

Leadership, Quest to Restructure and Development of Nigeria: An Appraisal.

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria as a lucky nation with richly endowed human and natural resources, which should be critically processed for socio-economic development, is yet to find itself in rightful position among the comity of nations. The major reasons for the low socio-economic status snail-speed development have been attributed to leadership challenges like its methods of selection processes into political positions and corruption. These issues lead to leadership failure especially at the federal levels. The author utilized both primary and secondary sources of data in execution of this work. The paper recommends that selfless, credible, responsible and conscientious leaders must be prepared to face the burden of leadership in developing nations in order to galvanise the huge human and natural endowments to catapult the country into sustainable socio-economic development. Under this guise, history will not forget to remember them for transforming the biggest black race in Africa into developed, favourable competitive comity of nations.

Keywords: Leadership, quest, restructure, development.

INTRODUCTION

The key words - Leadership, Restructuring and Development are multi-faceted concepts that can hardly be defined in few words or sentences. It therefore means that those terms are usually discussed from various views of different scholars in order to establish various aspects of those words/terms.

Concept of Leadership

[1] stated that leadership is the ability to influence persons or group(s) towards the achievement of a vision or set objective. Leadership is not rank, privileges, or money. A leader is highly visionary. He conceives a vision and outlines the strategies to achieve it. Therefore, a leader should possess most of the following qualities:

- Intelligence/skillful
- Innovation/initiation/creativity
- Honesty/integrity
- Futuristic planning
- Commitment/passion
- Confidence in himself
- Resilience
- Decision making capabilities
- Dedication to his commitments

[2] stated:

Leadership implies a purposeful direction of the affairs of those being

led. It implies movement towards a definite and defined goal which will be for the benefit of the society.

Following the above definition, the greatest preoccupation of a leader should ultimately be concerned with the happiness of the greatest numbers of the people. The leader needs to accommodate various interests and shades of opinion from varied groups and in some cases, from the dissidents.

Many Nigerians have commented on the leadership deficit in the country. Many believe that poor leadership is the main challenge that retards the proper translation of Nigeria's huge potentials, human and materials, into the needed prosperity, growth and development.

Late Professor Chima Achebe and former Head of State Chief Olusegun Obasanjo stated at different fora and at different times that leadership deficit in Nigeria is among the cog on the wheel of the nation's growth and development.

The distinguishing factors between the developed or industrialized countries and the underdeveloped or developing nations is the kind of leadership they had, and still having. The leaders that made

developed/industrialized countries what they become were that such leaders were decisive, courageous, visionary, inspiring and resilient. Those leaders understood the local and international challenges during their times and had the determination, dedication and conscientiousness to face them squarely. It should be noted that some nations developed under dictatorships like the China and Asian Tigers (Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong). Therefore, military intervention in Nigerian politics is not an excuse because even long years of democracy in Nigeria did not significantly improve the situation.

That is because development is not a miracle or accident but a conscientious product of decision by strong and diligent leaders who inspire their people towards achieving a difficult but much needed status.

To re-emphasize the roles of good leader in the process of leadership, so as to obtain a good result the following issues should be noted:

- Leadership prioritizes the agenda, compensates those that comply and admonishes or punishes offenders or opposition.
- Leadership creates the environment that either makes or mars the development pattern.
- Leadership makes the difference in the process and rates of development.
- Leadership determines the degree of equity exhibited.
- Leadership also dictates the difference in the level and magnitude of development, between two nations with similar natural endowments.
- The character and conduct of leadership would determine the level and degree of sacrifices made, as well as the level of honesty exhibited by the citizens.

Followership

Another fact regarding leadership in Nigeria is that the led (followers) have their own shortcomings in the quest for the country's development. The implementation of decisions made by the

political actors are carried out by members of the masses (the led). If the led can minimize corruption, be less self-centred and discharge their functions conscientiously, Nigeria would be better than what is currently the situation.

