

Nigeria's Priority Requirement: Good Leaders or Good Institutions

Mohammed Kachalla^{1*} and Umar Mustapha²

¹Department of Social Studies

²Department of Public Administration

College of Education and Legal Studies, Nguru

*Corresponding author: mohammedkachalla3785@gmail.com 08037855509

Abstract

The phenomenon of leadership and good governance has assumed greater interest in Africa. Good leaders globally guide governments of nation-state to perform effectively for their citizens. The paper explores that, good leaders provides their citizens with a sense of belonging to national enterprises to which everyone can be proud. The paper also emphasizes that good leaders produce results in terms of enhanced standard of living, basic development indicators, and abundant new resources of personal opportunity, enhanced schooling, and skilled medical care, freedom from crime and strengthened infrastructure. The paper adopts Desk Research as its instrument of data collection and Transformational Leadership Theory as its theoretical framework with a view to assess, critique, and indicate the Nigeria's priority requirement in respect of good leaders and good institutions. The study observed that, lack of target/vision, endemic corruption, employment and federal character issues, lack of self-confidence are the major problems bedeviling qualitative leadership in Nigeria. Hence, the Nigeria's priority requirement is good leader's not good institutions. The paper recommended that, there is a need for flexible and dynamic, genuine and sincere leaders who are pragmatic in their approach to things for better leadership delivery and services to peoples.

Keywords: *Priority Requirement, Leadership, Institutions*

Introduction

The concept of governance and leadership are intertwined. Good governance and leadership is critical for the achievement of results. It is often said that no country can develop beyond the level of its leadership. The quest for good leadership and good governance in Africa are two key elements that will ensure that Africa is a worthy, respectable and net-contributing player in the global arena. The phenomenon of leadership and good governance has assumed greater interest in Africa. Good leaders globally guide governments of nation-states to perform effectively for their citizens. The central idea behind leadership is to influence members of group or society in a bid to achieve set goals. It goes without saying that we must avoid the devastating consequences of the nineteenth century scramble for Africa- its partition and balkanization. Leadership is essential to improved governance. Good leaders globally guide Governments of nation-states to perform effectively for their citizens. They deliver high security for the state and the persons, a functioning rule of law, education, health, and the frame work conducive for economic growth. (Keohane and Nye, 1989)

The paper adopts Desk Research as its instrument of data collection and Transformational Leadership Theory as its theoretical framework with a view to assess, critique, and indicate the Nigeria's priority requirement in respect of good leaders and good institutions.

The Concept of Leadership

Efforts to understand leadership and its components have been on for many years. In the 1980s, the focus of studies was on investigating and comprehending the initiation of leadership structures in varied contexts and the examination of contingency models. During the 1990s, there was a shift to understanding the elements of leadership such as charisma, transformational attributes, vision, ethics of leadership and motivation. The late 1990s saw

a movement towards the examination of team, strategic and global leadership and concepts of followership. Now, over 30 years later, with numerous studies of leadership, there is better understanding of what makes leadership, its measurement, ethical and unethical behavior, contextual variables and people's perception of leadership in varied contexts. Several scholars have expressed varied views about leadership. According to Avolio, Sosik, Jung and Berson (2003), leadership is "a social influence process that can occur at the individual, dyadic, group, or strategic level, where it can be shared within a top management team". Katz and Kahn (1978) subscribed to a leadership definition encompassing incremental influence that is over and above that required to be consistent with the normal directive of an organization. Bryman (1996) synthesizing previous descriptions of leadership suggested that the hallmark of leadership is the presence of social influence where a person inspires or motivates other members of a group to attain specific group goals and objectives. Another definition posited that leadership is a concept realized in a process where one or more persons successfully frames or defines the reality of other people (Smircich & Morgan, 1982). Leadership is the ability of an individual or a group of people to influence and guide followers or members of an organization, society or team. According to Jacob & Jacques (1990) "Leadership is a process of giving purpose (meaningful direction) to collective effort, and causing willing effort to be expended to achieve collective purpose." The implication of this definition is that, leadership has to do with the ability of the leader to show the right path to the group or people he leads and to be able to make them see the need to go the way he wants them to go.

