

Review Article

A Review of Development Policies Implementation in Nigeria

Alexander Chinago Budnukaeku^{1*}, Ozuru Eucharia Chinedu², Kponi Godwin³

¹Department Transportation Planning and Logistics, Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

²Department of Social Sciences, Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic, Port Harcourt

³Niger Delta Science School, Rumuola, Port Harcourt

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Abstract: Development is critical and very essential to the substance and positive growth of any nation. A country is classified as develop when she is able to provide qualitative effort for her citizenry in terms of industrial development, manpower development and sustainable development with respect to her conservative nature to the biodiversity etc. Nigeria in the last 53 years has been struggling with the problems of development in spite of huge human, material and natural resources in her possession. This article examines the problems bedeviling Nigeria's development, which includes monumental sorption, lack of good governance, poor policy implementation and mono economic base of the nation as well as strategies for achieving sustainable development in Nigeria. The paper adopted secondary data as sources of information. It observe among other things that diligent implementation of developmental plans, commitment on the part of the leaders, policies implementation and enforcement, absences of corrupt leadership and the presence of leaders with high regard for scientific research and industrialization are necessary and vital requirement for the achievement of sustainable development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Implementation of national plans, National plans, Research, Resources and Sustainable development.

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INTRODUCTION

The pride of any government is the attainment of higher value level of development in such a way that her population would derive national attachment to governance. However for a country to be in a phase of development there must be some prerequisites which include socio-political and economic stability.

The gap between the developed and the developing countries is not static or narrow but is continually widening. Majority of the world's population in developing world lives in a state of poverty and unemployment.

The problem of urban population, rural stagnation, unemployment and growing inequalities continue to face developing countries such as Nigeria. Painfully, hopes of accelerated development are difficult to realize.

This gloomy situation is of great concern to stake holder and the concerned citizenry. Nigeria has

not been able to engender meaningful development despite her huge resources endowment. This has greatly affected her quest to improve quality of life of her citizens. Poverty, unemployment and starvation still ravage or pervade the nook and cranny of the country.

Development is very essential and critical to growth and sustenance of any country, in order to successfully enhance meaningful development, effective strategies must be evolved.

Here, we examine the trend of national development I Nigeria, and provides a workable framework or workable method of approach to national development. This article examines the extent to which Nigeria with the largest number of universities and polytechnic, and blessed with biggest human and sizable material resources potential in Africa has had its development impacted by the changing direction, quality and quantity of research emanating from its ever expanding research institutions, centres and individual and as well to explore the interaction between research and sustainable development.

*Corresponding Author: Alexander Chinago Budnukaeku

Department Transportation Planning and Logistics, Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK / CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

Development as a concept is a victim of definition pluralism. It is a difficult word to define, however, attempts have been made by erudite scholars conceptualize development.

Some of these definitions will be explored properly for the purpose of this work [1]. Captures development as an idea that embodies attempts to improve the condition of human existence in all ramifications. It implies improvement in material wellbeing of citizens, not the most powerful and rich alone, in a sustainable way such that today's consumption does not prevent the future, it also demands that poverty and inequality of access to the good things of life be removed or drastically reduced. It seeks to improve personal physical security and livelihood and expansion of life chances.

Naomi [2] stated development is usually taken to involve not only economic growth, but also some notions of equitable distribution, provision of health care, education housing and other essential services all with a view to improving the individual and collective quality of life. Similarly, [3] views development as a process of societal development, where improvements in the wellbeing of the people are generated through strong partnerships between all sectors, corporate bodies and other groups in the society.

It is reasonable to know that development is not only economic exercise, but also involves both socio-economic and political issues and pervades all aspects of the societal life.

1. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The word "Sustainability" is a diverse subject that is not limited to the environment. It equally has its relevance in all spheres of life including socio-cultural, economic and all development policies. The path to a truly sustainable society begins with the objective of improving and sustaining efficiency and safety in all forms of development. It is however a long-term process. The focus is on enhancing and sustaining an existing system or development over a while or lifespan; thus, the term sustainable development.

