

LEADERSHIP & THE DEVELOPMENT PARADOX IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Over the years, Nigeria, as a nation state has been faced with development challenges arising from the various leadership styles. As a country, she is bedecked with a number of socio-economic and political problems whose solutions are not only paradoxical but intractable. These development challenges anchor on leadership which has always been of interest since the Classical era to the era of Romanticism. Leadership has become especially topical in recent years, globally. Need we talk about the 'Arab spring' or the 'Mahgreb fiscal crunch?' Are the Asian Tigers or the Indo-Chinese meteoric rise not of interest? What about the universally acknowledged leadership of the United States of America in world affairs? The burden of this paper has been that of surveying the various leadership styles in Nigeria since 1960 and the impact(s) these leadership styles have had on Nigeria's march towards development as conceived by liberal and Neo Marxist scholarship. In the process, the paper identifies that leadership in Nigeria has brought about development paradox based on our frame of analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, for quite a time has been encountering development challenges occasioned by leadership styles. The country is bedecked with a myriad of problems and challenges that are seemingly defying solutions. Indeed the Nigerian situation is a paradox. Nigeria is a nation blessed with abundant human and natural resources. According to figures and information from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Nigeria's population is currently projected at over 163 million people based on the 2006 census of 140.3 million. It is currently the tenth largest producer of crude oil in the world based on 2011 estimates. Yet, 69 per cent or 112.5 million of her citizens live in relative poverty, while 60.9 per cent or 99.3 million live in absolute poverty, and 61.2 per cent live on less than a dollar a day (National Bureau of Statistics, 2012). Furthermore, social scientists and opinion holders conceive of democracy as the platform for development of nations, Nigeria has had 13 years of democracy from 1999 to date yet development within the frame of analysis of social sciences, has continued to elude her. What could be responsible? What have been the roles of successive governments or leadership in the development of the country? Is Nigeria a case of leadership failure or is it the citizens that have failed themselves? This article attempts to seek answers to these questions, and would ostensibly be considering the concept of leadership and its appraisal within the context of development issues in Nigeria from 1960 to date.

2. WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

The concept of leadership has been of interest since the Greco-Roman era where erudite ones like Plato in his popular work "The Republic" specified the qualities of the leadership via education. And Aristotle and Nicolo Machiavelli in their respective works "Politics" and "The Prince" outlined the essence which the leader requires to qualify to lead. (Bolden, 2004). Leadership has become especially topical in recent years as our country and indeed the world cries out for better and more purposeful and effective leadership, in business, in government and in public life. (Ajumogobia, 2011) Social scientists are not exactly agreed on the definition of leadership, though there is a heightened interest in the concept of leadership. Leadership, it seems, is increasingly becoming the panacea of the 21st Century. It is argued that in this changing, global environment, leadership holds the key not only to the success of individuals and organizations, but also to sectors, regions and nations. Yet, there is no widely accepted definition of leadership (Bolden, 2004). One of the most popular attempts at defining leadership is by one time American President Dwight Eisenhower, who defined leadership as the act of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it (Dickson, 2008). But Weinberg defines leadership as the ability to adapt the setting so everyone feels empowered to contribute creatively to solving the problems. (Weinberg, 1986)

According to Weinberg, leadership is ability. This implies that a leader has a capacity to do something through talent and skill. He says further that leadership is adaptive, meaning that the leader makes adjustments. According to him, a leader who fails to adjust to the territory will lose their way. And then, leadership acts on a setting, meaning a leader adjusts the state of the surroundings and people. A leader carefully observes those states and discerns significance looking for how to adapt the setting most effectively. Also, leadership empowers, meaning a leader inspires confidence and self-esteem. And that inspiration comes in many flavors. Some leaders inspire by bold talk; others by soft talk; and still others by their examples. Leadership acts on people's feelings, meaning a leader finds ways to link to people's instinct or intuition. Leaders help everyone feel empowered. Leadership creates contribution, which means every member is motivated to give something. And finally, Leadership is about solving the problems, which means closing the gap between things as desired and things as perceived. Closely on the heels of the above, we add that leadership is the ability to influence people to willingly and enthusiastically make their contributions to the achievement cum attainment of group or national objectives. To us, leadership is not only ability, art, affluence or influence, it is a process where ardent methodology is involved, which of course differs from one leader to the other. This, to us, is due to individual idiosyncrasy since no two individuals are alike. In line with our musings above, Ekong (2010) notes that leadership is a process whereby an individual directs, guides, influences or controls the thoughts, feelings or behaviors of other human beings.

All the above considered, it can be discerned that leadership is a phenomenon and occurs in a situation calling for interaction between a group of people, the problem or task and its possible solution. Following from this, a leader refers to a person or an actor in any social situation in which his ideas and actions influence the thoughts and behaviors of others (Offong 2012:5) Going by Weinberg's (1986), our postulate (2013) and Ekong's (2010) depositions, fitting leadership in Nigeria into this frame would tantamount to a leap of faith. Leadership in Nigeria warrants the Sociologist in the mould of Development Studies, Political Economy and Development Economics to conduct empirical surveys.

