

The Global South and the Quest for Sustainable Development: The Nigeria Experience, 1999 – 2019

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Abstract

This paper focused on the global South and the quest for sustainable development: The Nigeria experience, 1999-2019. Sustainable development is targeted at enabling a nation and its people attain a steady and secured socio-political and economic development at the present as well as having a strong foundation for the future. This has remained a major vision of the global South. For Nigeria, the country has not got much to celebrate socio-economically several years after her political independence. In her human capital development in particular, Nigeria has not also fared better. It is disheartening to note that despite some efforts to attain sustainable development, several of the countries under the global South are yet to be lifted out of the shackles of hunger, poverty, economic despair and monocultural economy. Methodologically, the study adopted the secondary means of data collection and qualitative method of data analysis. The theory of the rentier state was found appropriate as theoretical framework. The findings of the study revealed that a lot of internal and external contradictions have hindered countries of the global South especially Nigeria from attaining sustainable development. The paper recommends among others a more inclusive and multi-faceted approaches in the attainment of sustainable development by the global South.

Keywords: *Nigeria, Sustainable development, Global south, Rentier state, Africa.*

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Background to the Study

Sustainable development has remained a major challenge among countries of the global South in general and Nigeria in particular. A lot of these countries of the global south are endowed with vast mineral and natural resources, their problem has remained that of effective and visionary leadership to effectively harness these resources and drive the necessary technology.

The global souths are usually classified as largely underdeveloped countries found mainly on the southern hemisphere, Latin America, and Asia (Aniche, 2008). They are generally characterized with high level of poverty and economic backwardness. Until very recently, their economies were basically agriculturally based, with limited emphasis on industry and technology.

With reference to Nigeria, her economy has virtually remained mono cultural as greater attention has continued to be paid to the oil sector, with minimal effort on economic diversification into solid minerals, tourism and other non oil sectors of the economy. Although some of the countries hitherto classified as belonging to the global south such as Brazil, Japan, Malaysia and South Africa have adopted some lasting strategies that enabled them attain some level of economic development, yet, majority of them still wallow in abject poverty, ignorance, underdevelopment, leadership crisis, inconsistent development strategies, among others.

Sustainable development refers to the ability of policy makers to strike some balance between economic growth and environmental preservation. In other words, it has to do with the meeting of the present needs of the current generation as well as ensuring that the needs of future generations are not compromised (World Commission on Environment and Development; Our Common Future, 1987).

Since the attainment of political independence by most countries of the global South, a lot of developmental strategies and efforts have continued to be initiated and implemented by them to bring about the much expected sustainable development and emancipate the people from their position of misery to that of prosperity. However, the expected gains or results have continued to fall below expectation. Earlier, Nigeria for instance, had launched some development plans beginning with the first national development plan of 1962 – 68, up to the era of military incursions into her politics. The military regimes also came up with some strategic options and plans to fast track sustainable development in Nigeria. The various efforts however could not attain the expected ends.

Following the restoration of democratic rule in the country on May 1999, the various civilian regimes despite their political and ideological leanings have also not relented in coming up with different programmes and strategic options to bring about sustainable development in Nigeria. This paper therefore examined the global south and the quest for sustainable development; The Nigeria experience, 1999 – 2019.

Theoretical Framework

This study is predicated on the theory of the rentier state. The theory is premised on a set of coordinated ideas with respect to the patterns of development and the nature of states especially those economies that rely on oil rent (Idama & Elias, 2018). The rentier state which later got popularized as a theoretical framework was popularized by Hossein Mahavy during the pre-revolutionary Pahlavi Iran in the 1970's: A community of Middle East Specialists applied the rentier state in their study of the Arab world which they had to apply in their analysis of oil rich states on a general note. Specifically, the theory contends that rentier states refer to those countries that regularly receive “some substantial amount of external economic rent” (Yates, 1996:11).

The major factors that must occur for a state to be classified as rentier were examined by Beblawi. Among these is that the rentier economy has to be one where rent situations are prevalent. Next, is that the government is usually the major recipient of the external rent accruing to the economy? The causal mechanisms underlying the theory of the rentier state were expressed in the work of Herb (cited in Idama & Elias, 2018).

