

60 YEARS OF NIGERIA'S UNDERDEVELOPMENT: BAKING THE NATIONAL CAKE IN RETROSPECT.

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ABSTRACT

The paper seeks to examine the various theories of underdevelopment relevant to understanding the challenges of National wealth and its distribution patterns as it affects Nigeria's socio-political economy since independence in 1960. This paper identified leadership problem as one of the major factors responsible for the aged-long underdevelopment status of Nigeria in the face of abundant resources. The main objective of this paper is to identify obstacles of development and to recommend ways and further steps that will take Nigeria to its launching pads of development. The paper anchored its theoretical framework on dependency theory with its explanation of the economic development of a state in terms of external influences through political, economic and socio-cultural implication on national development policies. This paper relied on documentary evidence and library research which form the basis of content analysis as its methodology of data collection. The paper provided further discussions on salient issues of factors impinging on development efforts as well as reasons why the various national development plans in Nigeria failed to succeed. The paper's main recommendation is that the government of Nigeria should phase-out her aged-long mono-cultural economy through the diversification of all sectors of the economy and to improve equitable distribution of the Nation's resources to all and sundry.

Keywords: *Underdevelopment, National Cake, Growth, Development, Nigeria*

INTRODUCTION

According to Anyebe (2001), the term underdevelopment is described as a situation where the economic, social and political condition of a nation remains at their rudimentary stage of development. Over 50 years ago, Nigeria got her political independence from the Great Britain, full of promises that it will become a world power in no distant time. It is sad that today we do not have a country where things work as they should. The facts about the 1914 amalgamations of Nigeria revealed the following: Nigeria is a mistake of 1914 (Sir Ahmadu Bello), a mere geographical expression (Obafemi Awolowo) and God's experiment in the impossible (Dele Giwa) with an unsolicited amalgamation of 645 nations (Tunon, 2014). There seems a terrible decline in virtually every sector of our national life because Nigeria has failed to prove herself independent rather the country is still lagging behind in its desired development agenda. A number of various indicators of the state of underdevelopment appeared to be looming across the nation with poverty, hunger, illiteracy, unemployment, nepotism, regionalism and irresponsible citizens as major hindrances to Nigeria's growth and development. Development in its entirety implies creating the skills and capacity to do things, greater freedom, self-confidence, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and mutual well-being (Anyebe, 2001).

Nigeria has faced, however, numerous challenges in achieving sustainable development since independence in 1960 in spite of its abundant human and natural resources. The issue of resource control has brought about so many agitations. We have had at least eight revenue sharing formulas for determining how the national cake should be shared among the three tiers of government. Baking the national cake has shown that the sharing and distribution of resources has overshadowed the production processes. The question in our lips now is why the sharing of the cake more important to us than how it is baked?

The earlier we diversify our economy the more balance we are economically towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) realization. In the discussion of underdevelopment, it is pertinent to state that there are various features common to all nations, including Nigeria. These features include; low per capita income, primary products, weak currency, colonial experience, technological backwardness, high level of illiteracy, high level of unemployment, high debt rate, mono-cultural economy, underdeveloped natural resources, lack of enterprise and

initiative, insufficient capital equipment and general poverty amongst others as the possible characteristics noticeable in the world of underdevelopment.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The aged-long underdevelopment status of Nigeria as an independent nation has arguably not yet paved way for sustainable economic growth and development. This may be as a result of the inability and failure of the nation's resource managers or nation buildings to be remorseful in their conducts to overcome their endemic problem, which has become a battle yet to be won. Leadership in Nigeria has become the most difficult task, unable to steer the state affairs with genuine intentions that will positively affect socio-economic and political well-being of the nation. What makes Nigerians to be more interested in sharing the national cake than how to bake the nation's resources for development to thrive? Is Nigeria a country without founding fathers that has no development agenda since its birth in 1914? Why are the Nigerian masses in the face of abundant human and natural resources lack basic amenities and infrastructural facilities?

Objectives of the Study

This paper specifically achieved the following objectives:

- Explored reasons why Nigeria has remained underdeveloped.
- Discussed the common features and theories of underdevelopment
- Identified obstacles of development and national development plan
- Recommended ways and further steps that will take Nigeria to its launching pads of development.