2.1. Ruler-ship vs Leadership

A comparative study of the development of Nigeria in consonance with other countries once within its development bracket points to the exacerbation of the concepts of ruler-ship and leadership. From the

appraisal of the concept of leadership above, it becomes apparent that leadership is *sine qua non* in the development of an organization, region or country. Nigeria's contemporaries that have left her behind on the rung of development are those that with visionary leadership/leaders and not rulers. Ruler-ship refers to the situation where a powerful individual issues orders which are obeyed, whereas leadership involves setting example to be followed. Where a ruler commands, a leader shows. (Scorpio, 2010) By custom and history, most African countries have been ruled and not led for generations past, and this has deprived the continent of progress comparable to what other continents have enjoyed unhindered over the same period. (Alalade, 2011) Unlike the prerequisite special qualities and abilities that must be present and demonstrated in a way that makes the bearer stand out in a crowd before one can attain a leadership status, a ruler-ship status, on the other hand, is often attained in one of two ways; either by force (as in military takeover of government) or through hereditary means. So, while the attainment of a leadership status is akin to being rewarded by others as a sign of their unambiguous recognition of specific unique and uncommon qualities and abilities in the one who desires to lead, a ruler-ship status is handed down to the bearer not by the people's freewill or because the ruler possesses any special and uncommon qualities other than their heredity.

We associate ourselves with Dr. Alalade's (2011) assertion that the bane of development in Nigeria, nay, Africa has been the preponderance of rulers instead of leaders. African leaders have collaborated to constitute the worst enemies of their countries and region. Rulers in leadership positions have woefully failed miserably to lead, but have effectively ruled instead for their self enlightened interests. African leaders have not led their peoples to greatness. As late as the 1980s when African countries along with other developing Asian countries were classified as third-world countries, a country like Nigeria, other African countries as well as such Asian countries like Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, etc. were grouped alike. In fact, with enormous human and natural resources, Nigeria was particularly considered as having an edge over the other countries. But today, Southern and Eastern Asian countries like Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, and Taiwan have not only flourished technologically and politically, they have managed to surpass most African countries that once ranked with them as third-world nations. It is quite perplexing to see that while these emerging economies and the developed ones have steadily evolved into lender nations over the past decades, African countries on the other hand, have increasingly turned to the west for help. Piling on loans from the World Bank, IMF, EU, and G-8. Loans they neither can, nor intend to pay back, thereby effectively ensuring the continued enslavement and indebtedness of generations yet unborn to future descendants of the same Europeans that colonized, cheated and enslaved their forefathers for centuries past. Our take is that leadership, good leadership is germane to the development of a nation.

2.2. Characteristics of Good Leadership

As leadership has become imperative in the development of organizations and nations, so has the desire to be able to identify good leadership grown. According to Tool Box, an Internet based resource for leadership, the characteristics of leadership include:

1. Empathy – this involves creating a legitimate rapport with followers.
2. Consistency – by setting an example of fairness and credibility, the followers would want to act the same way.
3. Honesty - this characteristic ensures that identified obstacles are addressed rather than avoided. Honesty allows for better assessment and growth.
4. Direction – this implies having the vision to break out of the norm and aim for great things. Direction is an essential characteristic of good leadership

5. **Communication** – When leadership communicates effectively about expectations, issues and advice followers are more able to meet leadership's goals.
6. **Flexibility** – This implies that not all problems demand the same solution. By being flexible, leadership opens its mind to new ideas and sets a good example for the followership, thereby.
7. **Conviction** – a strong vision and the willingness to see it through is one of the most important characteristics of leadership. The Leader with conviction is always an inspiration and a resource to their followers.

2.3. Leadership and Development

It is believed that the quality of leadership and the socio-political environment often determine the nature of national development. The value of leadership in Nation building cannot be understated. Leadership is the prime cause of development because of its indispensable role in a national context, which no other agency can replace. Leadership provides direction, national mission, vision and goals. For instance, the contribution of leadership to the emergence of the South East Asian nations of Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea and Taiwan, referred to as the Asian Tigers cannot be over-emphasised. It was leadership that moved these countries from where they were once grouped with Nigeria as third world countries to nestle for a place amongst the developed nations of the world. It took clear headed and focussed leadership. These leaders provided direction, set the necessary agenda and executed needed and necessary change. To seemingly drive this point home, the Singaporean President, Lee Kuan Yew asserted, we learned from the failed policies of countries such as India, Pakistan, Ghana and Nigeria. Many new nations believed that the way to prosperity was state planning of the economy with socialist states being seen as models, So my strategy was to turn Singapore, a third world island, into a first-world oasis, by entrenching the concept of the rule of law and establishing up-to-date facilities in communications and transportation as the necessary artery for connecting people and property to the economy". (Fornauf, 2005)

President Lee placed premium on economic viability and pursued it with a clear, simple and pragmatic vision. As a leader, Lee said he learned to ignore political correctness when it did not accord with his own experience – a singleness of purpose and commitment, which he consistently applied. He achieved self liberation and carried on with a bold new vision of Singapore. (Fornauf & Henrizi, 2005) Comparatively, the Nigerian socio-political environment, not only makes the emergence of national leadership difficult, but also complicates the process of national development.

3. THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

As stated in the introductory part of this article, the decadent state of the economy and the mass poverty in the face of abundant human and natural resources is at once a comic and sad irony. The fact that Nigeria earns a whopping 120 million dollars a day from crude oil sales alone makes the situation even worse. How did Nigeria arrive here? A collection of factors have combined to impoverish Nigeria despite her enormous wealth. But none is as powerful as the failure of leadership in the country. Indeed, the story of Nigeria's development, or underdevelopment, is the story of failed leadership.

3.1. Nigeria's Under-Development as Failure of Leadership

Many national and international experts are of the opinion that the real impediment to sustained economic growth and development in the country has more to do with her leadership and the absence of good governance than with economic plans or reforms. To a section of economists, Sociologists, Political Scientists and students of Development Studies assessing Nigeria's development efforts has shown that the situation on ground is, however, anything but cheering. To them, successive leaders have propounded

several economic policies, some ambitious, others out of tune with reality, yet none has been able to get the country out of the woods. Visionless leadership have been the bane of our economic development, they noted.

Research has established a relationship between leadership and governance and economic growth. For instance, the World Bank has made it clear in its studies that good governance is a significant determinant of economic progress. According to Richardson (2008) two economists, Prof. Benno Ndulu and Prof. Stephen O'Connell, in a study on governance and growth in sub-Saharan Africa, noted that Africa's underdevelopment could be linked primarily to the governance models practiced in most parts of the continent.

In the same vein, the former Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Prof. Charles Chukwuma Soludo, quoting from a study conducted by two researchers, Daniel Kaufmann and Aart Kraa, in a paper titled, "Creating effective governance and leadership for sustained national prosperity," said that per capita income and the quality of governance were strongly positively correlated across countries. Two other scholars, Benjamin F. Jones and Benjamin A. Olken, (cited in Richardson, 2008) writing on growth, leadership and political institutions, also revealed that countries experienced persistent changes in growth rates across leadership transitions. They noted that leaders had a large causative influence on the economic outcomes of their nations. A clear case in point again is Singapore and the other Asian Tiger nations of South East Asia that have become part of the world's strongest economies today purely as a result of focused, committed and self-less leadership.

Nigeria's failure to achieve sustained growth can be linked to the lapses on the part of past and present leaders as well as the political institutions. Keen observers of the Nigerian nation agree that the problem with Nigeria has not been the lack of plans or reform agenda. On the contrary there has been a plethora of strategies and development plans devised by successive governments in Nigeria. These plans have had their good and bad sides. But on the whole, none of these plans were capable of moving the country forward considerably. Rather, there have been the evils of poor implementation, selfishness, gross indiscipline and greed on the part of those entrusted with the powers of state, our leaders, who have always ruined the chances of such plans to make any considerable difference. Perhaps a brief appraisal of the nation's governance from 1960 when Nigeria gained independence to date might give a better perspective to the challenges bedeviling the country. This thus bespeaks our own version of leadership and the paradox of development.

3.2. Governance and Leadership in Nigeria 1960-2013

Nigeria gained what Bade Onimode (1985) and Claude Ake (1981) called flag independence from the United Kingdom in 1960 after 99 years of formal colonial rule. (James Coleman, 1958) Nigeria's government at the time was made up of a coalition of conservative parties, (Sklar, 1963) which included the Northern People's Congress (NPC), a party dominated by Northerners and those of the Islamic faith; and the Igbo and Christian-dominated National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) led by Nnamdi Azikiwe, which itself metamorphosed from the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons. The comparatively liberal but radical Action Group (AG), which was largely dominated by the Yoruba and led by Obafemi Awolowo, made up the opposition party. (Udofia, 1981). The cultural and political differences among Nigeria's dominant ethnic groups - the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba were sharp. And the political parties obviously aligned themselves along tribal and ethnic lines. (Nnoli, 1980) and (Dudley, 1975)

3.2.1 Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe – October 1, 1960- January 16, 1966

At independence, Dr. Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe became the maiden Governor-General of Nigeria. He held this position until 1963, when Nigeria became a full republic. At this point, Dr. Azikiwe translated from the

Governor-General to the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. His tenure was inundated with ethnic bickering and conflict with his Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. These new and fledgling leaders, who fought so hard for the emancipation of the country from colonial powers, suddenly saw themselves as tribal lords after achieving independence for the country. It is our view that this prevailing tribal sentiments coupled with the willful and deliberate manipulation of election results during the 1964 Federal elections, and in particular, the Western Nigeria elections in 1965 led to the first military coup in 1966 that ousted the Azikiwe-Balewa government, and eventually culminated in the outbreak of the civil war from 1967-1970.

