



Research Paper

The Manacles of Development; an Exposition of the Internal Sociopolitical causes of Nigeria's Underdevelopment

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Abstract

Being a country with over 200 million people, vast and arable land mass, and oil wealth, Nigeria should be mentioned among the top 20 economies. The Vision 2020 of Former President Umaru Musa Yar'adua (Late) and the Transformation Agenda of Former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan were intended to position Nigeria as one of the top 20 economies by 2020. In 2020 however, according to sources, Nigeria has become the poverty hub of the world, with half of its population living below \$1.90 a day. Therefore, the primary objective of this paper was to expose the internal sociopolitical causes of Nigeria's underdevelopment and ascertain whether economic development can be consolidated or sustained without social development. This study was anchored on the Pluralist Theory popularized by Dahl (1961) to understand the subject matter better. Findings from the exposition revealed that in as much as the Federal Government of Nigeria has overtime formulated and implemented myriads of economic policies and committed funds towards their actualization; tangible projects outcomes have often been destroyed by ethnic, religious, and regional antagonism as well as the feeling of seclusion and the normalization of anomalies, thereby bringing economic development to a precipice and in some situations, to wreckage. Therefore, the paper called for the political will and cooperation of politicians, religious and traditional leaders, and the masses – in bringing about peace and tolerance, which are salient for the sustenance and consolidation of economic development.

Keywords: Ethnicism, Religionism, Regionalism, Nigerianism, Sociopolitical Development, Sustainable Development.

Received 02 June, 2022; Revised 13 June, 2022; Accepted 15 June, 2022 © The author(s) 2022.

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I. Introduction:

"This city is what it is because our citizens are what they are" – Plato [427-347 BC]

Economic development has for long been what nations across the globe thrive for. In fact, at the mention of the concept "Development," what naturally comes to the mind of people is economic development. This is because the human mind has become conditioned to development in the economic sense. Moreover, in their every day speeches and policies, virtually all governments and regimes often present economic growth and development as the panacea to societal ills.

Truly, economic development is quintessential. As Marx [19] stated in his work "A Contribution to the critique of Political Economy," the economy is the base. At the same time, political structures and social institutions constitute the superstructure (what he referred to as "Economic Determinism"). However, the quintessentiality of economic development depends on other forms of development, viz; social and political.

Lots of Nigerian scholars and African writers have written extensively on issues bordering on development and have in their works stated some factors militating against the continent's development. In doing this, they do not hesitate to attribute our economic woes and underdevelopment to the sociopolitical and economic incursion on the continent by Europe, even though the era of colonialism has six decades ago effaced. On the other hand, other authors have attributed the continent's underdevelopment to what has come to be known as "the international division of labor" – a system that depicts a parasitic relationship between the West (Europe and America) and Africa, emphasizing the sapping of Africa's abundant raw materials and cheap labor by industrialized nations which is seen as pharaonic – oppression of Africa by the West.

Both the former and the latter have, regardless of their reasons, predicated Africa's development problems on the West and have also succeeded in establishing that Europe and America depended on and still depend on Africa for their economic growth and development (what Wallerstein in Lenin [18] referred to as the asymmetric relationship between the core/center and the periphery). A relationship that leaves the dependent nations (the core) more advanced and better off when compared to its source (the periphery), a depiction that portrays Africa as an "inferior superior" and the West as "superior-inferior." These works have, however, in a bid to awaken the consciousness of Africans for the attainment of self-sufficiency and promote Pan Africanism, further embedded inferiority complex in Africans.

Therefore, this paper is a complete drift from the development thoughts of most African writers because the writers' interest is in unveiling the internal causes of Nigeria's underdevelopment from a sociopolitical dimension. The writers' therefore, see Nigeria's underdevelopment as a manifest consequence of the untamed sociopolitical defects inherent in it - what they refer to as "The Pentagon of Evil," viz; Tribalism, Religionism, Regionalism, Nigerianism, and Normativism.