METHODOLOGY

The method adopted in this paper is essentially qualitative using content analysis design, exclusively drawn from secondary sources of data collection. The method is derived from documentary evidences and library research works of different submissions, relevant to theories of underdevelopment. The method relied on the use of library research on published materials which includes; books, journals, internet, newspapers and other publication.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Review of Related Literature

Rodney (1973), in this classic work titled: "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa," postulated that underdevelopment explains a particular relations of exploitation, the exploitation of a country by another. According to the author, all the countries named as underdeveloped in the world were exploited by others. And the underdevelopment with which the world today is pre-occupied is a product of imperialist capitalist and colonial exploitation.

Frank (1969), in his study of the history of Latin American's underdevelopment, discovered that underdevelopment was not an original or traditional state of the Latin American society. Kamar (2008) in Frank (1969) viewed capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America as at the time when it began to slide into backwardness as soon as it had contact with international capitalist economy. The central-though of Frank's work is his argument that the stronger tie between the satellite and the metropolis, the greater underdevelopment of the societies.

Amin (1976) in Kamar (2008) emphasized that the development of capitalism in the centre (Europe) produces underdevelopment in the periphery (third world countries). According to him, the spread of capitalism constraint internal structure as the periphery society exists primarily to satisfy the requirement of the centre whilst their economies not only manifest uneven productivity and its disarticulated pricing but also prevents the development of a national capitalist class. According to Obiajulu and Obi (2004) based on Affiong (1980), Africa and Asia have been taken over directly or indirectly, by the capitalist power of Europe. When this happened, exploration increased through slave trade, colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism and the export surplus value ensued depriving the society of the benefits of its natural resources and labour. In brief, underdevelopment means that people of other nations stopped the process of development in other nations through exploitation and this has given rise to dependency, inequality, abject poverty, and backwardness in those countries which had suffered this century of exploitation and human degradation.

It has been argued that Nigeria has no indigenous founding fathers apart from British whose quest was to satisfy colonial economy interest in 1914.

The total export of southern protectorate was 4,000,000 pound sterling in 1914, while the total export of Northern protectorate was 373,000 pound sterling. (Eugene & Tunon, 2014). Legendary Harold Smith speaks about Nigeria Hidden Agenda on Ben TV thus;

“When General Frederick Lugard was asked what type of country he wanted to achieve by joining the Southern and Northern protectorates considering the huge religious, educational and economic disparity between the two zones? Lugard was quoted as saying word to the effect that he did not know, but what when Nigeria is 100 years old (1914-2014), Nigerians will decide what to do with Nigeria”. (Tunon, 2014:112).

The author, Harold Smith is not new in Nigerian history. He is one of the architects of colonial foundation that midwifed Nigerian independence in 1960. The paper is however, hypothetical of the view that development is a thing of the mind and interest. Nigeria as a nation state could develop its potentiality if it so desired through showing the political will among her leaders and followers (citizens). The paper further observed that America, the world power today and other African countries were once under the colonies of their colonial masters but have distinguished themselves against all odds and have taken the lead in its quest to develop, and development has taken it proper shape or is gradually waxing stronger in those countries. Asian Tigers have equally taken their opportunities to attain development as well as some Latin American countries such as Brazil. By contrast, it would be appropriate to point out that, Ethiopia which was never colonized is not the richest country in Africa. Similarly, South Africa which was the last strongholds of colonialism in Africa is not the poorest African country. Consequently, the notion that colonialism status and economic progress are incompatible is patently untrue (Isokun, 2005).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The most important use of theoretical framework in any research is the logical connection of the theory. This paper anchored on dependency theory. By dependency, it means the economic development of a state in terms of the external influence through political, economic and cultural implications on national development policies, resulting from leadership and systematic failures. The economic activity in the richer countries often led to serious economic problem in the poorer countries; poor countries exported primary commodities to the rich countries who then convert them into finished products for onward sale to the poorer countries. For instance, Nigeria’s exporting earnings from its crude oil

added no value to the products. This leads to unfavourable balance of trade and payment and further impoverishes the power countries. Poorer countries should instead embark on programmes of import substitution so that they need not purchase the manufactured products from the rich countries. In Nigeria for instance, the government's inability to build more and maintain functional refineries to refine its primary products of crude oil within the country has brought us many untold hardship. The method of exporting crude oil outside of this country and importing its refined products is an idea in retrospect. Also for Nigeria to be industrialized, it must have a high mass consumptions of iron and steel by maintaining functional Iron and Steel companies across the country and not to rely on other countries for supply. The Nigerian Iron and Steel Companies have gone moribund and comatose.

