

FOREIGN LOANS AND THE CHALLENGES OF NATION-BUILDING IN NIGERIA: HARVESTING INTERNAL POTENTIALS

Uzodinma Chukwuemeka OKAFOR¹ and Simon C ONONIHU²

¹Department of Political Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, NIGERIA

²Department of Political Science, Paul University, Awka, NIGERIA.

Abstract

Over the years, most developing economies have sought loans from wealthy nations to aid them cushion the effects of protracted socio-economic debacles limiting their states. Nevertheless, the exercise instead of providing succour to these states turns out to chain not only their economies but the pace of political development. It is on that note that this study examined the non-productivity and performance of the loans borrowed as they remained major issue in question. It questioned the character of leadership in Africa, especially Nigeria with poor utilization capacity where loan is involved. As a matter of fact, the study adopted structural functionalism theory to examine the governmental ineptitude in harvesting internal potentials due to poverty of ideas. To articulate the argument of the study, it employed causal design utilising documentary method of data collection and was analysed qualitatively using descriptive method of data analysis. In conclusion, the study attests that the problem of Africa is bad leadership consequent upon extreme mismanagement of resources, poor vision, mission and goal oriented target. It explains the extent of government's dependence on foreign loans without considering her untapped internal human and material resources. The paper recommends that government should explore local contents in addressing the problems of the state. This requires inward exploration of human and capital contents in the quest for the development of Nigeria.

Key words: Foreign Loans, Leadership, Local Contents, Nation-building and National Development

Introduction

It has become characteristic of developing states to borrow and remain as they used to be. This situation has given room for multiplicity of questions on why the borrowed money has been anti-progressive in determining socio-economic development in Africa. In a bid to probe into this unpleasant socio-economic trend that has dared the political fabrics of the state, complications of stance have continued to thread the part of reactivating the dynamics of development in Nigeria. The unfortunate issue is that despite the fact that most developed nations borrow to invest, developing states borrow to siphon (Utomi, 2019). Recently, Federal government approved two hundred Million dollar loan for

electrification project (Channels News, 2019 & Ajayi, 2019). Power sector has remained an establishment that can virtually sustain itself. In spite of that, Federal government has invested billions of Naira in the project with very little output over the years. This shows that government has continued to apply wrong approaches in dealing with power problem in Nigeria.

Again, the reckless abuse of resources in the 1970s by Nigeria government after independence the leadership boasted of having a problem of not how to make money but how to spend it systematically threw the state into financial mess. This was followed by a wasteful exercise (like festival of arts and culture, 1977) and dangerous frolic with state resources resulting in serious economic doldrums on the nation. The resultant effect was the borrowing under General Ibrahim Babangida in 1985 from London and Paris club with the attendant International Monetary Fund conditionalities. These conditions instead of promoting the essence aided the destruction of the state economically (Okolie & Ezeibe, 2010). Ever since then, the state has been on a constant borrowing from other countries like China, to the extent that it has ended up seeking loan from Brazil, yet much incomes are generated by the system. As such, the following questions were raised to guide the study: Is financial mismanagement a major threat to nation-building in Nigeria? How does the character of leadership affect borrowing in Nigeria? All these received academic attention in the study as they stand to guide the logic of the study.

On that note, this study provided a systematic and in-depth examination on issues surrounding foreign loans with the view of ascertaining the extent such has limited nation building in Nigeria. It examined the challenges posed by continuous borrowing and the conditions of idle resources cum potentials that are expected to provide the springboard for development in the state. Thus, it queried the excessive abandonment internal potentials capable of unlocking the gridlock of nation building in Nigeria to allow development to flower. It is on the basis of the above that the research examined the position of leadership on continuous borrowing and what has been done with the ones borrowed.

Methodology and Theoretical Exposition

This study adopted causal design to interrogate the variables under study which include: X, independent and Y, dependent variables respectively. It looked at how foreign loan poses challenge to nation-building in Nigeria. Documentary data were utilising and analysed using deductive argument and logic. Theoretically, the study utilized structural-functionalism as advocated by Almond and Powell. The theory centres on the structures which comprise of institutions of government (both formal and informal) and functions they perform. The theory is denoted by input and out mechanism functions, where what is put into the political system determines the outcome. The reason behind the choice of the theory anchored on the fact that most of the systemic problems are occasioned by weak political institutions that have failed to function. They have over time drifted to a state in struggle for identity and discovery. Nigeria has been struggling since independence to understand what leadership and nationhood are all about. The romance that prevailed between the military and civilian right from 1967 to 1993 presents enough evidence to

substantiate the position above. It has been a case of resources abuse to resource scarcity and finally to seeking loan either from the Paris club or London club which has attracted the International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditionalities. In 2020, Nigeria moved away from the old order to new order of borrowing after continuous borrowing from China resorted to borrowing from Brazil.

Unfortunately, these resources have never been committed to proper use leading to continuous borrowing by the state. It the continuous borrowing that has not yielded much other than structural deformity occasioned by poor functioning of the political system to produce positive results.

Meaning of Foreign Loan

Series of questions on the need for foreign loan has saturated both the academic and non-academic discourse. This was provoked on the grounds that most of the loans and the states that borrowed them end up the same, sometimes, worse than they were, leaving states with heavy financial burden. Sometimes, the need to have excess to loot, International conspiracy on the developing states and to save a state from impending economic danger This has in most times trickled down the monetary values of developing states owing to the demands of debt servicing. It thus, queries the rationale behind the consistent borrowing and lending that has little productive value. For one to appreciate the value of loan, it is important to understand the concept. In our common parlance the word foreign means something gotten from another, while loan means money given to be paid back either with or without interest. To create a network of balance, foreign loan is value given to a state by another with the intention that the receiver will pay back on conditions. Joe-Akunne (2016) notes that foreign loan is product of borrowed resources from another state to salvaging yawning economic problem by a state. He went on to note that foreign loan gives rise to foreign debt and where it is not well managed to result in debt crisis leading to economic and financial devaluation.

