits that the traditional conceptions of reliability have little application to qualitative research.

Ideologies of the President

Ideologies, which function as “power instruments within economic, political, educational, media and other contexts” (Beetz et al., 2021, p. 104), like “most of the intents of political actors and the underlying meaning of their speeches are not overt; they are hidden in the structures of their texts or speeches...due to the fact that political process is essentially an ideological process, and political cognition often identifies with ideology which is conveyed through language” (Agbo et al., 2019, p. 7).

Nonetheless, in this research, the belief systems of President Muhammadu Buhari and the set of ideas motivating the President’s framing of governance were uncovered, as embedded in his discourses on national development. The ideological underpinnings in the President’s discourses were carefully and deliberately framed. These are cognitive, axiomatic and “... consist of social representations that define the social identity of a group, that is, its shared beliefs about its fundamental conditions and ways of existence and reproduction” (van Dijk, 2006, p. 116). The social representations defined the social identity of the President’s party, its interests and goals from the pre-election period of 2005 through the period of this research. They can be classified into four major ideas of Democracy, Populism, Agrarianism and National Unity. These were deployed to exert democratic power and influence, in view of his antecedents as a former military ruler, for shaping the citizenry’s sentiments towards his civilian persona and supporting his agenda for national development between 2015 and 2021.

The Interplay among Power, Language and Ideology

The research uncovered that the desire to overcome the excruciating challenges to national development, constituted the national addresses of President Buhari from 2015 to 2021 (research period). In essence, his discourses constituted and legislated his ideologies, which were contextualized (products of) to enact power relations i.e. politico-economic interaction between his administration and the Nigerian citizenry, in order to surmount the prevailing social struggles impacting negatively on national development. The discourses were socially constructed...encompassing the “lifeworld”, involving power struggle and reconstruction of text in a manner consistent with his underlying ideologies (Chilton, 2004; Filardo-Llamas & Boyd, 2017; Kamalu & Agangan, 2011).

The research discovered that the ideologies (bedrock of the recurrent themes in his national addresses) were intentionally and frequently crafted into the discourses, to give direction on the plans of the President to overcome social struggles, for the enhancement of national development. They construed an interplay between discourse and power, as well as between

language and power for stability and durability of meaning in social practices and social structures (Fairclough, 2013). The Presidents ideologies mediated between the discourses and the Nigerian citizenry, as a form of social action to national development.

This form of mediation was well expressed in the critical discourse analysis studies on Nigerian and foreign Presidential addresses reviewed in this research (Chimbarange et al., 2013; David, M. K., & Dumanig, 2011; Dimaculangan & Dimaculangan, 2018; Javadi & Mohammadi, 2019; Kamalu & Agangan, 2011; Khan et al., 2019; Mirzaei et al., 2017; Ogunmuyiwa, 2015; Rubic-Remorosa, 2018; Sarfo & Krampa, 2013; Sipra & Rashid, 2013). The studies explicate the interplay between the concepts of language and politics in text and talk for the enactment of socio political dominance. The studies take readers through the empowerment ability of discourse in diverse socio-political contexts and how power relies on discourse for multidisciplinary actions that culminate in cognitive dominance.

Summary of findings

The rigorous coding process in this research revealed several themes that re-actualized themselves and others, as constituents of the socio-political dynamics prevalent during the selected period. The discursive elements of the President's speeches were constituted by the need for national development just as they constituted national development. The recurrent themes identified include entrenchment of democratic culture, intolerance to corruption and all forms of crime, collaboration with the international community, good governance, national unity, upgrade of social infrastructure, elimination of insurgency, improved armed forces and economic development.

Against the framework of these discursive elements are the socio cognitive constituents of President Buhari's antecedents, prior to his election into office. These constituents include insecurity and restructuring of the political-economic landscape. From his incursion to politics in 2003, General Buhari never hid his concern about the level of insecurity in the country, particularly as it concerned the Fulani – his immediate constituency. He was the Miyetti Allah Group (Fulani herdsmen) life patron who framed governance from a tribal and religious perspective. He faulted the ruling government's crackdown on Boko Haram insurgents, while turning the blame for insurgency on Niger Delta militants. He claimed that "what is responsible for the security situation in the country is caused by the activities of Niger Delta militants. Every Nigerian that is familiar with what is happening knows this. The Niger Delta militants started it all" (The Nation, June 02, 2013).

