

**EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN A TVET ERA:  
A CRITICAL DISCUSSION**

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**Abstract**

Leadership is one of the most important factors in achieving high level of developmental goals in any society. Therefore, the need for effective leadership should not be over emphasized. This paper examined effective leadership and National Development in a TVET Era. The specific objectives were to x-ray the concepts of leadership and National development and strategies for National Development. In the cause of the discussion, concept of leadership was examined; features of leadership, functions of leadership were all discussed. Also, the concept of National development, strategies for development and its problems were highlighted. The research methodology used for this paper was a descriptive survey approach. Findings amongst others reveled that, effective leadership leads to growth, achievement, efficient and effective service delivery. The researchers concluded that leadership is the only known panacea to solving the problem of poverty, lack of employment opportunities, low quality education, inequality, insecurity etc. It was recommended that, public accountability which is a known feature in democratic rule be grasped by our leaders and anti-corruption campaign should be intensified among others.

**Keywords:** *National Development, Leadership, Effective leadership, TVET.*

## **Introduction**

Leadership has always been an issue of general concern because of the Impact of leadership on the led and the society as a whole. According to Njoku (2008), leadership is a term that described the act of influencing, inspiring, guiding and encouraging members of an organization to accomplish determined goals. The growth of any nation is dependent upon the quality, integrity and sincerity of her leaders.

The word "Leadership" has received a lot of attention because of its importance in the society and at such; focus has shifted from mere leadership to effective leadership. Now what constitute effective leadership and ineffective one is a vacuum this work intends to fill.

According to Kalu (2014), effective leadership is a phrase used to imply the leadership which produces the desired result. It means the kind of leadership that uses the needed resources to achieve the expected goal. It does not waste, embezzle or siphon but it accountable, transparent and makes frugal management of resources. It's regrettable today that the impact of this enviable and emblematic leadership is seldomly felt in Nigeria and reverse seem to hold sway. That reverse is ineffective leadership.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Effective leadership is seen as the influencing factor in achieving national development. It can also be ascribed as the stimulating and enhancing force for the achievement of the organizational goals in the society. Effective leadership is a phrase or concept which implies leadership that produces required result.

Every responsive and rational society needs effective leadership for its socio-political and economic development. But the process that will enhance effective leadership is mostly hindered by various socio-political and economic interests or factors. Today, effective leadership in our society have become a mirage which have ultimately hindered national development. There is high level of corruption, economic waste, mismanagement, lack of transparency and accountability in the society.

It is against this backdrop, that the researchers decided to carry out this critical discussion on Effective Leadership and National Development in a TVET Era .

## **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The general objective of this paper is to examine the effective leadership and national development in TVET era. Thus; the specific objectives were:

3. To x-ray the concept of leadership and national development,
4. To examine strategies for national development.
5. To highlight the problems of national development.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In order to achieve the objective of this study, the following research questions are formulated:

5. What do Leadership and National Development stand for?
6. What are the Strategies for National Development?
7. What problems does National Development face?

## **THE CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP**

Leadership is one of the most important factors in achieving high level of development goals in any society. Nwachukwu in Njoku (2008) defined leadership as "a social influencing process for the attainment of goals". In concurrence to this stated definition, Onwuchekwa (2006) believes that "Leadership is the process of influencing group activities towards goal setting and goal achievement". The concept of leadership have been discussed extensively with numerous definitions. This prompted Bass in Okwii (2011) to asset that "many definitions of leadership exists as theorist to have defined the concept. Leadership have been conceived as the exercise of influence, as particular behavior, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an instrument to achieve goals, as an effect of interaction, as the focus of groups processes, as a differential roles, as initiation of structure, and as many combination is of these definitions.