From the logic of the above, he was of the view that that foreign loan is a product of desire to salvage a yawning demand and also has price where the conditions given are not met. To further strengthen the position, Lipza (2016) states that foreign loan is simply a loan to a country or organization made by a foreign country or institutions. The position tends to tilt towards the logic posited by Joe-Akunne. They gave a holistic view on the import of foreign loan. Obiora & Okafor (2018) also opines that loan taking is not new and it provides succour to the borrower. He downplays the view that loan taking is bad. In his opinion, he notes that loan taking is good provided the essence is met. To liken the situation with the Nigerian position, it raises too many questions in demand of what happened to the ones taken before. In sum, the Nigerian situation in relation to loan taking calls for a review to avoid pitting the state into deeper debt crisis.

The Concept of Nation-Building

The desire to have a working political unit called a state is prevalent in every political discuss and developed states are in the lead on deciding the direction. For the fact that issue of development is a continuum, the desire for nation building remains a continuum.

In other to appreciate this section of the study, a review of different facets of understanding on nation building is imperative. This explanation on Nation building entails the creation or development of a nation, especially one that has recently become independent (postcolonial states).

In addition, nation-building is constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state. It is thus narrower than what James (2006) in Mylonas (2010) calls "nation formation", the broad process through which nations come into being. Nation-building aims at the unification of the people within the state so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long run. According to Mylonas (2012), legitimate authority in modern national states is connected to popular rule, to majorities. Mylonas went to state that nation-building is the process through which these majorities are constructed. Furthermore, it is the process whereby a society of people with diverse origins, histories, languages, cultures and religions come together within the boundaries of a sovereign state with a unified constitutional and legal dispensation, a national public education system, an integrated national economy, shared symbols and values, as equals, to work towards eradicating the divisions and injustices of the past; to foster unity; and promote a countrywide conscious sense (<http://www.dac.gov.za/content/5-what-nation-building>).

Nation builders are those members of a state who take the initiative to develop the national community through government programs, including military conscription and national content mass schooling. Nation-building can involve the use of propaganda or major infrastructure development to foster social harmony and economic growth. According to Columbia University political scientist Wimmer (2018), three factors tend to determine the success of nation-building over the long-run: "the early development of civil-society organisations, the rise of a state capable of providing public goods evenly across a territory, and the emergence of a shared medium of communication. However, many new states were plagued by tribalism; that is, rivalry between ethnic groups within the nation. This sometimes resulted in their near-disintegration, such as the attempt by Biafra to secede from Nigeria in the late 1960s. This issue of secession has not ended as it has assumed a political stance where some few politicians are exploiting the opportunity to announce their political relevance in Nigeria.

In this stance, it is obvious that there was never a nation called Nigeria. What we parade is nothing but what Awolowo in Okoye (2006) called "a mere geographical expression". This showed that the nation has not in any way shown its value as a united one instead, she continues to trade in ethnic and religious politics. This is why the call for nation building is considered germane not for academic purpose but for practical essence.

The Dynamics of National Development

Development as a concept is a victim of definitional pluralism. It has suffered too many conceptions and misconceptions; thus, has lost its essence on the altar of some scholars. The concept of development appears not to be clear enough, but its precise meaning remains contentious among scholars and theorists. The distinction appears clearer when we seek to understand the indices and not the features of the phenomenon. A lot of people have in various ways conceived the concept in various forms as regards to the prevailing

situation and era of the state. To that extent, the concept of development has taken different formations, which includes: political development, socio-cultural development, economic development, technological development, intellectual development, National development and etc. Despite the fact that they have diverse angles, none can be separated from the other.

Gboyega (2003) captures development as an idea that embodies all attempts to improve the conditions of human existence in all ramifications. It implies improvement in material well-being of all citizens, not the most powerful and rich alone, in a sustainable way such that today's consumption does not imperil the future, it also demands that poverty and inequality of access to the good things of life be removed or drastically reduced. It seeks to improve personal physical security and livelihoods and expansion of life chances.

Rodney (1972:9) development in human society is a many-sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being...A society develops economically as its members' increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment. This capacity for dealing with the environment is dependent on the extent to which they understand the laws of nature (science), on the extent to which they put that understanding into practice by devising tools (technology), and on the manner in which work is organized (Rodney, 1972: 9). Taking a long-term view, it can be said that there has been constant economic development within human society since the origin to win a living from nature.

Naomi (1995) believes that development is usually taken to involve not only economic growth, but also some notion of equitable distribution, provision of health care, education, housing and other essential services all with a view to improving the individual and collective quality of life (Naomi, 1995). Chrisman (1984) in Lawal & Oluwatoyin (2011) views development as a process of societal advancement, where improvement in the well-being of people are generated through strong partnerships between all sectors, corporate bodies and other groups in the society. It is reasonable to know that development is not only an economic exercise, but also involves both socio-economic and political issues and pervades all aspects of societal life.

Nwoye (2000:40) opines that development is essentially about women and men becoming empowered to bring about positive changes in their lives, about personal growth together with public action; about both the process and the outcome of challenging poverty, oppression and discrimination and about the realization of human potential through social and economic justice. Above all, it is about the process of transforming lives and transforming societies along positive course of action. Also, Amucheazi (1979) argues that development should be man -oriented not institutional- oriented, involving the totality of man in his political, economic, psychological, social relations, among others. Thus, in line with the afore-stated claims, UN publication on right to development (1991: 2) posits that

Development is not only a fundamental human right but a basic human need, which fulfils the aspiration of all people to achieve the greatest possible freedom

and dignity both as individuals and as members of the societies in which they live.