He failed in his capacity as a statesman by towing tribal lines in such a way that undermined ‘security, peaceful co-existence, and socio-economic development of the nation’ (Onah & Uroko, 2021). Gen. Buhari was also a staunch proponent of the Sharia law who gave an impression that Sharia law would replace democratic rule. He proclaimed that, "I will continue to show openly and inside me the total commitment to the Sharia movement that is sweeping all over Nigeria... God willing, we will not stop the agitation for the total implementation of the Sharia in the country" (France 24, April 01, 2015).

On the economic and political restructuring, he depicted an understanding of the prevailing challenges and pledged to establish a market-based economy, run with a strategic regulatory framework and effective enforcement mechanism. This strategy would ensure the naira equates to the dollar in value, such that three million jobs would be created yearly. He also pledged to restructure the country with a new political system, conscious of the various ethnic nationalities and their varied demands (Sahara Reporters, March 24, 2021).

Upon his election as the Presidential flag bearer for the All Peoples Congress (APC) party, Gen. Buhari’s discourses took a new turn. From his election as Nigeria’s President, President Buhari’s national discourses deployed framing to enact his governance strategies and promote societal progressive growth. This research uncovered linguistic frames comprising pragmatic speech acts of locution, illocution and perlocution in the President’s discourses, to highly and frequently reiterate his new ideologies in ensuring national growth and development.

- a) From his inaugural speech of May 29, 2015, the tone was set for this discourse and governance strategy. The President presented a desire for commitment to democracy and determination to entrench the democratic culture for development in Nigeria. Following this, all his national addresses elucidated and even depicted activities conducted in line with this ideology.
- b) The linguistic structures of President Buhari’s national discourses consciously framed his policies and programmes as welfarist for the common good of all poor and vulnerable households in Nigeria. These echoed his populism ideology. The discourses were discovered to be a site of socio-cognitive power and struggle in the enactment of national development. The text of the discourses, in their interplay with the President’s populism ideology, revealed the social change structures packaged for the citizenry by the President in an attempt to empower them to overcome poverty.
- c) Agrarianism ideology, which tended towards food security, was also prevalent in the discourses of the President. The linguistic framing of this

was anchored on “Grow What We Eat and “Eat What We Grow” programme, which is buoyed by the government’s continued support of the Agriculture sector through the CBN Anchor Borrowers Programme and similar schemes (June 12, 2020).

- d) The research uncovered that from the inauguration of May 29, 2015, the discourses of the President relied heavily on linguistic features of persuasion and appeals for unity. The belief of the President in an indivisible nation was regularly articulated, irrespective of the diverse calls for self-determination by different groups during the time under review in the research. He appealed for unity, responsibility and patriotism across all strata of the society to tackle development challenges.

The research also discovered that the discourses constituted and legislated his ideologies, which were contextualized (products of) to enact power relations i.e. politico-economic interaction between his administration and the Nigerian citizenry, in order to surmount the prevailing social struggles impacting negatively on national development. The ideologies (bedrock of the recurrent themes in his national addresses) were intentionally and frequently crafted into the discourses, to give direction on the plans of the President to overcome social struggles, for the enhancement of national development. This implies that the ideologies mediated between the discourses and the Nigerian citizenry, as a form of social action to national development.