His first and second submission has to do with how the state goes about the collection and use of oil revenue which it partly uses to increase its capacity to buy off and suppress opposition forces. These mechanisms are state centred. The third mechanism expresses the extent to which rents have effect on society which implicitly is more of natural resource dependence than rentierism per se. This position does not rule out the structural problems arising from the input-output nature of the rentier economy coupled with the class structure and political rules usually prevalent in rentier states.

In political consideration, the nature of public revenue generation in rentier states normally concentrate economic wealth and by extension political power in the hands of a few individuals who dictate and influence societal politics and law. In most cases, this development often give rise to what Yates (cited in Idama & Elias, 2018) calls “a rentier class which is conditioned by the state's capacity to support itself economically, appropriate external rent and exercise authority over and above society”.

Applying the theory of the rentier state to the study on the global South and the quest for sustainable development: the Nigeria experience, 1999-2019; it could clearly be understood that most of the countries in the global south hemisphere are basically rentier states in the sense that the oil based economy which some of them project has continued to be dependent on the economy of the global North. For Nigeria, her much dependence on oil rent as a major source of foreign revenue earner has almost beclouded the country from making genuine effort on economic diversification into non-oil sectors of the economy. Besides, the entrenched culture of capitalism among the political class or the ruling elite has merely led to economic mismanagement, corruption and redistribution of national wealth. Oil revenue which ordinarily should be used to re-invest or fast track national or sustainable development has almost become a means for personal enrichment by the few people in power and their cronies. At the level of international economic relations, the global south generally bargain from a

position of weakness instead of strength with a few exceptions. In this development therefore, oil rent has not been properly utilized by the rentier states especially Nigeria to improve her level of human capital development.

Methodology

The paper adopted the secondary method of data collection. Thus, relevant data for the study were derived from textbooks, journals, internet sources, newspapers, government publications and the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGS) documents. The content method was applied in the analysis.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this paper are as follows:

- (i) To examine the objectives of sustainable development goals.
- (ii) To show that poor policy initiation and implementation has negatively affected the realization of sustainable development among countries of the global South.
- (iii) To examine the factors militating against human capital development in Nigeria.

The Global South

According to Onwuka (2008:1) “the global South comprises of those countries of the world whose development status lags that of the North in terms of socio-economic and political realities”. In comparative terms, these countries are variously described as underdeveloped, less developed, lowly industrialized, etcetera. A more benevolent term “developing countries” is also used to describe these less developed nations.

Aja (1998:137) argues that “the global South is used to refer to the under developed countries of the world.” Majority of them have remained at the bottom of economic and technological development. Geographically, the global South has an uneven spread, majority of them are found in Africa, middle East, Asia and Latin America. In a comparative sense, under development presupposes that there exist an advanced economy with its structural advancement in international division of labour and a structurally less-developed economy which by events of history has been disoriented, disarticulated and disadvantaged in international division of labour.

Moreover, Aja (1999) posits that the persistent crisis of development among the global South has not had any significant change several years after their political independence. Some of their identifiable features include:

- i. High level of poverty
- ii. Primordial loyalty
- iii. Short life expectancy
- iv. High birth rate
- v. Malnutrition
- vi. High level of unemployment and limited capital supply
- vii. High degree of ascriptive orientation
- viii. Low literacy level

- ix. Non mechanized agriculture
- x. Political intolerance
- xi. Limited political accountability
- xii. Low per capita income.
- xiii. High debt burden
- xiv. Insecurity

The report of the South Commission (1993:1) describes “the demographic and spatial features of the global South.” Thus, three and a half billion people, that is, three quarters of all humanity live in the developing countries. The developing countries therefore account for more than two third of the earth's land surface. Other popular nomenclatures used in describing the global South include; “ The South”, “centre – periphery”, “master – servant,” “rich – poor” relationship. The North refers to the developed capitalist or socialist countries, made up of some countries of Europe and America. There has remained an unequal economic relationship between the developed rich countries of the North and the poorer underdeveloped countries of the South. The report of the South Commission further contends that:

While most of the people of the North are affluent, most of the people of the South are poor, while the economies of the North are generally strong and resilient, those of the South are mostly weak and defenceless; while the countries in the North are by and large in control of their destinies, those of the South are very vulnerable to external factors and lacking in functional sovereignty.