Restructuring

The word restructuring in social sciences is defined differently by different scholars as it occurs in many other social science concepts. Furthermore, the definition of restructuring in Nigeria political context is influenced by many variables like:

- If the person holds a political office
- If he is outside corridors of political power
- The person's ethnic group
- The candidate's political party and whether the party is controlling the federal government or not.

Nevertheless, restructuring has to do with legal rearrangement of management of corporate entity like a nation. It also calls for legal organization of the operation of the structure of a nature or an organization.

Restructuring or the legal reorganization could include social, administrative, economic, security, political, educational, geography among others. Therefore, restructuring especially in a heterogenous and multifaceted nation like Nigeria would be explained differently by individuals or groups depending on their goals and interests.

The quest for restructuring in a general term started during the colonial administration [3]. It commenced with the splitting of the country in three regions (Northern, Western and Eastern) by Sir Arthur Richard's constitution, and it remained so till independence in 1960. The fourth region was added in 1963. The military administration in the country continued the splitting of Nigeria into geo-political constituents called states, until the present 36 states, 774 Local Government Areas and a Federal Capital Territory at Abuja. There are still more request for creation of more states in Nigeria. Some of the states are not economically viable on their own as they rely mainly on the Federal Government for funds, to function.

Nevertheless, as Nigeria has gravitated from oil boom period to this heavy foreign debt, we need to re-think, on how to pilot the affairs of the nation, without

tampering with the unity of the country. So, many people have been discussing about diversification of the economy. Diversification is a very good point in

trying to improve the economy of the country [4]. In addition, what brings about growth and development is a progressive competition.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed both primary (use of questionnaire, group interview and observations) and secondary (textbooks,

journals, magazines, newspapers, private and public libraries as well as on-line materials) as sources of data collection.

FINDINGS

A survey of information from seventy percent (70%) of respondents in this study agrees that Nigeria could perform better (develop more) if the federal government can:

- (a) use executive bill
- (b) or permit bill initiated by any member or group of the National Assembly to :
 “allow the National Assembly to make a law that would allow each geo-political zone

to process their natural resources except petroleum (mainly solid minerals) and pay forty percent (40%) of the yield or proceed to the federal government.

Those respondents added that each geo-political zone has many solid minerals which they can process as they have comparative advantage in that area.

Table 1: Mineral Resources in different geo-political zones of Nigeria & the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

S/N	Geo-Political Zones	Component States	Mineral Resources
1	North-East	Adamawa Bauchi Borno Gombe Taraba Yobe	Kaolin, Bentonites, Gypsum, Magnetite, Bauxite, Barites Gypsum Lead/Zinc, Uranium, Amethysts Diatomite, Feldspar, Tatuim, Granite, Syenites Gemstone, Gypsum Kaolin, Lead/Zinc Diatomite, Soda
2	North-West	Jigawa Kaduna Kano Kebbi Sokoto Zamfara	Barites Kaolin, Gold, Clay, Asbestos, Amethyst, Kyanite, Aquamarine, Ruby, Rock Crystal, Tapoz, Graphite, Sillimanite, Gemstone, Tantalite, Fluorspar. Copper, Glass-Sand, Gemstone, Lead/Zinc, Tantalite, Cassiterite, Tyrochlore Gold, Mica Kaolin, Gold, Limestone, Gypsum, Phosphate, Clay, Laterite, Granite, Potash, Silica-sand, Salt, Flakes Gold
3	North-Central	Benue Niger	Zinc/Lead, Limestone, Iron ore, Clay, Coal, Marble bauxite, Gypsum, Gemstone Gold, Talc, Lead/Zinc, Baxites, Iron ore, Kaolin, Dolomite, Bentonite, Clay, Coal, Salt, Bismutch, Gemstone, Bauxite, Fluoroide,