Another major finding in the research is that contrary to the autocratic military antecedents of President Buhari, the pragmatic and cognitive impact of the meanings of his national discourses, as interactions with the Nigerian citizenry, frame a democratic leader without any recourse to his military antecedents. His national discourses depicted his reliance on carefully planned discourse structures, strategies and rhetorical moves in presenting ideologies, agendas and plans to enact a high level of intimacy with the citizenry in support for his administration. The relationship he set out to establish and build with the citizenry for the development of the Nigerian nation was to be guided by democratic processes

Lastly, the research found that Newspaper editorials echoed the reality of the day to day experiences of the Nigerian citizenry as evident in the down turn of events and plans to enhance national development. The Nigerian nation was on a slide into the depths of a failed state. The three points programme (security, economic improvement and anti-corruption - SEA-) President Buhari’s campaign hinged upon for immediate transformation of the Nigerian society, remained unattainable and ineffective in the scheme of the prevailing social struggles. The change mantra and the ideologies mediating between his discourses and the Nigerian citizenry in

contending social struggles, remained a mirage when juxtaposed with the economic hardship and insecurity pervading the nation.

Conclusion

Leveraging on the findings in this research, the research concludes that the interplay among President Muhammadu Buhari's ideology and human development policies in the text of the national addresses between 2015 and 2021, consciously construed his administration's interventionist policies for the enactment of socio political development against the excruciating challenges in the Nigerian nation. The recurrent themes (offshoots of the President's three points interventionist programme i.e. security, economic improvement and anti-corruption -SEA-) of the discourses, their framing of Nigeria's developmental issues and the President's responses to popular agitation enabled positive socio-cognitive and pragmatic impact on the Nigerian citizenry.

In addition, the research affirms that the President's discourses very well reflected the pursuance of national development in a democratic manner, devoid of his military antecedents. The discourses framed the President as a democratic leader whose relationship with the citizenry was hinged on democratic ideals and processes.

Nonetheless, the research underscored the reality of the day to day experiences of the Nigerian citizenry, in juxtaposition to the interventionist policies of the President in the enactment of national development. Much as the discourses framed national development policies and impacted cognitively in the citizenry, the policies were reported to be ineffective in the prevalent Nigerian socio-political context.

Recommendations

This research highlighted analysis on the political and economic discourses for national development (societal improvement). Therefore, the research recommends that political leaders should ensure that subsisting problems and those envisaged as the foundation of social order in their societies; the value systems appropriate for social justice, wealth creation and distribution, social efficiency with moral sensitivity and concern for the common good as deduced from the knowledge of shared values with their citizenry, are pragmatically tackled not only in the discourses but as well experientially. In essence, the concepts, agenda, policies in political discourse must reflect the reality of the citizenry with a view to enabling effective and attainable transformation of the society.

This research also recommends that politicians and their speech writers should effectively and positively adopt the use of discourse framing to promote societal progressive growth. Deliberate, consistent and effective

use of structures that depict and uphold deliverable interventionist policies and achievable national development, irrespective of the interests of the politicians, would definitely mobilise the citizenry and entreat them to actions that engender development and societal transformations.

Finally, the research recommends that policy makers, particularly the presidency, establish a policy to ensure regular textual compilations (compendium) of the President's national discourses and the distribution of same to celebrated libraries and those of educational institutions.

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2015-got-worse-under-him-president

Appendix**1. Profile of President Muhammadu Buhari**

President Muhammadu Buhari (GCFRN) was born on 17th December, 1942 in Daura, Katsina State of Nigeria to Adamu and Zulaiha Buhari. Upon completion of his West African School Certificate in the Katsina Provincial Secondary School (now Government College, Katsina) in 1961, “he joined the Nigerian Army in 1961 when he was admitted to the Nigerian Military Training College, Kaduna. He underwent the Officer Cadets training at Mons Officer Cadet School in Aldershot, England from 1962 to 1963, and was commissioned as Second Lieutenant in January, 1963. He attended the Nigerian Military College, Kaduna for the Platoon Commanders’ Course from 1963-1964. He was then appointed Platoon Commander of the Second Infantry Battalion in Abeokuta. In 1965, he attended the Mechanical Transport Officers’ Course at the Army Mechanical Transport School in Borden, England. Further military trainings included the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, India in 1973, and the United States Army War College, from June 1979 to June 1980.

As a highly regarded officer, President Muhammadu Buhari held several key command and staff, as well as political appointments during his military career. These included Military Secretary; Member, Supreme Military Council; Military Governor of the North Eastern State; Federal Commissioner of Petroleum Resources; Chairman, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation; General Officer Commanding, 4th Infantry Division and General Officer Commanding, 3rd Armoured Division” (The statehouse, 2020).