Leadership, according to Dessler (2000) is "expected to mobilize all the resources towards establishing goals in the most economic and profitable manner". Asubiojo et al. (2005) defined leadership as the art of exerting special

Nigeria's Priority Requirement: Good Leaders or Good Institutions".

influence on people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards achievement of group goals. This special influence lies in the charisma of a leader, which makes the followers to carry out their responsibilities without being forced in anyway. Wong (2007) describes a leader as “a person who influences a group of people towards the achievement of a goal.”

Leadership in the opinion of Kazim (2004) is “the focus of activity through which the goals and objectives of the organisation are accomplished.” It involves influencing or directing people’s efforts toward the achievement of some specific goals and objectives at minimum cost. Leading others is done through guide, conduct, direct contact and precedence having considered people’s feelings, likes, dislikes, desires and customs. It is not just an impromptu task but an ability to influence others to work willingly toward achieving team’s set goals. Ojikutu (2008) says: “A leader must see self as first among equals; realize that leadership only succeeds when you carry your subordinates along. It is a team work, and everybody from the one at the top to the lowest in rank in organisation has vital role to play. To succeed as a leader, you must be ready to carry others along with you.”.

Characteristics of Effective Leadership

The characteristics of effective leadership are stated as follows:

Honesty and Integrity

Integrity is the practice of being honest and showing a consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles and values. Integrity is regarded as honesty, truthfulness and accuracy in one’s actions. When the leaders attain leadership positions, they aspire to retain this position. In retaining their jobs and in incurring the feeling of job satisfaction, it is apparent that they need to possess efficient knowledge in terms of their job duties and implement the characteristics of

honesty and integrity. These characteristics focus upon imparting factual information. Even if the factual information is not soothing, still the leaders form the viewpoint that they will be truthful and honest throughout their jobs with the other individuals. Therefore, it is comprehensively understood that the characteristics of honesty and integrity are worthwhile and meaningful to augment effectiveness in the leadership functions.

Confidence

Confidence is referred to the feeling or belief that one can have faith or rely on someone or something. It is the belief in oneself. It is the conviction that one has to meet the challenges and difficulties. Being confident requires the realistic sense of the capabilities and feeling secure in that knowledge. The leaders need to ensure that they possess efficient knowledge in terms of their job duties. In addition, they need to be confident enough in terms of the knowledge and implement them in a wise and productive manner. The leaders need to ensure they impart information to their subordinates as well in terms of ways of up-grading their confidence levels and overcoming apprehensiveness and vulnerability.

Skills and Abilities

It is apparent that leaders need to possess skills and abilities to carry out their job duties well and earn reverence and admiration from other members of the organization. The different types of skills, which the leaders need to possess are communication skills, time management skills, leadership skills, problem solving skills, analytical skills, critical thinking skills, presentation skills, decision making skills, technical skills, work ethics, and conflict resolution methods. These are the skills, which need to be put into operation throughout one’s jobs. Furthermore, the leaders need to generate information and put into practice the methods and approaches to up-grade these skills throughout their jobs. The leaders also in some

Nigeria’s Priority Requirement: Good Leaders or Good Institutions”.

cases get enrolled in educational institutions and training centers to up-grade their skills and abilities, particularly when they need to up-grade their confidence levels and carry out their job duties well.

Commitment and Passion

The commitment is referred to dedicating oneself to something. Before one makes commitment, one has to think carefully and put into operation effective and meaningful approaches and methods. Commitment obligates the leaders to do something. Passion is referred to one of those words that individuals often make use of without understanding the actual meaning of this word. Passion is having strong emotions reflecting an intense desire or boundless enthusiasm. In performing well in one's jobs and in achieving organizational goals and objectives, the leaders need to be committed and passionate towards the implementation of responsibilities and duties. In honing the characteristics of commitment and passion, the leaders need to be well-aware in terms of strategies and approaches. They need to impart them to their subordinates as well. The various ways of augmenting commitment and passion are, empowering and helping others, being confident in judgment and decisions, learning something new, setting of routine, staying inspired, staying accountable, revising goals on a frequent basis, observing the major picture, generating awareness in terms of various areas and making wise and productive decisions.