3.1. Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainable development requires balancing environmental, societal and economic aspect of the nation resources, in pursuit of development and an improved quality of life. Sustainability includes intergenerational equity, a just and peaceful societies, social tolerance, environmental conservation and restoration, poverty alleviation and natural resources preservation.

The key for achieving sustainable development include the following:

- Improve the quality of basic research.
- Reorient existing research programme to address sustainable development.
- Develop public awareness and understanding, and
- Provide training for all sectors (Private and public).

3.2. National Development Plans in Nigeria

Series of development plans existed in Nigeria. Nigeria is hunted by the spectre of development. The myth of growth and development is so entrenched that the country's history passes for the history of development strategies and growth models from the colonial era to date. No term in constant flux as development.

This seems the only country where virtually all notions and models of development have been experimented [4].

Two years after independence, the first national development plan policy was formulated between 1962 and 1968 with the objective of development opportunities in health, education and employment and improving access to these opportunities, etc.

This plans failed because 50% of resources needed to finance the plan was to come from external sources, and only 14% of the external finance was received [5]. However, this plan moved the young economy to achieve the GDP growth target of 4.0%, despite not implementing some key projects due to lack of fund.

The collapse of the first republic and commencement of civil war also disrupted the plan. After the civil war in 1970, the second national development plan 1970 to 1974 was launched, the plan priorities were in agriculture, industry, transport, Manpower, defence, electricity, communication and water supply and provision of social services [5]. The actual GDP growth during the second national development plan is 12.3% as against 6.2% proposed by the planner [6].

The third plan covering the period of 1975 to 1980 was considered more ambitious than the second plan. Emphasis was placed on rural development and efforts to revamp agricultural sector. The third National Plan proposed a capital expenditure of Thirty billion naira, with a proposed growth rate of 9%.

The fourth plan 1981 to 1985 recognised the role of social services, health services etc. The plan was aimed at bringing about improvement in the living conditions of the people. The specific objectives were: An increase in the real income of the average citizen, more even distribution of income of individuals and

socio-economic groups, increased dependence on the country material and human resources, a reduction in the level of unemployment and underemployment [5]. During these periods, Nigeria's enormous oil wealth was not invested to build a viable industrial base for the country and for launching an agrarian revolution to liquidate mass poverty. For instance, Green Revolution programme that replaced Operation Feed the Nation failed to generate enough food for the mass. In the past, various strategies for development have also been tried with little or no result; among these were the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), Vision 2010. Natural Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), Creation of Development Centres, Seven Point Agenda etc. Currently the transformation agenda of the President Jonathan administration, tagged Vision 2020 term to be without any clear methodological approach towards achieving them. And the most recent is the President Buhari feeding of indigent students and other development plans which are been rubbished with high level of corruption and excessive borrowing without any developmental enforcement and implementation policies. It is obvious that the current development so far is not exactly what sustainable development denotes.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The system approach or theory will be used to analysed the impact of research on sustainable development in Nigeria, this is because there is a symbolic, expansion of the world knowledge economy, and knowledge hegemony of a few countries over the rest of the world in the on-going process of globalization and its uneven development. This development has made knowledge accumulation to be the most important and dominant form of today's capitalist accumulation, responsible for launching the advance countries to the top of the world, by their control of the most advanced social and human capital formation, economic development and improved living condition. It is little wonder; therefore, the United State of America, which invests the largest share of the world RXD capital, controls the world's largest number of world Class University and the equal lion share of the world's knowledge economy [7, 8, 9, 10, and 11].

4.1. Models of Development; Asia in Context

The enviable growth and development pattern of several Asian countries are well known. East Asia is the only region in the world that has been able to maintain strong, consistent growth patterns over several decades, led first by Japan and the newly industrializing economies of Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan ,etc.[12, 13]. Apart from the homogeneous nature of this society, other several factors were responsible for their development. These were; development of Agricultural sector, a system of mass education, development of indigenous industries, export oriented strategy. The Spartan discipline in their leadership, existence of efficient bureaucracy, human

resource development, encouragement of a dynamic private sector working in cooperation with the government towards a society-wide vision of development, institutional capacity building and attention to the problems of governance, consistency and policy stability, etc.,[12].