Up until the 21st century, different regions of the global South are still faced with peculiar developmental crises. Thus, whereas the economy of Latin America has experienced greater diversification and relative development compared to Africa, the global south also witnessed greater debt crisis. As Ninsin (2000) report revealed, of the more than 112 billion USD lent to developing countries in 1995, only about 5.7 billion USD went to sub – Saharan Africa. This shows the level of economic instability and vulnerability the region is characterized with. In terms of political stability, Asia has an edge over Africa where there has been the persistence of militant insurgency, corruption and leadership ineptitude.

Sustainable Development

Several definitions of sustainable development have been developed. Similarly, scholars such as Nwosu (2017) and Okafor (2018) in their works focused on some areas of sustainable development. However, this paper is essentially focused on the aspect of human capital development which actually has to do with the level of improvement on the per capita income of the populace. The Bundtland report gave a foremost definition of sustainable development which holds that it has to do with meeting the needs of the present generation in as much as those of future generations are not compromised (Maduagwu, 2013). These needs are the eight needs developed by Abraham Maslow namely: Psychological needs, esteem needs, safety needs, love needs, self actualization needs, the needs for beauty and aesthetics, knowledge, understanding and transcendence. A societal framework of sustainable development describes a society's commitment and involvement in four interconnected

objectives such as economic development, social inclusive, environmental sustainability and good governance. These four dimensions are not usually treated in isolation as they are related and necessary for individual and societal well being, development and progress (Ugwu, 2013).

Sustainable development represents the pattern of development that is enduring. Much emphasis is laid on the development of the human person or human capital development, both in the present and in the future. The target is on the harnessing and maximum utilization of both material and natural resources for the utmost development of every segment of society irrespective of sex, party, religion, class or other affiliations. Sustainable development therefore recognises a safer environment as one that encourages the survival and sustainability of the human habitant. The human populace to a reasonable degree are empowered and made to be self reliant in as much as some other state objectives are not compromised.

According to Acholonu (2005:178) “sustainable development strategies are aimed at improving the quality of physical, social security and welfare services available to the people; adequate shelter, clean water, functionally well equipped and properly staffed hospitals and schools, effective and adequate information technology.” Some components of sustainable development have been identified to include; massive employment provision, diversification of the economy, efficient and effective provision of social services; technological advancement, a secured environment, leadership responsiveness and accountability among others.

Sustainable development is multi-faceted in approach as it does not only address the socio-economic challenges of the present generation but is also intended to lay a solid foundation for the generations yet unborn (Olayode, 2006). Generally, for sustainable development to be realistic, a good number of contending challenges must be addressed. These include; democratization, equitable distribution of wealth, respect for human rights, fight against corruption, sound resource management, responsible and responsive leadership and effective conflict management strategies.

Nigeria and sustainable development goals (SDGS)

The sustainable development goal was adopted by the member countries of the United Nations as a new global agenda to fast track the development of member countries between September 25th – 27th, 2015. The various development goals enunciated by the world leaders had some specific objectives which included: the wiping out of poverty, hunger, malnutrition and other human, socio-economic and political challenges confronting humanity in the 21st century by 2030. About five key relevant areas were chosen for priority attention. These were: the people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. The targets of the sustainable development goals were therefore much more embracing than those of the millennium development goals. Thus, according to Okafor (2018:77) “the sustainable development goals were expected to be driven by a holistic development, universality, integrated, home grown or locality focused technology that can drive and accommodate the three dimensions of sustainable development.” These are in the areas of economic, social and environmental sustainability. In the declaration made by the world leaders in 2015, they resolved among

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The third national development plan of 1975-80 had a better promise of revamping of rural agriculture and development. The period witnessed the popular oil boom era as the price of Nigeria's oil greatly appreciated in the world market. Public servants had a fair deal through the popular "Udoji awards" following the increment on their salaries and allowances. Unfortunately the economic growth of the time could not be translated into development.

