

POLITICS AND ENDURING DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

It is a truism that Nigeria has what it takes both human and natural to be one of the most developed economies in the world over the years. This is not realized as a result of the wrong approach of attaining development through dependent economic system by African countries, including Nigeria. Enduring development and economic dependency do not go together, they are actually antithetical. Apart from the unfortunate dependency theory, the playing of politics also hinders enduring development in Nigeria. Enduring development is intricately tied to policy formulation and implementation programs. Wrong playing of politics is majorly responsible for sustained underdevelopment in Nigeria through its three channels of Formal Processes, Political Attitudes and Interpersonal Relationships. This paper contends that for enduring development to be in place in Nigeria there must be sincerity of purpose both in the formulation and implementation of developmental policies and programs devoid of nepotism, ethnicity, religion, and tribe and party affiliations. Nigeria as a social formation must be seen as an entity and the leaders of Nigeria should be so both in principles and deeds. Competence, expertise and professionalism should guide all appointments at all levels. Areas of need and comparative advantages should be considered in the location of developmental projects.

Key words: Nigeria, Politics, Development, Leadership, Economy

Introduction

In terms of development Nigeria has progressively degenerated from the comity of developing countries to that of underdeveloped ones. Immediately after independence, Nigeria was on the part of development but along the way she crumbled like a pack of card due to systemic corruption. The oil boom era became a doom era as all other sectors of the economy were

abandoned, yet the huge revenue gotten from the oil was mismanaged in fraudulent contracts, importation of all sorts of consumer products, payment of salaries of over bloated staff and in frivolities, instead of investing in industrial and manufacturing sector. All the seeming efforts in the agricultural sector to propel development failed as a result of unnecessary bureaucracy and non-effective implementation of the programmes.

To change this ugly trend, politics has to be played correctly by way of getting good leaders that will be above corruption in all its forms. Leaders that are intellectually equipped and altruistic in nature, and can effectively harness all the resources of the country to propel development.

The concept of Politics

Politics has as many definitions as there are many people talking about it. Hence, it is a multifaceted concept that yields to any bent given to it. In all it has to do with power and struggle to retain it and what to do with it. Ake (1981) thought of politics as a process of conduct through which a given community manifests its sovereignty by electing leaders, helping them to grow, seek and render general objectives. The end point of politics then is always for public good. In this trend for public welfare, Ndu (1998) views politics as the elimination of the challenges and contraries that came up as result of the fight to fulfill the economic needs of citizenry. The war-like posture of politics was articulated by Orluwene (2008) as he defines it as importantly the fight for authority in the society. Basically it has to do with the will power to distribute the small resources to the various needs of the citizenry and equally showcases the rivalry, clash of concerns and differences in views that exist in the state. He also takes notice of its common good aspect as the exercise of domination authority in the society which includes holding on trust the wealth and quiddity of the society to the care of the selected representatives of the people who will act effectively and efficiently to the greatest admiration of the majority of the populace. Other notable scholars that contributed in defining politics include Harold Lasswell, who sees it as the learning of the art of influencing and those who are influential in the society or still the learning of moulding and distribution of power. For David Easton it is the power underlying the sharing of values. The definition of Andrew Heywood is multidimensional – he sees it as an activity by which the citizens generate, keep safe, and change the overall principles that guide their living; as an art of ruling, it is simply the activity of generating and implementing general resolutions; as it pertains to the affairs of the public, it goes beyond the art of governance which is narrow to a larger concept of

'public life' or 'public affairs' as a result of its 'public' character. Going further, he conceives it as the act of give and take, the learning of partnership among interest blocks; the act of struggles and cooperation among the peoples and the different blocks in the society to entrench values like freedom, equity, fairness, welfare, etc. Thus it is a relationship between man and society easing disagreements through diplomacy rather than violence; it is the manipulation and intrigue in the allocation of power whether at the interstate or intrastate levels.