However, in this seminar paper, the focus shall be on political leadership of a democratic society. In this sense, Aguwa and Ehiodo (2004) view leadership as "A term used to describe a person's status or position of authority". They went on to opine that "in modern democracies, leadership emerges through a set of legal procedures. Such leaders as the President, Governors, Legislators,

etc derive their leadership from constitutional procedures e.g. Election". Moreso, Ijewere in Okoye (2006) sees "leadership as service and said there cannot be any noticeable improvement in the governance of any nation until the drivers of such economy sees leadership as service. A leader is a man or woman of courage, focus, empathy, vision, wisdom, ability, capacity and dignity. He must be full of endurance, assurance, perseverance, temperance and acumen but above all. A leader should exercise reasonable discretion in decision making". Considering these expectations it becomes paramount to pause and look at what features leaders should possess in order to perform effectively.

### **FEATURES OF LEADERSHIP**

Aguwa and Ehiodo (2004) postulated that "Good leaders therefore are expected to possess some distinguishing qualities such as high intelligence which enables him to be able to analyze and understand some issues and take good decision without delay. Such leaders should be hard-working so as to serve as good example to others". They also emphasized that the "leader should be tolerant, accommodating, honest, firm and resourceful". Furthermore, other leadership qualities as identified by Okoye (2006) are:-

10. Commitment (to national goals and aspirations)
11. Selflessness (to serve collective/national interest rather than self)
12. Integrity; must be able to live above board.
13. Courage (to vigorously pursue set objectives, the political will to take appropriate decision) to implement tough policy decisions.
14. Competence leader must be competent in the performance of their duties leaders should be professionals.
15. Foresight; leader must have foresight. This will enable them to plan/think ahead.
16. Good listeners: listen to advice, seek wise counsel, and maintain contact with followers.
17. Focus: do first things first, the important things, not cash' distracted.

## **FUNCTIONS OF LEADERSHIP IN A TVET ERA**

Krech in Chikere and Okafor (2011) identified the following as functions of a leader;

4. A leader acts as the coordinator of group activities, acts as the overseer of the executive policies.
5. A leader as a planner decides the ways and means by which the group achieves its ends.
6. The leader as policy maker establishes the group goals and policies.
7. The leader as expert creates the source of available information and skills. There will be reliance on technical expertise and advice.
8. The leader as conveyer of rewards and punishment has the power to provide reward and mete out punishment.
9. The leader as example becomes the model of behavior for member of the group.
10. The leader as scapegoat serves as target for aggression and hostility of the group accepting blame in the case of failure.

## **LEADERSHIP STYLES**

According to Njoku (2008), the "behavior exhibited by a leader during supervision of subordinates is known as leadership style" such leadership styles are:

### **Democratic Leadership**

The democratic leader practices leadership by consultation. His authority is decentralized. They arrive at decision after consultation with followers and participation. Agwu and Ehiodo (2004) noted that "democratic leadership could be said to exist in a country where those who rule are the elected representative of the people. Our president today is elected by the masses.

### **Autocratic Leadership**

Also, Agwu and Ehiodo succinctly held that this style is depicted by the absence of consultation with the people. The leaders alone determine and implement policies. There is no room for choice. The fundamental rights of the citizen are seriously curtailed the various military

leadership in Nigeria is good examples of autocratic leadership where citizens have no say whatsoever in the affairs of the country.

### **Laissez-Faire Leadership**

Aguwa and Ehiodo (2004) admits that "this is a leadership that allows people to do what they wish. Such a society is not guided by any known and recognized rules and regulations.

### **THE NEED FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP**

The word "effective" simple means producing an intended result. Hence, effective leadership is a result oriented leadership that live up to people's (the led) expectation.