3. RESEARCH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Research for sustainable development is the focus or projection of research that seeks to equip people towards creating a meaningful future (Sustainable future). It beholds stakeholders such as government, businesses, research institutes, media and meaningful organizations to play important role in achieving sustainable development.

Some are interested in environmental preservation and protection; some have economic development interest, while others may be keen on social development [14]. Asserts that the way nations, cultural groups and individuals perceive sustainable development will depend on its own (Individual) values. In most European Universities, Nations, Technical colleges and Research institutions training is geared toward science and technology, economic and business management skills, that helps to build robust sustainable society.

Programmes such as Peace Research, Human Right Research, Environmental Research and Youth Entrepreneur schemes are carried in many schools. Hence, such initiatives help students and teachers to gain an understanding of the inter-linkages needed for sustainable development. The emphasis has been on research that will provide life and occupational skills that will enhance the potentials of individual, reinforcing self-reliance and sufficiency, and improving quality of life.

5.1. The Problems of Research on Sustainable Development in Nigeria

In spite of series of developmental strategies, put in place by successive government and sometimes with very good intentions, all attempt to generate meaningful development proved futile. Based on this, one is now confronted with these puzzles: Were those previous development plans and strategies bad in their context or wrongly projected? If nothing was wrong with the plans, then why is it still difficult to generate sustainable development in spite the huge resource at our disposal? The solution to these puzzle are not farfetched. A lot of factors have contributed together to impede national development.

(1) There are in most cases, no executive capacity responsible for the formulation and implementation of the plans. What we usually see are officials entrusted to such a position, but without any meaningful executive authority. They are more or less

rubber stamp, who cannot take their initiative, but must consult the appointer, who in most cases lack the technical knowledge required to galvanize plans to fruitful venture. Some of the previous development plans failed because; there was little or no consultation of the stakeholders. Sometimes feasibility studies are not carried out. No Environmental Impact Assessment and lack of measures to maintain and manage the plans.

Planning is supposed to involve even the peasants in the villages or hamlet. Even, the local government officials who are close to the people were not consulted. Planning is not an edifice where technocrats alone operate [12].

(2) Appointing individuals with no knowledge and understanding of a plan is also responsible for plan failure in Nigeria. Most of the plans in Nigeria are headed by political figures that by right have no business with such sensitive position. They view their responsibility as a reward for their political contributions. The interest is on how much that can be squeezed out of the system, and not how the system or plan will work.

(3) Lack of good governance also militates against national; development. Where there is no good governance development becomes a mirage. This is as a result of bad leadership in the country. Sense of patriotism is low among most of the leaders. Their actions or inaction frustrate the national development plans, and no one is punished because of weak legislation or what is known in local parlance as IM (Ima nmadu). Cartel connections or understanding among those that matters [12]. Captures the situation this way, "The decolonization allowed the crop of leaders that aligned with colonial power to take over Nigeria.

- This ensured the sustenance of a neo-colonial economic agenda, even after political independence. These leaders on assumption of power quickly turned up the repressive machinery of the colonial state rather than dismantling it. They use state power to suppress other and to get whatever they want from the system. Significantly, they have no vision of development to accompany the efficient instrument of repression the inherited. All they were interested in was access to power and privileges and not development.
- High level of corruption and indiscipline is another barrier to development in Nigeria. Nigeria State is corruptibly corrupt to say the least. Corruption is somewhat institutionalized. The State is made an instrument of wealth accumulation, rather than using it to project the interest of the citizenry. A very good plan supervised by a thoroughly corrupt State can hardly do a thorough good job? [12]. Corruption and development are antithetical to each other, the two cannot coexist, and so where one is present, the other suffers.