Accountability

The leaders are accountable in terms of their job duties and responsibilities. Leadership defines culture and if the members of the organization aspire to create a culture of accountability, it initiates with the leaders and are passed on to other members of the organization as well. Accountability is not one-time, but it is an all the time aspect. The leaders are all the time looking for opportunities. When they will acquire more opportunities, they will be

accountable in terms of them. When the leaders accept accountability, they understand and accept the consequences of their actions in areas in which they assume responsibility. For instance, a leader is required to work on a project and complete it within a specified time. In such cases, he will devote time towards it and ensure it is completed within the specified time frame. Therefore, it can be stated, the leader is accountable for the project as well as other job duties, which they need to put into operation. When the leaders understand the meaning and significance of accountability, they will be able to bring about changes and implement the job duties in an efficacious manner.

Delegation and Empowerment

Delegation is the assignment of any authority to another person, normally from a manager to a subordinate to carry out specific activities. It is one of the core concepts of management leadership. In an organization, a manager is expected to do all the work, so the job duties are delegated to the subordinates and along with the delegation of work, there is also a delegation of authority so that the subordinates can accomplish their tasks. The person, who is delegated the work is accountable for the outcomes. Empowerment is the power or authority given to someone to do something. It is the process to becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights. Through empowerment opportunities, there is an increase in autonomy and self-determination among individuals to represent their interests in a responsible and self-determined way through acting on their own authority.

Creativity and Innovation

With advancements taking place and with the advent of modernization and globalization, there is a need to bring about creativity and innovation in the implementation of tasks and functions. In all types of organizations, creativity is recognized and members are making use of modern, technical and

Nigeria's Priority Requirement: Good Leaders or Good Institutions".

pioneering methods in the implementation of job duties. Creativity is referred to imagination or original ideas to create something. It is a phenomenon, whereby something new or somehow valuable is informed. Innovation is the implementation of something new. Invention is the creation of something that has never been made before and is recognized as the product of some distinctive vision. When creativity and innovation are to be put into operation, the leaders need to work in collaboration with the other members of the organization as well. The individuals need to discuss various ideas and perspectives and make a decision. Therefore, the characteristics of creativity and innovation require the leaders and other members to work in collaboration and integration with each other.

Empathy

Empathy is referred to the ability to understand the feelings of others as if one is having themselves. Within the organizations, the employees are in some cases overwhelmed by number of problems and difficulties. These may relate to the job duties, infrastructure, amenities and facilities, technologies, tools and materials, other individuals, pay and reimbursements, and overall working environmental conditions. When one or more of these problems become impediments within the course of implementation of job duties and achievement of goals and objectives, they need to report to the leaders. The leaders need to understand the feelings and problems of others and provide them solutions. The leaders need to understand that employees have personal responsibilities as well, which they need to pay attention to. Hence, when they are assigning them job duties, they need to provide sufficient time, so they are able to complete them in a manageable manner.

Resilience

Resilience is referred to the capacity to recover in a rapid manner from problems and difficulties. It is apparent that in all types of

organizations, the leaders will want that all the members are implementing their job duties satisfactorily, there are availability of sufficient resources, there are not occurrence of any types of barriers, the employees are well-aware in terms of goals and objectives, there is mutual understanding and overall functioning of the organization takes place in an effectual manner. When there are occurrence of any problems and difficulties, the leaders as well as the other members need to inculcate the characteristic of resilience to cope up with them and prevent them from assuming a major form. In the augmentation of this characteristic, the leaders need to be well-aware in terms of measures and approaches. These are necessary in the implementation of this characteristic in an appropriate manner in accordance to the needs and requirements of the members and organization as a whole. Resilience is defined as the process of adapting well during the time of adversity, trauma, threats or significant sources of stress (Building Your Resilience, 2012), such as, lack of resources, tedious job duties, inability to complete the target on time, health problems and illnesses, and so forth.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is referred to the ability to monitor one's own and the emotions of other individuals. When the emotions are monitored, then some of the negative emotions are also experienced in some cases. But measures are formulated to cope up with them in an efficacious manner. The emotional intelligence is regarded as one of the significant characteristics, which the leaders need to put into operation throughout their jobs. This characteristic will prove to be beneficial to them to a major extent. Some of the benefits include, self-awareness, self-regulation, self-evaluation, internal motivation, empathy, social skills, thinking abilities, ability to cope with psychological problems, forming cordial terms and relationships with others, and generating awareness in terms of various areas.

Nigeria's Priority Requirement: Good Leaders or Good Institutions".