National development is the ability of a county or countries to improve on the social welfare of the people, example by providing social amenities like quality education, potable water, transportation infrastructure, medical care, etc. (<https://www.slideshare.net/ricoalolor/what-is-the-national-development>, n.d.). National development therefore can be described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation (Lawal & Oluwatoyin, 2011). It is on this that Abah (2000) x-rays development at the societal level to imply the following: (a) Increased capacity to regulate internal and external relations; (b) Increase in ability to guard national independence; (c) Self-sufficiency in food production; (d) High level of employment; (e) Equalization in the distribution of Social resources; (f) Self-reliance (in the area of domestic products); (g) Independent control of the economy; (h) Equalization of Economic opportunities; (i) Ability to solve internal problems; (j) Greater share of International Trade and (k) Education that promotes skilled manpower.

Tedheke in Aderinto and Uba (1998), argues that the so-called development that was encouraged was a caricature of it. First, the contradiction between colonial trading or merchant capital and industrial capital of the metropolises would not allow for authentic development. Merchant capital does not make its profit by revolutionizing production and technology but by controlling market, and the greater the control they have the higher rate of profit. For this reason, merchant capital tends to centralise and concentration itself into monopolies even faster than positive capital. It eschewed the principles of *laissez-faire* and sought state support for monopolistic privileges. In other words, this has painted Nigeria/Africa in a very bad mood. To that extent, it can be seen as a crisis of unprecedented proportion manifested in abysmal decline in overall living standards and decaying infrastructures and acute poverty. Commenting on this deplorable state of affairs, Ake (1981: 33) observes that

What has been developing in postcolonial Africa is underdevelopment. Africa has average negative growth rates for over two decades. The past has been so disastrous, that the future looks hopeless. Indeed, the only certainty of Africa development for the rest of this century is that poverty will spread and intensify. Even on the World Bank's projected 0.6 percent GDP growth per capital, which may be optimistic, Africa will take 40 years just to regain her income level of the mid-1970s.

The implication of the above unpalatable remark is that Nigeria is in a serious political and economic quagmire that will require extra ordinary will and sincerity of leadership for the country to meet the challenges of the new millennium. This is because the glaring failure of the development project in Nigeria has continued to provide ample room for all sorts of dubious and misguided development programme all in the name of turning Africa's economy around. Conclusively, the frustration was shared by Adedeji (1996) when he notes that after a decade and more of structural adjustment programme, poverty

has become more pervasive and systemic in Nigeria, and is predicted to grow as far into the twenty-first century based on current projections.

Foreign Loan and the Challenges of Nation Building

To understand the dynamics of foreign loan utilization and the challenges posed to nation building, the attendant variables were reviewed above. From the study, it showed that there has not been any sincerity of leadership since the inception of the state- Nigeria. The state continues to borrow what she can fix with her internal workforce or potentials. It is worrisome to note that the country has numerous minerals, and other vital resources yet oil is the centre of attraction. We do not have the technology to explore same oil, yet our engineers roam the streets without valid skills. Instead, we end up as a rentier state contracting expatriates to run our mono-economy for us - a state that relies on external force to harness her resources, thereby earning rent from it afterwards. This is the major reason why the state cannot properly harness her resources. Oronto (2010) pointed out that the nation is losing eight hundred million dollars on gas flaring every day. This was confirmed by federal government recently that the Nigerian government loses eight hundred million dollars every day on gas flaring, yet nothing is done to put a stop or even minimize gas flaring in Nigeria (Adeosun, 2017). The comment is unpalatable considering what the nation loses each day yet, government wants to borrow. Borrow for what?

Nigeria is such place that we parade thousands of Engineers (Petroleum, Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, Material, etc.), yet we cannot find solution to power problems, road crisis, petroleum challenges and other mechanical issues; we parade thousands of medical doctors (including consultants), yet people die like fowl in hospitals (both private and government owned) that are under-equipped. The experience is not in the interest of the people and the nation as we continue to watch those in power expose themselves for siphoning allocations meant for the development of the state. No serious punishment is meted out and even when corrupt cases are reported, politicians on the good book of the administration escape prosecution. The judicial system is handicapped and continued to experience circumscription of various forms. This explains why despite the depth of resources the state is endowed with, still the state runs amok seeking loan here and there, when some people who have looted the state treasuries have more than that what the state is asking for staked in different foreign accounts. It has made several banks in the state not to have enough to borrow the striving masses, except the money bags, who borrow through state connection and are not willing to pay back and as a matter of fact get state protection. How can this bring about development?

President Obasanjo fought for debt forgiveness through the then Minister of Finance, Ngozi Okonjo Iwuala (Kayode, 2019). Surprisingly, under President Goodluck Jonathan, so much was saved thereby boosting the external reserve of the Nation. Nevertheless, the unfortunate happened. Before his exit, the government and some other governors mounted pressure on him to split the saved treasure (National Sovereign fund and excess crude account) so as to commit it to the development of their various state (Iwuala, 2016). The situation purports two things; that there is no trust in governance as no money is expected to remain in the state purse for the fear of the incoming who is likely to squander

the state treasure without looking back. Two, it showed the kleptomaniac spirit hovering everywhere in the country where those that pretend to be professional in administration do not believe in saving. This signalled extreme corruption on the part of leadership. In other words, it is pathological of Nigerian leaders to liquidate their values and resort to borrowing afterwards. A nation that prides in wastage can never develop no matter what it pretends to be doing. Where are the nation builders? In all, the above are captured under the mismanagement of state resources, reversal educational system and corruption. These have made borrowing a routine in the Nigerian body polity.

Why Do We Have Internal Idle Potentials?