3.2.2 Major General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi 16 January - 29 July, 1966

Aguiyi-Ironsi came to power via the first military coup in Nigeria led by Majors Emmanuel Ifeajuna and Chukwuemeka Kaduna Nzeogwu in January 1966. The coup came about as a direct result of perceived corruption of the electoral and political processes and institutions. According to the Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia, the coup which was partially successful, led to the killing of Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Sir Ahmadu Bello, Premier of the Northern Region and Chief Ladoke Akintola, Premier of the Western Region. Gen. Aguiyi-Ironsi went on to surround himself with advisers who were all of Igbo extraction. This act further deepened the ethnic divide and precipitated riots that led to the slaughtering of thousands of Ibos in the north. With events spiraling out of control, a group of Northern military officers staged a counter coup, which proved successful. The Head of State, General Johnson Aguiyi Ironsi was killed during this coup while in Mapo Hall, Ibadan, along with his host Lt. Col. Francis Adekunle Fajuyi, the Governor of Western Nigeria. Gen. Aguiyi-Ironsi had power thrust on him but rather than see the whole country as his domain, he opted for parochial ethnic posturing under the guise of Unitarism. To this end, not much advance was made towards growth and development in the country, rather frayed nerves needed to be soothed.

3.2.3 General Yakubu Gowon – August 1, 1966 to July 29, 1975

The second coup by northern elements in the military threw up General Yakubu Gowon, who was the Chief of Army Staff under Gen. Aguiyi-Ironsi and also a Northerner of the middle belt extraction as the new head of state. The sequence of events that produced Gowon as Head of State led to an increase in ethnic tension and violence. The Northern coup, motivated by ethnic and religious reasons, resulted in the deaths of many military officers and civilians, especially those of Igbo descent. The violence against the Igbos increased their desire for autonomy. By May 1967, the Eastern Region opted to declare independence as a sovereign state called the Republic of Biafra, under the leadership of Lt Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, himself the Military Governor of the Eastern Region. (Murray, 2007) The Nigerian Civil War began as the Nigerian (Western and Northern) side attacked Biafra (South-eastern) on 6 July 1967 at Garkem. The 30 month war, with a long siege on Biafra and its isolation from trade and supplies, ended in January 1970. Estimates of the number of the dead in the former Eastern Region are between 1 and 3 million people, from warfare, disease and starvation, during the 30-month civil war. (Metz, 1991)

General Gowon continued to rule the unified Nigeria after the war. During his tenure Nigeria discovered oil in greater commercial quantity than the Oloibiri found of 1956. This singular factor seems to have changed Nigeria to this date. The Oil boom rather than be a blessing had negative consequences for the country as it gave rise to profligacy and corruption. Furthermore, it bred indolence. All concentrations moved from the Agrarian sector to the oil economy. General Gowon could not manage the huge wealth the country suddenly found itself. He was reported to have declared that he didn't know what to do with the volume of money at his disposal. And so rather than develop more infrastructural facilities as he did on road, industrialization and

provide a solid base for education and the economy, he proceeded to increase the salary of civil servants with the Chief Jerome Udoji Salary Increase Commission, which was also paid in arrears. Of course this led to galloping inflation with double digit inflation rate. It was also in his tenure that some Permanent Secretaries became known as Super-Permanent Secretaries having oversight of two or more ministries. With the introduction of the 3 Rs – Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation and other far reaching reforms in the economy, the Gowon brand of Leadership though encouraging was scuttled by developmental lags within the frame of Modernization school.

3.2.4 General Murtala Mohammed - July 29, 1975 to February 13, 1976

Despite the oil boom and the abundant oil money, the economy suffered, however, from the 1972-74 drought and rising unemployment as farm workers migrated into the cities in search of non-existent jobs. Discontent increased, and in 1975 military forces deposed Gowon in a bloodless coup when he was away from the country on an OAU assignment in Kampala, Uganda. Thus the Brig. Joseph Nanven Garba inspired coup brought in Brigadier General Murtala Muhammad as Head of State. Gen. Mohammed began demobilizing the military, pruning the civil service, and creating 7 new states in order to weaken regional ethnic ties. Dissatisfaction within the military over these measures and his hard stance on Nigeria's foreign policy which was a spite to Western imperialist Socio-Political and economic interests led to Gen. Murtala Muhammad's assassination on February 13, 1976 led by Lt. Col Bukar Suka Dimka. Gen. Murtala was much liked by the masses of the country because of his decisiveness and fighting spirit against corruption and having himself set an example by giving his fleet of houses in Kano to the government as well as the reforms he carried out in the civil service. Were he alive to continue with such posture of leadership, it is our submission, there would have been a development leap for the country within the neo-Marxist or Liberal heritage He was succeeded by his next in command, Lieutenant General Olusegun Obasanjo.

