

Leadership in Nigeria: A Paradox of Action for Resource Mobilization in a Depressed and Privatized Economy for National Development

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Abstract

Leadership is a generic and a normative term that operate for the good of society. In Nigerian, rather than use it to serve the public good, leadership has become a resource for the holder of state power as it provides him/her the opportunity to seek self-interest to the maximum space possible. While for those outside the corridors of state power leadership is a source of exploitation, pain and deprivation of their fundamental right to an egalitarian society. This picture of leadership has generally resulted in the increasing apathy and lack of trust for government among most Nigerian. In which case, most Nigerian do not see leadership as constituted to contribute to the peaceful attainment of their progressive socio-economic goal. This view is anchored against the role of Nigeria leadership in significantly contributing to the depression of the national economy, continued failed development process and the irrational and staled implementation of the policy option of privatization. The privatization program which spanned over two decades in implementation have not in any way taken off the dark clouds of hopelessness and growing pains of lack of access to basic goods and service and increasing unemployment. Despite the poor showing of leadership in Nigeria it is a valued resource which if effective articulated and operated has the capacity to contribute to the efficient mobilization of national resources by genuinely turning the depression for the good of all and also promoting national development. This paper using the documentary and analytical approach has examined the contesting issues about leadership and its place and utility for national development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Leader, Leadership, Development, Privatization, Implementation, Participation and Trust.

Introduction

Leadership reflects a trust for which the holder must at all times act in ways that is in the interest of the giver. Specifically, it is a contractual relationship defined in terms of a principal-agent relationship; one for which the agent must constantly seek ways of improving the state and condition of the principal. The political process of periodic election presents the platform upon which both the principal and the agent as it were negotiate and re-negotiate the term of the contract. Once signed via popular election, the terms of the contract is binding on all parties for a defined period of time for which a new contract will be re-entered into either with the old agent or an entirely new agent. The change of the agent for a new one will depend on the performance and score card of the old agent. In the contractual relationship the

constitution provides the framework that directs and guides the actions and behaviours of both parties as well as defines the progressive goals of the collectives to be pursued by the agent. The progressive goals aspired by the collectives are summed up in the capacity of the governance process enabling them to effectively overcome the challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality. Within the locus of social demand is the need for progress which is measurable and of value to the citizens as the principal. It is therefore of the essence for the agent who through the political process is contracted to form a government (leadership team) aimed at achieving the goals of the principal defined in terms of progress and values. In the process of pursuing these values and progressive ends resources must be mobilized and utilized for the attainment of those ends contractually agreed upon through the political process and subsumed in the constitution.

It is easier to attain those goals where resources (resources are in this context defined in terms of human, finance and natural endowment) are readily available and are put into productive uses. However where the contrarily is the case, attaining those goals become problematic especially in a heterogeneous and largely divided polity. This is because the struggle among the different grouping for the meager resource becomes tensed and outside the corridors of defined order; especially where the struggle is defined in terms of a zero-sum-game. Under this circumstance, poor leadership becomes really challenged and inhibited drawing from the fact that it is unable to ensure that divergent values are properly articulated, integrated and resources mobilized to achieve consensus goals. The ability of leadership to mobilize resources for the attainment of consensus goals of the collectives is depend on the character, will, trust and tact of the leader. These does not preclude the nature of decision making, discipline, and the management framework the leader and his/her management team espouses in the process of extraction, production and distribution channeled towards promoting the good life for all in the polity.

The ability of an individual to positively combine these characteristics and utilize it for the good of the whole society makes leadership a valued resources in itself to be cherished, obeyed and followed; in which case the population are willing to subject themselves to the orderly demand and sacrifice necessary to attain set goals. However, where these characteristics are selfishly employed in the process of rulership success in the pursuit of progressive goals of the collectives is regrettably fractured irrespective of how well those goals are articulated and projected. Under this pattern of behavior, gross abuse of the rights of the collectives is ever present with the meager resources of the state misappropriated by self seeking leaders. The prevalence of these abuses in Nigeria have scared-off foreign investors, deterred local investment, reduced government income generation capacity and consequently reduced significantly the level of resource employment in the Nigerian economy as such the whole system is reflecting a retrogressive character. This is an irony considering the high degree of resources endowment present for economic growth in Nigeria.

