

# ISRG Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (ISRGJAHSS)



**ISRG PUBLISHERS**

Abbreviated Key Title: ISRG J Arts Humanit Soc Sci

**ISSN: 2583-7672 (Online)**

Journal homepage: <https://isrgpublishers.com/isrgjahss>

Volume– III Issue -V (September-October) 2025

Frequency: Bimonthly



## AN ASSESSMENT OF LEADERSHIP AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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| **Received:** 06.10.2025 | **Accepted:** 11.10.2025 | **Published:** 15.10.2025

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### Abstract

*This study is centered on leadership and national development in Nigeria. Thus, it undertakes an assessment of the previous Nigerian leaders within the periods of their tenure in office. That is to say that whether their various administrations has successfully impacted meaningfully in the socio-economic and political life of the citizens of Nigeria. The study examines the reasons for stunted socio-economic and political development in Nigeria. This study adopted documentary method in research methodology. Three theories were used in the theoretical framework namely, the elite theory, the modernization theory and the dependency theory. Under this study, Privatization and National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) were examined as economic developmental plans. In conclusion, the study identified three major factors that are responsible for underdevelopment in Nigeria, which include, leadership problem, corruption and poor rule making and implementation. Hence, for Nigeria to develop, it must get rid of these identified problems.*

**Keywords:** Leadership, National and Development

### Introduction

The problem of leadership and national development always occupy the central stage of political and economic discourse of any country. Leadership and development became apparent when the colonial hegemony and subjugation were abandoned for self-determination. With this de-colonization, the mantle of leadership and its responsibility fell on two Nigerian heroes. Alhaji Tafawa Belewa and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe as Nigerian Prime Minister and President respectively under the parliamentary experimental system adopted

in 1960. This period of Nigerian political experiment was assumed to be the learning period for Nigerian politicians, the economy of the country was more stable and booming compared to what we have today; agriculture had its right of place hence the memory of the groundnut Pyramids in Kano, the oil palm plantation of Eastern Nigeria and the Cocoa and the rubber resources booming in the Western Nigeria.

The revenue generated from these agricultural resources, it was believed that it was used for the establishment of the first three Nigerian Universities in the then existing three regions. But despite these giant strides and monumental efforts geared toward national development at the period under review the administration brought the economy of Nigeria to its knee through the pursuit of the import substitution industrial policy, which subsisted on an artificial local currency and thereby encourage import and discourage export.

The consequences of this strategy were evident in the stunted growth of authentic industrial activities and the persistent and debilitating balance of payment deficit. Balewa followed this faulty round to development when cherished the illusion that the attachment of political Independence would immediately usher in a new era of rapid economic modernization and development. This stunted growth of the economy coupled with other social vices such as corruption, tribalism, thuggery and rigging of election beckoned and signaled the first military intervention in Nigeria politics led by Major Chukwuma Nzeogwu and Ifeajuna following the death of the Nigerian Prime Minister by the military coup, the leadership of the country took a new look and style as Major General Aguiyi Ironsi, the most senior Nigeria Military Officer became the new head of state amidst protect riots and threat of national disintegration resulting from the gruesome massacre of the prime minister and many other top government functionaries of Northern part of the country. After this, Gen. Ironsi decreed the unification of the country which abolished and eroded the federal structure in favour of the country province system. This decree made opened up nation's civil service to thousands of educated Southerners (Infejukune, 2000). In reaction to this event, riots and crisis erupted military country coup of July 1966 the idea that the Nigerian society was restive at the tie Ironsi inherited the leadership of the country contributed in his failure to embark on development policies.

Consequent upon the murder of Gen. Ironsi in July 1966- counter coup, Gen. Yakubu Gowon became the Nigerian new military-political leader. This administration was engulfed by a political imbroglio as all efforts made to settle issues of Aburi Conference failed. In other to checkmate this political imbroglio, the Federal Military government on May 29, 1967 decreed a State of emergency throughout the Federation and splinted the country into 12 states. This among others culminated in secession bid of the Eastern Nigeria later resulted in the historic Nigerian Civil War which ended on January 15, 1970.

At the end of the war, Gowon led government set about to restore national social harmony, revamp the economy, formulated policy of reconstruction and set up the second national development plan (1979-74) aimed at socio-economic development of the country (Tomori and Fajama 1984).