(4) Another important factor is the mono-economic base of the country. The country largely depends on crude oil for survival to the detriment of other resources. All other sectors of the economy are neglected. For instance, agriculture which constitutes the mainstay of the Nigerian economy in the 1950 and 1960 has been thrown into limbo over the years. How would government encourage export promotion when there is virtually nothing to export? The economy is not diversified and this is not suitable for a sustainable development [12].

(5) Finally, less emphasis was placed on research on all the environments of Nigeria (Political, Social, Economic and Technological, etc.) by leaders.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRATEGIES FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Arising from the findings and conclusion in this study the following recommendations and strategies were made:

The beauty of any development plan is the painstaking implementation of such plan, which its success lies with the implementers. In our discussion, it was mentioned that most of the past development plans failed as a result of implementation problem and lack of committed leadership etc. Based on this fact, new development policies and strategies are currently in place as alternative strategies for development, such as seven points agenda, vision 2020, transformation agenda etc. by the former President Jonathan and the most recent attempt made by President Mohammed Buhari in revamping the agricultural sector, if not that the development plans is been weakened by corruption and another plan put together by President Buhari Vision, 2030.

These policies and visions appear to all embracing but they are not sacrosanct in their totality, but if faithfully implemented, the nation at least will move towards path of development.

It is the position of this paper that to successfully implement the Transformation agenda and Vision 2030, President Buhari must take a clue from Asian models of development.

First development requires total commitment on the parts of the leadership. The need for discipline and honesty on the part of the project implementers cannot be compromise; such officials should show enough discipline, interest, willingness, dedication, resilience and honesty, without these attitudes and the will to pursue set economic goals, all other ingredients of development present would amount to nullity.

Secondly, the country should learn that wholesale liberalisation; the type advocated by orthodox SAP apologist is not necessarily synonymous

with development. It goes without saying therefore that a level State involvement (heterodoxy) is imperative even in the face of the crucial need for structural adjustment. But whatever the degree of the State involvement, private ownership of property must be guaranteed for investment to get stimulated [15].

Although, there is another question whether Nigerian State as presently constituted can play this crucial role given its embarrassing level of corruption, inefficiency, technical knowhow and incapacitation by commitment to sundry primordial values. Be it as it may, the goal should be evolve as a process of reformation of the State to make it able to play a type of highly constructive role that its counterparts are playing in the whole of East Asia (Ibid).

Besides, it has been observed that stability and continuity of policies encourages investment, propels and enhances development. For instance, in Korea, when park was assassinated, his policies remained and were leveraged on. Nigeria leadership must learn to build policies rather than jettison them for new ones that may be inferior to it for the sake of party politics and personal aggrandizement.

There is obvious need for Nigeria to revamp the agricultural sector, solid mineral sector and looking to Man power development; these sectors was instrumental to the development of Japan and China.

Agriculture used to be the mainstay of Nigeria economy, but the discovery of crude oil eclipsed agriculture and put it in state of oblivion. Note, Nigeria has four climatic zones and good river network that can enable her to cultivate varieties of crops and rear animals with minimal effort. But lack of vision, maladministration and quest for quick money has wrecked the economy and forced Nigeria to be importer of food crops that she can produce.

Human resource development should be a sinequanon to Nigeria National Development; this was demonstrated in Japan and South Korea [16]. Development depends very much on human knowledge and skills. This must be such that a high quality education and training is achieved for a large majority at a reasonable price and the context and quality of such education and training should be relevant and adequate to the national development needs. Not just copying academic programme that does not suit the national development plan. Literature on development stresses the axiom that it is the people who develop and that unless there are large numbers of suitably qualified people, development cannot take place.

There is need for attitudinal change. Nigerians must as a matter of urgency and fact change their pessimistic attitude towards development. The idea or belief that "It will not work, Nigeria factor or Are you

not a Nigerian" should be utterly discouraged. The attitude in a way legalised everything evil as part of the acceptable norms in the society. Thereby people can publicly practise evil, destroy public property and take bribe without any qualms. No country can develop or achieve her goal under such condition.

