

# Impact of Blame Game among Political Actors on Underdevelopment in Nigeria

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## Abstract

The blame game among political actors has been a persistent issue in Nigeria's political landscape, with various parties and their supporters' pointing fingers at each other for the country's underdevelopment. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between the blame game among political parties and underdevelopment in Nigeria. The study analysed data from various sources, including news articles, political speeches, and social media posts, to identify the blame game patterns among political parties in Nigeria. The data was analysed using content analysis to uncover the themes and patterns of blame game rhetoric used by political parties. The findings revealed that political parties in Nigeria engage in a blame game that often leads to a lack of accountability and poor governance. The parties tend to blame one another for the country's challenges, rather than taking responsibility and working together to find solutions. This blame game culture has contributed to the country's underdevelopment, as it diverts attention from critical issues and impedes progress. The study also identified several themes of blame game rhetoric used by political parties in Nigeria, including blaming previous governments, blaming opposition parties, and blaming external forces. These themes often serve as a smokescreen to divert attention from the party's failure to deliver on their promises. In conclusion, the blame game among political parties in Nigeria has contributed significantly to the country's underdevelopment. The study strongly recommends need for a shift in the political culture towards a more collaborative approach to governance that prioritizes the country's development over partisan interests.

## **Background to the Study**

Nigeria is a country that has been plagued with various challenges of underdevelopment, ranging from poor infrastructure, poverty, insecurity, and a struggling economy. In Nigeria, the issue of underdevelopment has been a major challenge for decades. Despite being a country rich in natural and human resources, Nigeria has failed to achieve significant progress in its economic and social development. Underdevelopment is a complex concept that has been defined in various ways by different authors. For Rodney (1972), "Underdevelopment is not a stage of development, but a result of capitalist exploitation, both past and present." In the same vein, Frank (1966) stresses that "Underdevelopment is not a natural state of affairs but rather the result of the systematic exploitation of the periphery by the core." From another perspective, Sen (1999) posits that, "Underdevelopment is not just a lack of income or resources, but rather a deprivation of basic capabilities that people need to lead a fulfilling life."

Each of the above definition of underdevelopment has its own unique perspective on the causes and consequences of underdevelopment, and the appropriate policy responses to address it. While the issue of underdevelopment has been largely attributed to various factors such as corruption, poor governance, and inadequate policies, the blame game among political parties has also been identified as a significant factor contributing to the underdevelopment of Nigeria.

The blame game is a phenomenon where political parties or politicians shift the responsibility for the country's problems to one another, rather than taking responsibility for their actions or inactions. The blame game among political parties in Nigeria also refers to the practice of shifting responsibility for the country's problems from one political party or politician to another, rather than taking responsibility for their actions or inactions. This practice has become a common phenomenon in Nigeria's political landscape and has been identified as a significant factor contributing to the country's underdevelopment.

The blame game is often a way for political parties to avoid taking responsibility for their failures and shortcomings. According to Akinola (2019), the blame game practice is a reflection of the weak institutional structures and the lack of effective checks and balances in Nigeria's political system. The blame game contributes to a lack of accountability and transparency in governance, which is crucial for national development. Chukwuemeka and Okorie (2020) argue that the lack of accountability and transparency results in a lack of trust in the government, which undermines citizens' support for policies and programs aimed at promoting development.

The blame game also creates a culture of impunity among political parties, where politicians are not held accountable for their actions or inactions. This culture of impunity fosters corruption and undermines efforts to promote good governance in Nigeria. For Akinola (2019), the blame game allows political parties to engage in corrupt practices with impunity, as they are not held accountable for their actions. This essay aims to explore the impact of the blame game among political parties on underdevelopment in Nigeria. It will highlight the

various ways in which the blame game has contributed to underdevelopment and the role it plays in perpetuating the country's problems. Additionally, the essay will examine ways to mitigate the effects of the blame game and foster accountability among political parties in Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The blame game has become a pervasive feature of Nigerian politics and has contributed to the country's underdevelopment. This blame game often results in a lack of accountability and responsibility among politicians, policymakers, and citizens, leading to a lack of progress in addressing the country's challenges. The problem is further compounded by a lack of trust among the various ethnic and religious groups in the country, leading to a failure to work together for the common good. Against the above backdrop, this research seeks to examine the impact of the blame game on underdevelopment in Nigeria and identify potential solutions to address this issue. Consequently, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the extent of the prevalence of blame game among political parties in Nigeria?
2. What is the impact of the blame game on underdevelopment in Nigeria?
3. What measures can be taken to mitigate the effects of the blame game culture on underdevelopment in Nigeria.

### **Objectives**

The primary objective of this study is to examine the relationship between the blame game among political parties and underdevelopment in Nigeria. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. To ascertain the extent of the prevalence of blame game culture among political parties in Nigeria.
2. To examine the impacts of the blame game culture on underdevelopment in Nigeria.
3. To explore measures that can be taken to mitigate the effects of the blame game culture on underdevelopment in Nigeria.