Humility

This is comprehensively understood that individuals will be able to augment their career prospects, achieve personal and professional goals and enrich their overall quality of lives, when they will depict humility. Humility is referred to the quality of having a modest or low view in terms of one's importance. In other words, the individuals have low self-regard and a sense of unworthiness. In organizations, when the leaders depict humility, they do not give credit to themselves for achievements, but to others. When the job duties have been carried out in a satisfactory manner and have proven to be valuable and beneficial for the entire organization, the leaders will acknowledge the efforts and contributions of the employees. When the leaders are appreciated, they normally do not express willingness in listening to their appreciation. Hence, depiction of the characteristic of humility is worthwhile in achieving the desired goals and objectives and augmenting the overall structure of the organization.

Transparency

The characteristic of transparency in leadership is referred to comprehensibility and lucidity (Rouse, 2020). The leaders have number of job duties to perform. They need to pay attention towards all the job duties and responsibilities and ensure, they are put into operation in an efficacious and well-ordered manner. The leaders need to put into operation time management skills and are able to take out sufficient time for all tasks and functions. The tasks are usually carried out in accordance to their priorities. The tasks, which are more important are carried out first, whereas, the tasks, which are less important are procrastinated. The identification of the characteristic of transparency will enable the leaders to create openness between them and their subordinates. This is an ongoing process, which can have ongoing results. Therefore, not

only the leaders, but other members of the organization too need to put it into operation in an effectual and meaningful manner.

Vision and Purpose

Vision and purpose are regarded as important areas in terms of which all individuals need to be aware (Vision, 2020). Within organizations, the various aspects that needs to be taken into account such as, management of resources, implementation of job duties, formulation of laws, policies and rules need to be in accordance to vision and purpose. When the organizations are established, they formulate vision and purpose, but with advancements taking place and initiation of modern, technical, pioneering and scientific methods, there are transformations made in vision and purpose. When transformations take place in vision and purpose, there are changes taking places in other aspects as well. These, are, management of human, financial, technical, and material resources, implementation of job duties and responsibilities, formulation of laws, policies and procedures and the overall working environmental conditions. The leaders need to communicate with their subordinates on regular basis and impart them information in terms of all types of changes that have taken place. Therefore, vision and purpose are regarded as important characteristics on the basis of which, the job duties of leaders and other members are focused upon.

Teamwork

Within all types of organizations, the leaders encourage the employees to work in teams. Teamwork is referred to way of working with each person, committed and working towards the common goal. Hence, the leaders need to put emphasis upon building teamwork skills of the individuals. The members of the team, work in co-ordination and integration with each other and stay committed towards the achievement of desired goals. The main reason being, when the employees work in teams, they are able to benefit in number of ways. Some of the ways

Nigeria's Priority Requirement: Good Leaders or Good Institutions".

are, obtaining support and assistance from others in the implementation of job duties, promoting mutual understanding, developing various types of skills and they are able to exchange ideas and viewpoints in providing solutions to their problems. Through teamwork, the leaders are able to convey the information to the employees that they need to form constructive viewpoints and accept other castes, cultures, religious backgrounds, ethnicities and so forth. A teamwork environment promotes an atmosphere that fosters friendship and loyalty. These close-knit relationships develop motivation among the employees to work diligently and conscientiously and make provision of support and assistance to each other.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopted the Transformational Leadership Theory as its theoretical framework. Transformational leadership is defined as a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing followers into leaders. Enacted in its authentic form, transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the follower's sense of identity and self to the mission and the collective identity of the organization; being a role model for followers that inspires them; challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers, so the leader can align followers with tasks that optimize their performance.

Leadership and Governance in Nigeria (An Overview)

The success or failure of governance in any regime in power is basically determined by the quality of leadership of such administration.