3.2.5 General Olusegun Aremu Obasanjo – February 13, 1976 to October 1, 1979

He was the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters, to Gen. Murtala Muhammed's led government before he was named as a military leader in the country after the failed coup that took the life of General Murtala Muhammed. He was the first military leader in the country to hand over power to civilian rule and was celebrated worldwide for that gesture and courage to submit to civilian hegemony. Obasanjo's first tenure in power was marked by improvement in education, through the universal primary education policy and other programmes like Festac 77, and attempts to expand the country's industrial base with huge revenues from the oil boom at the time, and the Operation Feed the Nation, a programme designed to encourage farmers in the country to stay put to the land. But he also promulgated the now controversial Land Use Decree that vested ownership of lands in governors. This act led to the progressive emasculation and impoverishment of a larger mass of Nigerians. Gen. Obasanjo returned to power in May 1999 as an elected President under the 1999 constitution. His second tenure was marred by controversial policies and brute display of power as defined by Max Weber and more in line with Nicolo Machiavelli's conception and application of power driven by unconfirmed desire for perpetuating himself in power in what came to be known as his "third term" bid. Perhaps, the highpoint of his second tenure in the leadership of Nigeria was the liberation of Nigeria from the huge external debt burden, which the Minister of Finance, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, and IMF-World Bank guru anchored in 2007, and the successful civilian to civilian handover of power. His first outing (1976-1979) and second coming (1999-2007) marked the watershed in leadership and development for the Nigerian state.

3.2.6 Alhaji Shehu Shagari – October 1979 to December 1983

Alhaji Shehu Shagari was Nigeria's Second Republic President. He was the first elected President of Nigeria to exercise full executive powers in line with the American model of democratization and as a departure from the British heritage of parliamentary democracy. He made housing, industries, transportation, and agriculture the major goals of his presidency, launching large scale housing programme that built estates, like the popular Shagari Estates. With regard to industries, Alhaji Shagari completed the Delta Steel Complex in 1982, and invested heavily on the Ajaokuta Steel Complex and the Steel Rolling Mills in Aladja, Ajaokuta, Jos and Oshogbo respectively. Alhaji Shagari initiated and established the Economic Stabilization Programme meant to protect the country against any shortfalls in oil revenue after the high oil revenues of the 70's and to guide the economy towards positive growth. Key objectives of the programme included reduction of import licenses and government spending and the upward review of custom duties. Shagari was considered a Champion of Democracy and good Governance due to his programmes targeted at improvement of the lives of the great majority. But rampant corruption under his administration, made worse by his second term election marked by accusations of fraud such as the Rice Saga of Umaru Dikko, a decline in world oil price, which led to a marked dissipation of the national finances under his leadership watch, coupled with escalating religious and political violence such as the infamous Maitatsine religious fundamentalism, ensured his overthrow by General Muhammadu Buhari on New Year's Eve in 1983 was actually looked upon with relief and celebrated by most of the Nigerian public at the time. Essentially, his brand of leadership sought to speak and represent his people in the Senate and not country-wide leadership, which seemed to have been thrust upon him. The outcome was the still birth democracy which affected the country's march to development in the mould of W.W. Rostow's *The Stages of Growth* (1960).

3.2.7 General Muhammadu Buhari – December 31 1983 to August 27, 1985

After the successful military coup d'état that ousted Alhaji Shehu Shagari on December 31, 1983, Major General Buhari and Major General Tunde Idiagbon were selected to lead the country by middle and high ranking military officers. Gen. Buhari was appointed Head of State and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces while Gen. Idiagbon was made the Chief of General Staff. In the bid to stem the rising tide of corruption and the apparent neglect of law and order in the society, Gen. Buhari initiated a public campaign against indiscipline known as "War Against Indiscipline" (WAI). A "new" form of political culture seemed to have been ushered into the polity. His tenure witnessed the enactment of draconian decrees, one of which was the infamous Decree No.2 that sought to gag the press. Many politicians were thrown into prison for alleged corruption. Gen. Buhari promised major reforms, but his government fared little better than its predecessor. His regime was overthrown for gross ineptitude by another military coup in 1985 when the real backbone of the regime, Gen. Tunde Idiagbon, embarked on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Beside WAI, where people queued up in all public places, not much except all the tendencies of Totalitarianism can be assessed of us of that government.