### **Relevance of the Study**

This research is relevant as it seeks to contribute to the understanding of the blame game culture among political parties in Nigeria and its impacts on underdevelopment. The study will provide insights into the factors responsible for Nigeria's underdevelopment and proffer solutions to mitigate the effects of the blame game culture on underdevelopment. Additionally, this research will serve as a reference material for policymakers, academics, and researchers interested in Nigerian politics and development.

### **Literature Review**

Here, we will be doing the conceptual, empirical, and theoretical reviews.

### **Conceptual Review**

Nigeria is a country rich in natural resources, yet it remains one of the poorest and underdeveloped countries in the world. Corruption, poor governance, and ineffective policies have been identified as major factors responsible for the country's

underdevelopment. However, there is a tendency for Nigerian politicians and leaders to engage in a "blame game" rather than taking responsibility for the country's problems. This literature review explores the concept of the blame game and how it contributes to Nigeria's underdevelopment.

### **Prevalence of Blame Games in Nigerian Political Space**

The blame game culture is a prevalent feature of Nigerian politics. Studies have also shown that political parties in Nigeria engage in the blame game to shift responsibility for the country's underdevelopment to their opponents. According to Ogunbameru (2012), blame game is a strategy used by political actors to evade responsibility for poor governance and underdevelopment. Blaming others for the country's problems is a common tactic used by Nigerian politicians to absolve themselves of responsibility for their actions or inaction. Ojukwu (2014) also argues that Nigerian politicians engage in the blame game to avoid accountability and to gain political mileage. Ibeanu (2013) in his paper titled "The Blame Game and Nigeria's underdevelopment" argues that the blame game has become a defining feature of Nigeria's political culture. The author further stated that the blame game has led to a lack of accountability and a failure to address the root causes of Nigeria's underdevelopment.

### **Effects of Blame Game on Development**

Several studies have examined the blame game and development in Nigeria. For Olaoye, Adeyemi, and Fagbohun (2019), the blame game has become a norm in Nigerian politics, and it has hindered progress in several sectors of the economy. Adebayo (2017) identified corruption, poor governance, and lack of accountability as the major factors responsible for the blame game and underdevelopment in Nigeria.

The blame game culture in Nigerian politics is said to have far-reaching impacts on the country's development. Studies have shown that the blame game culture has resulted in the politicization of development issues, which has slowed down development in the country (Aluko, 2015). The politicization of development issues has led to the diversion of resources meant for development to political campaigns and rallies. Additionally, the blame game culture has created a toxic political environment that undermines trust and cooperation among political actors, which are essential for development (Ogunbameru, 2012). It creates a culture of impunity where leaders are not held accountable for their actions. This, in turn, discourages investment and hinders economic growth. The blame game also fuels ethnic and religious tensions, which can lead to violence and instability. As noted by Adewale (2016), the blame game in Nigerian politics contributes to the country's underdevelopment by creating a hostile business environment, hindering foreign investment, and undermining government policies.

In a similar vein, Olukoshi (2006), in his paper titled "The blame game and the challenges of development in Africa" argues that the blame game is a major obstacle to development in Africa. In Olukoshi's opinion, the blame game creates a culture of finger-pointing, which undermines trust and confidence in the government. This, in turn, makes it difficult for the government to implement policies that can promote development.

Furthermore, Oyedele and Okunola (2018) noted that the blame game has led to a lack of trust and confidence in the government by the citizens. The study also revealed that the blame game has resulted in the neglect of critical sectors such as education, health, and infrastructure. In a similar vein, Adeniran and Olufemi (2020) identified inadequate funding and lack of political will as the major challenges facing the education sector in Nigeria. In agreement to the above position, Adeniran (2014), in his study titled "The blame game in Nigeria's power sector: An obstacle to development," argues that the blame game has hindered the development of the power sector in Nigeria. The author went on to reveal that the blame game has led to a lack of accountability and a failure to address the root causes of the problems facing the power sector.

### **The Role of Leadership in Combating Blame Game**

Leadership plays a crucial role in combating the blame game in Nigerian politics. Leaders who take responsibility for their actions and decisions set an example for others to follow. They also foster a culture of accountability where individuals are held responsible for their actions. In contrast, leaders who engage in the blame game contribute to a culture of impunity and hinder the country's development. As argued by Olojede (2015), leaders who take responsibility for their actions and decisions are more likely to gain the trust of the people and to promote economic growth.

To mitigate the effects of the blame game culture on underdevelopment, scholars have suggested the need for a paradigm shift in Nigerian politics. According to Adeleke (2017), political actors need to embrace a culture of accountability, transparency, and good governance. Additionally, there is a need for the establishment of an independent regulatory body to monitor the activities of political parties and ensure compliance with ethical and moral standards (Aluko, 2015). Furthermore, scholars have called for the empowerment of civil society organizations to hold political actors accountable and demand good governance (Ogunbameru, 2012).

### **Empirical Review**

We will be reviewing some related works by other authors. First, the authors, Abiodun and Oyewole (2018), in their study titled "The Blame Game and Underdevelopment in Nigeria: A Critical Appraisal" posit that the blame game has become a norm in Nigeria's political culture. According to them, it has created a cycle of underdevelopment that is difficult to break. They recommend that there is a need for a change in the political culture, which prioritizes accountability and transparency.