		Katsina Kogi	Wolfram Kaolin, Marble, Salt Iron ore, Kaolin, Gypsum, Coal, Marble, Dolomite, Talc, Tantalite, Limestone, Gemstone
		Kwara	Gold, Marble, Iron ore, cassiterite, Columbite, Tantalite, Feldspar
		Nasarawa	Dolomite, Marble, Tourmaline, Quartz, Tantalite, Columbite, Iron ore, Limestone, Mica, Talc, Clay, Salt, Barites, Galcena, Cassiterite.
		Plateau	Tim, Emerald, Marble, Granite, Tantalite, Lead/Zinc, Iron ore, Kaolin, Cassiterite, Dolomite, Clay, Coal, Wolfram, Salt, Bismutch, Fluoride, Gemstone, Bauxite.
4	South-East	Abia Anambra	Gold, Salt, Limestone Lead/Zinc, Clay, Limestone, Iron ore, Salt
		Ebonyi Enugu Imo	Limestone, Lead/Zinc, Gold, Salt Coal, Limestone, Lead/Zinc Lead/Zinc, Limestone, Lignite, Phosphate, Gypsum, Salt, Marcasite
5	South-West	Ekiti	Kaolin, Granite, Tatum, Feldspar, Syenites
		Lagos Ogun Ondo	Glass-Sand, Clay, Sand-Tar Phosphate, Clay, Feldspar Kaolin, Gemstone, Gypsum, Feldspar
		Osun	Gold, Talc, Columbite, Tourmaline, Granite, Tantalite
		Oyo	Kaolin, Marble, Clay, Sillimanite
6	South-South	Akwa-Ibom	Clay, Limestone, Lead/Zinc, Salt, Lignite, Uranium
		Bayelsa	Clay, Limestone, Lead/Zinc, Uranium, Gypsum
		Cross-River	Limestone, Uranium, Manganese, Lignite
		Delta	Marble, Glass-Sand, Clay, Gypsum, Kaolin, Iron-ore, Lignite
		Edo	Marble, Clay, Limestone, Iron ore, Glass-Sand, Gold, Dolomite, Phosphate, Gypsum
		Rivers Federal Territory (FCT)	Glass-Sand, Clay, Marble, Lignite Marble, Tantalite

Source: Compiled from Federal Ministry of Solid Minerals, Abuja.

These would enable each zone to have another dependable source of revenue especially now that the revenue from oil is dwindling. If each geo-political zone that is made up of five to seven states would pull their resources together, they will certainly evolve how to generate substantial revenue from their solid minerals.

If this is done, it will create jobs and reduce restiveness that is hampering good activities in different areas of the country.

Table 2: Some Ethnic Militia/Violent Groups in Nigeria

S/N	Name of Militia Group	Affiliated Group	Ethnic	Geo-Political Zone
1	O'dua People's Congress (OPC)	Yourba		Sout-West
2	Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), IPOB	Igbo		South-East
3	Bakassi Boys	Igbo		South-East
4	Arewa Peoples Congress (APC)	Hausa-Fulani		North-West and North-East
5	Book Haram	Hausa-Fulani		North-East and North-West
6	Hisbah (Vigilante) Groups	Hausa-Fulani		North-West and North-East
7	Egbesu Boys of Africa	Ijaw		South-South
8	Movement for Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND)	Spread		South-South
9	Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MOSOP)	Ogoni		South-South
10	Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF)	Spread		South-South
11	National Youth Council of Ogoni People (NYCOP)	Ogoni		South-South
12	Chikoko Movement	Ijaw		South-South
13	Urhobo Youth Movement	Urhobo		South-South
14	Federated Niger Delta Izon Federated Communities (FNDIC)	Izon		South-South
15	Martyrs Brigade	Spread		South-South
16	Miyeti Allah	Fulani		North Central
17	Tiv Militia	Tiv		North Central
18	Jukun Militia	Jukun		North Central
19	Berom Militia	Berom		North Central
20	Ngwangishi Otarok	Taroks		North Central
21	Ombatse Cult	Nasarawa Eggon		North Central
22	Eggon Militia	Nasarawa Eggon		North Central

Source: Compiled by the Vanda P. T. (2019).

The emergence of these and the other ethnic militias can generally be traced to the mass misgivings over perceived political marginalization, poverty,

unemployment, collapse of social infrastructure and state welfare programmes, as well as the perceived inefficient and corrupt state system.