The administration's developmental efforts include; the establishment of six federal Universities and taking over the management of four state universities, planned to introduce free compulsory education, and to instill the spirit of national unity into Nigeria youths, he introduced the idea of National Youth Service Corps, and to combat corruption and unemployment, he introduced the National Advisory Committee for social development in 1974 which later changed into ministry of labour and social development. Despite these laudable achievements, encouraging and impressive economic growth in Nigeria, several maladies befall the body politics. These among others include the wholesome dependence on oil, food shortage high inflation rate, which cropped up for the increase in salary of workers, unemployment and corruption. In spite

of the huge resources that was accrued from crude oil during Gowon's administration, development was a dream rather than reality, as a result of extravagance and reckless speeding of public fund, and corruption in public offices. This dwarfed and stunted growth of the economy, corruption and his failure to hand over civilian regime led to the military coup that ousted him in 1975.

The military coup of 1975, brought Gen. Murtala Mohammed as the new military head of state, the administration, on assumption of office set to revitalize the economy and the social fabrics of society. In the political sphere, government was re-structured to induce efficiency and a central control was created. Seven more states, making Nigeria a Federation of 19 states, establishment of a new Federal Capital territory, and in the socio sphere; a massive purges were affected in the Civil service, the judiciary and universities, purportedly to remove corrupt unproductive and aging officials, though some of these purges were believed to be malicious and unjustified.

As a result assassination of Gen. Mohammed on February 13, 1976, the leadership of the country fell on the shoulder of Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo who more or less continued with the dynamic programmes of Gen. Mohammed, which include war against indiscipline (WAI) to uproot the cancer of corruption, reform of local government in 1976 which made local government the third tier of government and the pursuit of the return to civil rule in 1979, the administration introduced third national development plan (1975-1980) which was aimed at achieving annual growth rate of 9.6 percent and to provide for expansion of agriculture, heavy and petrochemical industries, infrastructure, housing and education. Agriculture policies and programmes aimed at boosting the declining food production were also initiated. Major industrial and infrastructural development including, steel company; new oil refineries in Warri and Kaduna were also constructed. All the efforts geared towards National development fell below expectation as not as the programmes were implemented and those implemented lacked sincerity and honest in their implementation this, the country remained where it was before the coming of the administration.

On October 1, 1979, Alhaji Shehu Shagari was sworn in as president of Nigerian Second Republic. This was the time Nigeria was believed to be characterized by political stability, which had eloped Nigerian memory right from January 1960. But the economy of the country at this time hit the rock as a result of economic mismanagement, debt accumulation and looting of the government treasury by government officials ( Osisoma B.C. Nwolise in Ajaeju, 1995). The administration in ensuring food security and fall in the prices of food items introduced the green revolution which was accompanied by mass retrenchment of workers owing to lack of funds to pay their salaries. This administration apart from the still-born agricultural policy, the green revolution did not do anything to effect development in Nigeria. Inflation, unemployment, and tribalism reached their highest apogee and these among others gave birth to December 31, 1993 military coup.

This coup which was cherished and welcomed by many Nigerians, paved way for Gen. Mohammed Buhari to be the head of state. On the assumption of office, the administration emphasized and stressed its readiness to revitalize the economy. The measures adopted for the overall development of Nigeria fell to the bare ground owing to dwindling revenue from oil, problem of paying the external debts, the country was owing and the mass protect from Nigerian citizens due to the high handedness of the regime ushered in another military coup on August 27, 1985.

The coup brought Gen. Ibrahim Babangida as the country's first military president. This administration made and dissipated highest effort aimed at stabilizing the economy and improving national development. Example of such development policies of the regime are mass mobilization for economic recovery, self-reliance and social justice (MAMSER), the creation of two additional states namely Akwa-Ibom and Kastina states, the introduction of faith national development plan and the structural adjustment programmed (SAP). The policies indeed worsened national development. This is because at the point under review, mass poverty, misery, general social malaise, riots and collapse of the basic infrastructure were experienced and these worsened the state of Nigerian economy. Development under this administration was rather an illusion rather than a reality.

Equally, Gen. Sani Abacha while serving as the head of state did not fashion out strategic policies that would aid development of the country but rather engage on the violation of fundamental human rights which was aimed at sustaining himself in power. The only achievement of this administration was the 1995 constitution which was abandoned after his death.

Gen. Absusalami Abubakar succeeded Abacha at his death. He hurriedly prepared the 1999 constitution and subsequently hand over to the elected civilian president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo on May 29, 1999. Amongst the administration's contribution to national development were the settings up of constitution, creating avenue for the formation of political parties and later handover to a civilian elected president.

With the disappearance and disengagement of the military in Nigerian politics and subsequent handover to Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as the new civilian president, Nigerians heaved a sign of relief believing it to be an era of rapid national development. The administration in other to revitalize a d reinvigorated the bartered and dwarfed economy, introduced many political, social and economic measures aimed at enhancing national development. One of such political measures is the privatization policy which entails the giving out of government owned corporations and establishments to private individuals so as to enable efficiency and effectiveness necessary for national development.