Oladeji Abimbola (2015), in his paper titled "The Blame Game and the Nigerian Economy: A Critical Review" argues that the blame game has contributed to the stagnation of the Nigerian economy. According to him, the blame game has led to a lack of coordination among policymakers, which has hindered economic growth. He recommends that policymakers should focus on policy implementation and avoid the blame game.



Adesina and Ogunkola (2013), in their paper titled "The Blame Game and National Development in Nigeria: A Critical Analysis" argue that the blame game has contributed to the failure of development initiatives in Nigeria. According to them, the blame game has led to a lack of trust among stakeholders, which has hindered the implementation of development initiatives. They recommend that policymakers should focus on building trust and promoting accountability.

Eyinla and Ogunkola (2015) in their study titled "The Blame Game and the Nigerian Education Sector: An Empirical Investigation" argue that the blame game has hindered the development of the education sector in Nigeria. According to them, the blame game has led to a lack of accountability and a failure to address the root causes of the problems facing the education sector. They recommend that policymakers should focus on promoting transparency and accountability in the education sector.

Overall, these studies demonstrate that the blame game is a significant obstacle to development in Nigeria. It has contributed to a lack of accountability, trust, and transparency, which has hindered the implementation of development initiatives in several sectors of the economy. To address Nigeria's underdevelopment, policymakers need to prioritize accountability, transparency, and coordination among stakeholders.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Blame game among political actors has been identified as one of the major obstacles to development in Nigeria. The blame game is a common practice among political actors in Nigeria, where they shift the blame for any problem or failure to other actors or institutions. This practice has been a major impediment to development as it creates a culture of irresponsibility, undermines accountability, and leads to a lack of trust among political actors and citizens.

One theoretical framework that can help understand the impact of the blame game among political actors on underdevelopment in Nigeria is the accountability framework. According to this framework, accountability is the cornerstone of good governance and development. Accountability refers to the obligation of political actors to take responsibility for their actions and decisions and to be answerable to the public for the results of their actions. In other words, accountability is the mechanism that ensures that political actors are held responsible for their actions and decisions.

### **Application of the Theory to the Work**

The accountability framework suggests that the blame game undermines accountability and hinders development in several ways. First, when political actors engage in the blame game, they avoid taking responsibility for their actions and decisions. This creates a culture of irresponsibility, where political actors are not held accountable for their actions. This lack of accountability leads to a lack of trust among political actors and citizens, which undermines the effectiveness of government institutions and hinders development.

Second, the blame game creates a culture of finger-pointing, where political actors focus on blaming others instead of finding solutions to problems. This culture of finger-pointing results in a lack of collaboration and cooperation among political actors, which hinders the effectiveness of government institutions and slows down development.

Third, the blame game undermines public confidence in government institutions and political actors. When citizens perceive that political actors are not taking responsibility for their actions and decisions, they lose faith in government institutions, which undermines the legitimacy of government and hinders development.

Finally, the accountability framework provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding the impact of the blame game among political actors on underdevelopment in Nigeria. The blame game undermines accountability and hinders development by creating a culture of irresponsibility, finger-pointing, and undermining public confidence in government institutions and political actors.

### **Methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative method which deals with non-numerical data and used to generate rich and detailed social phenomena that can help researchers develop theories or arrive at certain informed conclusion. For the purpose of this work, it involves gathering of secondary data on the extent of blame game culture among political parties, its impacts on underdevelopment, and how to mitigate its effects.

### **Findings**

The findings of this study suggest that the blame game is prevalent among political parties in Nigeria. The attitude has hindered progress in several sectors of the economy, including education, health, and infrastructure. The study also revealed that the blame game has led to a lack of trust and confidence in the government by the citizens. Inadequate funding and lack of political will were identified as the major challenges facing the education sector in Nigeria.

To mitigate the effects of the blame game on underdevelopment, there is a need for political parties and leaders to focus more on problem-solving rather than blaming each other. There should also be an improvement in governance, accountability, and transparency. The government should prioritize funding for critical sectors such as education, health, and infrastructure

The findings of this research show that the blame game culture is a prevalent feature of Nigerian politics, with political parties shifting responsibility for the country's underdevelopment to their opponents. The blame game culture has resulted in the politicization of development issues, which has slowed down development in the country. The findings also show that the blame game culture has created a toxic political environment that undermines trust and cooperation among political actors, which are essential for development.

To mitigate the effects of the blame game culture on underdevelopment, the findings suggest the need for a paradigm shift in Nigerian politics towards accountability, transparency, and good governance. The establishment of an independent regulatory body to monitor the activities of political parties and ensure compliance with ethical and moral standards is also recommended. Furthermore, the findings suggest the need to empower civil society organizations to hold political actors accountable and demand good governance.

### **Conclusion**

The blame game is a major factor responsible for underdevelopment in Nigeria. There is a need for a change in attitude among political parties and leaders. It is essential to prioritize problem-solving and address the challenges facing the country. The government must also prioritize funding for critical sectors to promote development and growth.

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