Economic balance remains frontal in the issues of governance as it provides the premise upon which finances for state administration are generated as well as utilized to exploit other resources of the state for growth and development. Unfortunately, contemporary evidence shows that these potentials have not been realized essentially because of bad governance (Bello-Imam and Obadan, 2004:1); which boils down to leadership issue (Achebe, 1988). Todaro and Smith (2004) have advised that for Nigeria to turn the tide of its economic misfortunes and mismanagement to begin to achieve its potentials and as a leader of the developing nations require taking some fundamental decisions and action in the political, economic and social relational frontiers. This observation goes further to question the existing quality and capacity of leadership in Nigeria. This is because decisions and actions of leadership is a valid instrument in redefining state focus, and a tool for effective state resources mobilization and utilization necessary for development through better development management.

The question of leadership has remained a vexing issue even as the treatise on Nigerian leadership history has epitomized below per- performance in all spheres of its characteristics. Hence, the prevailing need and demand to strengthen leadership quality in Nigeria so as to change rightly the economy, the political system, and the fractured pattern social relation in

Nigeria. This is because the weak character of leadership in the social, political and economic spheres have continued to produce undesirable environment favourable for growing poverty, unemployment and inequality among the population in the system. This compromised pattern of leadership resulting from leadership failure in Nigeria have been occasioned by poor vision, weak will and failed discipline by those in position of public authority over the years. Hence, the consequence is the failed state of infrastructure, insecurity, arbitrariness and the disrespect for the rule of law by both leaders and the governed. Drawing from the challenging leadership dilemma, this paper seeks to examine the concept of leadership and how it contributes to effective resource mobilization for national development particularly in this era of resources constraint, depression, and privatization yet underdevelopment.

Towards Understanding Real Leadership and its Utility for Resource Mobilization

Leadership is a defining element between success and failure of any organization or society. It is the thread that binds the resources of the state to people's valued goals. The strength of the thread of leadership in terms of character and quality will determine the level of success a society will attain in its move toward the ends of development. Although, leadership strategy differ yet leadership is a universal instrument that characterized every society. A real leader in playing the role of leadership is valued based on the functions he/she performs in contribution to the achievement of the goals of the organization or society. This is tied to the leader's ability to persuade others to seek defined objectives enthusiastically (Kast and Rosenzweig, 1974). Generally, leadership is about influence and reclining behind a leader is the instrumentality of power which is derived from institutionalized authority. When power takes the form of authority, it is generally regarded as legitimate, since it is seen to further the collective's goals. This means that some are granted authority for the benefit of all (Haralambos and Holborn, 2007:524).

Power denotes i) the ability to produce a certain occurrence or ii) the influence exerted by a man or group, through whatever means, over the conduct of others in intended ways. Power is a function not only of the extent to which a person controls information, persons, and instrumentalities, but also of the importance of the various attributes he controls (Kast and Rosenzweig, 1974).

Kast and Rosenzweig, (1974) further observed that power can be classified into physical, material and symbolic and these categories are related to coercive, utilitarian and normative approaches. Power is the fulcrum that the leader utilizes to balance the mix and the weight of influence, goals to be achieved, resources to be employed and the result to be attained. In this sense, the leader is a bridge-builder linking and facilitating different approaches, strategies, and techniques (Judith, 2002). Playing this role effectively imposes on the leader to follow the variable-sum concept of power rather than the constant-sum concept of power relations. Generally, extricating power from a leader or leadership his/her functionality is undermined. This bring to fore the reality that power is not a constant and that leadership, almost by definition, is a voluntary activity with limits to free choice (Heller, 2001) and power usage.

Since differences abound in society the pattern of interaction will reflect such differences, however, within the changing dynamics of bargaining and compromise political leadership cannot at one given time reflect the interest of all members of society in taking a single decision. Albeit, leadership as an honest broker must mediate between different groups, ensuring that all of them have some influence on government policy (Haralambos and Holborn, 2007). In the process of re-molding divergent group interest to reflect a balance and an acceptable compromise the leader must also respond to the necessity of flexibility inherent in the situational approach of leadership characterization.

Drawing from Weber's analogy, leadership is derived from traditional, legal-rational and charismatic authority. The distinction also illuminates the truth that lie behind the character of the leader at any given time. Searching further, scholars have logically differentiated and classified the various typologies of leadership into universalist and situational approaches.

The former include great man theories, personality theories, psycho-analytic theories, charismatic, transformational and transactional theories. Situational approaches are, in general, of more recent origin and are based on the assumption that different styles of behaviours, including leadership, are appropriate for contrasting varieties of real life situations (Heller, 2001).