Universal Basic Education (UBE) was also introduced which is to ensure that every Nigerian citizen has a free education from primary school to junior secondary school. The administration also introduced Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC) aimed officials. Again, the monetization policy was introduced to avoid wasteful spending of government in providing certain facilities for its key officials. National Poverty Eradication Programme (NADEP) was also introduced which has the objective of creating job opportunities to jobless Nigerians especially through skill acquisition programme. That is not all; the administration in its resolve to create a credible and reliable economy came up with the idea of National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS) which is the summation of all the economic policies of Obasanjo administration geared towards revitalizing and building strong Nigerian economy.

President Umar Musa Yar' Adua on assumption of office on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2007, rolled out his election covenant with the people of Nigeria, the 7 point agenda. Since then, the 7 point agenda have been properly conceptualized and comprehensively articulated and the implementation strategy adequately laid out to ensure the realization of vision 20:2020. Towards achieving public information and

enlightenment, the Nigeria High Commission, London, courtesy of [www.nigeriafirst.org](http://www.nigeriafirst.org), decided to publish and place on its website, an overview of the 7 point agenda, however, with a strong slant on issues and policy challenges. The following are the key aspects of the 7 point agenda; transportation sector, power and energy, food security, national security, Niger Delta and energy security, education and human capital development, land tenure reforms and home ownership, wealth creation.

Under the most daunting circumstances, president Goodluck Ebele Jonathan took over the leadership of the country in May 2010. The death of president Umaru Musa Yar'Adua that month led to the ascendancy of then vice president Jonathan at a time of considerable political tension in the land. A year later, He was elected president in what was globally acclaimed as one of the most credible elections in the history of Nigeria. However, that was just the beginning of a journey, for the president inherited a nation faced with several long standing challenges. President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan developmental plan was geared towards rebuilding of infrastructure, creation of quality education, improve health care delivery, agriculture, food security and job creation for the people.

On 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2015, Mohammed Buhari became the president of Nigeria. Within the period of his administration. They following developmental plan is on motion; the president fertilizer initiative for agricultural support, support for micro, small and medium enterprises, monetary, fiscal, trade, immigration, consumer protection reforms, fiscal support to states, provision of infrastructure, improve power sector, oil and gas, investing in people, education, health care, sport and creative industry just to mention but a few.

It is worthy to note that in spite of the introduction of the above handsome and glamorous policies by the previous and current leaders, development up till today has eloped or evaded the geographical landscape called Nigeria. It is on this hard realization of development objectives in Nigeria that has informed this research work.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Right from the time of Nigerian political evolution, plethora of development policies and programmes have been initiated by series of administrations and government to effect development in the society. In spite of these handsome development strategies, development has not embraced the geographical entity called Nigeria. The issue of leadership in Nigeria is a critical factor affecting the nation's development across various dimensions, including social, economic, and political spheres. Several key challenges have been identified as impediments to national development:

- **Corruption:** This is a pervasive issue that undermines governance and development efforts. Corruption leads to the misallocation of resources and erodes public trust in leadership.
- **Electoral Misconduct:** The integrity of electoral processes is often compromised, leading to leadership that may not reflect the true will of the people. This undermines democratic principles and hinders effective governance and development.
- **Incompetence:** A lack of competent leadership results in poor policy formulation and implementation, which stifles development initiative and economic growth.

- Lack of Patriotism and Nationalistic Consciousness: Leaders often lack a sense of national duty and commitment to the collective good, which is essential for fostering unity and progress.

Finally, the historical and structural factors, such as Nigeria's colonial past and its large, diverse population, further complicate the leadership landscape. These factors have contributed to political instability, ineffective governance and development.

On this note, simple and sizeable research questions have been constructed to enable one understand and account for why Nigeria has not attained developmental stage despite the development strategies adopted by various administrations,

1. Why is it that all efforts geared to develop Nigeria failed to yield desired results?
2. Why is it difficult to implement good development policies in Nigeria?
3. Could the failure to initiate and implement good developmental policies in Nigeria be attributed to quality of leadership?
4. What then account for the failure of developmental strategies in Nigeria?
5. What then are needed to ensure national development?

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Bearing in mind that this research work is deeply concerned with unveiling the circumstances behind the stunted socio-economic and political development in Nigeria, the following fundamental objectives will likely be achieved at the end of this work.

