

Leadership Challenges and Nigerian Democratic Consolidation

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Abstract

The paper examines the extent to which inept and corrupt leadership have over the years, adversely affected the development of Nigeria as a nation. It argues that Nigeria's failures have come about largely as a result of frequent leadership change, lack of ideology, policy reversal and weak institutional patterns. The study adopts descriptive approach and content analysis as its methodological orientation. The paper also examines the leadership selection process in Nigeria and found that the leadership selection process in Nigeria takes the imposition pattern and that Nigerian leaders have frequently come to their position with limited experience. Hence, the decline in moral and high level of corruption caused by bad policies, eroded professional standards and ethics and weakened the system of governance. The paper observes that for Nigeria to overcome the crises of leadership in the country, those on whom the burden of leadership will fall in the future must fully comprehend their responsibilities, duties and obligation. They must also be exposed and be prepared to face the challenges of leadership in developing society. Since the long term salvation of our country depends on the quality of its future leaders. The paper concludes that only leadership that has maximum empathy for the people can be relevant to the qualitative development of Nigeria.

Keywords: *Leadership, Development, Challenges, Corruption and Governance*

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Background to the Study

In Fifty five years of nationhood, the most critical challenge confronting Nigeria as a nation appears to be credible leadership. Many scholars at one time or the other have queried why Nigeria seems to find it difficult to address her perennial leadership problems in spite of abundant human and material resources available at her disposal. Some have argued that leadership challenge of the country could be traced from the emergence of colonial misadventure in Nigeria, while others dismissed such argument on the basis that corruption and lack of vision among past and present leaders of Nigeria culminate to hamper any meaningful effort in the quest for good governance in the country. These leadership challenges are evidenced in political, social and economic instability and the prevalence of ethnic, communal and religious crises, which have bedevilled Nigerian socio economic development. In other words, the staggering wave of violence, insecurity, increasing crime wave, economic recession, coupled with the break in law and order are the attributes to the problem of leadership in Nigeria. Therefore, the quest for good leadership is a *sine-qua-non* for sustainable development.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this is to examines the extent to which inept and corrupt leadership have over the years, adversely affected the development of Nigeria as a nation.

Literature Review

Leadership and Development: Conceptual and Theoretical Clarifications

One of the primary jobs in an intellectual discourse of this nature is usually concerned with the definition of terms. It is really very difficult to attempt a definition of leadership, or in other words it is difficult to define what makes certain persons to be “leader”. For example, some researchers define leadership in terms of personality and physical traits, while others believe leadership is represented by a set of prescribed behaviours. Indeed, Rost (1991) found that there were 221 definitions of leadership published in books and articles between 1900 and 1990; a number that given the recent interest in leadership, has likely to doubled since his view. It is in light of this that Ubegbe (1999) defines leadership in the following words;

Leadership is the process of creating the subordinates' identification with the group's mission and creating their desires to achieve the group's goal.

According to Graig (2005) leadership is defined as a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organizational goals. While Robert et al (2004) affirms that leadership involves a complex interaction among the leader, the followers, and the situation. Transformational leadership is inward looking and conscious of the benefits that its society can derive from the international environment. It takes the responsibility of the national or local problem depending on the layer of leadership; deploys skill, knowledge imagination and energy to solution to most problems and assists followers to realize their hidden and untapped capabilities. The transformational leader is always physically present to monitor projects at sites. He also receives report from the subordinates to ensure that policies and projects are implemented according to designs and specification. This style of leadership relegates corruption to the background, and brings sanity, transparency and accountability to the fore. This is the legacy of transformation left by transformational leaders in many countries of the World (Ukaegbu, 2010).

Omolayo (2005) describes leadership as an essential oil that keeps the wheel of government working without any difficulty. According to him, leadership makes the difference between success and failure in a country. It involves giving direction to citizens who are the critical assets of the nation.