3.2.8 General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida – August 27, 1985 to August 27, 1993

General Ibrahim Babangida, popularly known as IBB – Nigeria's own Maradona, took over power from Gen. Buhari in a palace coup in August 1985. He introduced the concept of Military President into the Nigerian political lexicon and remains the country's only military leader addressed by the title of President. He maintained a firm grip on power and tried to abrogate the unpopular policies he inherited in office. Gen. Babangida's regime was popular for its liberal economic policies. He tried to introduce the culture of debate in politics, with the open deliberations that preceded his launching of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) supported Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). He administered an eight year

political transition programme that did not culminate in the enthronement of civil democracy but succeeded in throwing up new crop of leaders in various spheres of the country's political life. His constantly moving projected hand-over dates and banning and unbanning politicians got him the nickname "Maradona" in deference to the Argentine soccer maestro's dribbling skills. He left office under massive popular pressure in 1993, after his annulment of the June 12 Presidential election which was widely held to have been the freest and fairest in Nigeria's post independence history. This led to mass civilian violent protests which effectively shut down the country for weeks. This forced Gen. Babangida to keep his promise to relinquish office to a civilian-run government, but not before appointing Chief Ernest Shonekan as Head of the Interim National Government. His regime has been touted as the most corrupt, and responsible for institutionalizing and creating a culture of corruption in the country with his "settlement" of civil servants and opposing elements in the polity. These are mere speculations. General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, barring the very unfortunate annulment of the fairest and freest elections in Nigeria to date and a few skirmishes, was an epitome of quality leadership and *pointman en route* development as conceived by liberal scholars in the moulds of Dudley Seers (1969) and Michael Todaro (1985).

3.2.9 Chief Ernest Shonekan – August 26 1993 to November 17 1993

Chief Ernest Adegunle Oladeinde Shonekan, a British trained Nigerian Lawyer and Industrialist was appointed Interim President of Nigeria by General Ibrahim Babangida on the eve of his stepping aside from governance after an 8 year rule. Chief Shonekan's transitional administration only lasted a few months before it was overwhelmed by General Sani Abacha who forced him to resign on 16th November 1993. What can a study of this nature postulate on Shonekan's "regime" than that of being a baby watch? As a person, everyone knows Chief Shonekan as a man with a stout mind. A very successful lawyer and industrialist who at different times presided over the Boards of UAC and Unilever - large Nigerian conglomerates - for years but who was made to midwife Nigeria at the heat of June 12, 1993 election annulment believed to have been won by Aare M.K.O. Abiola – his brother and fellow Egba High Chief. One can observe a paradox in leadership and development here in practice.

3.2.10 General Sani Abacha - November 17 1993 to June 8 1998

Gen. Abacha took over power from Nigeria's Interim President, Chief Ernest Shonekan in a palace coup. He forcefully dismantled the remaining democratic institutions and brought the Government back under military control. Gen. Abacha embarked on brutal rule using violence on a wide scale to suppress the continuing civilian unrest. He stifled opposition and threw many into jail and orchestrated the murder of many more. He engaged in wanton pillaging of the national treasury. He shifted money to offshore accounts in various western European banks and voided many coup plots against his regime. Several hundred million dollars in accounts traced to him were discovered in 1999. The regime came to an end in 1998 when the dictator was found dead amid questionable circumstances of being fed with apples allegedly by Lebanese and Indian girls. From November 16, 1993 – June 8, 1998 when Gen. Abacha led the people of Nigeria, not much can be used as parameter to assess this Kanuri colossus, whose leadership caused Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa, an Ogoni environmentalist and journalist to be acidified, thus placing Nigeria as a pariah nation. Western nations, including Britain, isolated Nigeria hence development occasioned by Gen. Abacha's Leadership was stalled. Even at this, the man Gen. Abacha stood his ground and stamped his authority to ensure Nigerian sovereignty was intact when Cameroonian Gendarmes backed by the French Jaguar attempted some incursion over the Bakassi Peninsula. Even the western world that instigated Nigeria's isolation under Gen. Abacha respected the man Abacha by that singular act of praetorian leadership during stress and storms.

3.2.11 Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar – June 1998 to May 29, 1999

Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar became Nigeria's 8th military Head of State in 1998. Gen. Abubakar is one of the few Generals in Nigeria who rose to the top without holding political office. He only held Military Positions previously, and had, in general, stayed out of the political limelight. Gen. Abubakar was appointed head of state upon the sudden death of his predecessor, Gen. Sani Abacha. He notably re-established the democratic institution in Nigeria. General Abdulsalami Abubakar, adopted a new constitution on May 5, 1999, which provided for multiparty elections. On May 29, 1999 Gen. Abubakar transferred power to the winner of the elections, Chief Olusegun Matthew Aremu Obasanjo, whose tenures this article had assessed earlier.