FINDINGS

Consider this fact:

A man started work in Nigeria civil service in 1983 with a salary of N500 (\$700). He retired in 2018 with a salary of N250,000 (\$532) after 35 years in service. That implies the rate at which Nigeria is progressing or otherwise.

[4] quoted in Tell Magazine December edition thus:

What is missing in Nigeria's development calculus is the existence of that core of committed elites

(leadership) ready to develop the country even if they have to sacrifice most of what they have in the process.

The assertion above is very correct because it always seems impossible until it is done. Further, a good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination. It appears that many Nigeria's leaders walk up to the citadel of leadership without a programme that will bring happiness to the masses (real development).

Table C: Perception of Realities from Respondents

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	Many Nigerians alledge that Nigerian leaders preferentially develop their areas of origin	320 (80%)	60 (15%)	15 (3.75%)	5 (1.25%)
2	The effects of money on the practice of our democracy and leadership adversely affect the development of Nigeria	300 (75%)	70 (17.5%)	20 (5%)	10 (2.5%)
3	Religion and Ethnicity adversely affect the smooth and effective governance of Nigeria that should bring development	200 (50%)	100 (25%)	60 (15%)	40 (10%)
4	The adverse effects to the above issues could be reduced by rotational presidency	320 (80%)	60 (15%)	10 (2.5%)	10 (2.5%)
	SA = Strongly Agree	A = Agree			
	SD = Strongly Disagree	D = Disagree			

CONCLUSION

The respondents responses from the above table (table) show that

Three hundred and twenty (320) respondents representing eighty percent (80%) of them strongly agreed that many Nigerian leaders preferentially develop their areas of origin. Fifteen percent (15%) of those respondents (60 of them) agreed that Nigerian leaders preferentially develop their areas of origin. The sum of the respondents that strongly agreed and those that agreed that Nigerian leaders preferentially develop their areas of origin constitute ninety five percent (95%) of those respondents.

Those who either disagreed or strongly disagreed form five percent (5%) of the total respondents.

Regarding adverse effects of money on the practice of our democracy and leadership, the total respondents that strongly agreed and those that agreed were 92.5% of the respondents. That implies that only 7.5% of all the respondents disagreed that money has no adverse effects on the practice of our democracy and leadership. Two hundred respondents representing fifty percent (50%) of them strongly agreed that religion and ethnicity adversely affect smooth and effective

governance that could bring development. A second group that added their voice on how religion and ethnicity adversely affect effective governance that can bring development constitute twenty five percent (25%) or one hundred respondents.

Nevertheless, twenty five percent (25%) of the respondents disagreed that religion and ethnicity do not have significant effect on governance and development of Nigeria.

A total of ninety five percent (95%) of the respondents stated that those adverse effects on the issues like preferential treatment based on areas of origin, money politics, religion and ethnicity could be drastically reduced if the position of Presidency of Nigeria is constitutionally made to be rotating from one geo-political zone to the other. Those with such views/conviction added that there is no geo-political zone in Nigeria that cannot produce more than ten (10) candidates that are qualified to function as president of this country.

Those that did not agree that rotational presidency would resolve the challenges constituted five percent of the total respondents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made in this work.

- (a) Nigeria should maintain a united indivisible nation and use its high human population and natural resources to galvanise

itself into one of the developed nations of the world.

- (b) Restructuring would expose and improve the federating units abilities, capabilities and propel them to generate socio-economic competitions among

the federating components which would improve development of the zones and the nation at large.

- (c) Leaders should invest more in mechanized agriculture, critical infrastructure, and education, because educated elites would be in a better position to elect people with good track records into leadership positions that can develop the country. This is because democracy that does not develop its people is not

better than a dictatorship that works.

- (d) The position of presidency of the Federal Republic of Nigeria should be made rotational within the geo-political zones as part of its constitutional framework.
- (e) There is need to change our value system and base it on hard work merit and excellence; and eschew mediocrity, nepotism and corrupt practices.

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