1. To evaluate how Nigerian leaders has handled the issue of development in Nigeria.
2. To examine the reasons for the failure of developmental projects in Nigeria.
3. To identify the factors that are responsible for stunted development in Nigeria.
4. Assess the performance of Nigerian leaders.
5. To evolve new ways of repositioning Nigerian state for development.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### LEADERSHIP

The concept of leadership poses a difficult thing whenever the actual meaning is a matter of discourse. This is basically because of several ideological orientations by scholars concerning this particular concept.

Roger (1982) viewed leadership as "the capacity to inspire confidence in the rightness of one's purpose, courage in their collective execution and obedience in the treat of resistance". He contended that although leadership is also one of the characteristics that make politics impossible, leadership is a matter of degree, and consist in the extent to which a single person can build control on the foundation of influence.

Equally contributing, Alan and Robert (1969) defined leadership as a process where one person exerts social influence over the members of the group. A leader then is a person with power over others who exercise the power for the purpose of influencing the behaviour of other members of the group.

Katz and Kahn (1973) identified leadership as one of the most dynamic element in the life of any organization, since it can either

motivate followers to high level of organizational performance or drain strength from an organization and limits its survival.

More so, Ukeje and Okorie (1990) conceptualize leadership as "a process of influencing, directing and coordinating the activities of other people in an organization.

Following suit, Arnold (1986), stated that leadership is an influence process, it involves the exercise of influence on the art of the leader over the behaviour of one or more people. Supporting this view of influence process, Ukeje and Okorie (1990) again assert that leadership involves one person trying to get others do something that he wants them to do. Citing Stodgill (1950) who actually agree with the view of influencing activities of an organized groups towards goal setting and goal achievement.

Nwachukwu (1988) believes that leadership is a social influencing process for attainment of goals; the function of a leader pervades all organizations this a good leader therefore is one who is capable of persuading others to move enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals.

Hollander (1971) puts it that leadership is a process. Organizational leadership is a process of executive performance, management and supervision which is obviously predicted on the formal structure imposed by authority.

Leavitt et al (1973), in their own words, refer to leadership as the distribution throughout an organization of decision-making power.

Cartwright (1978) posits that leadership means the ability of an individual (who leads) to get others to do what he wants for their own or for society's good rather his own.

Okadigbo (1987) leadership connotes "the personality at the helm of national affairs and the manner of his exercise of given or dispensation of national resources and his approach to the well-being of the people". Leadership involves influence, power and control over others.

In addition, Chikendu and Kali (1986) also contented that "in writing the history of leadership in Nigeria, there is need to show that failures of achievement of each leader were directly engineered by other Nigerian elite who operating from behind the counter and also exercise power by different methods.

Looking at the above review, we can understand that the essence of leadership is to persuade others to comply voluntarily with ones wish. It is the ability to obtain non-coerced voluntary compliance, which enables followers to attain goals which they share with leaders.

### DEVELOPMENT

From time immemorial till the present day, there has been lack of consensus as to the real meaning of the concept of development. This concept attracted several definitions from different people at different time and places.

Before now, the emphasis was on economic growth approach, emphasizing increase or growth in Gross National Product (GNP), Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Per Capita Income (PCI), and other measurable economic indices. With the passing away of time, the inadequacy of this approach became obvious and fallacy of equating economic growth with development became object of criticism. The criticism is drawn from largely from the paradox of "growth with development" identified with the most third world countries. It has been argued world over that the economic growth approach cannot



define development. Development is a far wider phenomenon reflecting on economic, socio-economic, cultural, psychological and other aspects of society's life which put together amount to clear and apparent progress. This approach adopts the holistic perception of the phenomenon of development.

From the above analysis, ABA (2000) perceived the idea of development to be tri-dimensional. To him, development in one dimension connotes utilitarian and consummator capacity of a society to have increase in the quantity of usable items available to man in the society meaning that a society is developed when it engages in production activities that would enable the citizen of the society to have enough consumable items. Similarly, in the second dimension, he argued that development in any society emphasis relational and behavioural dimension, which defines the nature of leadership among men in the society and among societies. From the above second dimension, we can deduct that a society attains developmental stage when there exists a cordial, harmonious and appreciable decorum among the people in the society and among societies, deemphasizing the necessities of other indices of development in a society such as the production capacity of such a society, the level of scientific and technological development as well as literate condition of the society which aids in the harnessing of natural endowment of the society which has direct bearing with the level of societal development.

On his third dimension, Aba N.C. defined development looking at the institutional and structural paraphernalia of a society, which gives explanation to institutional and legal framework which circumscribes and restricts the behaviour of men and streamline their relationship while they individually and collectively seek to gain greater access to material things of value in a society. This third dimension dwells centrally on law and morality as it concentrates much on the need for man to exhibit, appropriate behaviour towards the other in the society.