Nigeria, a nation endowed with abundant national and human resources still battles with leadership debacle and governance after sixty-three years of independence. Nigeria had on 1st October 2023 just celebrated its 63rd year of independence. Her 100 years amalgamation celebration was witnessed in 2014. The question here is how the nation stands in the context of the leader-follower development relationship. What could have been the major problem(s)? What could have caused this stagnancy? The most critical challenge confronting the giant of Africa – Nigeria, appears to be credible leadership. Many scholars at one time or the other have queried why Nigeria seems to find it difficult to address her perennial leadership problems inspite of abundant human and material resources available at her disposal. Some have argued that leadership challenge of the country could be traced from the emergence of colonial misadventure in Nigeria, while others dismissed such argument on the basis that corruption and lack of vision among past and present leaders of Nigeria culminate to hamper any meaningful effort in the quest for good governance in the country (Chris and Otu, 2012). Therefore, the major problem of Nigeria is bad leadership resulting to poor governance, decayed infrastructure and epidemic corruption such that politicians and public office holders as well as private organizations chieftains steal/divert public funds with impunity and get away with it safe for the nation's weakened judicial system and the 'bull-dog' anti-corruption agencies (Bola, 2015).

The trouble with Nigeria, as Chinua Achebe (1983:1) rightly observed is simply a failure of leadership.

Braithwaite (2009) observes that: "Our country has overborne beyond tolerable limits the weight of merciless and corrupt leadership throughout the length and breadth of the land." The Punch (2012 a) quoted Maitama Sule as saying: "Justice should be done to whoever deserves it, irrespective of his religion, tribe,

Nigeria's Priority Requirement: Good Leaders or Good Institutions".

political inclination or position. If there is justice, there will be peace and stability. Peace and stability are the prerequisites of development.”

“It is the responsibility of government of Nigeria to put in place adequate legal and regulatory framework which will guarantee the rights of the citizens and secure their economic prosperity and development” (Oyeshola, 2008).

Thus, poor leadership is, therefore, responsible for poor service delivery to Nigerians. In Nigeria, we must begin to judge the success and failure of our leaders from their ability and vision in delivering their campaign promises to the people. The current crop of leaders in Nigeria are only interested in their pockets. Hence, they seem to have redefined what constitute leadership. Leadership must not only be selfless but also, the leader must be able to utilize judiciously the resources of the state in providing people-oriented and quality services in the state. By this, leadership must be viewed as service to the people. It is, therefore, imperative to state that noncompliance to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is the first step in judging our leaders. A visionary leader who desires to deliver quality services to the people must be willing to abide with the constitution he sworn to obey. This is succinct because, it is from the said constitution that he derived his powers (Chris and Otu, 2012).

Here are some of the major problems of leadership in Nigeria.

- i. Lack of target/vision. This has to do with poor focus, lack in good mission and directions to meeting organizational set goals. It is peculiar to our leaders in Nigeria because one who does not have good objectives/set goals will actually lack good planning, foresight and passion, and the organisation will be without any direction to succeed. For example,

Nigeria's Priority Requirement: Good Leaders or Good Institutions”.

attaining millennium development goals (MDGs) on reducing poverty, child and maternal mortality issues, vision 20:2020 and other related targets in Nigeria is still far. The end result of poor planning is failure. In the current dispensation, Nigeria could be said to be passing through a difficult leadership succession plan because political office distribution is attached to party affiliation and federal character, promoting mediocrity. “When you look at the people who are occupying leadership position in our country today, most of them don't have leadership skills and it is not an insult. It is not their fault, they were not taught” (Adeyemi, 2012).

- ii. Endemic Corruption: Diversion of Public Funds and Crude Oil Theft. The Nation (2014) quoted the Rivers State Governor Rotimi Amaechi as saying: “Our problem is not just oil theft, causing environmental degradation, which is costing this country to lose about \$7 billion a year, but financial diversion.” For instance, the shameless and brazen looting of the nation's treasury, with no regard for consequences, by all ranks and files in the corridors of power both in private and public sectors of Nigeria economy at the expense of socio-economic growth, is worrisome. Many infrastructural projects were either abandoned or poorly done while in most cases full payments had been made. This attitude often lead to loss of valuable assets, good infrastructure, skilled and dedicated human capital resources. Elaigwu (2006) says: “The country must return to the path of glory and

honor blazed by credible office holders whose watchword must be satisfactory performance in office through discernible and transparent contributions to its growth and development. The days of unbridled corruption and abuse of office should be put behind us while new eras of optimism and high sense of responsibility are ushered in.”

iii. Employment and Federal Character Issues. These entail the selection and appointment of unqualified/unskilled people to offices of leadership requiring experts/ professionals as a result of political and other various influences thereby putting wrong pegs into the right hole.