The march towards sustainable development in Nigeria led the civilian government of President Shehu Shagari to drawing the fourth national development plan (1981-85). The plan really integrated the local government as the vanguard for rural development and also emphasized the need for a balanced development of the economy (Nwapi, 2018). Rural water scheme was therefore given a boost. However, like the previous efforts, the plan also fell below expectations as the civilian government grossly mismanaged the economy and had to be sacked by the military juntas. The fifth national development plan (post fourth plan, 1985 – 1990) launched by the Babangida regime among others saw to the establishment of the directorate for food, roads and rural infrastructure (DFRRI). Primarily, the programmes was aimed at promoting productive activities and boosting of infrastructural facilities in order to fast track rural development and improve the quality of rural life.

In a further search for sustainable development in Nigeria, the various civilian and military regimes initiated and pursued programmes such as the Agriculture Development Programme (ADP), Operation Feed the Nation, Green Revolution, Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), vision 2010, 2020 among others.

The election and emergence of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as the second executive president of Nigeria on May 1999 was a highly celebrated event as it indeed marked a turn around in Nigeria's socio-economic and political focus after many years of military intransigence into the political history of the country. The administration lamented the decades of Nigeria's economic down turn and had to embark on land slide economic reforms in the various sectors of the economy in order to bring about sustainable development in Nigeria.

One of the strategic plans of action of the Obasanjo's administration was the introduction of the national economic empowerment and development strategy (NEEDS). NEEDS was an integrative and intervening strategy aimed at educating Nigerians on the socio-economic and political reform agenda of the federal government. It was a democratic participatory approach, whereby the people, the government and other stakeholders were involved in taking decisions on how to achieve sustainable development in Nigeria. The strategy was targeted to be people driven in the bid to transform their lives and bring about development. The goal of NEEDS were translated at the various levels of government. Essentially, NEEDS laid greater emphasis on increasing the quality of public service delivery, efficient resources utilization, wealth creation, poverty reduction, food security, provision of rural infrastructure, a diversified economy and value re-orientation. (Ajayi, 2006) NEEDS was noted to be an umbrella strategy which incorporated the goals and targets of two global initiatives known as the new partnership for Africa's development (NEPAD) and the millennium development goals (MDGS).

In order to re-awaken and make public enterprises more economically viable, president Obasanjo's administration carried out holistic reforms in the major sectors of the economy such as banking, aviation, power, public service, health care, education among others. The administration's campaign for debt cancellation by the global financial institutions and agencies such as the London and Paris clubs recorded some level of success as some forms of concessions were granted to Nigeria (The Economist, 2003).

The economic programme of commercialization and privatization which commenced in 1988 in the country was upheld by the Obasanjo's administration. The Obasanjo's administration also came up with measures to attract foreign investors into Nigeria. Among the notable foreign investors in the Nigeria economy were those in oil and gas, tourism, banking and insurance, exploration, mining, transportation, food and beverages, real estate, etcetera, Nigeria also became investors delight in information and communication technology (NBS, 2009). Besides, the introduction of the GSM handset and computer system gave a boost to business, inter-personal and official communication in Nigeria. The brief reign of late president of Umaru Yar' Adua (May, 2007 – 2010) saw the administration embarking on the Seventh Point Agenda. The Agenda focused on the specific areas such as energy and power sector, food, land reforms, improved education, health, development and resolution of the Niger Delta crises (Otoghagua, 2007). The administration made efforts to address the lapses noted in these key areas. Unfortunately, the untimely death of the president marred the pursuit of the 7th point Agenda to a logical conclusion. A major feat Nigeria achieved at this time was the relative reprieve achieved in the Niger Delta through the Amnesty granted to repentant militants in the region.