More so, Aba C.N in his concluding definition remarked that development implies increased skills and capacity to earn income, greater freedom of action, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility, general material and psychological well being which has meaning in relation to the state of the society.

Nnoli (1981), in his own parlance, believes that development is a dialectical phenomenon in which the individual and society interact with their physical, biological and Inter-governmental environments transforming them for their own betterment and that of humanity at large and been transformed in the process. Nnoli's contention is that development is associated with changes in man and his creative energy and not in things. This means that development is human oriented and human generated.

Todaro (1977) viewed development as a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structure; popular attitudes and national institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and absolute poverty.

Todaro emphasizes more on the economic and social dimension of development but overlooked the political dimension, which is a critical factor of development. It is obvious that economic development cannot take place where there is political and cultural dislocations.

Baster (1972) see development as dialectical phenomenon which is far from being static, rather is dynamic and therefore assumes a continuous transformation process and a movement towards better

and improved conditions, locally and in relation to the international economic order.

Nwosu and Nwankwo (1988) conceptualize development as self-reliance in which people of a given society are mobilized in other to transform economic and social environment, for the general well-being and those of other humanity. It is a development strategy which relies mainly on people's ability to bring about self-generating and self-sustaining socio-economic and political system, which is problem searching, problem learning and problem solving.

Okoye (1997) interprets development as the capacity of a national economy whose initial economic condition has been more or less static for a long time, to great and sustainable annual increase in its gross national product as rates of perhaps five to seven percent or more. In terms of new economic view, Okoye see development as the reduction or elimination of poverty, inequality and unemployment within the context of a growing economy.

Beyond narrow criteria, he sees development as a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structure, population, attitudes and national institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of abject poverty.

Therefore, any development strategy requires not only concern with accelerating growth but also a direct concern with improvement and ascendancy of material and mental conditions of living of the entire population in the society through fair and equitable distribution of national wealth and resources.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Basically, we shall in the theoretical framework of this work adopt three theories namely: the elite theory, the modernization theory and the dependency theory. The elite theory as a theoretical framework shall be adopted in the explanation or analysis of the concept of leadership as a variable while modernization and dependency theories being contenting views of development shall be adopted in the analysis of development.

### THE ELITE THEORY

The origin of the elite theory is traceable to the writing of a good number of European thinkers in the years preceding the growth of Fascism particularly Wilfred Pareto, Gaetano Moscati both Italians, Robert Mitchell, a Swiss. This theory became popular in the United States in the years following the Second World War, it was based on the ideas that every society consists of two broad categories:

1. The selected few who are capable and therefore have the right to supreme leadership and
2. The vast majority of masses who are destined to be ruled.

According to the proponents of the theory, every society is ruled by majority that possess the qualities necessary for its accession to full social and political power. Those who get to the top are always the best and they are known as the elite. These elites who always distinguish themselves are the leaders.

### THE MODERNIZATION THEORY

The modernization school is also known as the right wing bourgeois, liberals and developmentalist school. The pre-occupation of this dominant paradigm is to place emphasis on the internal conditions of socio-economic formation of third world countries and to reduce the problem of underdevelopment on an aggregation of inhabiting factors such as can be identified in the institutional structure, cultures, psychological attributes and value systems. As a way out

from the problem of underdevelopment, scholars of the development school advanced various models of development, which include among others, the idea of typical index approach, the diffusions approach and the psychological approach.

This school argued that any society that wants to achieve development should first of all move away from her traditional to modernity. Thus, this is responsible for lack of development in the third-world countries.

### THE DEPENDENCY THEORY

The development theory is also known as the left king Neo-Marxist, radical or underdevelopment school. Strictly speaking, the theoretical foundation of underdevelopment paradigm has its root in the works of Karl Marx and his lifelong companion Engels, especially marks organic composition of capital, labour theory of value and colonialism. However, in the concrete form, the Underdevelopment theory, as it exists today, has also grown mainly from theoretical contributions of Neo-Marxist scholars like Presbich (1963). It emerged as a theoretical critique of modernization theory and as alternative approach to the study of government and underdevelopment in the third world states.

### METHODOLOGY

The geographical area of this study is Nigeria. In terms of population, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and with estimated population of over 200 million people. Obviously, the population of Nigeria is large, which makes it a “giant” relative to other African countries. The population growth rate is influenced by the interplay of the three main demographic processes of fertility, mortality and migration (Obodoeze, 1996).

The data collection techniques adopted in this research work is secondary data technique or documentary method. The secondary data collection involves the use of published and unpublished materials, books and journals, newspapers, periodicals dissertations, radio and television sources, reports and official publications of international organizations, and central and state government publications.