Irrespective of the differences in the thrust of evidences between the two approaches they yet find convergence at the feet of leaders possessing leadership trait or characteristics hence it must be recognized that there is often a degree of overlap between the two schemata, though evidence supporting situational or contingency approach produces a more realistic analytic as well as prescriptive approach to leadership (Heller, 2001).

Thus, looking beyond the plethora of definition of leadership, the concept of leadership envelops substantial number of traits or characteristics which are: intelligence, social maturity and breadth, inner motivation and achievement drives and human relations attitudes (Kast and Rosenzweig, 1974). For Heller, (2001) they are courage, will-power, flexibility of mind, knowledge, and integrity. Judith, (2002:229) would rather hold that the hallmark traits of a leader should be visionary consciousness, multicultural responsiveness, intuitive sensitivity, risk-taking confidence and self-awareness. As more and more literatures are explored different traits that are presumed to define leader trait and character will continue to throw-up themselves which compounds the whole situation. Complicating the search for the real traits of leadership is the truth that was reeled up by Jennings that over fifty years of study have failed to produce one personality trait or set of qualities that can be used to discriminate between leaders and non leaders...hence, the quest for traits-and the traits-continues (Grover, 2008:353).

That failure nonetheless, Summing up the divergences of the presumed traits identified by some of the scholar mentioned above Thomson, (2004:424) notes that there is no single, recommendable behavior for effective strategic leadership. Some leaders are autocratic, others democratic in the way they make decisions. Some rely on planning and analysis, while others are more intuitive and visionary. Leaders vary in the degree of risk they will accept willingly. Some look for consistency as far as it is predictable in today's dynamic environments, while others are constantly opportunistic and driving change. Some pursue growth through efficiency cost savings. Others are adding new values in an innovatory climate. Some set very ambitious growth objectives, and others are modest. All of these styles can prove effective; the challenge lies in creating and maintaining the E-V-R (Environment-Values-Resources) congruence.

Therefore, one way of reducing the excessive randomness is to concentrate on certain core activities and characteristics, for instance by singling out decision making attributes of leadership or by concentrating on Zand's three basic leadership requirements: Knowledge, Trust and power (Heller, 2001:348). Angling leadership from this point leadership then is a mix of administrative, political, and public relations skills which bring in the issue of leadership abilities (Sapru, 2008:150). Leadership abilities although hard to measure, yet they clearly make a difference, it is an aspect of government that adds or detract (Rouke, 2008). Thus leadership goes to the man who possesses the knowledge of situation, and who knows how to pass from one situation to another.

Knowledge builds competence which produces trust and trust elicits genuine involvement and engagement with consequence for power, power rightly utilized creates influences that birth acceptability and willful compliance. Central to the three elements is trust; trust could be assumed or earned. According to Gordon trust is the lubricant that reduces friction, a bonding agent that glues together disparate parts, a catalyst that facilitates action. No substitute-neither threat nor promise-will do the job as well (in Tunji, 2008:86). Trust is derived from the leader's ability to stand by the orderly rule of conduct at all times so as to continually educe the trust of the people that he/she will use his/her knowledge and public power proper for the good of all and not resort to hedonistic behaviours emblematic of a flagrant abuse of due process. Trust builds stronger bonds of cooperation, and cooperation on a larger scale requires organization and direction, which necessitate positions of command. Some are therefore granted the power to direct other (Haralambos and Holborn, 2007) this in essence is derived

from trust and must be reciprocated by those in leadership position in government for trust to be maintained.

The challenge of development and resource shortfall requires in cooperating into government only individuals with leadership qualities of: Independent will and right sense of decision and direction, self-sacrifice, an attitude disposed toward savings and discipline, fairness in resource distribution, utilization, risk taking and accountability. These are fundamental character of a leader necessary for unlocking the towering resource challenge severely affecting the economy and impeding national development in Nigerian. On the contrary, the qualities of trust building and value bearing character for good administration and governance have become lost pearls not sought after by our political leaders. Hence those who think doing good is all that matters forget that it is really not the essence of governance for those who seek power in Nigeria. Doing good is merely an attachment, it is not the real thing. That is why denial of this good can become part of government policy toward those it considers to be enemies (Kukah, 2003:12). The tragic consequence of this form of behaviours against the ostracized is an opening for the legitimization of crisis by the neglected and ill treated as a response to the abuse by the representative of the state.