To understand this section, it is germane to understand that the concept of idle potential covers both human and material resources that have remained untapped by the state owing to societal priority. Poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, natural disaster, poor infrastructures, etc are the effect of idle potential. The implication is that when the potentials in the state are not harvested, it ends in abysmal trauma. It is in line with the above that it is considered imperative to look at those factors that contribute to having internal idle potential in Nigeria. Below has few of them discussed.

Corruption: Corruption is the bane of idle potentials in Nigeria. It is the reason for the wrong selection of officials to fill the vital positions of authority. It is unfortunate that the nation has not had it so good to the extent that mediocre have over the years throttled the vehicle of Nigerian progress. This is worrisome to the extent that all the facets of the practice looked welcomed in our body polity. No work with heavy pay is becoming fashionable now due to the level of reference that is accorded wealth no matter how it is made. The arrival of internet facilities has confined so many young men to making quick money through dubious means. They come home to receive chieftaincy titles from traditional rulers and elders in communities and churches. The idea of “work and pay” has been jettisoned into the dustbin of ages. It has thus produced it own re-bouncing effects.

Such effects have assumed diverse forms to the extent that it has dampened the appetites of those willing to trade to the just part. The idea of making quick money and rushing back to Nigeria to spend it without questions kept mounting the courage base for the prospective young one who do not believe any more in education. Having chronicles of excessively rich men without education, still has numerous educated people working under them to earn pittance to facilitate their survival is cogent enough to form a discouragement base. It is therefore not far from the comment of the president of Nigeria (Mohammadu Buhari) when having a chit-chat with the American president Donald Trump who in 2018 described the Nigerian youth as lazy (Kayode, 2018).

The obvious is that the holders of power since independence have sown a rusty platform that promotes highhandedness and wholesale defalcation that have deformed the moral base. When General Ironsi was executed, the content of his bank account was tagged “Ironsi mistake”. It was revealed that only two pounds was found in his account. Since then, no military Head of State in Nigeria (perhaps, with the exception of General Buhari) has left office without being a billionaire. This dangerous precedence is the bane

of unproductive stance in the country. We prefer a make shift to solution, we prefer palliative to lasting value, we prefer imitation to quality, we prefer fake to real, etc. Most disturbing in this ugly trend is that the government is comfortable living out this mess. It was noted that about 30% of the National Budget are spent by the National Assembly (FG executive Report, 2017). This has also opened another avenue to promoting corruption. No one is thinking outside the box on how to address the challenging issue of development confronting the Nigerian state.

Table 1: EXPORT COMMODITIES IN NIGERIA'S EXTERNAL TRADE, 1960-1984 (AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VALUE OF EXPORTS) COMMODITIES

Year	Cocoa	Groundnuts	Groundnut Oil	Groundnut Cake	Palm Kernels	Palm Oil	Raw Cotton	Natural Rubber	Hides & Skins	Timber	Crude Petroleum	Tin Metal	Other Commodities	Grand Total
1960	21.6	13.5	3.1	0.9	15.4	8.2	3.7	8.4	2.7	4.1	2.6	3.6	12.1	100
1961	19.4	18.6	2.9	1.1	11.5	7.6	6.4	6.3	2.4	3.9	6.6	3.8	9.5	100
1962	19.8	19.2	3.7	1.5	10.0	5.3	3.5	6.7	2.3	3.4	10.2	3.9	10.6	100
1963	17.1	19.4	3.4	1.4	11.0	4.9	5.0	6.2	2.2	3.5	10.7	4.7	10.4	100
1964	18.7	15.9	3.8	2.2	9.8	5.0	2.8	5.6	2.2	3.6	14.9	5.8	9.7	100
1965	15.9	14.2	3.6	2.0	9.9	5.2	1.2	4.1	1.7	2.3	25.4	5.5	9.1	100
1966	9.9	14.4	9.4	1.7	7.9	3.9	1.2	4.0	2.0	2.0	32.4	5.4	11.9	100
1967	22.5	14.7	2.4	1.7	3.0	0.5	1.7	2.6	1.9	1.4	29.9	5.0	12.6	100
1968	24.3	18.0	4.4	2.3	4.8	-	1.6	3.0	1.9	1.7	17.5	6.5	13.9	100
1969	16.5	11.1	3.3	1.6	3.1	0.1	1.0	3.0	1.3	1.3	41.2	3.8	12.5	100
1970	15.0	4.9	2.6	1.2	2.5	0.1	1.5	2.0	0.6	0.7	57.5	3.8	7.5	100
1971	11.1	1.9	1.0	0.5	2.0	0.2	0.9	1.0	0.4	0.4	73.7	1.9	5.9	100
1972	7.2	1.4	0.7	0.4	1.1	-	-	0.5	0.5	0.4	81.6	1.3	4.8	100
1973	4.9	2.0	1.0	0.8	0.8	-	0.2	0.9	0.5	0.5	83.1	0.7	4.5	100
1974	2.7	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.8	-	-	0.6	0.2	0.2	92.6	0.5	2.1	100
1975	3.5	-	-	-	0.4	-	-	0.3	0.1	0.1	94.0	0.3	0.1	100
1976	3.3	-	-	0.1	0.4	-	-	0.2	0.1	-	93.6	0.2	2.2	100
1977	3.9	-	-	-	0.4	-	-	0.1	0.1	-	92.8	0.1	2.4	100
1978	6.4	-	-	-	0.3	-	-	0.2	-	-	90.0	0.3	2.7	100
1979	2.4	-	-	-	0.1	-	0.2	0.2	-	-	95.2	0.1	1.8	100
1980	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	na	na	na	na	n.a	n.a	na	n.a	-
1981	1.3	-	-	-	0.2	-	-	0.2	-	n.a	96.9	0.2	7.8	100
1982	1.8	-	-	0.1	0.2	0.2	-	0.1	-	n.a	97.5	-	-	100
1983	5.0	-	-	0.2	0.2	-	-	0.3	-	n.a	94.3	-	-	100
1984	2.8	-	-	0.1	0.1	-	-	0.3	-	-	96.8	-	-	100

Source: Compiled from *Central Bank of Nigeria; Economic and Financial Review*, Vol. 6. No. 1, June 1968, p. 88; Vol. 8, No. 1, June 1970, p. 76; Vol. 8, No. 2, December 1970, p. 97; Vol. 13, No. 1, June 1975, p.51; Vol. 20, No. 1, June 1982, p. 54; Vol. 21, No. 4, December 1983, p. 72; CBN, Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 1983.