President Muhammadu Buhari had his first experience as a head of the Nigerian government (head of state and commander-in-chief of the armed forces) while in the army, via a 1983 military coup which toppled the second post-independence democratically elected civilian government and suspended the Nigerian constitution. Unfortunately, Buhari’s military government was overthrown by another military coup in 1985 (20 months after his 1983 coup), which led to his incarceration till 1988 when he was retired from the army.

In 2003, General Buhari (Rtd.) joined politics and “ran for office in the Presidential election as the candidate of the All Nigeria People’s Party (ANPP). He was defeated by the People’s Democratic Party incumbent, President Olusegun Obasanjo, by more than 11 million votes” (Wikipedia, 2021). He also ran in the 2007 and 2011 Presidential elections on the platforms of two different political parties (ANPP and CPC – Congress for

Progressive Change). He lost the Presidential elections to both Presidents' Umaru Yar'Adua and Goodluck Jonathan respectively, by wide margins.

Buhari ran again in the 2015 Presidential election, now as a candidate of the All Progressives Congress party and won. He also ran for a second term in 2019 on the same party platform and won, indicating that the first term in office did not diminish his appeal (Electoral Geography 2.0, 2021). Rather, it precipitated eagerness of the citizenry for the actualization of his campaign promise to take Nigeria to the "next level".

President Muhammadu Buhari has been married twice, first to Safinatu Yusuf from 1971 to 1988, and since 1989 to Aisha Halilu. He is blessed with 10 children.

2. Selected National Addresses with broadcast dates from May 29, 2015 to October 01, 2021

Television Station	National Address	Date
<i>Nigerian Television Authority (NTA)</i>	President Buhari's Inaugural Speech	May 29, 2015
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	President Muhammadu Buhari's Speech on Nigeria's 55 th Independence Anniversary	October 01, 2015
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	New Year Message to all Nigerians	January 01, 2016
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	President Buhari's Democracy Day message to Nigerians	May 29, 2016
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	President Buhari's Independence Anniversary Speech	October 01, 2016
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	President Muhammadu Buhari's New Year message to Nigerians	January 01, 2017
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	Acting President Yemi Osinbajo's Democracy Day Speech	May 29, 2017
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	President Muhammadu Buhari's Independence Day Speech	October 01, 2017
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	President Muhammadu Buhari's New Year Address	January 01, 2018
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	Address by Muhammadu Buhari, President Of The Federal Republic Of Nigeria In commemoration of the 2018 Democracy Day Celebration.	May 29, 2018
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	Muhammadu Buhari's 58th Independence Day address.	October 01, 2018
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	President Muhammadu Buhari's New Year message to Nigerians.	January 01, 2019
<i>Nigerian Television</i>	President Buhari's Democracy Day message to Nigerians.	June 12, 2019

<i>Authority</i>		
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	Independence Anniversary Speech by President Buhari	October 01, 2019
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	President Muhammadu Buhari's New Year message to Nigerians	January 01, 2020
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	President Buhari's Democracy Day Address	June 12, 2020
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	Independence Day Address by His Excellency, Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the occasion of Nigeria's Sixtieth Independence Anniversary	October 01, 2020
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	New Year Speech by His Excellency, Muhammadu Buhari, President of The Federal Republic of Nigeria	January 01, 2021
<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	Speech by His Excellency, Muhammadu Buhari, President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces Federal Republic of Nigeria on the occasion of commemoration and celebration of Democracy Day.	June 12, 2021

<i>Nigerian Television Authority</i>	Independence Day Address by His Excellency, Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the occasion of Nigeria's Sixty-First Independence Anniversary.	October 01, 2021
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3. Coding Sheet

Coding Units		Coding Categories			
Speeches	Television Station	Frames	Themes	Development Issues	Response to agitations
Inauguration Day Addresses					
New Year's Day Addresses					
Democracy Day Addresses					
Independence Day Addresses					