The concept of Development

Development as a concept has been accounted for in many diverse ways by different scholars depending on the scholars' intention and points of emphasis. In line with this approach, Martinussen (1997) posited many ways of understanding development which included it as economic advancement, development with regard to human development, development as a process of modernization, development as discarding of dependency, development as dialectical modification and development as historicity. Gordon (2006) conceived development as something that is complementary and purposeful. He puts it thus "to be developed implies achieving more than an end that ought to be achieved" (Pg.93). This idea simply means that development must go beyond set targets. Sen (1999) took the issue of development to a different level by maintaining that development has to do with freedom. For him, the kind of freedom people determines their kind and level of development. Invariably, lack of freedom brings about underdevelopment or no development at all. Bamikole (2012) seemed to lay credence to the thought of Sen by insisting that what is necessary in the current interpretations of freedom is that development manifests a qualitative transformation from one type of human experience to another.

Walter Rodney (1972) in his own contribution took it that no matter how the issue of development is talked about, it will always boil down to economic sense. For him, economy is ultimately the index of any other social features. Hence, he noted that a society develops economically when its citizens advance collectively their ability to handle the ecosystem. The ability to handle the environment is determined by their grasping of the principles of nature or science, and still on their ability to put this knowledge of nature into practical use by way of inventing tools and the organization of work therein.

Going beyond improved environment to that of the human beings that inhabit the environment is the concern of Ibe (1989), and Osita-Njoku (2016), they see development as a mechanism of starting a change in the society in order to

improve the capacity of establishments and values of the society to face the challenges that culture, politics, economics and technology exert on the citizenry. Koinyan (1987) also sees development along this trajectory by stating that real development must be human development, where man's creative ability to enhance his material situation by using the treasures available to him is considered utmostly. He goes further to say that development is a process that enables the enhancement of man's personality and that this personality that is enhanced is the driving impetus at the base of the socio-economic change of the society. According to Gran (1983), and Adetiba (2013), development is a social and technical procedure which targets the freeing of human faculties that will enable people to acquire maximal control over the treasures and wealth required for putting in place fundamental human requirements and security.

Young (1982), states an interesting conception of development by putting down a number of goals of development which include – growth which for him is the arrow head of development; equity in the sharing of socio-economic and political treasures; independence and auto-reliance; the sharing of human dignity by way of constitutional democracy or charter of human rights, the negation of which may result the oppression of the populace; involvement in the government; this means that there must be a process through which the people must get involved in governance and the capacity of the state to react or address novel challenges and demand to adjust to changing needs. For him, the absence of these logically may turn to underdevelopment.

In the view of Dike (2012), economic development is not the same as economic growth which some people tend to hold, it implies more than that. For him economic development is to ascertain qualitatively how the economic richness of nations or sub-regions has advanced the economic, political, and social welfare of the populace.

So from all these conceptions it is clear that development is all inclusive but gives priority to improved quality of human lives. Improvement of physical structures without corresponding well-being of individuals in terms of security, freedom, justice, availability of basic needs of man, rule of law, opportunity to advance one's potentials and quality leadership tantamount to underdevelopment.

Developmental Efforts/Strategies in Nigeria

With the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914, Nigeria came into existence and the history of development in Nigeria started.

The development prior to this period was tribal/ethnic development and progress was made tremendously in terms of ensuing peace and tranquility that were on ground across the tribes and ethnic affiliations.

From the inception of the country called Nigeria the colonial intention of development was never for the interest of Nigeria rather that of the colonial master. Colonization as a matter of fact was never civilizing mission but that of exploitation, hence, all the activities of the colonizers in the colonies were aimed at making profits for themselves. In this vein Ake (1981), states that colonial masters made sure that the colonies specialized in production by engaging the process of quotas and tariffs which ultimately was to the advantage of non-processed primary goods from the colonies. In other words the material resources of the colonies were the primary targets of the colonizers and that made them to take interest in the development of infrastructure to the extent it would serve their interest. In view of that, they invested in primary production, exercise control over production and effected changes in the social structure which necessarily correlated to the type of economic development they wanted.