iv. Lack of Self-Confidence. A good peoples' leader must have the courage to touch the life of the led (followers) such that their hearts are submitted to and trust him/her (leader) in return reciprocally because without the people he/she cannot get credible results. Leadership is a trust. Maxwell (2007.b) writes: “Trust is the foundation of leadership which is a potent combination of strategy and character. Character makes trust possible. And trust makes leadership possible. That is the Law of Solid Ground.” But Fagge (2014) affirms that “there is no sincerity of purpose in our leaders. We cannot trust them. The scandals that are taking place in Nigeria, if it happens elsewhere in sane climes heads will roll but they are covered up in here.” It is pertinent at this juncture that “we need disciplined people in our national life to be able to move (the nation) forward by turning things around even in

the private sector economy. Good leadership is critical to the resolution of our ‘Nigeria’ problems” (Saturday Tribune, 2011). “All hands must be on the deck if the ship of the state is not to sink” (Osuntokun, 2012).

However, in another development, Nigeria's defective leadership practices and weak democratic institutions have been blamed on the absence of sustained mutual relationship between good leaders and effective institution building processes. Leadership and development experts say Nigerians have continued to believe in the possibility of a strongman coming to fix the country in one go. This was largely the motivation for electing Muhammadu Buhari as Nigeria's president during the 2015 elections. The National Chairman of the ruling party, APC and former Governor of Kano State Abdullahi Umar Ganduje says there is need for symbiotic relationship between good leaders and strong institution to deliver national credibility and development as Nigeria struggles to build good leadership and strong institutions. Ganduje, who made this statement at the 2018 Annual National Management conference, also stated that good leaders build strong institutions to help them achieve national goals rather than personal objectives. “The existence of a strong, objectively analytical institution is likely to strengthen the hands of a courageous leader in order not to pander for emotive demands that are not in the long-term interests of the generality or majority of the citizenry”. The conference however charged strong leaders to rely on strong institutions rather than ‘strong men’ who tend to place their interests above national development goals. Olakunle Iyanda, president and chairman, Nigerian Institute of Management, gave some reasons why Nigeria needed to shift from reliance on strong men to strong institutions. In his words, “Strong men are human, and therefore mortal. Strong institutions are immortal and more enduring.

Nigeria's Priority Requirement: Good Leaders or Good Institutions”.

They are less susceptible to manipulation and corruption.” Being inanimate, effective institutions do not have personal ambitions that can lead to decisions that are motivated by base human drives that focus on self-serving and self-aggrandizing objectives. “We must therefore strive to build strong professional institutions, such as the National Assembly, the civil service, the security agencies, political parties, etcetera, that have helped many other nations to emerge within a short period from poverty to affluence and development,” he said (Jeremiah and Sandra, 2018).

Assessment

In assessing the leadership situation in Nigeria, Adejimi (2005) indicated that in Nigeria, most of the policy makers as well as those involved in decision making are engaged in bribery, egoism, power, and trade liberalization. They are distracted to an extent that they forget the nation’s policies aimed at improving the lives of people in the society. From the foregoing discussion, the relationship between leadership and development should be clear. Awolowo (1984) definitely said the obvious when he opined that: “The greatness of a nation (national development) does not consist in the abundance of its resources but in the quality of its people.” If the leaders have failed to give vision to the people, harness its resources, but instead are corrupt and become ‘instrumental leaders, it will be difficult, if not impossible for such a country like ours to develop.

Indication/Findings

Leadership has a lot to do with the required transformation in our daily activities, attitude to work, discipline and dignity of labor necessary to lead corrupt-free life, tackle poverty; reinforce social reintegration and promote justices which are keys for sustainable growth and development. There is a need for flexible

and dynamic, genuine and sincere leaders who are pragmatic in their approach to things.

Thus, from the above assessment, I hereby strongly indicate that Nigeria’s priority requirement is **Good Leaders**.

Conclusion

It is an axiom that Nigeria is richly endowed by providence with human and material resources critical for national development and advancement. However, since gaining political independence, Nigeria has continued to meander the path befitting failed, weak and “juvenile” states. A state that had very great prospects at independence and was touted to lead Africa out of the backwoods of underdevelopment and economic dependency, Nigeria is still stuck in the league of very poor, corrupt, underdeveloped, infrastructural decaying, crisis-riven, morally bankrupt and leadership-deficient countries. Rather than become an exemplar for transformational leadership, modern bureaucracy, national development, national integration and innovation, Nigeria seems to be infamous for whatever is mediocre, corrupt, insanely violent and morally untoward (David and Moses, 2013).