The vice president during late president Yar'Adua's administration, Dr Goodluck Jonathan was sworn in following the death of the President to complete the tenure of his boss. Dr. Ebele Goodluck Jonathan pledged to continue with the programmes of his predecessor at least up until his emergence as the substantive Head of state and commander-in-Chief of the Nigeria armed forces after the 2011 presidential elections. The transformation agenda of President Jonathan's administration (2011 – 2015) was aimed at addressing the pitfalls in Nigeria's march to development over the years. Among these were; the absence of a long term genuine planning, lack of continuity, consistency and commitment to initiated policies. The government noted a major pitfall over Nigeria's planning process which among others resulted to a mere growth and minimal development. Transformation was devised as a strategy that would radically and positively transform the lives of the individual, organization and community (Alozie, 2018). Among others, the transformation agenda was designed to focus on three major areas which included:

- i. Strong, inclusive and non inflationary growth
- ii. Employment generation and poverty alleviation
- iii. Value re-orientation (Ita, 2012).

The transformation agenda was also designed to address the following: job creation, education, health, power, transportation, Niger Delta, labour and productivity, foreign policy, economic diplomacy among others (Gyong, 2012).

The projected financial burden of the transformation agenda is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Investment size for the 5 – year period of the Transformation Agenda (in trillions of naira)

Sector	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Private	1,755.49	2,158.50	2,953.83	3,708.59	4,657.16	15,233.57
Public	2,633.23	3,237.76	3,759.42	4,720.02	5,720.29	20,277.72
Total	4,388.72	5,396.26	6,713.25	8,428.61	10,377.45	35,511.29

Source: National Planning Commission (2014)

As shown in table 1, the projected financial cost of the transformation agenda was estimated to be N35,511.29 trillion for the five – year period. Out of the amount, government was expected to contribute 57.10% or N20,277.72 trillion whereas the private sector was expected to make up the remaining balance of N42.9% or N15,233.57 trillion (Gyong, 2012).

In addition to other development efforts of Dr Goodluck Jonathan administration, the subsidy re-investment programme (Sure-P) was introduced as a way of cushioning the effects of the partial withdrawal of oil subsidy. The programme was aimed at re-investing the gains derived from petroleum subsidy withdrawal into other critical sectors of the economy in order to drive development in those sectors. Like the previous administrations, the administration intensified the programme of privatization and commercialization of some public enterprises. Foreign investors and other development partners were wooed to invest in the Nigeria economy as well as patronizing Nigeria made goods.

On assumption of office on May 2015, President Muhammadu Buhari's administration set for itself “A Change Agenda”. This was aimed at changing the narratives in Nigeria's path to sustainable development. The project was aimed at enabling Nigerians understand that it was no longer business as usual. The change agenda was therefore targeted at bringing about a radical change in the attitudinal life style and orientation of both Nigerian leaders and the led.

Among others, the administration noted that the incidence of corruption has remained a major constraint against Nigeria's effort towards meaningful development. For several years running, President Buhari's administration therefore vowed to do all within its power to ensure that corruption was stamped out of Nigeria no matter whose ox is gored. Since the present fight, several funds which were embezzled by some public officials, politicians and other high profile Nigerians have been recovered. Several cases of corruption are still being investigated whereas some former public office holders found to have corruptly enriched themselves with public funds have been convicted or imprisoned.

In a further move to drive development in Nigeria, the Buhari administration introduced a social investment programme which focuses on human development and economic recovery. Through the programmes, the administration pledged to lift about 10 million Nigerians out of poverty before the expiration of the tenure of the administration. Under the arrangement, the

N-power was introduced as a poverty alleviation and youth empowerment scheme aimed at assisting unemployed young Nigerian graduates. Successful candidates after a competitive test are paid a monthly stipend of thirty thousand naira only (N30,000.00). They are expected to utilize the money to start a small or business acquires skill(s) to improve their lives.

As a way of encouraging small scale business enterprises, the “Anchor Borrower's Scheme” was also launched. This was meant to cover those involved in agriculture and related practices. Under the arrangement, the beneficiaries are assisted with some repayable loans on very attractive conditions and terms. In addition, a trader money of about ten thousand naira only (N10, 000.00) has also been introduced by the Buhari administration as a way of assisting market women, hawkers and other Nigerian traders whose businesses and trade are relatively small. The money is usually disbursed to these traders in some selected markets in the major cities in the country.