In furtherance of that type of developmental strategy Ezeanyika (2010), maintains that this profitable system was sustained by the European powers because it prevented industrialization in the colonies and they deliberately neglected the establishment of modern industries in the colonies because they gained more through the exploitation of local human and natural resources for the benefit of their metropolitan industrial estates. They equally prevented the colonized people to set up industries that could compete with their industries at home.

Some scholars were of the opinion that colonization was a blessing to the colonized considering some of the developmental projects embarked upon by the colonial masters such as roads, rails, communication and recreation. For these scholars colonization was a civilizing mission and special gratitude should be given to them. Reacting against this line of thought Ake (1981), expressed that the colonial powers made sure that infrastructural development was to their own benefit once it will allow for easy transfer and movement of raw materials to collection point. Thus following the capitalist rationality of maximum output, they invested only in what had to and when they had to. Not surprising then, the places in which colonialism fostered some development were in places which were convenient collection centers for commodities, such as Kano; places from where the commodities could be shipped abroad such as Lagos; places where the climate was to the taste of Europeans and which could be used as administrative headquarters such as

Jos, Calabar and Enugu. So the seeming development was for them and not for the colonized.

During the dying days of colonialism certain developmental strategies were also experimented upon by way of legislations. There were 'Acts/Laws' like, Import Duties Relief Act of 1957; Income Tax Relief Act of 1958; The Customs 'Draw Back' Regulation Act of 1958. Also immediately after Independence the trend continued as there were The Company's Income Tax Act of 1961; Exchange Control Act of 1962 and The Tax Exemption to Loanable foreign Capital (Usoro, 1974). All these strategies could not propel the expected industrial development as a result of administrative bottlenecks and infrastructural constraints and for the fact that foreign investors were inclined to other more profitable commercial activities such as transportation, communication, electricity, primary production, trade, health and education than the manufacturing activities that the country needs (Dodo, 2009; in Osita-Njoku 2016). However, it must be placed on record that from 1960 down to 1965 that in every region of the country there was appreciable financial boom from engaging in the production and export of agricultural produce they cultivated during the colonial era which they carried over.

In 1962, the urge for the newly independent Nigeria to move on industrially gave birth to the strategy of Import Substitution Industrialization. The sole aim of this strategy was to replace imported products with goods manufactured locally so as to bring down the country's dependent on imported goods especially the consumer products, as this will definitely encourage local manufacturing, save foreign expenditures and reduce drastically unemployment and thereby increase the quality of the lives of the citizenry. This strategy made some notable improvement industrially as Nigeria really became self-sufficient in consumer products like drinks and other beverages, cotton, soap, textile, tobacco, plastic goods, livestock feeds, stationeries and footwear among others (Orluwene, 2014).

However, this industrialization tempo did not last long because of certain variables. In her industrialization push the country inadvertently and indiscriminately got involved in trans-border development of industries of all sorts without expertly choosing the building of those industries from which she enjoyed comparative advantage, at least from the angle of internal resources. Following the colonial methodology of concentrating virtually all industrial establishments in urban areas widened the already negative urban-rural social and economic inequalities. Still, the huge protection given to local industries especially in the area of high tariff and other industrial incentives instead of improving things led to significant industrial inefficiency. Most

importantly was the fact that most of the industries established under Import Substitution Industrialization strategy were mostly owned, managed and controlled by foreign investors and one cannot expect real industrialization from them (Ogbuagu, 1995).

The failure of the Import Substitution Industrialization Strategy especially from the point of view of foreign ownership of most of the industries led to another strategy called the 'Nigeria Enterprises Promotion Decree' (Indigenization Policy) in 1972. This strategy aimed at expanding the indigenous businessmen's active participation, control and management of the economy. However, of very important note here is that it aimed equally at denying and depriving a particular section of Nigeria the opportunity to participate in the ownership of these businesses. It was done immediately after the civil war when every Igbo man that had any amount of money in the banks before the commencement of the war was given paltry sum of twenty pounds to start life. The strategy did yield its expectant result because of lack of foresight of many Nigerian local businessmen as they preferred a share of the proceeds of the indigenized enterprises to effective participation and meaningful ownership and control of these ventures. Also the foreign firms affected by this law engaged various methods to thwart the indigenization decree by collaborating with some corrupt Nigerians. Above all, the policy became a veritable tool for very few opportune Nigerians from different ranks and class - businessmen, top military officers, top civil servants and other professionals to amass wealth to the detriment of the policy (Okigbo, 1989; Orluwene, 2014).