3.2.12 Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua – May 29, 2007 to May 5, 2010

Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, son of Alhaji Musa Yar'Adua, a Minister of the first Republic, and junior brother to late Maj. Gen. Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, who was Gen. Obasanjo's 2nd in Command (1976-1979) and who also was the founding leader of the People's Democratic Movement, (PDM) which metamorphosed into the People's Democratic Party, (PDP) in 1999, came to power on the platform of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the general elections of 2007 – an election that was witnessed and condemned by the international community as being severely flawed. (Final Report of the EU Election Observer Mission, 2007) A month after ascension of office, he publicly declared his assets (becoming the first Nigerian leader to do so). This disclosure, which fulfilled a pre-election promise he made, was intended to set an example for other Nigerian politicians and discourage corruption. He advocated for and pursued the policy of respect for the rule of law. A policy many critics saw as a deliberate attempt to slow down the hand of the law from catching up to his cronies who were being prosecuted for various corrupt charges. One of such persons is Chief James Onanefe Ibori, former Governor of Delta State (1999-2007) whom the courts in the land found no charges against but was later convicted and jailed by a court of law in Great Britain. During his tenure misappropriation continued to have free reign and political hawks continued to have a field day decimating the already impoverished country. President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua was diagnosed for pericarditis and left Nigeria in November 2009 for treatment in Saudi Arabia. While many believed that the illness had incapacitated and rendered him unfit to rule, his kitchen cabinet and his wife continued to insist all was well while the country went adrift until the Nigerian Senate on February 9, 2010 transferred Presidential Power to the Vice President in acting capacity until the President returned to full health. President Yar'Adua was eventually brought back to the country on February 24, 2010. There was speculation he remained in a life support machine until his demise on May 5, 2010. Alhaji Yar'Adua's illness and eventual death and the attempt by his close associates to pull the wool over the eyes of Nigerians was a manifest expression of desperate desire to cling to power at all cost, itself an indication of failed leadership and a bid to truncate development as conceived by developmentalists in our mould. But while on the saddle, President Yar'Adua endeavored to steer the ship of state with an adroit zeal to transform it through his 7-Point Agenda. In addition, he nipped in the bud the rising irredentist move by the militants of the Niger Delta Geo-Political zone, when he granted them unconditional amnesty to let peace be and therefore, moved the frontiers of development further with our western and allied development partners. Were his failing or failed health to allow him, this article would have had ample opportunity to put him on the front burner that history threw him into.

3.2.13 Dr. Goodluck Ebele Johnathan – May 6 2011 – to Present

After President Yar'Adua's death on 5 May 2010, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, hitherto Vice President and Acting President was sworn in as Alhaji Yar'Adua's successor on 6 May 2010, (BBC News, 2010) becoming

Nigeria's 14th Head of State, while his vice, a former Kaduna State Governor, Arc. Mohammed Namadi Sambo, an architect, was chosen on 18 May 2010, by the National Assembly following President Goodluck Jonathan's nomination for Sambo to be his Vice President. (The Punch, May 18, 2010 & Akinlade May 18, 2010) Dr. Goodluck Jonathan served as Nigeria's President till 16 April 2011, when a new Presidential election in Nigeria was conducted. Dr. Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP was declared the winner on 19 April 2011, having won the election by a total of 22,495,187 of the 39,469,484 votes cast to stand ahead of Maj.Gen Muhammadu Buhari from the main opposition party, the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), which won 12,214,853 of the total votes cast. (Purefoy, 2011) The international media reported the elections as having run smoothly with relatively little violence or voter fraud in contrast to previous elections. (Nossiter, April 16, 2011) Yet post election violence claimed no fewer than 10 National Youth Corps members in various states of the North, like Gombe, Borno, Yobe, Bauchi, Kano, etc..

President Jonathan is the first Ph.D holder and the first citizen from the South-South geo-political zone to ascend to the presidency of Nigeria. The populace, therefore, have great expectations of him. But right now there seems to be a general disenchantment with him especially for his "kids glove" approach to handling the now endemic and hydra headed corruption in the country and the issue of insecurity especially as it relates to the "Boko Haram" insurgency in the North Eastern part of the country, and kidnapping in the South South and South Eastern parts. Despite the President's promised succor for the populace, youth unemployment is over 65% and a national unemployment rate of 23.9% as at December 2011 (Source: NBS). Power supply is nearly non-existent despite claims to the contrary, which he (The President) made on the CNN interview with Christiane Amanpour in January 2013, the economy is not strengthened enough to withstand the stress and storms of poverty, inequality and unemployment which widen by the day, industries have gone moribund, and incidence of absolute poverty is indicated at 65% (NBS). And it has been widely observed that Nigeria may not meet the millennium development goals, targets set by the international comity of nations as indices for measuring development of developing nations like Nigeria, which target is in 2015. While it is acknowledged that the problems Nigeria now faces did not originate with President Jonathan, Nigerians are actually requesting that he would provide leadership and the political will to tackle the problems head-on.