Problematicue:

Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, successive military and civilian regimes have championed various programmes and policies aimed at the betterment of the citizenry's lives. Even though principally aimed at eradicating poverty and bettering the socioeconomic lives of the most significant number, these policies have been discovered not to be exhaustive in coverage, as underdevelopment still looms and remains visible in every nook and cranny of the nation. According to a 2017 report [9], Nigeria has West Africa's most extensive road network, yet these roads are most poorly maintained and in the worst of conditions in the region. A similar report by Gilbert da Costa [14] described the quality of Nigeria's roads as "generally poor." Most people describe the roads as "death traps."

Agriculturally, Nigeria has lost its glory – the export of agricultural commodities, which accounted for over 70% of the nation's GNP at independence, has dramatically declined. Importation of agricultural products (including staple foods) has become the day's order, keeping the nation perpetually as a monoculturally (crude oil) sustained economy. Data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and the Central Bank of Nigeria showed that from 1990 to 2011 (for 21 years), Nigeria spent over N40 trillion on the importation of food to meet domestic consumption – the annual food import bill is said to be five times of export. Another report by the same bodies showed that from 2016 to the first half of 2019, Nigeria spent N54.51 trillion importing manufactured foods and agricultural goods [8,11].

Apart from road, agriculture, and other sectors in pitiable states, education is another sector that has become bedridden. It is well known that Nigeria has the highest number of universities in Africa. Most of these universities have, however, aside from going on industrial actions now and then (which distorts learning), been ridden with adequate infrastructures and lack modern educational facilities, a situation that has resulted in them being termed as "glorified secondary schools" – a problem that has led to capital flights, as a recent report by Guardian.ng (June 2020) showed that Nigerian parents spend even above the Federal Government of Nigeria's yearly budget of \$750 million on their children's education in the United Kingdom [12].

The above and more are the visible everyday manifestations of the nation's problems, and one may think it requires economic intervention to be resuscitated or rebranded. Economic intervention is needed and will go a long way to solve the issues above. Nevertheless, what is an economic intervention without sociopolitical intervention (seaming the social fabrics of the nation)? In fact, what is economic development without social development? Is economic development sustainable without social development?

Conceptualization:

Development; Development, just as all other concepts in social science, has no straight-jacketed definition. As aptly stated by Rodney, development is relative, and what means development to one might invariably mean underdevelopment to another [23]. Development is a process that involves the advancement of people in society. It involves the pragmatic transformation of social, economic, and political structures that constitute society's framework [21]. In essence, development should be holistic and pervasive – it should encompass all socioeconomic, humanistic, and political enclaves. According to Todaro, development is a multidimensional process involving the re-orientation of the entire economic and social system – which involves, in addition to improvement of income and output, radical change in institutional, social, and administrative structures, as well as in widespread attitude, customs, and beliefs [24].

Regardless of scholars' opinions on the meaning and nature of development, development in all societies should meet the following objectives;

- a. It must be man-centered; development focuses on people and their overall advancements.
- b. The development provides increased availability and widens the scope and range of distributing life-sustaining resources (public goods and services).

- c. Increase in living level (raise in income level); more jobs, better attention to cultural and humanistic values, and detachment from primitive reasoning while embracing socioeconomic ventures that trigger civilization.
- d. Expand the range of economic and social choices for individuals and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence, not only with relevance to other people and nation-states and from the shackles of ignorance and human misery.

Social Development; Social development includes improvement in the quality of life of people; equitable distribution of resources; broad-based participation in the process of decision making; and special measures that will enable marginal groups and communities to move into the mainstream [22]. Social development is a participatory process of planned social change designed to promote the well-being of the people and which, as such, offers an effective response to the innate needs and aspirations of the whole population for the enhancement of their quality of life [6].