Given the nature of the research work “leadership and national development in Nigeria” and the technique for its data collection which is the documentary method, content analysis has as well been adopted since the research dwells purely in documentaries.

### CORRUPTION AND LEADERSHIP IN NIGERIA.

Corruption has attained the status of a pervasive phenomenal social behaviour in Nigeria. Successive regime’s remarkable notoriety for lack of accountability and abuse of office has made corruption a feature of the national political culture, and therefore, sharp practices in the nation’s public financial management have seemingly assumed normalcy rather than condemnation by public administrative (Kunle Ajayi, quoted in Godwin, 2003).

Gross appropriation of public resources then becomes the motive of public office holders. This is to the extent that Transparency International and World Bank have proclaimed Nigeria to be among the most corrupt nation in the world. This assessment has serious implication for the country’s drive for increased foreign investment and socio-economic development. Beside and beyond the immediate shore of Nigeria, Nigerians traveling abroad are stigmatized as dubious and fraudulent.

Consequently, holders of the green white green passport are often singled out for thorough scrutiny and in the process embarrassment are meted with dehumanized treatment.

However, attempts by the various regimes to check corruption were merely promotional of regime’s legitimacy and societal acceptance. Nigerian democratic regimes of anti-corruption policy currently suffers both political and bureaucratic sabotage, as its effects are equally impotent. The anti-corruption agencies are used as an instrument to fight against their opponents.

From the foregoing, it could be believed that corruption is the major problem in Nigeria, and what is required in the country is an incorruptible leadership, which is not interested in wealth acquisition. Corruption has been an odious feature of this country’s history especially since self-rule in 1960. In the eyes of mainly only few public offices have been above board. The rest are guilty. This assertion can hardly be flawed if finding of the various judiciary and administrative inquiries into affairs of public officers at various times in the life history of the nation are taken as acid test of the level of official corruption in Nigeria.

### DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN NIGERIA

Over the years, the Federal Government of Nigeria and State Government alike have done marvelously well in plans and policy formulation as it concerns national development. Under this study, Privatization and NEEDS will be examined.

#### Privatization in Nigeria

Many countries of the world embraced on privatization programs at different times. Chile introduced privatization in 1974. The United Kingdom implemented a rigorous privatization program during the regime of Margaret Thatcher in the 1990s. The 1990s witnessed the implementation of privatization program in many countries of the former Eastern Bloc like Russia, Romania and Czechoslovakia etc.

Privatization in Nigeria was formally introduced by the privatization and commercialization degree of 1988 as part of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) of Gen. Ibrahim Babangida Administration.

Privatization as the name Implies is a measure usually adopted by government to expose a public enterprise to a competition or bring in private ownership or control or management into a public enterprise and accordingly to reduce the usual weight of public ownership or control of management.

However, in a strict sense privatization means the transfer of ownership (and all the incidence of ownership, including management) of a public enterprise to private investors (Iheme, 1997). The later meaning will help one to draw a line between privatization and other varieties of public enterprises reform. It is also the sense in which the term has been statutorily defined in Nigeria. In the same vain, Star (1998), defined privatization as “a shift from public to private sectors, not shift within sector”. According to him, the conversion of state agency into an autonomous public authority or state owned enterprise is not privatization, neither is it conversion of a private non-profit making organization into profit making.

Privatization and Commercialization Act of 1988 and the Bureau of Public Enterprises Act of 1983, defined privatization as the requirement of part of all of the equity and other interest held by federal government or any of its agencies in enterprises whether wholly or partly owned by federal government.

Although privatization was not defined in the Public Enterprises Act of 1999, we can assume it to have the same meaning.

Therefore, privatization is founded on the fact that there are problems with public ownership of enterprises and privatization is part and parcel of a reform agenda to turn around these enterprises so that they can deliver goods and services more effectively and efficiently in the tune necessary for development. But as we experience in Nigeria today, privatization is purely ideological loaded and cannot be substantiated by the existential reality of Nigeria. This can better be appreciated when one critically look at the menace of poverty and its scourge in Nigeria. This has provoked the anti-privatizationist to opine that no matter how good the program might be, it is not at least for now, in consonance with the realities of Nigerian State. To them the public corporations that provide the basic necessities to the poor masses are sold out into the hands of shylocks especially foreign enterprise.

#### **National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS)**

NEEDS is Nigeria's home grow poverty reduction strategy. NEEDS is not just plan on paper, it is plan on ground and founded on clear vision, sound values and enduring principles. It is a medium term strategy from 2003 to 2007. But which is derived from the country's long term goals of poverty reduction, wealth creation, employment generation and value orientation. It is a nationally coordinated framework of action in close collaboration with the state and local governments (with their States Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, SEEDS) and other stake holders to consolidate on the achievement of last years, and build a solid foundation for attainment of Nigeria's long term vision of becoming the largest and strongest African economy and a key player in the world economy.