The unfortunate entry of the military into Nigerian polity in 1967 and the creation of 12 states out of the existing 4 regions and the consequent civil war that ended in 1970 erased all the achievements recorded in the agrarian sector of the country's development. After the war all the successive governments tried one program or the other to revamp agriculture since the industrial efforts were not giving the expected result. General Yakubu Gowon's government in 1972 started the 'National Food Production Programme (NAPP) and the accompanying 'Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperative Bank (NACB) dedicated wholly to funding agriculture (Akinwumi, 2000). General Olusegun Obasanjo (1975-1979) discarded the programme he met on ground and introduced 'Operation Feed the Nation' which was meant to encourage Nigerians to focus on agriculture. This programme at the end of the day ended with the establishment of 'Obasanjo Farms' in Otta, Abeokuta. The civilian government that succeeded the military government (1979-1983) led by Shehu Shagari ignored the 'Obasanjo' experiment and initiated his 'Green

Revolution' which only succeeded on the day of inauguration. With the coming back of the military General Buhari (1983-1985) ventured into 'Back to Land Programme' which ended with his administration in 1985 without making any significant headway. General Ibrahim Babangida (1985-2003) came on board with his 'Directorate of food, Road and Rural Infrastructure' (DFRRI). The project was aimed at massive production of food, creation of road network in the rural areas and infrastructures to checkmate rural-urban migration. This project like others before it after gulping a whooping amount of about 2 billion naira achieved nothing substantially.

The sole reason for the failure of all these developmental efforts was the abandonment of the mixed-economy that the country was known for during the dying days of colonialism and immediately after independence to that of mono-economy. With the discovery, exploration and exportation of oil every other sector of economy was abandoned. The resultant effects of this unfortunate situation as some analysts have pointed out include increasing unemployment rate, food crisis, marginal inflation, unprecedented corruption and poor attitude to work, as governments of the 36 states of the country and Abuja now rely absolutely on federal allocation from oil to run their states (Ezeoke, 2011). As it is today only 3 states of Lagos, Rivers and Akwa Ibom can take care of their recurrent expenditure only without the federal allocation. Ezeoke went ahead to nostalgically compare this trend with what obtained during the agriculturally glorious days of regional governments by stating that this is unlike in the 1960s when Nigeria operated a mixed economy that made her the world's largest exporter of groundnuts, palm produce and the third largest exporter of cocoa. Precisely, during that period, Nigeria was responsible for 60% of the world supply of palm oil, 30% of groundnuts and 15% of cocoa. The multiplicity of these natural resources equally gave each region of the country a tincture of identity. For instance, palm produce was grown in the eastern region, cocoa in the western region and groundnuts in the northern region. To maintain their unique identities, the government of each region earnestly made conscious efforts to ensure that it was not outdone by others. Through agriculture each region was able to take care of her domestic needs including capital and recurrent expenditures.