Thus, underdevelopment may not be backwardness so to say but intentional downward development. In this sense, Nigeria as an independent nation would remain impoverished if it continued to rely and depend on other so-called developed nations for social, cultural, political and economic exploration and development. The economic and political interest of an industrialized country determined their development or underdevelopment, the goal are superimposed (Vincent, 1950).

Development Theories

There are so many theories of underdevelopment; these include:

1. Modernization theory
2. Dualism theory
3. Strategy theory
4. Theory of balanced growth
5. Theory of stages growth

For the purpose of this paper, the following theories shall be briefly explained.

Modernization Theory (Backwardness Theory)

According to modernization theory, internal factors in the countries such as illiteracy, tradition agrarian structure, the traditional attitude of the population, the low division of labour, the lack of communication and infrastructure, etc are responsible for underdevelopment. Consequently, a change of these indigenous factors is the strategy for development. The industrialized countries are the model for economy and society, and these

models will be reached sooner or later. The modernization of the apparatus, capital aid, transfer of knowhow, are the stage of industrialized countries. Development is seen as an increase of production and efficiency and measured primarily by comparing per capital income.

Dualism Theory

Dualism theory assumed a split of economic and social structures of different sectors so that they differ in organization, level of development, and goal structures, the traditional subsistence sector consists of small-scale agriculture handicraft and petty trade has a high degree of labour intensity but low capital and little division of labour. The modern sector of capital intensive industry and plantation agriculture produces for the world market with a capital intensive mode of production with a high division of labour. The two sectors have little relation and interdependence and develop each according to its own pattern.

Strategy Theory

Underdevelopment from the view point of this theory is the result of vicious circle of factors. One example is based on the fact of low labour productivity, in turn, is a consequence of capital shortage which is a result of the population's low saving ability. As the saving rate is determined by the low real income, the circle is closed. Strategy theory intends to breakup this cycle as a certain point which they consider critical and which varies according to the different theories. Thus, they want to initiate development and transform traditional subsistence economy into a modern market economy. Their main emphasis is on capital formation and investment (investment theories) and by and large, they prescribe action for overcoming underdevelopment while they contribute little towards explaining the causes of underdevelopment.

Theory of Balanced Growth

This theory sees the main obstacles of development in the narrow market and thus, in the limited market opportunities. Under this circumstance, only a bundle of complementary investments realized at the same time has the chance of creating mutual demand.

The real bottleneck in breaking the narrow markets is seen here in the shortage of capital and therefore, all potential sources have to be mobilized. If capital is available, investment will be made. However in order to ensure the balanced growth, there is a need for investment

planning by the governments. Development is seen here as expansion market and increase of production including agriculture.

Theory of Stages of Growth

This theory tries to explain the long-term processes of economic development from the view point of economic history by describing five ideal types of stages through which all societies pass through according to Anyebe (2001). Thus:

- i. The traditional society which has more than 75 percent of the population engaged in food production and political power is in the hands of land-owners or of a central authority supported by the army and civil servants.
- ii. The transitional stage creates the preconditions for take-off by bringing about radical changes in the non-industrial sectors. Export of raw materials gain momentum, a new class of businessmen emerges; and the idea of economic progress coming from outside spreads through the elites.
- iii. The take-off stage brings sharp increase in the rate of investment in the per-capita output. This stage of industrial revolution is accompanied by radical changes in the production techniques. Expansion takes place in a small group of leading sectors at first and on the social side is accompanied by the domination for the modern section of society over the traditional one.
- iv. The drive to maturity brings a spread of growth from the leading to the sectors and a broader application modern technology followed by necessary changes in the society at large.
- v. The stage of high mass consumption can be reached after attaining a certain level of national income and formulating an economic policy giving priority to increase private consumption. The critical phase for development is the take-off stage during which net investment rates has increase from 5 to 10 percent of the national product and during which political, social and institutional framework has to be built in order to reach a situation of self-sustained growth. The financial resource must be accumulated internally by higher savings rates. Income distribution favoring classes and strata which are willing and able to use capital more productivity than others has the same effects.