Aside the various economic reforms, president Buhari has also been utilizing the opportunity of his numerous tours abroad to enter into bi-lateral and other agreements with the major global economic giants and countries to woo foreign investors to invest in Nigeria and patronize Nigeria made goods. The temporary closure of Nigeria's land borders in 2019 was also described a device aimed at checkmating economic sabotage and criminal activities across the borders as well as encouraging local production of rice and other products where Nigeria has a comparative advantage.

Challenges of Sustainable Development in Nigeria

A lot of factors have continued to cripple the efforts of the Nigerian state towards sustainable development especially in the area of human capital development. This study examined the following:

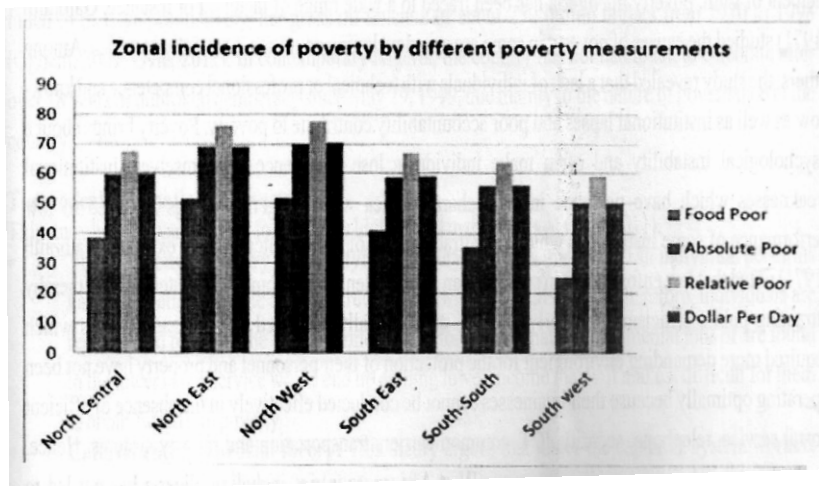
- (i) Poor development of human capital
- (ii) Corruption
- (iii) Insecurity
- (iv) Boundary clashes and communal conflicts
- (v) The challenge of effective and visionary leadership
- (vi) Weak commitment to industrialization and non diversification of the economy

(i) Poor Development of Human Capital

Human capital measures the quality of human welfare or per capita income of a people. Despite the various measures most of the countries among the global South have undertaken to improve the quality of the people's life, the measures or strategies have remained grossly inadequate. The gaps between the rich and the poor have continued to be widened especially among the urban poor and those at the grassroot. In Nigeria for instance, the report released by the International crisis Group in 2014 showed that over 70 million people were poor irrespective of the criteria for measurement. Nigeria's North East had the worst case (which has up until 2020). Persisted due to the persistence of terrorist insurgency, armed banditry, kidnapping; climate change and illiteracy have also compounded the problems of the area. Sustainable development in Nigeria has therefore been far fetched as the different zones in the

country have for several years been recording very poor outing in their human capital development (Alozie, 2019). This is illustrated in figure 1.

Figure 1: Zonal incidence of poverty by different poverty measurements in Nigeria



Source: Lilio (2013:20).

The zonal incidence of poverty for the different geo-political zones in Nigeria area represented in Figure 1. The record presents a gloomy picture of human capital development in Nigeria. with the zones in Northern Nigeria having the worst case. The effort of the state in concretely addressing Nigeria's poor level of human development for years has remained worrisome. Thus, despite Nigeria's abundant human, natural and mineral resources, it took the 158th Position out of the 177 countries noted to be the poorest globally in 2012. Several years thereafter, no appreciable improvement has been recorded in Nigeria's human capital development (Alozie, 2019).