The role of politics in development of Nigeria

Politics is a game that if played in the right way will lead to victory and if otherwise leads to defeat. In Nigeria bad politics has been a clog in the wheel of development. The abandonment of the inherited mix- economy for mono-economy is a very bad politics. Oil that should have propelled development to unimaginable height became a thing the political class fights for at the

detriment of the needed development. Oil politics led to the utter neglect of other sectors of the economy and brought about corruption in a new dimension resulting in infrastructural decay. Oil politics brought into the Nigerian polity the concept of 'derivation principle' that was not there during the colonial and early post-colonial periods. According to Akpabio & Akpan, 2010; Eghweree, O.C. 2014, Prior to oil, revenue sharing formula that adopted derivation principle paid regions from where applicable resources were sourced, 50% of the total revenue generated. This was however short-lived as the derivation principle was though retained, but applicable percentage kept dropping in the following sequence. It changed from 50% to 25% between 1968 and 1980 and miserable 1.5% between 1980 and 1989. The Constitution of Nigeria drafted by the military in 1999 raised it to 13% and all efforts that have been made since then to amend the constitution to effect a change of the percentage were thwarted by a section of the country because of politics. While all the governors from the South-South region wanted increased allocation, those of the North, wanted the existing 13% to remain. Agbo (2013) puts down this injustice against the South this way "The 1999 Constitution provides for at least 13 percent derivation to oil producing States. Due to the agitation of oil bearing communities for more it was proposed in the ongoing constitution amendment process for derivation to be increased to 20 percent. This was rejected by 224 votes to 125. This is another interest of the South-South rejected by the North."

The current sharing formula is based on number of local government areas was designed to favour the North which has a total of 393 LGAs and the South has 381. Kano State alone with 44 LGAs earns more than Abia, Bayelsa and Ekiti States put together - 42 LGAs. But it is an irony of fate that the North that earns more from the oil revenue than the South has a higher level of poverty. For according to Ikenwa (2019), the ten poorest states in Nigeria today are :- Sokoto, Katsina, Adamawa, Gombe, Plateau, Ebonyi, Kebbi and Zamfara; whereas the ten most developed states are - Lagos, Anambra, Rivers, Abia, Enugu, Kano, Ogun, Akwa Ibom, Oyo and Abuja. This is bad politics in reality, a celebration of corruption. It is the negative playing of politics that made Shagari administration the cite one of the best refineries Nigeria had then at Kaduna that was far away from the oil wells in the south. It is this ethnic politics that was responsible for the establishment of all the basic and sensitive military formations and facilities in the North without recourse to their developmental impact on the Nigerian economy.

Also negative/ethnic politics is the reason for sacrificing meritocracy for mediocrity in governmental appointments today in Nigeria; all these offices

are occupied by individuals from one section of the country – Chief of Staff, Secretary to the government of the federation, Chief justice of the federation, president of the court of appeal, EFCC chairman, president federal high court, National security adviser, Inspector General of Police, Chief of Army staff, Chief of Air staff, Comptroller Custom services, Defence Minister, Comptroller of Prison services, Comptroller of Immigration, Comptroller of Fire service etc. The appointment made in the judiciary recently toed the same pattern of ethnic chauvinism, out of the 27 appeal court justices appointed 23 were from the North and 4 from the South.

Following nepotism in appointments is that of neglect of competency and expertise. It is only in Nigeria among the comity of nations that one sees a medical doctor heading the ministry of Labour and Productivity; a seasoned lawyer at the head of ministry of Power, Works and Housing; a newspaper columnist with a degree in journalism in charge of ministry of Education and a professor of education as assistant minister – a showcase of round pegs in square holes, a sacrifice of development for interpersonal relationships.

Another factor militating against development in Nigeria is the politics of ‘federal character principle’ which in itself was designed to give each section of the country a sense of belonging. However its implementation is highly politicized for when it comes to appointments it is thrown away but in terms of anything that will favour a particular section of the country it is absolutely adhered to. In terms of admission in Nigerian unity schools, a student from Abia state is expected to score at least 130 out of 300 to get a chance of being admitted but his colleague from Zamfara state needs only to score 4 out of 300 to get automatic admission. Entry into the Nigerian federal universities also follows this mess through the principle of ‘catchment areas’ where standard is lowered for some states and raised for others in the name of helping the educationally disadvantaged states. The big question here is how long will they remain as disadvantaged? After almost 60 years of independence the story is still the same, will it ever change? Yet in the next few years to come these students from these so called educationally disadvantaged states will be appointed ministers (including ministry of education), justices of appeal courts and high courts, heads of establishments, institutions and agencies of government and so on and so forth.