Social development is the elimination of inequality, enmity, and animosity in the allocation of the commonwealth and the application of absolute rationality in intergroup dealings. A socially developed society is devoid of ethnic bigotry and religious intolerance, possesses obscured and nearly invisible fragmentation amongst regions as well as a unified heterogeneous people, thereby guaranteeing long and healthy life of the general populace, providing room for sharing of knowledge through intergroup dealings, give access to resources needed for a decent standard of living and provides a safe environment for all other forms of development to thrive. Social development entails a qualitative change in the structure and framework of society.

Political Development; The consciousness of people to political issues, characterized by their participation in decision making, holding government at various levels accountable for all forms of resources entrusted to them, the prevalence of meritocracy over mediocrity (shunning nepotism) in political appointments, the nonexistence of political godfathers, non-personal interference of cabals and cartels in issues of general concern, the efficacy of the rule of law and the proper working of the principles of checks and balances and a general increase in national political integration/unity is what political development entails.

Theoretical Framework

Many theories have been used over the years to explain the animosity between coexisting groups across the globe. The Elites theory, for example, is one theory that explains the power relations between the elites (few members of the society) who exert dominance in the socio-economic and political space of the community for their aggrandizement at the expense of the masses (the more significant number of the society). This study, however, is anchored on the **Pluralist Theory** – a theory that explains the social heterogeneity and diversity inherent in virtually all societies and which prevents any lone group from exerting dominance over other groups, even though a particular group (or some groups) may seek to either legitimately or illegitimately dominate the other(s).

The pluralist theory was popularized by Robert Dahl and had the following assumptions; (a) resources and hence potential power are widely scattered throughout the society, (b) at least some resources are available to nearly everyone, and (c) at any time, the amount of potential power exceeds the amount of actual power [7]. The pluralist theory is based upon a perspective that citizens are involved in different groups (mainly as a result of their social identity), and as such, power and resources should be dispersed to secure their legitimate interests, and none of these groups will be worst off as well as not dominate the system [20].

Since virtually all groups in a pluralist society desire to exert dominance, it is only natural for feuds and animosity to exist in such a society, and consequently, rancor – hampers all forms of development in any society. Contempt in a pluralist society is spurred by the feeling of "Us against Them" – a feeling resulting from existing fragmentations, evident diversity of ethnicity, religion, ideology, and differing ancestral origins. The social interactions between ethnicities, regions, and religions can be understood as an interplay of conflicting and competing positions. Groups try to maximize their interests to the detriment of other groups. Lines of conflict are multiple and shifting (resulting from diverging interests) as the allocation and sharing of the commonwealth is a continuous bargaining process between competing groups – this inability to tame these sociological structures mostly impedes economic development because political gridlocks become the order of the day (as a result of inevitably less consensus between groups).

The pluralist theory, although plausible in its merit, is seen to be; (a) unconscious of the fact that one group may dominate other groups in the political arena and (b) that the domination of the sociopolitical arena by a particular group may breed inefficiency and may not be effective, and (c) those who occupy national positions may find it difficult distinguishing between national interest and their group's interest.

Therefore, peculiar to a discourse of this nature, the following are kin to explaining intergroup relations in the quest for economic, political, and social dominance; (a) resources and political powers, though widely scattered throughout the society, are limited and do not satisfy the insatiable nature of man and his desire for perpetual dominance (b) the existence of multiple groups in the society makes the equal distribution of available resources complex (c) the inequality in the distribution of resources amongst various groups breeds animosity, and consequently, rancor (d) animosity between groups impedes development.

Nigeria being a pluralist society is filled with people of diverse religions (majorly Christianity and Islam), diverse ethnic groups, and six regions that have always been at tooth and neck with each other. Although these groups have coexisted for decades, their coexistence has not been peaceful and because of that, reaching a consensus on national issues becomes difficult. In cases where consensus is reached, the recurring decimals of tribalism, regionalism, and religionism takes center stage and dislodges the efforts of the past heroes of the nation by ruining what has been built over the years. As long as Nigeria remains, these groups will continue to exist, but as long as sociopolitical development (effacing of ethnic bigotry and religious intolerance, obscured and nearly invisible fragmentation amongst regions as well as a unified heterogeneous people) does not take place, economic development will also not take place as supposed.