Development according to Rodney (1972) is a phenomenon which is inherent in all societies. Olewo (1995), says that development means growth or change or planned change. The term development has diverse perspectives such as social development, economic development, and political development. Gbenga Lawal (2007), expressed that development is the process by which a type of (social) change is introduced into a system in order to produce a better production method and improved social arrangement. It involves a structural transformation of the economy society, polity and culture of a country. The level and rate of development of a particular society are influenced by so many variables such as the political culture, leadership style and corruption. Development in human society is not a one sided process rather multi-sided issues; some scholars perceive development as an increase in the skill and ability. It is viewed as maximum freedom, and the ability to create responsibly.

Seer (1977), states that sustainable development does not involve capital accumulation and economic growth only but the condition in which people in a country have adequate food, job and income inequality. It is the process of bringing fundamental and sustainable changes in the society. The development encompasses growth and embraces the quality of life as a social justice, equality of opportunity for all citizens, equitable distribution of income and the democratization of development processes. It is the capacity of members of the society to actualize them by participating actively in the social engineering of their destiny. Sustainable development entails the ability of individuals to influence and manipulate the forces of nature for their enhancement and that of humanity. Economic, political or social development implies more changes in the technical and institutional arrangement by which it is produced. In spite of various concepts, development is multi-dimensional and is basically about the process of changes around the spheres of societal life.

The Causes of Leadership Crisis in Nigeria

Leadership crisis in Nigeria is occasioned mainly by lack of intellectual training and discipline on the part of leaders of our national government. This does not imply that, adequate intellectual training is necessarily a guarantee for good leadership, but it does help in most occasions. The main theme of Plato's Republic thesis is that for there to be a meaningful and sustainable development, a society has to be governed by people-men and women-who have, through careful training attained the proper knowledge of human life and know the meaning of goodness in all its forms (Ochulor, 2011). Such knowledge facilitates an appropriate comprehension of the purpose of government. Without it one will not be able to govern well. Good leadership demands unusual virtue, intelligence, education, discipline, selflessness and a great deal of experience. So leadership crises in Nigeria arise largely from the leaders' intellectual incapacity, lack of discipline and political inexperience, not so much from the political institutions, not so much from the system (Ochulor, 2011). Good leadership is a function of character, adequate knowledge and intellectual training on governance.

Another cause leadership crisis in Nigeria is corruption. Corruption has political and socio-cultural variables. The root causes of corruption in Nigeria could be traced to the culture and weird value system of the society. It is almost impossible to see a corrupt-free Nigerian because of the deteriorated culture and weak value system of the society (Dike 2003). "Corruption has taught Nigerians wrong lessons that it does not pay to be honest, hardworking and law abiding because the culture has legalized illegality in the society" (Aleyomi, 2013). The struggle for survival in the society has become a race for everyone, and there is no longer room for morality in the society (Smith, 2008).

Bad leadership also arises from uncontrolled quest to remain in power and to enjoy outrageous salaries paid to Nigerian public office holders, most especially the executives and legislature. The major means of living in flamboyant affluence and conspicuous consumption in Nigeria is to hold a political office. Government functionaries in Nigeria often involve in several dubious means to amass dynastic wealth which their generation born and unborn cannot finish. Billions of naira is often being misappropriated and looted by our leaders from public treasuries without anything been done by the government to track them down (Lotterman, 2002). Instead of addressing the problem of corruption, governments dissipate energy in castigating critics and oppositions. Bad leadership breeds corruption and ineffective taxing system, which makes it difficult for societies to track down people's financial activities (Lotterman, 2002). Another cause of bad leadership in Nigeria includes excessive greed, urge for a shortcut to wealth by the general public, the absence of a strong sense of national community and giving out chieftaincy titles to corrupt persons by traditional rulers (Ndiulor, 1999)

Challenges of Leadership in Nigeria

Lack of rule of law: The leaders in Nigeria do not show respect to the rule of law, especially, judicial decisions. This hampers the judiciary to effectively discharge its duties. The predictability of the judiciary is not yet a reality in Nigeria, the political executives still undermine the independence of the judiciary through patronage appointments, and judicial administration is characterized by weak enforcement capacity.