According to Njoku, (2008) any leadership with a mark of success and accomplishment, positive changes realized, value added to human life both within and outside the category, group team or organization are finally met a reasonable percentage of its promises despite any challenges thereof, should be counted effective. Nigerians are yet to see such leaders with prickly-conscience who use abundant resources and turn it into opportunity for national development, leaders that would uphold their manifestos, leaders that would not flout the rule of law without remorse, leaders with the spirit of equity, morality and women in leadership position milking the nation dry at the expense and detriments of ordinary citizen. This accounts for the lamentation of the celebrate literary icon Late Chinua Achebe in his book 'the trouble with Nigeria (1983). The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with Nigerian land or air or anything else. According to Chikere and Okafor (2011), the Nigeria problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility to the challenge of personal example which is the hallmarks of true leadership" in view of the forgoing, the clamour or effective leadership becomes even more indispensable. We need leaders that will not renege their vows, leaders that will use yearly national allocation to deliver qualitative and evenly spread social services, leaders that will value the life of an ordinary Nigerian, who will put the entire nation above; political party, elite demands, ethnicity, cronyism etc. we urgently need leadership in Nigeria if national development must be attained.

## **THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

National Development is term that describes government plan to improve the social and economic status of her nation. Development on one's land according to the former UN secretary in Ubani (2012) 5 Growth plus change, it includes changes in institutional, social and administrative structure as well as social behaviour and attitudes of people including sometimes the people's custom and beliefs. On the other hand the word "nation" is defined by Okereke in Kalu (2014) as community of people who feel that they belong together in the double sense that they share deeply significant elements of a common heritage and they have a destiny for the future. As he proceeded, he noted that. national development "involves an activity that affects the nation; a people of common heritage as a whole, of all and not a part. As a matter of fact, national development is usually not segregated from any part of a nation but encompasses plans or programmes targeted at achieving sustainable improvement in both material and spiritual life of a nation. Which must be realized in ways consistent with the protection of human dignity. Nigeria soon after independence intensified the struggled for development by initiating the First National Development plan F 1962-1968 and other subsequent development plans and here comes short development plan of president Jonathan called Transformation Agenda" (2011-2015)

## **STRATEGIES FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

The following are the various development strategies that has been adopted at one time or the other. These are: community boards of 1954, the farm settlement scheme of 1959, The First National Development Plan Period (1962-68); The Second National Development Plan Period(1974-1980); The Third National Development Plan Period (1975-80); The Fourth National Development Plan Period (1980-85); and the Post Fourth Plan Period (1985 to 1990), the agricultural development project, operation feed the nation, national directorate for employment, green revolution, mass mobilization for self-reliance and economic recovery, river basin development authority, national accelerated food production Programme, the national livestock development Programme, the directorate of food, roads and rural infrastructures, the integrated rural development programs, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, the vision 2010, the vision 2020, the seven point agenda and the likes (Ohagwu, 2010; Ezeah, 2005; Ndukwe, 2005)

Brief overviews of a few developmental strategies in Nigeria are:

**The First National Development Plan (1962-1968).**

The plan made no clear statement on rural infrastructural development, as agriculture was still an important exchange earner; the plan's objectives were to encourage the assemblage of agricultural produce for export purpose.

**The Second National Development Plan (1970-1974).**

The Second plan was launched shortly after the end of the civil war. The plan attempted to rehabilitate economic activities in the war-affected areas. The plan spelt out five principal national objectives meant to achieve a united, just, strong and self-reliant nation. But just as in the first plan; government did not make any clear statement on rural infrastructural development. However, it was stated in the plan that government was committed to village regrouping. This was perhaps to reduce the cost of providing economic and social infrastructure such as health, electricity, water and educational facilities for the rural areas. The sum allocated to rural development looks too paltry, and, generally like the previous ones, the plan failed to introduce.

**The Third National Development Plan (1975-1980).**

Serious concern for rural development at the national level was first highlight in the third national radical package towards rural infrastructural development. The objectives of the plan are similar to those of the second national development plan. The plan emphasized the need to reduce regional disparities in order to foster national unity through the adoption of integrated rural development. The plan provided for rural electrification scheme, the establishment of River Basin Development Authorities (RBDAs). The construction of small dams and boreholes for rural water supply and the clearing of feeder roads for the evacuation of agricultural produce and the supply of electricity to rural areas from large irrigation dams.