Bad leadership: History has shown that Nigeria has never found it so good in terms of leadership. From the colonial period through post-colonial era, the Nigerian state has been so unfortunate with leadership. None of the leaders have being so good to the extent of working for the harmony of the state. Instead, what we have are leaders with low weak intention of developing the state. Since the failed effort to continuously reap from the booties of oil boom of 1970s, the leadership of the nation is refocused on harnessing another option which is foreign loan. An effort targeted at putting unending burden on the state while holders of power go home in fat pockets. Below is the table of how bad the government is over years through their negligence on the maximization of natural values with so much attention attached to oil.

Poverty of Ideas: There is no betrayal of the obvious to state that poverty of ideas poses a major threat to harvesting internal potentials in Nigeria. This owes a lot to the fact that since the inception of Nigeria political history, the nation has been so unlucky to have leaders who are blind with ideas. They hardly think outside the box. The implication is that there is no tomorrow in their plans as they concentrate on looting the treasures of the state to a point of suffocation. A clear example could easily be seen in the reaction of Nigerian Head of State who was confronted in the 1970's on investment while the oil boomed. His response was easily captured to mean that the problem of Nigeria is not how to make money but how to spend money. Soon after the comment was recklessly uttered, the state was thrown into a serious financial comatose in the 1980s, where austerity measure was proffered as a solution the attendant political crisis.

Again, since the inception, of the Fourth Republic, attention to issues on poverty has been reduced to a laughable level thereby, deepening the depth of poverty in Nigeria. The gimmicks have moved from rebranding to packaging which is just a change in nomenclatures. Under Obasanjo's administration from 1999-2007, his strategy of fighting poverty was the adoption of National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NAPAP) through National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP). The administration ended up institutionalizing poverty through the sharing of KEKE tricycle, wheel barrow, sewing machine, etc. From this, one begins to wonder how these items can help improve the economy when other countries are thriving on ideas. The emergence of Yar' Adua/ Jonathan from 2007/2009-2015 adopted SURE-P as a strategy of ameliorating poverty by paying a stipend of N20,000 – N30,000 as the case may be. Buhari's emergence, took to cue by adopting N-Power to engage jobless graduates with a palliative for two years paying similar N30,000 just like Jonathan's SURE-P. Of all these initiatives, none of them is anchored on practical ideas, rather to appease some political agents that played some ridiculous roles during election. It is in other words seen as a settlement programme for a job well done using state resources. The inclusion of others is to make it look real but after two years, those youths are thrown back into the old order.

At this point, it becomes evident that there was no attempt to invest and plan for the future. The arrival of oil became the centre of attraction to the extent that the desire for the emergence, struggle and use of state power was pursued with vigour and desperation. No wonder, Ake (1996), argued that too much premium was placed on state power and people were going about it in a Machiavellian unscrupulousness. The same stance still prevails in

the state where the resources of the state is used to enrich political parties in power, political cliques, etc. at the mercy of the nation's survival. All this short-sightedness is responsible to the continuous looting and borrowing that has attended the state. The table II below provides enough evidence on the cluelessness of government to coordinate her natural resources for maximum productivity.

Table II REVIEW OF EXTERNAL TRADE. 1987-2006. RECORD OF OIL AND NON-OIL EXPORT REVENUE IN DOLLAR AND PERCENTAGE

Year	Oil Export Revenue (Million US Dollar)	Oil Export in %	Non-oil Export Revenue (Mil US \$)	Non-oil Export in %	Total Export Revenue (Million US Dollar)	Total Export in %
1987	28,154.4	95.2	1423.54	4.8	29,577.94	100
1988	28,158.3	90.3	3034.46	9.7	31,192.76	100
1989	55,562.9	92.8	4313.99	7.2	59,876.89	100
1990	79,184.3	67.2	38569.08	32.8	117,753.38	100
1991	122,728.3	96.1	4932.47	3.9	127,660.77	100
1992	200,444.6	97.5	5168.5	2.5	205,613.10	100
1993	171,648.1	90.4	18130.01	9.6	189,778.11	100
1994	98,494.2	95.2	4930.32	4.8	103,424.52	100
1995	539,199.2	95.1	28011.83	4.9	567,211.03	100
1996	764,337.5	95.3	37414.55	4.7	801,752.05	100
1997	744,230.4	94.7	41242.29	5.3	785,472.69	100
1998	468,402.6	99.0	14790.97	1.0	483,193.57	100
1999	1,543,319.0	99.0	15979.92	1.0	1,559,299.52	100
2000	2,735,049.6	99.4	17007.87	0.6	2,752,057.47	100
2001	1,972,211.5	98.3	34915.5	1.7	2,007,127.00	100
2002	1,997,588.0	92.2	169824.42	7.8	2,167,412.42	100
2003	2,997,309.1	96.4	111979.33	3.6	3,109,288.43	100
2004	4,480,864.6	87.4	648161.04	12.6	5,129,025.64	100
2005	6,252,882.3	94.4	368421.34	5.6	6,621,303.64	100
2006	7,006,591.1	92.7	548550.22	7.3	7,555,141.32	100
2015	2114,000	93	n.a	7	n.a	100
2016	1737968	92.5	n.a	7.5	n.a	100
2017	1,811,106	90.7	n.a	9.3	n.a	100
2018	n.a.	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a

Source: Extracted from National Bureau of Statistics: Review of External Trade. 1987-2006. Abuja. p. 68. www.nigeriastat.gov.ng, OPEC: Crude Oil Exports: Africa: Nigeria, 2018. Nigeria Crude oil: Exports. <http://www.ceicdata.com/en/indicator/nigeria/crude-oil-exports>

The table has systematically shown what the government have received all these while, the effort they have made so far to salvage the economy they have bartered. The

above table conclusively shows what poverty of ideas represents and how it has dealt a big blow towards building the Nigerian state for meaningful development.