Absence of Development Oriented Leadership: Many observers of the development and crisis in Nigeria since independence agree that poor leadership has been a major factor. Most of the Nigerian leaders were not committed to development of their society. Available evidence in the development literature on transformational leaders who have significantly reduced poverty in their respective countries during the past quarter century does not generate any consistent conclusion regarding the factors that contributed to the successes. The leaders behind the success stories in Chile, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan, all demonstrated strong commitment to development, with clarity of vision and of goal (Adamolekun, 2002).

Absence of Accountability and Transparency: In Nigeria, there is complete absence of transparent and accountable leadership. A government is deemed to be accountable when its leaders (both elected and appointed) are responsive to the demands of the citizen. Accountability is best enforced through the instrument of rule of law and independent judiciary. Citizen can seek redress in the courts for acts of omission or commission by a government and its officials. However, Nigeria has not done well in this regard; it has been corruption at all levels. And this corruption is not unconnected with

profuse index of weak accountability and lack of transparency. The leaders abuse public office for private gain.

Corruption: although corruption is a global scourge, Nigeria appears to suffer tremendously from this malaise. Every one appears to believe that the nation has a culture of corruption; Nigeria is a rich nation floating on oil wealth, but almost none of it flows to the people. The countless reforms and lack of transparency and integrity of our leaders have left Nigeria corrupt as ever. Politicians are expunged and later re-admitted into their parties, then, what hope for good governance when the leadership is deeply entrenched in corrupt practices.

Electoral Malpractices: This problem has become a popular phenomenon in Nigerian politics. As a matter of fact, an average Nigerian believes that elections cannot be won except it is rigged. Yes, this is an extent at which our electoral system has deteriorated. Electoral malpractice is not a recent phenomenon; in fact, it has existed since independence and has continued to exist, even, in a modernized fashion. Our leaders are the architect of electoral fraud, for instance, in the first republic; the leadership of various political parties were accused and alleged of election rigging. The same happened in the second republic. And forth republic was also not different. If by now, our leaders, the so called politicians are not ready to face free and fair election I doubt if good governance can be entrenched by these same set of people who are so desperate in their bid to clinch to power at all cost.

Lack of Political Will: A political will is the compelling force for sound leadership quality, the ability to do what is right, what is relevant and what is attainable within the context of patriotic nationalism. Political will very often means personal or group sacrifices. It implies the ability to implement policies that have a nationalistic important and relevant without allowing pockets of interest to detract from what should naturally be of national benefit. In contemporary Africa, Nelson Mandela represents that model of leadership by personal sacrifice to redeem his people from servitude (Isekhure, 1995). In light of the above, Eze (1995) has this to say about leadership in Nigeria;

In considering the Nigerian situation, there seem to be certain issues in Nigerian leadership which require experimental investigations. For instance, it has been generally asserted that Nigerian management are marked by authoritarian leadership characteristics and practices. They are said to have maintained a rigid dictatorial approach, as well as master-servant, rider-horse relationship with subordinates. In fact, it is been said that a Nigerian man is by nature and training an autocrat who demands nothing but respect and obedience from his subordinates, and those younger and lower in status than him. Also in public sector, the leadership have been associated with certain undesirable traits such as double-standards, pursuance of selfish goals, lack of seriousness and indiscipline.

Lack of Experience before ascending to Leadership Positions: Most Nigerian leaders assumed their role with limited experience and training in the art and science of directing and effectively managing the affairs of a modern state (Kamuntu, 1993). The challenge to African leaders is thus to develop the capacity that would enable us to strike a balance between the values of African societies and the governance that our nations must

follow. However, the concern must be to blend the two rather than to treat them as if they were mutually exclusive.

Pressure on Public Servants: A further cause of leadership trouble in Nigeria is the fact that Nigerians at times push their leaders into corrupt practices. People, villages, towns and communities whose sons and daughters are in government departments often make demands of them; such demands that can only be met by a corrupt use of one's office.

Emphasis on Ethnic Origin: Emphasis on ethnic origin is yet another leadership challenge in Nigeria. It was Ojukwu (1989) who observed that “tribalism is perhaps the one factor that has nullified all our efforts at evolving a national leadership capable of fulfilling our national aspiration”.