Thus, one cannot but agree with the position that Nigeria is a victim of poor leadership and convoluted systemic corruption which has become pervasive and cancerous in the country’s national life. This view has been held strongly in literature by scholars and writers who have identified the inexorable nexus between leadership crisis and corruption in the country as the continued reason for Nigeria’s inglorious economic throes, political convolutions and national underdevelopment. Current debates rest on the conclusion that Nigerian leadership suffers from extreme moral depravity and attitudinal debauchery (Agbor, 2011; Agbor, 2012; Ezirim, 2010; Ebegbulem, 2009; Ogbunwezeh, 2007). The crucial and major challenge confronting Nigeria and other developing countries of the world is leadership.

Nigeria’s Priority Requirement: Good Leaders or Good Institutions”.

The issue of getting the right leadership to propel good governance has been a recurring challenge in Nigeria and developing countries in general. The present and past leaders of Nigeria seem to have failed to provide quality leadership capable of addressing numerous challenges confronting the country. Governments are unable to set in place transparent and accountable institutions capable of securing economic progress, governing effectively, and protecting their citizens.

On a final note, the study reveals that Nigeria's priority requirement is **Good Leaders** rather than Good Institutions.

References

- Achebe, C. (1983). *The Trouble with Nigeria*: Enugu; Fourth Dimension Publishers
- Adejimi, A. (2005). *Optimizing Management of Design Process for Effective Maintenance of Public Building in Lagos State*. Lagos, Nigeria: University of Yaba Press.
- Adeyemi, S. (2012). Our Leaders Lack Leadership Skills. *TELL Magazine*, 17 December, 52-53.
- Agbor, U. I. (2011). Leadership attitude, development paradigms and Africa's development: The necessity of the Confucian ethics. *EBSU Journal of Social Sciences*, 1(2), pp. 90103.
- Agbor, U. I. (2012). Leadership Behaviour and the Crises of State Failure in Nigeria: Towards a Transformational Leadership Attitude for Addressing Nigeria's failing State. *Public Policy and Administration Research*, Vol.2, No.4.
- Asubiojo, E. A., Adewusi, C. O., & Oyediran, A. (2005). *Communication: Theory and practice*. Aseda Publishing. Brumbach
- Avolio, B. J., Sosik, J. J., Jung, D. I., & Berson, Y. (2003). *Leadership Models, Methods, and Applications*. In I. B. Weiner, W. C. Borman, D. R. Ilgen & R. J. Klimoski (Eds.). *Handbook of Psychology: Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (pp. 277-308). Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Awolowo, O. (1984). *Voice of Reason: Akure*; Fagbemi Publishers.
- Bola, A. (2015). Leadership Styles in Nigeria: Errors, Problems and Solutions. *Continental J. Social Sciences* 8 (2): 17-31, 2015
- Braithwaite, T. (2009). EFCC and the People's Revolution. *TELL Magazine*, 2 March, 52-53.
- Bryman, A. S. (1996). The importance of context: Qualitative research and the study of leadership. *Leadership Quarterly*, 7, 353-370.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Christ, I. N. and Out, D. (2012). Nigeria and the Challenges of Leadership in the 21st Century: A Critique. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 2, No. 13, July 2012
- David, I. and Moses, U. U. (2013). *Leadership Crises and Corruption in the Nigerian Public*