(ii) Corruption

Corruption has remained endemic since the political history of Nigeria. As far back as January 15th 1966, when the first military coup took place, late major C.K. Nzeogwu that led the coup observed that:

Our enemies are the political profiteers, the swindlers, the men in high and low places that seek bribes and demand 10 percent; those that seek to keep the country divided permanently... the tribalists, the nepotists, those that have corrupted our society and put the Nigeria political calendar back by their words and deeds (Onwuka, 2020:22).

Several years down the lane, corruption has remained a dreaded monster and social menace. Its successful fight has remained a major challenge of successive administrations in Nigeria. Onwuka (2002:348) defines corruption as “a dishonest, immoral or illegal action or behaviour, especially by public office holders entrusted with public fund or wealth. A corrupt society is one that has become used to dishonesty, immorality and illegality.”

Corruption also has to do with the use of one's office or position for private or selfish gain. Corruption also denotes the betrayal of public trust for personal, group or individual advantage. Noting the endemic nature and institutionalization of corruption in Nigeria's public and private lives, two corruption fighting institutions, that is, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission were set up in Nigeria by the administration of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. The agencies were given the mandate to investigate, probe and prosecute cases of corruption in Nigeria. The efforts of these agencies and even the courts in Nigeria have however, not significantly reduced the incidence of corruption in Nigeria.

Since Nigeria's fourth republic, some investigated corruption cases have included; the police pension fund of N32.8 trillion; the oil sector corruption scandal from 1999-2011 totaling N1.7 trillion; the Malabo oil scandal and James Ibori N450 billion money laundering case in London. Besides, after a 12-year legal battle, a former governor of Abia State was in December 2019 convicted and sentenced to 12 years imprisonment over fraud and money laundering to the tune of N7.65 billion. Other former governors convicted for similar offences include Chief Lucky Igbinedion (Edo), Chief James Ibori (Delta), Rev. Jolly Nyame (Taraba) and Senator Joshua Dariye of Plateau State (Davidson & Kingsley, 2019). Up until the first quarter of year 2020, Nigeria's former national security adviser, Sambo Dasuki was still standing trial over the disappearance and misappropriation of about N126 billion through his office which excluded the 82.1 billion military equipment scandal in the same office without formal award of contracts (Opoola, 2018). Onwuka (2020) contends that the high incidence of corruption in Nigeria has robbed the country of valuable resources needed to industrialize and develop the country. Sadly, Nigeria again dropped downwards in the 2019 global corruption ranking by the transparency international. The report showed that Nigeria in 2019 occupied the 146th position out of the 180 countries studied. Nigeria was also rated as the 4th most corrupt country in Africa (AIT News, 23/1/2020).

(iii) Insecurity

Insecurity simply denotes the absence of security. By security, is meant anything that constitutes a threat, stress, death or harm to the human person and property (Aja, 1999). Insecurity therefore has to do with a situation or state of fear (physical, psychological or otherwise) of losing one's life, property or other valued resources. An insecure nation is one that is vulnerable, where the people live in perpetual or incessant threats to their lives, property or social existence.

The Nigerian State has remained most insecure since the restoration of civil rule in the country in 1999 more than any other period in the nation's history. A few instances of the drivers of insecurity in Nigeria include; the violent activities of the Niger Delta militants which made the region most insecure for business and habitation; persistent Boko Haram abductions, killings and attacks in North East Nigeria and its environs leading to cases of internal displacement. Others are; violent attacks by herdsmen who often rape women and girls, armed banditry, kidnapping and ritual killings. The continued cases of insecurity in Nigeria has often led to the closure of some businesses in the affected areas and the transfer of

same to safer places, often times outside Nigeria. Insecurity has actually worsened the efforts so far made in Nigeria towards sustainable development.