At the State Level, some governments, like Oyo State, showed their intention to transform the rural areas through the provision of basic infrastructural facilities.

**The Fourth National Development Plan (1981-85).**

The Fourth National Development Plan exhibits several distinguishing features. First, it was formulated by a civilian government under a new constitution based on the presidential system of government. Second, it was the first plan in which the local government tier was allowed to

participate fully in its own right. The plan emphasized among other things the need for balanced development of the different sectors of the economy and of the various geographic areas of the country. It emphasized the importance of rural infrastructural development as a vehicle for enhancing the quality of rural life.

In terms of rural transportation development, the local government in the country planned for the provision of intercity/village bus services, for the construction of motor parks, and for petrol filling stations during the fourth plan period (1981-85). In order to increase the access of rural dwellers to safe drinking water, rural water supply schemes were planned apart from the huge boreholes drilling Programme.

At the state level, the various state governments spelt out different policy issues in the fourth development plan. For instance, in Oyo State, the government identified four cardinal programs for itself. These include-

- (a) Free education at all levels
- (b) Free medical services
- (c) Integrated rural development and
- (d) Gainful employment

#### **The Post Fourth Plan Period (1985 to 1990):**

The post fourth plan period witnessed the establishment of the Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) in 1985 for the purpose of providing rural infrastructure in the country side. The laws establishing the Directorate was promulgated under Decree number four of 1987. The core of the Directorate's Programme is the promotion of productive activities. Besides, the directorate recognized the provision of rural infrastructure such as feeder roads, water, electricity and housing as essential for the enhancement of the quality of life in the rural areas.

#### ***The Programme of the directorate includes:***

- I. The organization and mobilization of the local people to enhance or facilitate closer interaction between the government and the people. In addition the local communities were asked to form unions or associations for the purpose of providing common facilities for themselves;
- II. The provision of rural infrastructures such as rural feeder roads, rural water and sanitation, rural housing and electrification;

- III. The promotion of productive activities such as food and agriculture, rural industrialization and technology;
- IV. The promotion of other extracurricular activities such as socio-cultural and recreational programs, intra and inter community cohesion activities.

The plan for the implementation of DFRRRI programs was organized into two phases, the target was to provide water for 250 communities in each of the states of the federation, to construct 90,000km of feeder roads, and to promote rural housing, health and agriculture. To facilitate industrial growth, and improve the attractiveness of the rural environment, the Directorate planned to commence its rural electrification Programme in the second phase starting in June 1987. In pursuit of its objectives, DFRRRI also planned to co-operate with organization (Edwin, 1972).

In Nigeria several attempts were made to effect both rural and national development from independence apart from the various rolling plan, they includes the agricultural development project (ADP), green revolution, operation feed the nation, and others. The various aforementioned strategies for development have all been the same, it is just a change of a nomenclature, their objectives and medium for achieving the various goals have not been different from one another.

### **The Agricultural Development Project (ADP)**

This initiative was on the advice of the World Bank in 1970, the pilot project were stated in Funtua, Gombe, and in Gasua, the Programme was also expanded to other states such as Plateau State (the Lafia Agricultural Development Project now in Nasarawa State),Kogi, Benue, Kwara and Oyo State. The objective is to improve the living conditions of the low income earners resident in rural areas, this implies the supply of farm inputs like fertilizers, fungicides, pesticides, and high yielding variety seeds, credit facilities in cash and kind, land clearing services, the development of feeder roads and extension services. This brought about significant growth recorded in the agricultural sector in the late 1980's to early 1990's but the main challenge was the withdrawal of fund by world Bank(Ogundele,2008Ohagwu, 2010).

### **Operation Feed the Nation**

Operation feed the Nation was introduced just as the time the National Accelerated Food Projection Programme (NAFPP) was introduced by the Federal Military Government in 1976,

with the objective of creating awareness about the importance of agriculture in National development. The Programme was designed to involve all the segments who were engaged during the long vacation, it was for a cross breeding of ideas from school and traditional knowledge. The Programme faced out at the expiration of the regime that introduced it.