The Manacles of Underdevelopment

Development is a holistic and generic phenomenon – apart from its impact affecting everyone, the effect of development in one segment has a “spread effect” on other segments. As such, all forms of development are essential and should not be neglected if at all the happiness of the most significant number is a priority. However, the successful development of any nation, aside from the formulation of workable policies, depends mainly on the cooperation and willingness of its people and the political will of government officials. In the case of Nigeria, however, development has been hampered by the manifest consequences of ethnic and religious rivalries, regional fragmentation, normalization of anomalies, and the question of one Nigeria – collectively, the pentagon of evil.

The Pentagon of Evil [Internal Causes of Nigeria’s Underdevelopment]

Ethnicism & Underdevelopment; Ethnicity is a cultural interpretation of descent and historical tradition by a group of people, as opposed to others, and expressed in specific behavioral and cultural styles [1]. To Badmus, however, an ethnic group consists of people who conceive themselves as being of a kind [4]. Ethnicity has that feature of shared consciousness and identity and group extensiveness based on which discrimination is made. Ethnicity, therefore, breeds animosity between different groups.

Inherent in the fabrics of Nigeria is the identity of its people. Before colonialism, ethnicities existed in Africa (Nigeria, no exception); they did engage in social and economic relations with each other, even though the relationship between these ethnicities sometimes turned sour. The attainment of independence by Nigeria in 1960 signified the integration of these ethnicities under a single entity. It is safe to say that these ethnicities were integrated in 1914’s amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates in Lugard’s regime. As a result, the implementation of national policies even in the present time cuts across all states and communities (consequently, tribes) in the polity – in a bid to even infrastructural development.

Both past and present government regimes desire to leave tangible legacies (projects) behind at the end of their tenure; it is, in fact, the main reason for the formulation and implementation of various economic policies. These policies meet the aims for their formulation; however, under certain conditions (social order is sacrosanct), without which the desired economic and infrastructural development becomes unattainable. The dwindling state of the nation’s economy has called for the government’s attention over the years. Various programmes and policies have been formulated and implemented to cushion this glaring reality. According to a Business Day report, data from the Bureau of Statistics (NBS) capital importation report shows that foreign direct investment (FDI) in the agric sector was \$490 million in 2019, upping the previous year’s \$290 million investment by 69%. It also showed that more people have engaged in agriculture over the last six years (an average of 82% annual increase) [8,11]. This revelation shows that the agricultural sector is beginning to receive the government’s response to the call for diversification of the economy, and with the introduction of the Anchor Borrowers Programme (ABP), more and more farmers are emerging.

Despite the take-off successes of this policy, among others, ethnicity has continually deterred the overall success of the programmes – which is to meet the agricultural needs of the nation, as well as have a surplus to export. The animosity between ethnicities (which, because of their agricultural endowments and potential, were strapline Nature’s Gift to the Nations and Food Basket of the Nation, respectively) has further impeded the success of the various agricultural policies implemented by successive and the present day’s governments. The recurrence and resurgence of ethnic conflicts (and a cold war in some situations) have no doubt hindered the grand success of agricultural policies and other policies that are of paramount importance to the overall development of the nations.



Yams destroyed at Muekyuna Community (Tiv/Jukun crisis on 16th April 2019)

Apart from the destruction of harvested farm produce, farmers around the boundary area between Wukari of Taraba State and Ukum of Benue State find it challenging to return to their farms for fear of reprisal attacks. Additionally, this ethnic crisis has affected other businesses, deterred investors, and impoverished many people living in the area. An octogenarian, Elder Atov Avyoko narrated his ordeal to reporters, stating his loss of 5,000 tubers of yams, livestock, bags of groundnuts, and maize and soya beans to the Tiv/Jukun crisis of April 2019 [13]. A businessman in Taraba State, Samuel Nege, said he lost over N40 million worth of rice (1,400 bags) and property in the crisis when his warehouse was attacked [10].