Sectional demand and agitation: Sectional attachment has initiated serious demand and agitation among the people of Nigeria to the extent that merit has been replaced with mediocrity. The desire to please and contain ethnic pressure has negatively affected the national interest. There is little or no drive and desire to move the nation beyond parochial level. All that are advanced are ethnic chauvinism, politicized sectional interest, federal character and other attachments of varied degree. The effect is so devastating that it has thrown the state into relative stagnancy.

Unfortunately, instead of the holders of power to pursue a lasting solution to the protracted quagmire of underdevelopment ravaging the cooperative existence of the Nigerian state, it chose the distractive pact. Recently, the central government in their poor vision to finding solution to the developmental problems of the state drew the attention of Nigerian to power allocation at central level where the President (Mohammadu Buhari in 2015) was accused of adopting crude and non-diplomatic stance in the selection of his cabinet members, after it took him six months to announce his cabinet members. He has consistently shown high level adamant posture resulting in unending accusation that he is not nationalistic but parochial. Most disturbing was that his utterances (before assumption of office) impacted negatively on the economy taking the Naira currency from ₦180 to above ₦400 per dollar in 2015-2016. It completely threw the prices of products in the market up by over 300% leaving the masses in excessive pains and frustration. More injurious is that it has taken the debt profile to another level. At this time, the country should be thinking outside the box, setting up research institutes that will proffer solutions to the problems of the state, instead it is a constant politicisation of everything to the disadvantage of the poor masses.

The Need for an Exploration of Internal Potentials

Before independence, we had groundnut pyramids in the North, Cocoa in the West and palm produce in the East. Nevertheless, at the wake of crude oil discovery in commercial quantity at Oloibiri, Bayelsa, in 1956, the whole economic products were jettisoned to the background leaving the state at the mercy of the vagaries of crude oil prices.

Not only oil, in some parts of the country, other minerals were discovered, like gold in Kebbi state that is allegedly exported illegally to Saudi Arabia which contributes nothing to national income, bitumen and other economic and commercial products that are capable of shooting the nation to the next level of economic dawn. Nevertheless, the issue bothers so much on the depth of mismanagement of resources the nation has suffered in the hands of mediocre who have held power for long and refuse to relinquish under no given condition for the fear of the unknown. These processes and experiences pose serious danger to the pace and process of development in Nigeria, making the aspiration of nation building a fluke. Table III below shows the numerous natural resources the nation Nigeria is endowed with. The question is; how many of these resources are harvested for national development? The rate of utilization is unimaginable. If the states were empowered to tap their god given resources, Nigeria can bet to beat the fastest growing economy in the

world. Table III shows how wasteful the nation is. This is because, if we harvest half of the resources we are endowed with, borrowing will be very far from Nigeria's economic and financial agenda.

Table III: NATURAL RESOURCES IN THE 36 STATES OF NIGERIA AND LOCATION

No	State	Natural resources	Rate of utilization
1	Abia	Gold, Lead, zinc, Limestone Oil and gas, salt	Poor
2	Abuja	Cassiterite, Clay, Gold, Dolomite, Lead, Zinc and Marble	Poor
3	Adamawa	Bentonite, Gypsum, Kaolin, Magnesite	Poor
4	Akwabom	Clay, lead/Zinc, Lignite, Limestone, Oil/Gas, Salt and Uranium	Poor
5	Anambra	Clay, Sand-Glass, Gypsum, Iron-ore, lead/ Zinc, Lignite, Limestone, Phosphate, Salt, Oil and Gas	Poor
6	Bauchi	Gold, Cassiterite (tin-ore), Columbite, Gypsum, Wolfram, Coal, Limestone, Lignite, Clay, iron- ore	Very poor
7	Bayelsa	Clay, Gypsum, Lead/Zinc, Lignite, Limestone, manganese, oil and Gas, Uranium	Poor
8	Benue	Barite, Clay, coal, Gemstone, Gypsum, Iron-ore, limestone, Lead/Zinc, Marble and Salt	Very poor
9	Borno	Bentonite, Clay, Diatomite, Gypsum, Hydro-carbon, Kaolin and Limestone	Very Poor
10	Delta	Clay, Grass-sand, Gypsum, Iron-ore, Kaolin, Lignite, Oil and Gas, Marble	Poor
11	Ebonyi	Gold, Lead/ Zinc, Salt, Granite	Poor
12	Edo	Bitumen Dolomite, Clay, Phosphate, Glass-sand, iron-ore, Gold, Gypsum, lignite, Limestone, Marble, oil and gas	Poor
13	Ekiti	Granite, Kaolin, Syenite and tatum	Very poor
14	Enugu	Coal, Lead/Zinc, limestone	Poor
15	Gombe	Gemstone and Gypsum	Very poor
16	Imo	Lead/Zinc, Gypsum, Lignite, Limestone, Marcasite, Oil and gas, Phosphate, salt	Very poor
17	Cross river	Barite, Lead/ Zinc, Limestone, Lignite, Manganese, Oil and Gas, Salt	Poor
18	Jigawa	Butyles	Poor
19	Kaduna	Amethyst, Aqua Marine, Asbestos, Clay, Flossper, Gemstone, Gold, Graphite, Kaolin, Hyanite, Mica, Rock crystal, Rubby, Sapphire, Sihnite, superntinite, Tentallime, Topaz and Tourmaline	Very Poor
20	Kano	Gassiterite, Copper, Gemstone, Glass-sand, Lead/Zinc, Pyrochinre and Tantalite,	Poor
21	Kastina	Kaolin, Marble and salt	Poor
22	Kebbi	Gold	Cannot say
23	Kogi	Dolomite, Cole, Feldspar, Gypsum, Iron-ore, Kaolin, Marble, Talc and Tantalite	Poor