The NEEDS in collaboration with SEEDS, constitutes the reasoned response to the challenges of underdevelopment. The people will be mobilized around the core values principles and progressions of NEEDS and SEEDS. A coordinated implementation of both programs is expected to create seven million jobs over the period which will reduce poverty and lay the foundation for sustainable development.

NEEDS rests on four key strategies: reforming the way government works and its institutions, growing the private sector, implementing a social character of people and re-orientation of the people with an enduring African value system.

NEEDS, if sincerely implemented will ensure the reformation and restructuring of government institutions, re-professionalize and strengthen public institutions, to deliver effective services to the people, shall also eradicate waste and inefficiency and free up resources for investment in infrastructure and social services energize the private sector and improve the growth for wealth creation, employment generation and poverty reduction. The government will be enable the facilitator and the regulator while the private sector will be the executor, the direct investor and manager of the business. The key elements of this strategy are privatization, de-regulation, and liberalization programs.

Again, the program as a social charter, is people oriented, it is about their welfare, their health, education, employment, poverty reduction and empowerment, security and participation. This is the overall goal of NEEDS. More so, the key message of NEEDS is that "it is not business as usual". The privatization program is designed to shrink the domain of state and hence the pies of distributable rents,

which have been the Haven of public sector corruption and inefficiency. It is not in doubt, of NEEDS as economic recovery and development strategy means well for Nigerians but what we cannot perfectly asserts is "can it take a different direction in terms of implementation or will it follow the macadamized road taken by its predecessors"? The nearby future can tell better.

#### **STRATEGIES FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

Ideas and contributions on the strategies for national development have never been in one agreement, scholars based on their ideological paradigms have taken different dimensions when it comes to what should be done to develop Nigeria. In his own words, Already (1981) argued that, "it is quite hazardous to talk of development in Africa, not because there is anything inherently problematic about the concept in the African context, but because it is not in the least clear that many African countries have strategy which is identifiable, or have goals of economic development and sometimes those goals are clear enough; they also have policies which are clearly articulated and operationalized. But it is difficult to encounter anything that can properly be called strategy. He further stressed that this is in itself important because of their ineffectiveness in changing their economy in the way, they would like to". On the same note, Ake (1981) identified some of the reasons why developmental strategies of African leaders have been ineffective. In the first place, many African leaders are impatient with disagreement and ideological debate on the plea that the problem of their countries and what they do about it are not quite clear. Similarly, a tendency to focus on one or two problems in Vogue, and allow the elaboration of the character of this problem and the policies and procedures for dealing with it assume status of a development strategy in the absence of a real strategy. A third problem is the failure to understand that goals which are individually desirable may not necessarily be collectively compatible. More often than not, development is thought of in terms of discrete and substantive goals and when each of these goals is treated systematically, it is readily assumed that they constitute a master plan for dealing with the problem of the doctor. This tendency is obvious in the development plans of African State. More often than not, the plan is really not a strategy for development but an aggregation of projects and policies, which may sometimes be incompatible. One may hasten to add, from the point of view of our present purpose here, this lack of clarity in regard to development strategy is not in itself a serious problem it would be as if we are only interested in the possibilities of change in the present state of Nigeria. From the above point of view the lack of clarity is clear, it indicated that Nigerian aspirations are not likely to be realized and that our economies are likely to undergo rapid and profound changes.

Having said all this, we must now be more specific and articulate some of the known strategies imperative for national development.

First and foremost, Nigerian leaders should limit the importation of these artifacts manufactured abroad. But the encouragement of genuine indigenous manufacturers should be of paramount importance. This essential experience has shown that necessity is the mother of invention. The Defunct Biafran State made tremendous fabrications with local resources during the Nigerian Civil War when avenues to procure weaponry were closed against them.

Secondly, Nigerian should de-emphasize the idea of attracting the obnoxious international monetary fund (IMF) loans. This is important, as experience over the year's shows that it is not panacea

to Nigeria's development problems. On the contrary, it is a plot by the Western Nation to underdevelop us the more. Empirical evidence abounds to authenticate this.

Similarly, the relationship between Nigeria and the Western industrialized nations should be minimized. This is not only because industrialized nations do not mean well for Nigeria but also because relationship with them will make Nigeria think less of what genuine development is all about.

In alternative, it is instructive for Nigerian leaders to consider directing their relationship to the emerging industrial nations of South Korea, Japan and the rest the "Tiger" nations.