Another anti-development policy or principle in Nigeria today is that of ‘rotation or zoning’ of political leadership. This is not contained in the constitution of Nigeria but in some political parties’ constitution. This policy is both anti-democracy as well as anti-development. Leadership in all ramifications especially in statecraft is the reserve of the best following Plato’s

recommendation. It is not all comers affair. In Nigeria the best are relegated to the background and the mediocre are elevated and the resultant effect is obvious- underdevelopment in the midst of plenty of both natural and human resources.

In furtherance of anti-development policy of the Nigerian government is the practice of allocating to defence and security a huge chunk of resources rather than in an area that will stem the tide of insecurity namely education. As an example, the 2019 budget allocated to the office of the security adviser to the president the sum of 34.37 billion naira and the ministry of defence the sum of 158.12 billion naira whereas a meager sum of 47.29 billion was assigned to education. This practice at long run will continue to increase the level of insecurity in the country. Similar to this anti-development practice is the allocation of more than 50% of the total budget to recurrent expenditure at the detriment of capital expenditure. According to Udoma Udo Udoma (2018), the total recurrent expenditure is 4.72 trillion naira only and the total capital expenditure is 2.28 trillion naira only. The cost of governance is so exorbitant in Nigeria when one considers the multiplication of offices and roles such as: - Assistants, Special Assistants, Senior Special Assistants, Technical Assistants, Advisers, Special Advisers, Personal Assistants, Senior Personal Assistants for Media, for Social media, for Communication, for Information, for Domestic affairs, for Security, for Legal affairs, and for Special duties and a convoy of many cars with drivers and fuel. The Nigerian legislators are the highest paid in the world and there are so many of them. The United States of America is the richest economy in the world and has 100 senators whereas Nigeria has 109 senators. This formula shouldn't be the case for an economy that desires development and growth.

The way forward

Politics seen as the act of influencing, manipulating and controlling others in the polity fundamentally aims at impacting positively on the society. The founding fathers of politics, the Greeks knew that politics distinguished the society from the state of nature; hence, politics is always for the good of the society. If politics is played correctly it brings development and if badly played it begets underdevelopment. Therefore for Nigeria to be really developed politics must be rightly conducted.

For development to be on ground the country's leadership must see the country as an entity and treat it as such. Ethnic or religious divides should not both explicitly and tacitly be considered when it comes to the matter of advancing the country. Every section of the country should be treated fairly

and equitably in terms of infrastructural development and the principle of comparative advantaged utilized maximally.

Again, Nigeria should discard the current dependent economy system and adopt as matter of urgency the independent system. Looking inwards is a credible step towards authentic development. The Nigeria borders should be closed for everybody – no medical tourism abroad instead let our hospitals and clinics be upgraded to world's standard; no vacation abroad instead let our recreational and many tourists sites we have be developed; no sending of our children abroad for studies instead let our budget for education comply with the UNESCO recommendation of 26% of the total budget for this will adequately fund our institutions and raise the standard of education. There must also be a mandatory patronage of 'made in Nigeria' products by everybody from the top to the bottom as this will encourage our local manufactures.

Furthermore, to enhance development and economic growth there must be a genuine effort to fight, reduce and eliminate corruption from every sector of our political and economic lives. From the military government of Ibrahim Babangida till today there has been subsidy for oil but actually what has been subsidized is corruption. During the presidency of Goodluck Jonathan, the House of Representative investigated the oil subsidy scandal and a shocking revelation was made – the average consumption of petroleum product daily was 40 million liters and the nation's refineries at their skeletal services were producing 45 million liters daily, so why the importation of petroleum products and the payment of subsidy by the government. Therefore oil subsidy has to be removed and Nigerians feel its pain for a period and the money realized be used to fix our refineries and new ones built and the problem of fuel scarcity and price fluctuation will be solved permanently. Equally important here is greater transparency and predictability of monetary policy as there was no reason a dollar would exchange for 500 naira as it happened in 2016 and 2017 and 360 as at today.