The current members of the National Assembly many of whom have participated in varying degree in dictatorship regimes does not inspire the confidence of Nigerians. It is therefore not surprising that the scandals that have rocked the various legislatures at the national and state levels, leading to changes in leadership for many of them, and many legislators apparent pursuit of parochial interest, have created an immense problem that is fast becoming an obstacle to the legitimization of the republic (IDEA, 2001:138). The political leadership that should be symbols of order and shown the path of light have themselves become lose cannonballs of disorder striking viciously at orderly standard of social, economic and political conduct when it does not suit their selfish interest. This is evident in the way the rules keep changing in the direction of self or group interest against that of the whole collectives. This clearly explain why the leadership of the National Assembly leadership decided to preside over sharing –out #10billion naira to themselves rather than return such excess monies to federal purse at the expiration of their tenure.

To most scholars, the poor leadership showing reflecting in Nigeria's failed state character has often been blamed on the historical ties to neo-colonial agenda that have continued to evolve with different shades of exploitative tendencies aimed at keeping third world countries like Nigeria subservient. However, varying from this view point Sadeeqe, (2006:89) holds strongly that this state of national affairs is not a historical development, dialectically, rather a function of misgovernance, maladministration and irresponsible and bad leadership. There is no doubt that Nigerian leaders have showed candor and pragmatism in some areas of governance particularly in the area of foreign policy (Ogbu, 2007) yet in the area of leadership at the domestic level it has failed to reflect the same candor and pragmatism. Good leadership is to at all times lubricate the enduring qualities of good administration and good governance. The challenge of governance in Nigeria has significantly remained the question of leadership. This challenge is drawn from the way so-called leaders emerge in this country, as Makarfi observed we cannot have good governance, peace and tranquility without having good leadership (in Daily Trust Newspaper, Tuesday, December 6, 2011). In Nigeria, the qualities of good leadership has been lost in the deep gully of greed and selfishness birthing ineptitude making its leaders to continue to fail to gauge right or pretend not to so do, thus neglecting to promote the public interest. Yet it is when government performs, by providing the environment for citizens to meet their most basic needs in a peaceful and tranquil setting that people have a stake in the defence of democracy (IDEA, 2001:139) and governance institutions. Unfortunately, by the evil schemes of some Nigerian politicians the needed tranquil setting have eroded Nigerians who now live in fear.

Drawing from the outcome of most regimes both political and military, self service has fuelled leadership pursuit neatly crafted in the adage of the desire to serve the people. This makes it evident that not all leaders hold political office and not all those who hold political office are leaders (Kukah in Daily Trust Newspaper, Tuesday, December 6, 2011). There is no gainsaying that this has been the fundamental subtle reason behind military incursion into

Nigerian politics. Although, it is not solely the factor for their involvement in governance, the role of collaborators cannot be free of this guilt as Soyinka noted

For every uniformed individual that grounded society under his heels, there were at least a hundred eager servitors who collaborated and profited, whose notion of a national agenda dovetailed neatly with the predatory mission of the military. And not merely individuals but groups, whose obsession with a privileged control of the fortunes of the nation both directly and indirectly made the incursion of Sani Abacha on the national scene possible and nurtured his regime (in Kayode, 2007:196).

It will be erroneous to hang this blame on the Abacha regime alone as other regimes before and after him have been deeply enmeshed by this ill. The overwhelming view has been that over the past 80 years the colonialist, the politicians who replaced them, the military rulers who ousted the latter, the civilian who took power from the military have consistently manipulated the differences for their own selfish interest (IDEA, 2001:96-97).

This greed to rule at all cost had fuelled the suggestion by impatient politicians in Nigeria that the presidency and other significant political position be occupied on a turn by turn (rotational) bases, and not by the most competent and qualified individual (leader) who have the capacity to deliver the right dividend of good governance. Relating to rotational presidency, although not enshrined in the constitution remains an awkward prescription to solving the deep divide created by leadership. Contending argument holds that

the adoption of rotational presidency may not really solve the leadership problem at the center because if we critically look at the crisis of the Nigerian state and the level of poverty in the land, the most important factor that has brought misery in to a majority of the people of this country is leadership at all levels. A country's path to development or underdevelopment and backwardness falls on the lap of the leader (Jacob, 2006:41).