The problem with the Programme was that its birth was spontaneous without specific and measurable objectives (Alanana, 2005, Ndukwe, 2005, Ohagwu, 2010). In the recent past the following were the development Programme in the wake of the return to democratic government, National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the seven point agenda. The President of Botswana Mr. Festus Mogae, during his presentation had a wise thought for our policy makers, according to him, "Nigeria could grow its economy through focused, honest leadership, with well-defined and coordinated national priorities "(Peterside, 2003).

## **PROBLEMS OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN A TVET ERA**

According to Achebe (1983), National development has been hindered by a lot of factors. These factors are those thing we see as problems.

They are discussed below:

### **1. Poor Data Base**

In Nigeria, our Administrator deal with unrealistic facts and figure. They have to contain with insufficient information. The statistical data they use in planning for national development is misleading. and does not show a true picture of issues and events.

### **2. Corruption**

This is a very big problem to national development. It is like a cankerworm that has eaten deep in the fabrics of Nigerians. Today, an average Nigerian is corrupt and there is corruption in virtually every aspect of our life. Things are not been done based on merits, rather it is based on ascription. Our administrators change their minds on important national issues, whenever they are enticed or bribed. There is no due process in what we do in this country. Contracts will be awarded and the contractors will collect money and abandon the projects, and claim to be "untouchables" because they have political god-fathers.

**3. Poor Plan Implementation**

In Nigeria our problem in most cases is not the issue of proper planning, but the case of poor implementation. There have been various useful and people oriented plans, but due to poor implementation in the hands of the authorities, the plans never achieved its stated goals and objectives.

**4. External Manipulations**

Those are dictations from outside. Nigeria is a country that got political independence without economic independence, and this has really manifested in the way and manner our leaders do things. Our economy relies on foreign economy for survival, and as a result of this fact we must abide by whatever conditions that are been to us. It is said that "He who pays the piper dictates the tune".

**5. Illiteracy**

This Es a very big problem facing the third world countries. More than 70 percents of the citizen of the Third World Countries are illiterates. This ugly development does not allow the seed of development to germinate.

**6. Military in Government**

Apparently military in government remains a very big threat to national development not only in Nigeria, but to anywhere else in the world. Democracy is seen as the best form of government and not militarism. It is said that the "worst civilian government is better than the best military government". In this respect, we see military rule as an aberration. The purpose of military establishment is security. It emphasizes more on professionalism. The military is set up to protect and. defend the Nation against any external attack or aggression. That is why we say that it is for security tending. No matter how righteous and real a military junta looks like, he is still a military man.

## CONCLUSION

A good leadership in government affairs is justified on how effective national resources have been utilized to forge or speed development. Nigeria is so much tainted with image of bad leadership which peak volume to national development and unity. Effective leadership is the only known panacea 'to solve the problem of poverty, lack of employment opportunity, low quality education, inequality, inadequate and non-functional infrastructures, high material-death, low level of human capital, high propensity to engage into crime, insecurity etc. it helps to foster prosperity of the people.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of this investigation, recommendations are given;

4. Public accountability which is as known feature in democratic rule should be grasped by Nigerian leaders. Being accountable to the people helps in building their confidence and reduces aggression, lampooning and casting of aspersions against the leader.
5. Anti-corruption campaign should be intensified. Regulatory agencies and law enforcement agencies should help step up to their responsibilities by prosecuting public servants who are guilty of corruption charges.
6. Project, policies, and programmes should be equitably and evenly distributed across the entire nation to avoid neglect and marginalization.
7. There should be strong ties between the presidency and the arms of government in order to build peace and secure and country against terrorist and other enemies of peace.
8. Political culture should be given priority attention. There should be national re-orientation whereby the citizen will uphold, respect the dignity, integrity of Nigeria and paint Nigeria's image with good virtues.

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