24	Kwara	Cassiterite, Columbite, Feldspar, Gold, Iron-ore, Marble, Mica and Tantalite	Poor
25	Lagos	Bitumen, Glass-sand, Oil and Gas	Poor
26	Nasarawa	Amethyst (Topaz Garnet), Barytex, Barite, Cassirite, Chalcopyrite, Clay, Columbite, Cooking Coal, Dolomite, Marble, Feldspar, Galena, Ironore, Limestone, Mica, salt, Sapphire, Talc, Tantalite, Tourmaline, Quartz and Zircon	Poor
27	Niger	Gold Lead/Zinc and Talc	Poor
28	Ogun	Bitumen, Clay, Feldspar, Gemstone, Kaolin, Limestone, and Phosphate	Poor
29	Ondo		Poor
30	Osun	Columbite, Gold, Granite, Talc, tantalite and Tourmaline	Poor
31	Oyo	Aqua Marine, Cassiterite, Clay, Dolomite, Gemstone, Gold kaolin, Marble, Silimonite, Talc and tantalite	Poor
32	Plateau	Barite, Bauxite, Betonite, Bismuth, Cassiterite, Clay, Coal, Emerald, Fluoride, Gemstone, Granite, Iron-Ore, Kaolin, Lead/Zinc, Marble, Molybdenite, Phrochlore, Salt, Tantalite, Columbite, Tin, Wolfram	Very Poor
33	Rivers	Clay, Glass-sand, Lignite, Marble, Oil and Gas	Poor
34	Sokoto	Clay, Flakes, Gold, Granite, Gypsum, Kaolin, Laterite, Limestone, Phosphate, Potash, Silica, sand and Stone	Very poor
35	Taraba	Lead/Zinc, Kaolin	Poor
36	Yobe	Soda Ash and Tintomite	Very poor
37	Zamfara	Coal, Cotton and Gold	

Chizoba (n.d.) Natural Resources and their Locations in Nigeria's 36 states and Abuja.

Retrieved from <https://www.nigerianinfopedia.com/official-list-of-natural-resources-in-the-36-states-of-nigeria/>

Unfortunately, the institutions of government are not working, power is very expensive and remains epileptic, pipe borne water is a forgone utility as bore-holes that is yet to cause its own havoc is the only hope of Nigerians. Do we talk about roads which fall under basic infrastructure? More than 70% of Nigerians that died on the way are not product of over speeding or other causes but largely due to bad roads with unimaginable pot-holes everywhere (FRSC Report, 2017).

The hospital is far from rescuing the common man. There is a common mantra that says, 'if you want to die quick, go to Nigerian hospital for medication. This shows the extent poor training, underfunding, and under-equipment has reduced Nigerian hospital to. Yet, we parade the best brains in every facets of human endeavour all over the world. *The state has ended up in building an empire without an Emperor.* This is worrisome as the nation has nothing to fall back on should the value of crude oil significantly decline. It shows that the state is far from harvesting her material potentials in human capital, fix capital and natural resources. The atmosphere does not allow prospects and ideas to grow. This explains why we have uncontrollable brain drain in the country. The human capital that emanated from Nigeria has shown that if they were in the country, their ideas would

not have seen the light of the day. In United States and Europe, scientists and doctors of Nigerian extraction have confirmed the claim on the waste of potentials our government have been presiding over. They have reduced governance to a meal ticket. When you are in power, you have value and are assumed to be important, but once you are out, you lose your worth. This is sarcastic, because of the way the nation is conceived. *Imagine a nation that pride in the qualification of the position of a president with just West African School certificate (WASC) to run a state, while banks and other mini-institutions require a minimum of Bachelors' Degree for you to operate at the counter as teller.* It explains why they easily lose value once they are out of power. The Senate which is supposed to be populated by the nation's wise men is now a place for unpatriotic and highly selfish people comes to fight over personal and party interest against national interest. That is why we will continue to get it wrong. You cannot put a round peg in a square hole and expect it to get balanced.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the above exercise on the harvest of internal potentials for national development, it is germane to note that Nigerian leaders have no effective and properly articulated practical plans of building the Nigerian state otherwise; there is no explanation on why the state should be subjected to continuous borrowing despite the depth of resources the state is endowed with. Looking at the conditional drive for idle potentials, they reveal that corruption has eaten deep into the fabrics of the nation's live with numerous attendant consequences. The conditions created as a result of the non-productive stance in the economy have deepened development gap to the extent that the solutions to the state problems are not sought.

To respond the pathetic situation affecting nation, it is imperative to note that a lot of things are wrong with the Nigerian federal state. The 1977 land Use Degree/ Act has empowered the federal government to continuously and solely explore and exploit the natural resources endowed with some states. Where the federal government is not capable, the structure should be re-negotiated to empower some other states in other to explore their untapped resources. Again, the adoption of federal character is problematic, for it encourages mediocrities and discourages hard work. It is required that we should first find the square root on how to manage our diverse talents to build the nation we call Nigeria, otherwise we will sink into oblivion in the near future.