In the political dynamics of scheming defined by self-interest abiding by defined principles remains a pretty difficult task for our political leaders who lack the basic tenets of good governance, the vision neither have the capacity to effectively mobilize the citizenry towards achieving the vision. Achieve progress for Nigeria's development will require person or persons with the knowledge, abiding trust in using public power to incite genuine citizen's participation in the development process. This involvement places a significant demand and pressure on the governance process as the leader is required to be open, accountable and at all times divulging the right information and guidance at the right time for the right decisions to be made, action taken and resources already mobilized to be utilized in the implementation of favourable policy conditions that will enable the attainment of the good life for all.

Development, Depressed Economy: Leadership and the Dynamics of Adoption and Implementation of Privatization Policy

Development is a phenomenon desired by all, it is however not a free gift. It is a product of careful design, effective resource mobilization and collaborative action with the people and their leadership. It entails sacrifice and dedication coupled with careful observation and an openness to change efforts. Development is about the whole society as a whole as well as it is about the individual. Development is a normative process of growth that continually questions the orthodox ways of doing things by seeking to advance the pattern of human existence at all times. Development is progressive when it at all times improves human as well as environmental conditions. Not tying this paper to the rhetoric of regurgitated definition that fills extant literature, this paper will only anchor on the definition of Seers, (1995), Sen, (1985 and 1999) and Goulet, (1971).

Todaro and Smith, (2005) have refers to the views of these group as the new economic view of development. The views of these scholars further strengthened the truth that income and wealth are not ends but instrument for other purposes especially for the realization of human potentials (Todaro and Smith, 2005:47). Seer's definition in essence questions the effectiveness to which national resource allocation system contributes in reducing poverty, enabling the employment and utilization of resources and breaking the stronghold of

inequality in a polity. The ability of the system leadership to act decisively, fairly, justly and firmly in these areas will no doubt result in strengthening the capabilities or potentials of the people (capability approach of Sen) by allowing individuals in society the freedom for life sustenance (the ability to meet basic needs), self-esteem, and freedom from servitude (the right of choice) for a more humane life (this aspect captures Goulet's core values). This process requires individual as well as leadership (government) engagement for success to be achieved which redirects us to the relevant place and utility of leadership in the development process.

It has been argued that the global flow of interactions seeks to undermine the development of others while promoting the growth of others; the question that needs to be asked is what is the leadership characteristics of those nations that global flows have undermined their progress? Development is a dynamic process of social, economic and political redefinition requiring appropriate leadership candor, learning, sacrifice, discipline, focus, commitment and resources investment aimed at attaining some specified goals at all times. Abusing these critical behavioural characteristics will only produce an economy that is not only depressed but afflicted by legitimization crisis. An examination of leadership behaviour of post independent leaders in Nigeria reflects a gross contradiction of some of these characteristic outlined above. The leadership and governance arena was one that promoted growth to meet political demands (infested with rats), rather than social and economic imperatives where surpluses were scarce and productive investment rare (Thomson, 2007:201-206).

Specifically, ours was a society whose resources were sucked out of society by government, yet the government offered little in return. This leadership character has nothing better to offer the citizens than deepening poverty and inequality in the polity. The danger with inequality is that: i) it leads to economic inefficiency, as it promotes the inefficient allocation of assets, ii) it undermines social stability solidarity and iii) it increases the veil of ignorance (Todaro and Smith, 2005:244-5). This leadership behaviours had resulted in economic depression that began subtly yet grew steadily to the state described above. Economic depression describe an economy that is characterized by a severe decline in the level of economic activity (slump) real output are at very low levels and there is a high rate of unemployment (Pass, et.al. 2005:120). Capturing this description with reference to state of Nigeria's economy Okongwu, (1986:23) noted that we have arrived at the situation where the national economic regime is characterized by an essential discontinuity of economic policy. The deleterious effects of such discontinuities seem rather obvious. This scenario led to the economic crisis that manifested in a rapidly increasing inflation that averaged 10.5 percent in 1970-74 and 19.9 percent in 1975-79, and further shot-up to 23.2 percent in 1983 and 39.6 percent in 1984 (Obadan and Edo, 2004:16); with little or no solution from leadership to apply to check the situation at that time.