It is therefore apparent that economic development which would have been brought about by the effort of government towards resuscitating agriculture has been thwarted by a lack of social cohesion.

Religionism and Underdevelopment; Religion is the opium of the masses, and most of all, its tenets are dogmatic – religious dictates are supposedly unquestionable. Before Nigeria, however, various ethnicities across Africa had their different traditional religions, and even though both predominant religions (Christianity and Islam) of the present era were imported truths, abiding by their dictates as those who introduced them to us, however, would have been incredibly instrumental to general development; after all, our present political, administrative and economic structures were equally imported. Suffice to say that, since the practice of Islamic religion by the Arabs and Christianity by the Englishmen has not deterred their development; it is expected that it does not deter ours too – moreover, religious teachings from both religions are of good moral ethics, which brings about social order and social order as well known, is a prerequisite for peace and consequently, economic development.

However, the narrative of Nigeria's religious practice is that of despicable extremism. Recent research showed that the more 'religious' a country is, the more impoverished it is. It has been observed that religious extremism in Nigeria has robbed it of its economic potential; Nigeria has become a spiritual hub instead of an attractive economic hub. Billions are spent on yearly basis building churches, mosques, and synagogues instead of industries. Nigeria is said to house the most enormous church auditorium as well as the highest number of "men of God" in the world.

Obviously, the yearly expenditures of people on religious activities in Nigeria have been noted to supersede the annual budget of the government itself; it becomes more apparent that when a country's religious population increases, there is equally a decrease in a country's economy and consequently, massive poverty across the nation. And as mass poverty increases, the following are bound to happen; (a) an increase in religious activities – because the masses return to God for solutions to their problem (b) there will also be an increase in the number of religious buildings – to meet the spiritual need of the people (c) more money will be spent on religious activities by solution seeker. It is a vicious cycle.

It is also important to note that the principles of wealth creation advanced by classical economists are capitalist investment and labor employment. Weber also noted that religious devotion is usually accompanied by a rejection of worldly affairs and the pursuit of riches and possession. However, he pointed out that the difference in work ethics of the Protestants and Catholics was the primary reason for the development of the protestant capitalists' societies and the stagnation of the conservative catholic societies – since the protestants believed in

capitalist investment and profit maximization while the Catholics believed that the accumulation of wealth was evil [25].

As a result of religious extremism and the lackadaisical attitude of Nigerians toward the amassment of wealth, most Nigerians do not invest their accumulated wealth; they instead spend them on religious activities. A CBN (Central Bank of Nigeria) annual report for the year ended 31st December 2002 to 2004 clearly showed that November, December, January, March, and April always recorded a massive circulation of money in the economy, with lesser money in the bank [5]. This reveals that these months well known for religious festivals (Ramadan, Christmas, Hajj, and Easter), encourage massive withdrawals from banks and extravagant religious-related spending.

Apart from the negligence of capitalist investment resulting from religious extremism, religious extremism has also often led to violence in Nigeria – a situation that has, now and then within the last decade, caused unprecedented economic loss. The heinous and devilish activities of Boko-Haram have, in the name of propagating Islamism, claimed human lives and impoverished many, and robbed others of their source(s) of livelihood, thereby leading to the overall retrogression of the economy.



The above are pictures of Boko-Haram’s bombings in Nyanya (Abuja) in 2014 and outside the United Nation’s building in Abuja (Nigeria’s capital) in August 2011, respectively [15,16] – which are both economic threats.

No right-thinking businessman invests in an atmosphere of rancor; these heinous activities of Boko-Haram have greatly influenced the withdrawal of international organizations from investing in Nigeria, especially in the north-eastern part of the country, where the actions of these insurgents are prevailing. As noted by Isakpa, “there can be no real progress made in any economy that is hostage to security” [17]. Collaborating with Isakpa on the issue of Boko-Haram’s religious extremism and the economy, Afolabi noted that Boko-Haram activities have added to the fear of foreign investors in Nigeria as no investor would like to invest in an atmosphere of fear, insecurity, and anarchy [3]. Apart from hampering the economic life of the nation, killings and destructions of properties perpetrated by Boko-Haram also affected the education of young Nigerians,

especially in Borno State and Adamawa State, thereby increasing the number of school dropouts in the society – some of these school dropouts who may not afford to sit for another entry exams into another institution may end up engaging in social vices (which are also of dire consequences to the economy).