(iv) Incessant Violent Boundary clashes and Re – occurring Communal Conflict

The haphazard way and manner Nigeria borders and boundaries were demarcated among the constituting communities has continued to generate incessant clashes which often result to violence and deaths. Most of these boundary issues arose during the creation of regions, states and local governments. Several years after the dust raised from the exercise are yet to be settled. Colossal loss of lives and property have continued to be recorded. Communal conflicts have often been products of generational animosities. These conflicts have either taken community or communal dimensions (Azuonwu, 2002). Some of the recorded violent communal conflicts include: the Yoruba versus Hausa Fulani fracas in Shagamu, Lagos, between 1999-2000, the Urhobo versus Itsekiri conflict, Ife versus Modakeke crises, between 2000 – 2001, the JuKun versus Tivi conflict in Jos which exacerbated in the year, 2019. Communal conflicts have always led to huge losses of hard earned and acquired valued state or national resources, dislocation of persons and cases of internal displacement. Huge resources that should be channeled into the provision of critical infrastructure are often diverted into payment of compensations and rebuilding of burnt or damaged facilities.

(v). The Challenge of Ethnicity

Ethnicity which has remained a sub-system in Nigeria has continued to derail sustainable development in every facets of national life. Ethnicity is defined as a form of social phenomenon that has to do with the identity of members of the largest possible communal group that attempts to protect and advance their vested interest in a given political setting (Nnoli, 2008). The ethnic foundation of Nigeria as a heterogeneous entity has continued to manifest among Nigerians in every sphere of national life. Both the leaders and the led have hardly hidden their ethnic origin and outward show of favours mainly to those from their own ethnic group whether such persons are qualified for such offers or not. This has led to the continued putting of square pegs on round holes which has grossly affected productivity and the effective management of public agencies in Nigeria. Thus, mediocrity in most cases has been the order of the day in the running of serious business of government (Nwabuguogu, 2016).

(vi). The Challenge of Effective and Visionary Leadership

The revered literary giant, Chinua Achebe had long noted that the trouble with Nigeria is that of leadership. Leadership simply denotes, the ability of an individual who has been appointed or elected into such a position to lift or take the people from their current non satisfactory position to where they are supposed to be. Leadership is further described as that ingredient or oil that keeps the wheel of government moving with minimal difficulty. It is usually the function of the leadership to effectively mobilize, articulate and in liason with the people harness available human and material resources in order to realize state goals and objectives. Up till the 21st century, the nature of leadership in Nigeria has remained corrosive and lacking the needed ingredients, commitment, selflessness and vision that can drive sustainable development.

Conclusion

The global South where Nigeria belongs has continued to be confronted with a whole lot of constraints on their path to sustainable development. Although most of the countries have been embarking on strategies to bring about sustainable development, their success have remained minimal. For Nigeria, her human capital development has not been recording improvements despite the strategies put in place over the years in this regard. Among others, leadership ineptitude, increasing terrorist insurgency, ill-conceived development patterns; high debt burden; institutionalized corruption, poor technological and industrial take-off have remained the major challenges of the global South. Little efforts made in some places over the years have not been sustained for several reasons. The expected enabling environment for meaningful grassroots development has continued to elude these states. Insecurity has persisted to thrive in several parts of the global South as the state has seen itself at the mercy of unrepentant armed bandits, terrorists and criminal elements.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the paper, the following recommendations are proffered:

- (i) **Provision of Enabling Environment:** Concerted efforts should be made by countries of the global south in bringing about a sound or the needed environment for the thriving of political and socio-economic activities in the region. Internal and external threats against state security and development should be comprehensively addressed.
- (ii) **Economic Diversification:** As the economy of most of the countries of the global South are mono-cultural and heavily dependent on oil and gas (with all the risk of price fluctuations at the global market), the continued call for the diversification of these economies into non-oil sectors such as agriculture, solid minerals and tourism have become imperative as such would make these economies get more stabilized for effective planning.
- (iii) **Visionary, Result-Oriented and Focused Leadership:** The quality of leadership in a state significantly determines the extent to which the state would go in realizing her state objectives especially in the area of sustainable development. For the global South, no effort should be spared in bringing about leaders that would be committed, corrupt free and achievement oriented as a lee way to realizing the much cherished vision of sustainable development.
- (iv) **Re-vitalization of Regional Integration Mechanisms:** In view of the fact that the global South has basically common features and characteristics, they would achieve more socio-economically by integrating, harmonizing and coordinating their efforts and resources. Therefore, there is the dire need for them to do away with those bottlenecks that have crippled the expected level of cooperation among them.

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