The lack of leadership will and weakness has inflicted a severe cost on the development process as it is been experienced in Nigeria today with the economy remaining underdeveloped;

Sadly, Nigeria had become one of the poorest African countries, with per capita income falling below US\$300. Also it is reckoned that the percentage of Nigerians living below the poverty line doubled from 41 percent to 80 percent (IDEA, 2001) and still increasing. Its annual per capita gross product was less than \$950 per person in 2007. In the 1990s, its economy stagnated, growing by less than a half percent per year. In 2007, 70% of Nigerians earned the equivalent of one dollar per day. Nigerian chances for development has been squandered by a succession of corrupt military dictators... who are believed to have stolen or misspent \$400 billion in government money over the past four decades (Magstadt, 2009:131). The mismanaged development process resulted in a depressed economy necessitating the implementation of the privatization program in Nigeria. This flow of events reflect a linear relationship which birthed the adoption of the neo-liberal prescription of privatization policy capsuled in SAP as a panacea to the economic woes that Nigeria was hit-head-on with for which local antidote tied around the Economic Stabilization Act of April, 1982 by the government failed to alleviate.

Privatization: Understanding the Real Reason for its Adoption (Politics, Economic or Self-interest?)

The inadequacy of government pre-SAP measures to alleviate the problems challenging the national economy had by the 1980s resulted in legitimization crisis (Fraser, 2003:306) that warranted the adoption of a much stiffer measure that has drag to this period. The present privatization program is a by-product of SAP, Privatization can be both economic and political, in the case of the former; there is the direct transfer of the ownership of public enterprises to private hands through direct sales while, political privatization is emblematic of widening the public shareholding through share offer to the general public (Oxford, 2006:416). The events that feed the inevitability for the adoption of SAP in Nigeria had began subtly way back in the 1970s and gradually grew monstrous in the 1990s to the point that palpable solution feed in to solve the economic problem failed helplessly like a pack of card.

It is clear that the reason for economic failure was not strongly tied the issue of oil glut nor was it significantly related to the challenging forces of globalization but simply that of leadership self-interest propelled by greed. The post independent Nigeria's economic and governance predicament cannot be blamed on colonialism either. This problem streams from the fact that the country's economic and political potential has been squandered by a corrupt and self seeking leadership and its poor policy decision (Joseph, et. al. 1996:273). The underlying factor that propelled the adoption of privatization policy of SAP is rooted in the self-same factor of protecting self-interest occasioned by military and civilian politician whose governments were characterized by various abuses yet wanted international legitimacy as a tool to hold on to power.

Equally not dismissing this fact is the aggressive promotion of the neo-liberal doctrine by developed nations of the West and their affiliate international institutions. These factors have found a hold on the truth that the history of election in Nigeria from 1960- 2011 has reflected the character of aggression, conflict, and contempt for due electoral process for which both the presumed winners and the losers are guilty of inciting. In all instances, the acclaimed winners lacked the valid trust of the people due to unethical electoral malpractices as a fair amount of evidence exists to show that there have been 'grave and massive electoral fraud' in the four republics (Uke, 2006:50). And because they do not have their roots in the people are usually insensitive to public opinion. Therefore public accountability of the government to the people is always the least in the priority of the ruler (Uke, 2006).

The infraction of the electoral process resulting in the imposition of candidates, vote-buying to actual rigging has resulted in the placing of political power in the hands of un-popular candidates who seek legitimacy from whatever sources available and are ready to give anything except power to get that legitimacy. Thus, the elements of military and civilian political leadership self interest, international institutional interest weaved around a faltering economy and the need for a quick fix-solution to cover up for the failure of poor leadership choices combined to give SAP and its privatization agenda a head-on acceptability by Nigeria government. The failure to develop has been occasioned by bad governance and its poor policy choices resulting in the depression of the Nigerian economy thus necessitating the adoption of the World Bank prescription of privatization (despite the high level of poverty among Nigerian and the harsh conditionalities embedded in SAP) as condition for assessing further help to alleviate the already faltering economy.

Privatization is the last step in the SAP circle; it is a SAP instrument which defined the role back of the state that allows the private sector to be the engine room and driving force of economic growth and development. Privatization did provoke the sales of presumed inefficient public enterprises as a necessary cost saving measure. The divide that has greeted the privatization of public enterprises in Nigeria are subsumed in the arguments of the proponent and opponent of the policy. For the proponents privatization, the whole exercise is subsumed in the idea of reducing the cost of governance, strengthening the efficient supply of goods and services through private sector competition, using the proceeds from such sales to finance other essential area of state responsibility, widening the share owners, allowing