References

- Abah, N. (2000). *Development Administration: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach*. Enugu, John Jacob's Classic Publishers Ltd.
- Adedeji, A. (1996). *Africa within the World: Beyond Dispossession and Dependence*. Nigeria, IFE-ACDESS.
- Adeosun, K. (2017). "External Dept management, Finance and Development". Nigeria: *Vanguard* Newspaper
- Aderinto, A.A. and Uba, C.N. ed. (1998). "Nigeria and the Contemporary World. Nigeria", *Nigeria Defence Academy Journal*.
- Ajayi, F. (2019). "Drops of Oil in a sea of poverty – The case of a new debt deal for Nigeria". [www. Jubilee. Plus.org](http://www.Jubilee.Plus.org)

- Ake, C. (1981). *A Political Economy of Africa*. Nigeria, Longman Group Limited.
- Ake C. (1996). *Is Africa Democratizing?* Lagos: Malthouse publishers
- Amucheazi, E.C. (1979). "Problem of Development in Nigeria". UNN, Division of General Studies.
- Channels TV News (2019). <http://www.channelstv.org>
- Chizoba (n.d.). "Natural Resources in the 36 states of Nigeria and Location". Retrieved from <https://www.nigerianinfopedia.com/official-list-of-natural-resources-in-the-36-states-of-nigeria/>
- FRSC Report (2017). <http.naijafsrc.report2017.org>
- Gboyega A (2003). "Democracy and Development: The Imperative of Local Governance". An Inaugural Lecture, University of Ibadan
- James, P. (1996). *Nation Formation: Towards a Theory of Abstract Community*. London: Sage.
- James, P. (2006). "Globalism, Nationalism, Tribalism: Bringing Theory Back In", *Towards a Theory of Abstract Community*. London: Sage Publication. Vol 2
- Jochen, H. ed. (2005). *Nation-building: a key concept for peaceful conflict transformation?* London: Pluto
- Joe- Akunne, I. (2016) Foreign Direct Investment and Socio-political Development of Nigeria. A Ph D Dissertation, Department of Political Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka
- Kayode, T. (2019). "Poverty reduction and the attainment of the MDGS in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects". *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance*.
- Keith, D. & Mylonas, H. (2016). "Threats to Territorial Integrity, National Mass Schooling, and Linguistic Commonality," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 49, No. 11: 1446-1479.
- Lawal, T. & Oluwatoyin, A (2011) "National development in Nigeria: Issues, challenges and prospects". *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research* Vol. 3(9), pp. 237-241. Retrieved from http://www.academicjournals.org/app/webroot/article/article1380534762_Lawal%20and%20Oluwatoyin.pdf
- Lipza, R. (2016). "The Evolution and Performances of the monetary policy in Nigeria in the 1980s", CBN Research Department Lagos
- McCracken, M. (2007). "Foreign loan", retrieved from http://www.teachmefinance.com/Financial_Terms/Foreign_loan.html
- Mylonas, H. (2012). *The Politics of Nation-Building: Making Co-Nationals, Refugees, and Minorities*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Naomi O (1995). "Towards an Integrated View of Human Rights". *Hunger Teach Net*, 6(3): 6-7
- National Bureau of Statistics: Review of External Trade. 1987-2006. Abuja. p. 68. www.nigeriastat.gov.ng, OPEC: Crude Oil Exports: Africa: Nigeria, 2018. Nigeria Crude oil: Exports. <http://www.ceicdata.com/en/indicator/nigeria/crude-oil-exports>
- Nwoye, K.O. (2000). *Corruption, Leadership and the Dialectics of Development in Africa: An explanatory Perspective*. Enugu, Associated Printing & Litho Co. Ltd.
- Okafor, U. C & Obiora, C.B (2019). "Regional Agitation and the Problem of National Integration: The need for State Restructuring in Nigeria". *South East Journal of Political Science*. Vol.5, No. 1, p 148-167
- Okolie, A. M. & Ezeibe C. C. (2010). "Realities and Illusions of Development Trap: from Washington to Post – Washington Consensus. Whither Nigerian Consensus?" A Paper Presented at *Nigeria Political Science Association (NPSA)* South East hosted by Federal Polytechnic, Oke.
- Okonjo-Iwuuala, N. (2016) "External Debt Management: An Introduction, World Bank Technical Paper" No. 245, *World Bank*, Washington DC
- Okoye, I.C. (2006). "Political Culture Mimeo", Unpublished. Awka, Nnamdi Azikiwe University.
- Oronto, D. (2010). "Assassins in Foreign Lands: A Crop Watch"

Radio Interview on Human Right. From <http://www.globalissue.org/Geopolitics/Africa/Nigeria.asp>

Rodney W. (1972). *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. London, Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications.

UN publication on right to development (1991)

Utomi, P. (2019). "An Economic Study of Debt Overhang Debt Reduction, Investment and Economic growth in Nigeria", NCEMA monography series, No. 8, NCEMA

Walker, C. (18 July 2011). "Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?". *World Politics*. 24 (3): 319–355. doi:10.2307/2009753. JSTOR 2009753.

Wimmer, A. (2018-07-04). "Nation Building: Why Some Countries Come Together While Others Fall Apart". *Survival*. 60 (4): 151–164. doi:10.1080/00396338.2018.1495442. ISSN 0039-6338.

<http://www.dac.gov.za/content/5-what-nation-building>

<https://www.slideshare.net/ricoalolor/what-is-the-national-development>

Biographical Note

Uzodinma Chukwuemeka OKAFOR, *Ph.D* is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, NIGERIA. He specializes in International Relations and has contributed articles in both local and international scholarly journals. His research interests are Research Methodology, Peace and Conflict Resolution, Diplomacy, International Organizations, International law and politics. E-mail: foreverdimma@gmail.com.

Simon C. ONONIHU, *Ph.D.* is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Paul University, Awka, NIGERIA. His area of interest is International Relations and has published in many reputable journals. Email: csnihus@yahoo.com