4. The Role of Colonial Education System on Leadership and Development in Nigeria

Why have the Nigerian and African leaders failed so? How did Africa come to be bedeviled with poor leadership? Is there some extraneous design to keep Africa underdeveloped? Could Nigeria's colonial antecedents be responsible for its failed leadership? Developmentalists argue that the colonial educational system is largely responsible for the failure of leadership in Nigeria today. Hauwa Imam declares that the colonial education system was geared towards producing the desired manpower for the civil service, thus the recipients of western education ultimately became misfits in their own local rural setup and were suited for blue collar or white collar jobs in the cities. (Imam, 2012). The colonial education system also fostered inferiority complex on its recipients, the mentality that the white people are superior to blacks, or the idea that the black man cannot succeed because of the color of his skin. Walter Rodney (2009) arguing on how colonial education system negatively impacted the colonized countries, posited that education is crucial to society for the preservation of the lives of its members, the maintenance of the social structure and the promotion of social change. He states further that education grows out of the environment and the learning process directly related to the pattern of work in the society. The implication is that colonial education was geared towards producing man power to meet the needs of the colonial masters. Consequently, the colonial masters ensured that the colonized did not get education beyond what was necessary and so "Africans were being educated inside colonial schools to become junior clerks and messengers". (Walter Rodney, 2009) The

colonial educational system was not designed to produce leaders but subservient followers. Independent Nigeria followed in the colonial trend, (Woolman, 2001) and even today is still producing people without the right frame of mind for leadership. Furthermore, in its efforts to lay basic foundation, for hard work and material gain the colonial authorities introduced various means which in their view were the only way to survival. Omotosho (1998) observed that among the vestiges of the colonial education are materialism and individualism. Both constitute the main roots from which many ideas were originated. While Nduka (1975) observed that the greatest legacy from the colonial past is western materialism, Essoh (2006) articulates on the virtues and character of the Nigerian cultural heritage that serve as the building block of cultural renaissance, public order and social control. Any wonder then why Nigeria has remained underdeveloped despite her huge human and natural resources?

5. Imperialism Perpetuated

Employing the same notorious divide, rule and conquer methodologies that secured for them permanent footholds in Africa, Europe has once again succeeded in using African rulers against their people to maintain the status quo ante. Like the African kings and chiefs before them who aided and abetted slavery, imperialism and colonialism for selfish reasons, the rulers of most modern day African nations have been enthusiastic pawns through whom the resources of the continent are being siphoned off to the West mostly by forceful takeovers through military coups or electoral frauds, the same shade of characters have always been at the corridor of power, bringing nothing but the same old tired, backward-looking, anti-people ideas and habits to governance. With this frame, can development in the strands of modernization and sustainable development paradigms take place?

6. Conclusion

The problem of Nigeria's underdevelopment is largely that of fledgling leadership. Nigeria is in dire need of the kind of leadership with the ability to translate the enormous potentials of the country to manifest development realities. The solution to the myriad of problems the country is currently faced with is leadership. We have seen from the Asian Tigers the role that leadership could play in the development of a nation. But how do we raise such leaders?

Prof Ibidapo Obe, a former Vice Chancellor of the University of Lagos writing in The Guardian Newspaper of October 1, 2012 under the caption "Nigeria Has Leadership Challenges" stated *"If you ask me I will just do everything on education. Right now the type of emphasis we give on education is not impactful in my own mind. That is because nobody goes back to the basic idea- if you educate your people you have good roads, you have good hospitals, you have good everything. In fact efficiency will be entrenched. Efficiency is related to punctuality, all those good virtues-punctuality, crime-free society and so on- are related to education. Why would somebody want to be a suicide bomber? Why would somebody want to kill him or herself? Because he or she is not educated, he or she thought that is the end of the world. No, he or she is not able to see the other side of the story."*

Rodney (2009) with equal strength declared:

"Indeed, the most crucial aspect of pre-colonial African education was its relevance to Africans, in sharp contrast with what was later introduced. The following features of African education can be considered outstanding: its close links with social life, both in a material and spiritual sense; its collective nature; its many-sidedness; and its progressive development in conformity with the successive stages of physical, emotional and mental development of the child. There was no separation of education and productive activity or any division between manual and intellectual education. Altogether through mainly informal

means, pre-colonial African education matched the realities of pre-colonial African society and produced well-rounded personalities to fit into that society."

It is our considered opinion that for Nigeria to produce the kind of leadership needed to harness the abundant resources of the country and foster the much needed development, it would be necessary to consider modelling our educational system along the lines of the pre-colonial African education system. Even at this, there is a paradox. This is evident in contemporary realities of modernization and globalization where isolationism, individualism and "narrow-path" to growth and development are abhorred.

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