Real development is achieved through internal activities rather than external influences. Development is seen as a process generated within a society by forces propagated and invigorated by the actual members of that society. It is believed that true development can neither be started nor sustained by outsiders, though outsiders can help when the willingness is there by the people. It is true that no country can develop in isolation, but heavy emphasis should not be placed on foreign resources for the country's development.

The models of development of Japan and China show how these countries utilize their internal resources both human and material for rapid economic development. It is reasonable that Nigerians should inculcate a high sense of patriotism as demonstrated by the Koreans, Chinese and Japanese.

Leadership in Nigeria must behave in a way to inculcate the spirit of patriotism in the minds of the people, so that they will be ready to stand with the government in her development effort. When Nigerians see through themselves as one and not as belonging to one section of the country as portrayed presently, then the urge to develop Nigeria will be taken serious and then sustainable development can be achieved [17].

Additionally, the need to reform electoral process is imperative for socioeconomic and political development. Electoral fraud is one of the banes of Nigeria's development. The role of leadership in development cannot be over emphasised, all efforts towards development must be coordinated and directed by the leaders therefore, the leaders must be development conscious, have genuine interest for development and the political will to propel such development.

The leaders must also have the cooperation of the people because, it is the people that develop the nation Honestly, the aforementioned qualities cannot be possible without a legitimate mandate for the leaders by the people When a leader assumes office illegitimately or through electoral fraud, such leader is bound to fail in his effort to generate meaningful development

This is due to the facts that such illegitimate leaders tends to display character that repress development such as, selfishness, corruption, pride, thuggery and inefficiency and also, there is apathy and natural detachment to development plans by the people as they did not see such emerging leaders as the products of their consent through voting. Based on the

foregoing, the electoral process should be reformed in such a way that nobody assumes power (political) through crook or fraudulent means. The process should be made open, free, fair and competitive. All legal battle proceeding the elections must be concluded before any swearing in. This, it is believed will create genuine environment conducive for development.

More so, development plan should not be exclusively regarded as economic issue, it should be seen as holistic and encompassing national issue that cuts across economic, social, political and psychological aspects of human endeavour. More generous financial support should be made available to provide the basic research infrastructural facilities.

Since research has come to stay, institutional and research centres staffs that are not computer literate should take positive steps to remedy their deficiencies so as to flow along with the reforms. By this, library and information services will become ennobled through the acquisition of adequate research knowledge/skill and its full application in Nigerian University libraries or else, they will become irrelevant in this era of research.

Furthermore, effective and efficient power supply supplemented with standby generators should be provided to check the menace of frequent electricity power failure. In the same vein, the government should address the problem of erratic power supply more seriously not through military order, but through request for a system change or study and development because research results could be analysed effectively and efficiently without energy/light.

The assistance of some donor agencies such as Education Trust Fund (ETF) and Open Society Initiative for West Africa must be actively enlisted (OSIWA) must equally support research efforts for national and sustainable development.

Every division of the Nigeria academic research centres/institutions should be automated in order to facilitate and create an avenue for effective service delivery in research conduct for sustainable development. Short course research training programmes should be organised from time to time to assist researchers who do not have knowledge and skills for research.

This will also create awareness of research potential and capacities for national and sustainable development.

Orientation programmes on the use of computer and other research tools for research information analysis should be encouraged and made compulsory for new entrants into the profession.

Importation of ostentatious goods into the country should be discouraged, and unnecessary medical trips abroad should also be discouraged.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper has carefully discussed national development in Nigeria, and carefully outlined the driving forces of development in some of the Asian countries as models for Nigeria development.

The paper also suggested some viable strategies needed to engender sustainable development in Nigeria. It is the belief of the researchers that if these options and models are faithfully and judiciously pursued and imbibed, Nigeria will be well positioned in global economy by the year 2030. We, therefore discourage imposition of candidates on political parties' by acclaimed cabals. Finally, it has been observed that there is no synergy between academic researchers' findings and the political class policies and implementations. No country can grow without tapping from the academia research. Nation building is not about tribalism.

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