- Sector: An Albatross of National Development. The African Symposium, Vol. 13, No.1, ISSN: 2326-8077
- Dessler, G. C. (2000). *Management: Leading People and Organisation in the 21st century* (2nd Edition), New Jersey: Century Prentice Hall. pp. 201-209.
- Dike, V. (2013). "Leadership, Politics and Social Changes: Nigeria and the Struggle for Survival." (www.afbis.com/analysis/leadership.htm) Retrieved, 18/3/14
- Ejimabo N. O. (2013). *Understanding the Impact of Leadership in Nigeria: Its Reality, Challenges, and Perspectives*. SAGE Open April-June 2013: 1 –14
- Elaigwu, A.I. (2006). Why Nigeria's bad Leaders don't resign. *The Nation*, 30 October, 18.
- Emotional Intelligence in Leadership. (2020). Retrieved August 31, 2020 from mindtools.com
- Ezirim, G. E. (2010). Contextualizing Nigeria in the global state failure debate. www.unn.academia.edu Retrieved 1st August, 2012.
- Ebegbulem, J. C. (2009). Corruption and leadership crisis in Africa: Nigeria in focus. *Afroeuropa* 3, 2.
- Fagge, N. (2014). ASUU Raises the Alarm over Corruption in Nigeria. *Daily Independent*, 28 February, 2.
- Gwebu, T. (2012). "Botswana's Mining Path to Urbanization and Poverty Alleviation", *Journal Of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 30, 4.
- Hasan, S. (2019). Top 15 Leadership Qualities that Make Good Leaders (2020). Retrieved August 30, 2020 from blog.taskque.com
- Jacob, R. & Jacques, E. (1990). "Military Executive Leadership" in Clark, K. E. & Clark, M.B. (eds) *Measures of Leadership: Orange; Leadership Library of America. International Journal of Politics and Good Governance Volume VII, No. 7.1 Quarter I 2016 ISSN: 0976 – 1195*
- Jeremiah, M. and Sandra, O. (2018). Experts Say Good Leaders Need Strong Institutions To Achieve Set Goals. *Business Daily*
- Katz, D., & Kahn, R. L. (1978). *The Social Psychology of Organizations* (2nd ed.). New York: Wiley.
- Kazim, O. A. (2004). *Leadership: Elementary*. Lagos: Rabot Publishing Ltd. pp. 2-8
- Keohane, R. O. and Nye, J. S. (1989) *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*. New York. Boston: Little Brown.
- Maxwell, J. C. (2007. b). *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of leadership*. USA: Thomas Nelson Publishers.
- Njoku, M. G (ud). *Leadership Strategies For Nigeria*. JEL Classification, M54, 015

- Obama, D. E. (2016). Leadership and Development in Nigeria: A Critical Analysis. *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance*, Vol. VII, No. 7. 1 Quarter 1, 2016. ISSN: 0976-1195
- Ogbonnia, SKC. (2007). Political Parties and Effective Leadership: A Contingency Approach. Dissertation Submitted in partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of philosophy Applied Management and Decision Sciences. Walden University May 2007.
- Oggunwezeh, E. F. (2007). Nigeria: A Failed State in the Making. www.nathernielturner.com retrieved August 1, 2012.
- Ojikutu, S. (2008). A good Leader is a Chief Servant. *The Spectator*, 22-28 August, 5.
- Ologbenla, D. (2007). Leadership Governance and Corruption in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*. Vol.9 (3), 97-118.
- Osuntokun, J. (2012). Ahoy Nigeria: All Hands on Deck. *The Nation*, 5 January, 21.
- Oyeshola, D. (2008). Sustainable Development: Issues and Challenges for Nigeria. Ibadan. Nigeria: Daily Graphics Ltd. pp. 160-240.
- Rotberg, R. I. (2004) "Strengthening African Leadership: There is Another Way". *Foreign Affairs* 83, No. 4 July/August 2004.
- Rouse, M. (2020). Transparency. Retrieved August 31, 2020 from whatis.techtarget.com
- Saturday Tribune (2011). Poor Leadership Has Eluded Us For So Long. 23 July, 45.
- Smircich, L., & Morgan, G. (1982). Leadership: The management of meaning. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 18, 257-273.
- Taylor, I. (2002). "Botswana's Development State and the Politics of Legitimacy" (www.shef.ac.uk/uni/academic.N-Q/dev/papers/taylor/pdf) Retrieved 10/6/14
- The Nation (2014). Jonathan Not Serious about Fighting Corruption, Oil Theft. 26 February, 5.
- The Punch (2012). Nigerian Leaders Unjust. 9 December, 4.
- Ujo, A. (2001). Understanding public Administration, Kaduna. Anyaotu Enterprise and publishers, Nig. Ltd.
- Vision (2020). Retrieved August 31, 2020 from dictionary.com
- Wong, A.S.L. (2007). Leadership. Available from, <http://www.defineleadership.com>. (Accessed 2 September 2012).