Regionalism and Underdevelopment; In as much as Nigeria has six geopolitical regions, a more significant line of distinction and manifestation of antagonism between these regions seems to leave the regions balkanized into three; the south-east and south-south as one faction (collectively called the east), the south-west remains lone and unmerged with no other region (regarded as the West). However, the entirety of the north-east, north-west, and north-central constitutes the other faction known as the north. These lines of distinctions between regions have existed long before independence, but instead of disappearing at independence, it has instead become more pronounced. An excerpt from an interview with the former Premier of the Northern Region (Late Ahmadu Bello) available on YouTube credits this assertion. Sir Ahmadu Bello stated thus;

*"...well, the **Igbos** are more or less the type of people whose desire is mainly to dominate everybody. If they go to a village, to a town, they want to monopolize everything in that area. If you put them in a labor camp as a laborer, within a year, they will try to emerge as headmen of that camp and so on. Well, in the past, our people were not alive to their responsibilities because we can see from our **northernization policy** that in 1952 when I came here, there were ten northerners in our civil service here, and I tried to have it northernized, and now, all the important posts are being held by northerners..."*

One may say Sardauna's (Ahmadu Bello) statement was tribalistic since he mentioned a particular tribe (the Igbos) while discussing the northernization policy. However, when asked if his policy of filling all critical posts in the north with only the northerners and not with other Nigerians were temporary or permanent, his response proved that the northernization policy had an element of regional antagonism. In his word, he stated thus;

*"...what it is, is a **northerner first**. If we can't get a northerner, we take an expatriate on contract. If we can't, then we can employ another Nigerian but on contract too. I should say this is going to be **permanent** for as far as I can foresee. I am sure whichever government of the day might be... might even lead to bloodshed".* The journalist further asked Bello if this northernization policy doesn't damage the idea of all people in all regions in Nigeria being fair citizens of one country. In response, Bello stated thus, *"...well, it might, but erm... I mean, how many northerners are employed in the **east** or the **west**? The answer is no. And if there are...maybe ten laborers only employed in the two regions..."*

Long after independence, the narrative has not changed; governments of the northern states of the federation would instead consider a foreigner in an appointment or award of a contract before a Nigerian from the east or the West. Governments of the eastern states also prefer expatriates to Nigerians from the West or the north. The same could be said about the western part of Nigeria. This singular act that Bello declared would be **permanent** has truly lingered and has robbed virtually all the regions of efficiency in implementing projects and caused the entire federation to lose capital – as the capital flight has become the order of the day.

***Note;** Apart from the direct negative impacts of ethnic, religious, and regional rivalry on Nigeria's economy and infrastructural development, the political and administrative arena of Nigeria has been greatly influenced by these factors. It is glaringly evident that this primordial trio (ethnicity, religion, and regionalism) has become a tool in politicians' hands during elections. Churches and mosques have become political campaign grounds instead of remaining institutions for strengthening moral values. The attendant consequence it has on development is gargantuan and immeasurable because while people elect leaders along with ethnic, religious, and regional affiliations, merit is often left out. When merit is left out, leaders without a clear vision but unrealistic manifestos and impractical development ideas are elected. Instead of making policies that will benefit all, they make policies that are rather beneficial to those in their circle, thus leading to economic oligarchy – the cartels get richer at the detriment of the masses.

Nigeria's Question (Do we exist as a people?)

The amalgamation (without integration) of the northern and southern protectorates in 1914 birthed the entity called Nigeria. Unlike many other countries that were amalgamated and have become culturally unified (North America, for example, was amalgamated, and the last antimiscegenation law was struck out in 1967). After a hundred and six years, Nigeria still doesn't consider itself a nation but a mere territory – a typical example of "a house against itself."