Obstacles to Development

Many factors usually in combination impinged on development efforts. The causes of underdevelopment in developing countries may include; civil disturbance and political decadence, natural calamity and nepotism. In specific term, the following among others can be said to be the factors responsible or impinging development in Nigeria. These include dispersal of resource, lack of discipline, in adequate preparatory work, lack of supervision and lastly administrative and procedural delays. (Kamar,2008). The plate below further elucidated the State by State economic description of the Nigeria State in the 21st century. It showed that poverty and corruption are at the height of impact in virtually all the 36 States in the country. Hence, development in real sense does not take place in a society choked by such economic situation.

THE STATE OF NIGERIAN STATES					
STATE	OOSC	DR. RATIO	POVERTY	LONGEVITY	CORRUPTION
ABIA	91,548	1: 4,176	30.67%	52	27.2%
ADAMAWA	227,123	1: 27,334	75.41%	43	40.7%
AKWA- IBOM	581,800	1: 7,899	26.82%	51	30.9%
ANAMBRA	118,314	1: 5,482	14.78%	48	23.8%
BAUCHI	354,373	1: 33,817	61.53%	45	24.4%
BAYELSA	53,079	1: 4,527	22.61%	50	28.7%
BENUE	252,037	1: 9,894	32.90%	47	34.3%
BORNO	330,389	1: 12,684	*	43	24.7%
CROSS RIVER	97,919	1: 5,710	36.29%	54	35.8%
DELTA	145,996	1: 4,731	6.02%	49	29.4%
EBONYI	145,373	1: 6,197	79.76%	48	36.0%
EDO	140,798	1: 1,454	11.99%	50	38.1%
EKITI	50,945	1: 6,513	28.04%	53	23.6%
ENUGU	82,051	1: 1,867	58.13%	52	31.4%
FCT	52,972	1: 1,390	38.66%	52	28.6%
GOMBE	162,000	1: 14,130	62.31%	48	45.5%
IMO	275,890	1: 11,683	28.86%	53	17.6%
JIGAWA	337,861	1: 29,701	87.02%	47	18.5%
KADUNA	524,670	1: 4,634	43.48%	45	28.2%
KANO	989,234	1: 14,123	55.08%	47	18.9%
KATSINA	536,122	1: 54,897	56.42%	49	35.4%
KEBBI	244,000	1: 29,547	50.17%	52	30.4%
KOGI	124,290	1: 12,876	28.51%	46	47.9%
KWARA	84,247	1: 3,055	20.35%	52	33.6%
LAGOS	254,654	1: 1,765	4.50%	49	35.1%
NASARAWA	187,000	1: 13,001	57.30%	50	27.3%
NIGER	292,700	1: 14,443	66.11%	50	28.5%
OGUN	244,427	1: 5,881	9.32%	53	29.5%
ONDO	317,700	1: 7,111	12.52%	52	21.0%
OSUN	165,114	1: 4,350	8.52%	52	29.2%
OYO	418,900	1: 2,824	9.83%	51	35.6%
PLATEAU	335,865	1: 3,863	55.05%	46	20.6%
RIVERS	188,590	1: 3,788	23.91%	47	43.0%
SOKOTO	436,570	1: 8,613	87.73%	50	21.2%
TARABA	499,923	1: 15,785	87.72%	47	39.1%
YOBE	427,230	1: 12,271	72.34%	44	25.2%
ZAMFARA	422,214	1: 39,179	73.98%	50	33.7%