management of former nationalized industries normal commercial autonomy and reducing the burden of decision-making impose on government by public ownership (Grant, 2003:441). Critics of the Nigerian privatization program have honed their argument on the grounds that it was only a means of re-allocating national enterprise among the ruling military and civilian political elite. The position of the critic may hold grounds given the shady manner with which public enterprises were sold out as well as the largely unanswered questions that have trailed the whole process since 1988 to date. More so, embedded in the SAP remedial portion there were other viable alternative to privatization the government could chose from like commercialization and contract management. One cannot throw away this truth that privatization rightly managed and implemented is a tool for enhancing economic growth and development. Unfortunately, due to leadership greed the privatization opportunity have been so mismanaged by leadership that the public outcry of lack of transparency and pervasive corruption in the way some of the components of the programme was undertaken. Based on general perception of corrupt practices analyst have now tagged privatization as “an official plundering of national patrimony” by the political elites (Odusola, 2004:98).

There is no gainsaying that one does not need to argue with the privatization policy if its sole aim is to protect the interest of the collectives. However doubt is cast against this truth given the fact that the Nigerian program of subsidies has been so craftily rechanneled to benefit a few strong groups who have become cartel in the various sectors of the national economy with no benefit to the average Nigerian. equally perplexing is the question, how can one explain for the provision of astounding bail-out regimes for ailing industries in America and countries in Europe by their governments yet enforcing a contradicting demand for the total removal of subsidies in an already faltering Nigerian economy and that of other developing economies. This reality remains a paradox of double standards that is difficult to understand neither explain by both the learned and lay mind. This paradox shows the high place of state-centric interest in global relations which Nigerian leadership must not be wary to project our national interest and not the leader’s interest or other nation’s interest despite global pressure. However if the proceeds of the removal of the subsidies as dictated by privatization fail to benefit the whole collective by not strengthening the peoples capacity, expand their potentials and improve their living condition than it is now then one cannot but affirm that the whole policy of privatization was accepted by the ruling elite in mischief wholly applied to deprive the average Nigerian of their fundament right to an egalitarian society via the equal access to public goods as enshrined in the constitution. Then, accepting to adopt and implement SAP regime was more of an international diplomatic political choice by illegal regimes rather than an economic one aimed at blowing off the hot steam of stiff instituted measures by western government against anti democratic authoritarian regimes in operation in most third world nations Nigeria inclusive. Although, SAP had economic implication, its political undertone provided the bases for a marriage of convenience bonded by interest between the West that is against any government that was not democratic and an undemocratic government that needed both internal and external support to remain in power for as long as it can hold. Thus SAP provided the government at that time the respite from external pressure to continue with its rule of illegality.

Concluding Remark

Changing the leadership character that has enable poor resource mobilization and utilization that have produced a depressed economy with a resultant underdevelopment of its people means also changing the governance and institutional dimension that have provided the fertile grounds that nourished the growth of bad leadership. Removing these system inhibitions enables leadership and individuals to play rightly their role in the development process. Breaking down system and institutional barriers that allow bad leadership enables the society through some combination of social and economic and institutional processes, secure the means for obtaining a better life (Todaro and Smith, 2005:56) for the people. According to Todaro and Smith, 2005:57) the better life should reflect in i) increase in the availability and

widening distribution of basic life-sustaining goods such as food, shelter, health and protection; ii) raise the levels of living; and iii) expand the range of economic and social choice.

On the contrary, leadership indecision, decisions and unstable character had led the Nigerian nation's economy into a depressed state for which its government lacking leadership capabilities were unable to prescribe a valid solution to halt the early noticed vacillating signs of failure. Rather than taking a nationalistic state-centric decision and action to reposition the economy for better functioning self-interest became rather the deciding criteria for accepting external prescription which it was not ready to sincerely implement. This poor leadership will and insensitivity had culminated in compounding the problem of Nigeria further than it was supposed to be. The consequence of the actions of the state due to bad leadership decision is the imposing poverty, inequality and growing insecurity which it is now the present leadership is finding it difficult to remedy. These prevailing awkward economic, social and political circumstances challenging the Nigerian nation should provide the premise for the emergence of a truly competent leader who can educe the trust and cooperation of the citizenry in solving them. This kind of leader will require the spirit of flexibility, openness, self-sacrifice, discipline and accountability that genuine participation demands on the political and governance process for genuine success to be attained. It is only through this form of leadership that the root of democracy will be deepened and its rich fruits can be harvested and accessed by all in the polity.

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