Before independence in 1947, Chief Obafemi Awolowo stated thus;

"Nigeria is not a nation. It is a mere geographical expression. There are no 'Nigerians' as there are 'English,' 'Welsh,' or 'French.' The word 'Nigeria' is a mere distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within the boundaries of Nigeria and those who do not".

This statement from Awolowo – a three times contender for the country's apex office, a champion for federalism in Nigeria, a key player in Nigeria's independent movement, and a widely celebrated nationalist

shows how we are divided. It has instilled into people (especially the Yorubas) a sense of difference, and as such, they see themselves as Oduduwa nation and not Nigerians.

Shortly after Awolowo's statement in 1947, Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa 1948 stated thus;

"Since 1914, the British government has been trying to make Nigeria into one country, but the Nigerian people themselves are historically different in their backgrounds, religious beliefs, and customs and do not show themselves any sign of willingness to unite...Nigerian unity is only a British invention".

This statement made by Balewa doesn't come as a surprise because it is, after all, true that Nigerians are different in all respect (a traditional system of administration, origin, and ideology). However, since British colonialism is ended, Nigerians must desist from thinking that our unity is a British invention – the blame game ought to have ended by now if truly, we desire self-propelling development in all sectors.

Today, an Igbo man anywhere in the world would do his best to raise his children in an Igbo way, a Yoruba man would also raise his children the Yoruba way, and a Hausa man equally does the same. In fact, all ethnicities in Nigeria do the same. This simply means that no one raises his child or children as Nigerian(s); as such, the future of Nigeria is equally not Nigerian – this makes development difficult since, after all, two cannot work or even walk together except they are agreed.

The Normalization of Anomalies; The understanding of "normal" has been distorted in Nigeria; in fact, what an average Nigerian sees as normal is an utmost abnormality to a sane person. Corruption and cabalism have, for example, not just become normalized in Nigeria but institutionalized. Corruption in Nigeria has become systemic, and like a pandemic, it has eaten deep into the socio-political and economic fabrics of the nation. In most cases, the masses that ought to revolt against corruption come to the defense of the shildy, particularly if such a person is ethnically, religiously, or regionally affiliated to them. It is, therefore, seen as normal by average Nigerians that a politician takes his share of the national cake (the commonwealth). The first thing on the mind of an average Nigerian when elected or appointed to an office is to take his/her own share of the national cake.

The new normal across the nation is the payment for securing of jobs in Nigeria. Police jobs, military recruitments, and appointments for jobs in the civil service are for the highest bidder. Jobs are sold from as low as N30,000 (Thirty thousand naira) to as high as N15,000,000 (Fifteen million naira). The Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, on 16th January 2013, resolved to investigate the allegation that Federal Government agencies have been engaging in the recruitment irregularity of selling slots to applicants for as high as N500,000 per slot. During the session, Senator Mohammed Ali Ndume (PDP, Borno) confessed that he offered money (N200,000) for a job slot to help a well-qualified graduate from his constituency. Senate Leader Victor Ndoma-Egba also disclosed that many of his constituents had approached him for financial aid of N500,000 to secure jobs in government agencies.

The above is no longer irregular but regular – as it has become a recurring decimal and its consequence on the nation's economy results from the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of those employed. This is because, in most cases, those qualified for the job mostly don't get the job. After all, they can not afford to pay for it. In a study carried out by Ademola, it was revealed that the Nigerian Federal Public Service had been bedeviled by over bloatedness, low productivity, ineffective, cronyism, and workforce lopsidedness which were traced to the flawed recruitment process of the civil service resulting from outright sale of jobs by syndicate groups in the Civil Service Commission and other agencies [2].