OOSC – Universal Basic Education Commission, 2018 (UBEC)
DR Ratio – Statistical Report on Men and Women, 2017 (NBS)
Poverty – Poverty and Inequality Index, 2019 (NBS)
Longevity – National Multidimensional Poverty Index, 2018 (NAMPI)
Corruption – Corruption in Nigeria, 2019 (NBS)

StatiSense
Data Intelligence (Advanced Analytics)

Why the various National Development Plans in Nigeria failed to succeed

The obvious reasons behind the existence of development gaps in Nigerian state could be attributed to the following problems to include; inadequate statistical data, corruption, lack of plan discipline, lack of cultural integration in government policies an plans and flaws in the strategies adopted by the government, especially in rural infrastructure among others. Nigeria has formulated five notable National Development Plans, four (4) rolling plans such as: (i) vision 2010, (ii) National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) (iii) Vision

20:2020 (iv) 7-points Agenda and the transformation agenda of Jonathan Administration and now, the Buhari's Economic Recovery Plan. Efforts to define a suitable framework for socio-political and economic development, has seen the emergence of not less than five (5) national plans from 1960 to date yet, various development plans has suffer setbacks because of lack of continuity and inconsistency in policies and programmes of successive government, indiscipline and systemic failure as some of the major reasons for the failures.

The first national plan was between 1962 and 1968, followed by the second development plan 1970 to 1974 aimed at accelerating post war reconstruction. The third national development plan 1975 to 1980 tried to jump-start industries through the strategy of import substitution. The fourth and fifth national development plans were launched in 1981-1985 and 1986-date respectively. A subsequent national rolling plan was instituted between 1990 and 1992 to consolidate the achievement of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and to address the problems that still hindered economic development. Vision 2020 was yet another development plan that has become a mirage. All the above development-plans were brilliantly formulated but suffered from deficiency of scope, poor implementation, budgetary indiscipline and general corruption.

According to Kamar (2008), the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) launched in 2003 as one of the key Economic Policies of Obasanjo's Administration, which is set out to create about 700,000 jobs over a period of seven (7) years to reduce poverty, increase empowerment generation and also to decelerate inflation through the stabilization of the exchange rate failed short to realize its objectives. Because some problems envisaged in the NEEDS documents showed that it has failed to spell out for instance how the 700,000 jobs will be created. Are these jobs to be created by the three tiers of government, the private sectors or some foreign investors? The blue print also failed to specify the stages of implementation. The issue of sustaining growth is one of the major problems of confronting our nation. Despite being a signatory to the commission for Africa and the United National Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with the focus on halting poverty and hunger, infant mortality, illiteracy, provision of food and shelter by 2015; on current trends, Nigeria has not only missed all the MDGs by 2015, but also would likely take another 50 years to reduce the

high level of poverty and hunger in the country despite the introduction of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

CONCLUSION

This paper highlights the visible failure of Nigeria as an independent nation to work towards breaking the jinx of underdevelopment in the face of abundant resources; that the sharing and distribution of the nation's resources are keenly contested with so many agitations. Our inability to find equality with our peers since the political independence over 50 years now is seen as self-inflicted injury. The various theories of underdevelopment reviewed further shown that the leadership and the people of a particular nation are capable of changing the fortunes of their nation with a focus development plans that is geared towards sustainable growth and development which is lacking in the Nigeria context.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a way of taking Nigeria to its launching pads of development, the following recommendations are put forward by the study.

- The Nigerian leadership and citizenship must develop the political will and shock absorbers to narrow the wide gulf between our country and other developed nations of the world.
- The government should take steps to undo the common attributes of cultural rigidity, poor leadership, plan indiscipline and corruption in our body polity.
- Every development obstacle should be removed in every given environment freed from civil disturbances, political decadence, natural calamities and nepotism.
- For vision 20:2020 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be realistic, government should imbibe the culture of discipline in planning and to develop and build both human and institutional capacity to the fullest with all sense of political will and commitment.
- The government of Nigeria should phase-out her aged-long singled mono-cultural economy through the diversification of economy to guarantee balanced development in all sectors and to improve equitable distribution of the nation's resources to all and sundry.
- Nigeria as a nation state with abundant resources must work assiduously to engender the culture of discipline, patriotism and selfless service as it relate to issue of public affairs and services.

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