More so, Nigerian leaders must realize that a particular developmental approach does not work in all environments. In other words, there is no best way of achieving development. Nigeria should evolve her own development approach that has bearing with her culture, physical and economic realities.

Again, Nigerian leaders should create enabling environments conducive enough for Nigerians abroad to return home and use their long-term acquired technological know-how to entrench genuine development in Nigeria.,

In conclusion, modernization can act as development if it is premised on improving upon people's creative energies to manufacture goods and services with local resources. Nigeria is endowed with human and natural resources capable enough to bring about this type of development. Nigeria demonstrates her superiority over the Western world in the field of football competition in China (1985) and Atlanta USA (1996). These are sure indications that America, Britain, Germany, Japan, France, etc. are not superior to Nigeria, if Nigeria can conquer the world in international soccer competitions. It can achieve similar feats in economic, social and political development. What is required is discipline, patriotism, encouragement, courage and selfless service by our leaders and Nigeria in generally.

## CONCLUSION

In this research work, "Leadership and national development in Nigeria". The researcher exerted enormous effort in an attempt to find the root cause of the dilemma behind national development. This became imperative when it was taken hook, line and sinker that the problem behind development in Nigeria is not due to the death of human and natural resources as it is not arguable that Nigeria is blessed with both natural and human resources that if well utilized can ensure overall development of the society.

Besides, what make it more trouble-some and demanding for solution is the belief that a considerable number of development plans and policies have been initiated since Independence to affect our national development, but all these are to no avail as development always hope for has awaken the curiosity of the researcher who attempted to understand why efforts geared forwards national development in Nigeria have always failed, why Nigerian leaders have always relent in initiating good policies and programs that can enhance development, causes of development strategies in Nigeria and mostly what can be done to effect national development in Nigeria.

Nigeria and its economy have been a serious concern of all about its development trends. It was in response to the urgent need to understand why underdevelopment has since ever been perpetuating in the country that I came up with this research. At the instance of

my research, I came to see some of the reasons behind Nigeria's lack of development.

At the Apex of the pyramid of factors is the case of bad leadership. Bad leadership in Nigeria date back to the period of pre-independence through colonial period to present time.

Leaders of Nigeria today see their position as ends not means to an end, and this has contributed to gross irresponsibility witnessed on the part of Nigerian leaders.

Below the leadership factor is corruption, it has not been long World Bank and Transparency International identified Nigeria as a corrupt country in the world. This is true as corrupt practices have eroded efforts geared towards development.

In other words, leadership problems in Nigeria, corruption, poor rule making and implementation cause the underdevelopment of the country and as long as the country did not get rid of those identified problems, development will ever remain elusive in the history of Nigeria.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The "spontaneous growth" model of development advocated by Andre Finder Frank and others hinges on the necessity to allow third-world countries to develop on their own without foreign interference or Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). This is ideal, but it is fraught with practical impossibilities. In other words, it may mean going back to the Stone Age or at least crying over spilt milk.

Obviously, there is much in the developed countries that will be useful in Nigeria; what is required is to select suitable ones and ensure proper adaptation to the Nigerian. As an alternative, I support the "Asian Tiger Model" which Malaysia, China and Japan used to develop their societies. For instance, in Malaysia, selective foreign direct investment was allowed, but proceeds from it were invested in Agriculture to provide employment and food for the majority of the people.

More so, development will embrace Nigerian society quickly than expected if the Nigerian leaders stop importation of certain consumable goods that can be locally produced thereby protecting the local industries from foreign competition.

In like manner, Nigerian leaders should shun corruption in all its ramifications as the incidence of corruption has been identified as the major threat to national development.

They should also ensure diversification of the economy where over dependence on oil as the only source of foreign exchange will be minimized and other sectors like agriculture and tourism be made top grow.

Moreover, good policies that can enhance quality life of the people and development should always be initiated and their implementation should follow the theory. It is only through this that sincere policy implementation which will aid development can be achieved. Once more, activities of multinational corporations influence of western countries, international organizations and financial institutions should be controlled as our study has indicated them for lack of development in Nigeria.

In support of the above suggestions, the issue of poverty should be handled with care; eight years policy is not enough to eradicate poverty in any society. So government should adopt those perpetual policies that can help in erosion of poverty in Nigeria.



In conclusion, Nigerian Education System should be reshaped to effect-self-reliance as the half-baked graduates produced by the Nigerian Universities today, have nothing to offer in the labour market, and political positions should be made less lucrative, since it is the lucrative nature of it that has made it a so or die affair, which has also hindered national development. It is my utmost belief that if the above suggestions are taken into consideration, Nigeria will in no distant time go beyond expected height in area of development.

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