Apart from the normalization of corrupt practices, it is pertinent to note that normativism in the education sector has also contributed to the underdevelopment of Nigeria. Education, especially university education, should be universal, but universities in Nigeria do not meet global standard best standards. Some of these universities are funded to operate virtually and have been supplied with sufficient computers, but the internet connections to access reading and research materials are not provided. In some cases, the funds meant for it are either embezzled or misappropriated. More so, the academic curriculum of Nigerian schools lacks constant reviews and improvement, as such lacks the substance for now and the future. Moreover, the continuous churning out of graduates taught by unqualified teachers (consequent of the 100/400 cut-off point of Colleges of Education) right from their formative age is not helping matters – as graduates with certificates but without relevant skills are produced now then.

The normalization of "sorting" of lecturers in our higher institutions has also contributed to students' laziness to struggle for the type of knowledge that can help them contribute to national development. This has consequently resulted in endemic corruption in the education sector, low enthusiasm for honesty, patriotism, truth, and moral integrity, and faulty education policies, which have collectively induced low-quality education and presented a scarcity of efficient and qualitative skilled workforce in the country.

II. Conclusion:

Without prejudice, it can be deduced from the foregoing discussion that the problem with Nigeria is not an economic problem but a problem of the state (socio-political). After all, a former Head of State (General Yakubu Gowon) once stated that the problem of Nigeria is not money but how to spend it. It has always been reechoed that "united we stand, divided we fall," and such is the case with Nigeria – we are divided along ethnic, religious, and regional lines. Its adverse effects on development, particularly economic development, are evident in every sector. It is pertinent to note that Nigeria is not the only pluralist country in the world. Europe and American countries also possess elements of plurality. However, they (Europe and America) have been able to manage their heterogeneity to their maximum advantage. Today, America has drifted away from the manacles of ethnicity, religionism, and regionalism. Its plurality is now likened to a salad – a delicacy having different vegetables and condiments garnished together as one (all the vegetables need each other for optimal taste).

The situation with Nigeria is not one without remedy – Nigeria is made up of Africans, unlike the United States of America, which is made up of people from different continents (Asians, Europeans, Africans, etc.) due to the slave trade. This means that even if our ethnicities differ, we are one as Africans, and that should be enough to make us want to agree to walk together as one. Suppose the current situation in America can be likened to a salad. In that case, it means that if the proper steps are taken, the problem with Nigeria can radically transform into being compared to a molten potpourri of metals – where soft metals (minorities) mix with strong metals (majorities) as one and as a result, possess same characteristics. This means that when the minorities are well assimilated and incorporated into the majority, the entire society's heterogeneity will efface, and Nigeria will emerge stronger, not only as a country but as a nation.

It has also been ascertained that the actualization of economic development and its consolidation is not without social development – particularly the re-orientation of the mind of Nigerians who are now and then involved in conflict bordering on identity.

III. Recommendations:

Having understood that socio-political development is germane to bringing about and consolidating economic development, the following recommendations are suggested:

- a. More social policies (like Buhari's War Against Indiscipline in 1983-1985) should be made for the social orientation and sanity of the civil service.
- b. Government must engage in activities that will bring about greater national integration, like engaging in perpetual re-orientation of Nigerians on the need for ethnic tolerance, inter-religious cordiality, and general reception of one another.
- c. Leaders, particularly political and religious leaders, must guard their utterances to avoid the inculcation of hatred, animosity, and the feeling of unwontedness and division between regions in the mind of the masses (lessons from Obafemi Awolowo's speech in 1947, Tafawa Balewa's speech in 1948 as well as Ahmadu Bello's speech).
- d. Political appointments should be significantly balanced across the six geopolitical regions of Nigeria.
- e. School curriculums should be continually reviewed to meet global best standards of education and technological advancement to prepare the future generation of civil and public servants.
- f. Since religion is the opium of the masses, religious leaders must teach their followers the importance of saving and investments (lessons from Max Weber's "Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism").
- g. There is a need for more integrative and cooperative regions, and as such, the central government must ensure equitable distribution of resources in conformity to federal character.
- h. Citizenship education should not only be taught in schools, but the government should work hand-in-hand with religious leaders; for citizenship education to be included in religious programmes.

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