Weak Emphasis on the Rule of Law: It is our strong view that all should be bound by the country's laws. We advocate the supremacy of the law of the land over all. The idea of one law for the ruler and another for the ruled is an injustice. For Nigeria to develop we must uphold the principle of the Rule of Law which asserts the absolute supremacy of the law of the land and the equality of all before the law. Any political theory that does not uphold the rule of law will surely promote bad leadership in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Investigations in this paper show that the Nigerian leaders take the greater blame for leadership failure in Nigeria but the led also have a share of the blame because of their various ways of encouraging bad leadership for the sake of selfish gain. If the facets of leadership challenges in Nigeria are to be surmounted, Nigerian leaders must shun selfish tendencies and promote the common good of the Nigerian people through people oriented leadership.

In conclusion, therefore, we want to agree with Ochulor (2011) that these leadership challenges are spiritual, civic and a national challenge. As mature and responsible citizens of modern Nigeria, it is the people's duty to take this challenge individually and collectively. Nigerians must fight corruption in all its forms and ramifications and in all its pomp and pageantry. This is a civic and national task and challenge. The people of Nigeria must insist on good leadership by resisting bad leadership at all costs, including the sacrifice of individual or collective lives. No country gets good leadership on a platter of gold. All hands must be on deck to ensure that leadership in Nigeria becomes and remains good and people-oriented.

Recommendations

1. We recommend that education is in itself a way of addressing these aspects of the challenge of nation-building. Much depended on the leaders and the extent to which they play an even-handed role in balancing the interests of the various ethnic, cultural and religious groups and be seen to do so.
2. We also recommend that local government autonomy could be seen as one way of encouraging a return to the autonomy of the local community and reducing the presence of the central government. Much however still needs to be done in this regard. It was noted for example that whereas Britain has 1900 local government

units for a population of 48 million inhabitants, Nigeria has only 304 local government units for its population of about 120 million.

3. The challenge of orientating education to the African context should be seen as a part and parcel of building on the indigenous African cultures, including values, institutions and patterns of behaviour. Development must be seen not so much as a process stimulated by external inputs, but rather as a process of self-enhancement from within, building on material and human resources available to the people from the grassroots level of the farmer to the level of the national decision-makers.
4. This study therefore recommends that for sustainable development to be achieved, specific and deliberate strategies should be evolved to remedy some of the problems identified. The study suggests that more and dedicated leaders should be identified and responsibilities aimed at improving the welfare of the people assigned to them. Also, all citizens of our country should be made to contribute his or her quota towards sustainable development; such contributions will enhance sustainability in terms of security, acceptability, usage and identification of the people with the said ideals.
5. Finally we recommend that the fight against corruption should be number one priority of the present government, civil society groups, the religious institutions and the media. The anti-corruption institutions in the country should be made independent of government interference. There is a need for strong political will among the political leadership ensuring continuity and doggedness in the fight against corruption in the country; the cost of election into political offices by people who vie for them should be reduced so as to reduce the rate at which the political office holders engage in corrupt practices. Punishment for corruption should be made to be higher than the gains in all political institutions and other high places.

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Women in the Informal Sector and Economic Growth; Opportunity or Necessity Based Entrepreneur

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Abstract

Women play vital and dynamic role as agents of development largely in the informal sectors of the economies. Many researchers have opined that necessity based entrepreneurs dominate the informal sectors of developing countries and do not substantially impact on the economic growth of developing countries than opportunity based entrepreneurs. The study therefore examined 100 informal women entrepreneur in various sectors of Jos metropolis but found that around half of these women are literate and operate in this sector because of extra income (15.9%), identified opportunity (9.9%), innovation (7.9%) and autonomy (6.9%) as against need for survive (16.8%), unemployment (9.9%), little startup cost (8.9%) and help family (5.9%). Hence, the mean difference between both is very insignificant. Thus, necessity based women entrepreneurs are not more prevalent than opportunity based entrepreneurs especially amongst women in the informal sector. We recommend therefore that policy makers should create more enabling environment, business training, and growth of micro and small enterprises should be center-stage in government policy.

Keywords: *Women, Informal sector, Economic growth, Necessity or Opportunity entrepreneurs*

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