For development to be in place Nigeria needs quality leadership that will comprise of young, patriotic, vibrant and intellectually developed technocrats. Leadership is not an 'old men club' where people are recycled from generation to generation. It has to do with knowledge, mental alertness and physical stability and competence. If the leaders are not intellectually developed then in the midst of plenty of resources nothing can come out of it. The young adults should be sincerely encouraged to come into politics to make their impact. The 'not too young to run' policy that came into being recently is a welcome development but the political parties in Nigeria

systematically pushed them away by high cost of elective processes. To increase the quality of leadership in the country there has to be a policy of 'too old to run' this will take care of one being a minister between 1979 and 1983 and came up again to be a minister between 2015 and 2018. Nigeria needs leaders, who are willing and able to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which is really the hallmarks of true leadership. Leaders that will not be doing the same thing over and over again and expect a different result but one that will think outside the box and do things differently. This new leadership must bear in mind that leaders are role models whom people look up to and sometimes copy their actions, behavior and even mannerisms.

As corruption is antithetical to development, there has to be zero tolerance for corruption. This is linked to absolute respect for rule of law. Currently in Nigeria some people are above the law and that's why the fight against corruption is not yielding the expected results because it is selective, targeting at both real and imagined enemies of the government. Corruption we have to know is multifaceted in nature for it does not deal with only financial crimes; nepotism, tribalism, ethnic bigotry and celebration of mediocrity are all forms of corruption. Therefore jettison all these and sticking to merit and fair play boosts the morale of the populace to work harder for the good of the society.

Another point on development that is enduring is diversification of the economy. The current mono-economy is precarious. Soludo (2019), expressed concern about this by maintain that "the petroleum sector is the major driver of the economy, accounting for over 90 percent of export earnings and about 85 percent of government revenue. The sector contributes some 15 percent to GDP, in contrast, the industrial sector accounts for a tiny proportion of economic activity of less than six percent while the manufacturing sector contributes only four percent to GDP". Diversifying the economy to achieve optimally has to go with the restructuring of the country. Majority of Nigerians are clamouring for restricting but the few who are benefiting from the present structure are kicking against the idea. Restructuring has immense benefit for all. According to Ese Idiegbe in Soludo (2019) "restructuring the nation's economy will reduce the pressure on the center and ensure development in the agglomerating tiers of states and local governments. It will allow States to control their resources and hence help to drive effective growth in the sub-national levels of governments". Nigeria is endowed with so many natural resources that can be tapped for development if the country is structured in such a way that the principle of derivation is very attractive. The beauty of this well restructured principle is that it will logically instill the

spirit of healthy competition among the regions or geo-political zones or even the states. Hence, all the successive governments' programmes in the agricultural sector should be reviewed and streamlined for effective implementation devoid of bureaucratic bottlenecks. Also the tax system should be redesigned in such a way that every taxable products and persons must comply with it or risk severe penalty. Thus, this increased domestic revenue generation, mobilization and utilization will propel development and economic growth to unimaginable height.

Conclusion

There is no valid justification for Nigeria being an underdeveloped economy considering the huge natural and human resources she is endowed with. Many developed economies in the world today are not as richly blessed as Nigeria for she has one of the best land, climate, water, air and geological set up in the world. I agree with Walter Rodney that Europe underdeveloped Africa and Nigeria included, but that ended with colonialism. Blaming colonialism for underdevelopment after almost sixty years of self- rule is to play the blame game instead of accepting woeful failure in the development agenda. Achebe (1983), diagnosed the problem of underdevelopment in Nigeria and found the answer as the failure of leadership, "The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian Character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else." Therefore, good and high quality leadership can turn things around for better; leadership that is patriotic and committed divested of nepotistic, tribalistic, ethnic, selfish and parochial tendencies; leadership that is people oriented and ready to make sacrifices. Lastly, development is an all-inclusive project; hence, both the leaders and the led are involved in the process.

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