

## **PARADOX OF DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY CHALLENGES IN 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This work examined and interrogated the reasons why the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria appears to be a paradox which is a reflection of the opposite of the development strides, goals and objectives set for the country by the founding fathers on attainment of independence in 1960. The founding fathers of Nigeria gave the country the 1960 independence constitution and the 1963 Republican Federal constitution which inter alia emphasized the national development objectives of the country to be- increase in per capital income, more even distribution of income; reduction in the level of unemployment; increase in the supply of high level manpower; balanced development and indigenization of the economy. The Nigerian founding fathers emphasized that for the country to attain greatness in terms of adequate security and achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs), the political leadership and administration should be anchored on pursuance of a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; a just and egalitarian society; a land of bright and full opportunities for all its citizens and a free and democratic society. All these lofty ideas and aspirations of the founding fathers notwithstanding, development in Nigeria in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has not met public expectations over the years. This is why Nigeria appears to be a paradox in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, despite being blessed with vast abundant human and natural resources which if adequately had been managed by the past and present administrations of the country would have made Nigeria an 'elderado' (i.e. paradise and envy of the world). The methodology adopted for the study is dialectical materialism which gives primacy to material conditions, particularly economic factors, in the explanation of social life. The justification for giving economic factors such primacy is because man is first and foremost an economic being. To begin with, economic need is man's most fundamental need. Unless man is able to meet this need he cannot exist in the first place. Man must eat before he can do anything else- before he can worship, pursue culture or become a leader. When an individual achieves a level of economic well-being such that he can take the basic necessities, particularly the daily food for granted, the urgency of economic need loses its edge. Nevertheless, the primacy remains. The fact that one is not constantly preoccupied with and motivated by economic needs shows that the needs are being met; it does not show they are not of primary importance. The greatest benefit of this tool of theoretical framework of analysis and method is that we must pay particular attention to the economic structure*

*of society and indeed use it as the point of departure for studying other aspects of society. Once we understand what the material assets and constraints of a society are, how the society produces goods to meet its material needs, how the goods are distributed and what types of social relations arise from the organization of production, we have come a long way to understanding the culture of that society, its laws, its religious system, its political system and even its modes of thought. Thus methodological application of dialectical materialism to the study reveals the major findings in our contemporary Nigeria societies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. First, economic inequality is extremely important in Nigeria because it tends to reproduce itself endlessly in a series of other inequalities especially access to political power which makes the economically privileged groups in the corridors of power to continuously reinforce it through corruptions and perpetuation in office. Second, the security challenges and poor achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs) in the areas of health, education, social services etc, in Nigeria are attributable to extreme poverty and economic inequalities in the society. Third, tribalism flourishes in Nigeria mainly because it is useful especially in the economic sense. It provides access to 'important' people for villagers and the unemployed seeking jobs in the cities; it fills to a considerable extent the gap left by the lack of a social security system in the country. Finally, Nigerian Government excessive use of police and soldiers to truncate any form of anti-government lawful protests and opposition both in the past and at present are largely responsible for the perceived marginalization, insecurity and quest for self-determination by some sections of the country. Based on the findings it is recommended that Nigerian government at all times as a panacea to the security challenges and achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs) should allow conversations that will lead to an acceptable constitutional reforms by both the majority and minority ethnic nationalities in the country. Also, there should be an electoral reforms with electronic transmission of results for transparency capable of producing leaders with a strong political will to build a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; a just and egalitarian society; a land of bright and full opportunities for all its citizens; and a free and democratic society as was envisioned by the founding fathers.*

**Keywords: Paradox, Development, Security challenges, Dialectical materialism.**

## **Introduction**

Development is said to have taken place when there is positive change in a country resulting in improvement in the living conditions of the people. In Nigeria there is wide-spread poverty as most of the people are unable to provide for themselves the basic necessities of life. Majority of the people are poor because they have no money, no power, no self-pride and no influence. They live in abject poverty (NPC & UN, 2001).

Development entails the pursuit by societies of the three core values of life namely- Sustenance, self-esteem and freedom. Life-Sustenance has to do with the provision of such basic needs as food, housing, clothing and basic education. Until a country is able to provide its citizens with these basic needs, it is regarded as undeveloped, because they form the major objective of development.

Self-Esteem has to do with self-respect and independence. When a country and its people cannot stand on their own, then they have no self-esteem. In order to promote freedom, there are three evils that people strive to overcome i.e. want (hunger), ignorance (illiteracy) and squalor (filth). A people desire freedom to be able to choose; and education to be able to afford a decent life. These three core values relate to one another because the absence of any one of them affects the others negatively.

In effect, development is said to have occurred when there has been an improvement in basic needs; the country and its citizens display a greater sense of self-esteem due to economic progress; and people have freedom of choice in life.

In Nigeria, development has not met public expectations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There are serious challenges in the areas of health, education and social services. Also in the area of security, there are very serious challenges in the forms of Boko Haram terrorists; Banditry, cattle rustling; Herdsmen attacks; Kidnapping for ransom; Armed Robbery; Unknown gun men; Secessionist agitations etc.

The last six years has seen the country's economy go into very serious problem because of sharp decline in the petroleum sector which is the major pillar of the economy. In the agricultural sector, very little growth was recorded while the industrial sector has not fared much better. The result has been an unprecedented rise in unemployment rate and this has increased the level of poverty and insecurity in the country. That the country, Nigeria, needs assistance in tackling these socio-economic problems and insecurity is no longer in doubt.

Therefore, paradox of development and security challenges in 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria is an attempt to theoretically and empirically examine why the present state of poor development and in security in the country is a reflection of opposite of the development strides, goals and objectives envisioned by the founding fathers on attainment of independence in 1960. The founding fathers of Nigeria gave the country the 1960 independence constitution and the 1963 Republican Federal constitution which inter alia emphasized the national development objectives of the country to be-increase in per capital income, more even distribution of income; reduction in the level of unemployment, increase in the supply of high level manpower balanced development and indigenization of the economy. The Nigerian founding fathers emphasized that for the country to attain greatness in terms of adequate security and achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs) within the Sub-Saharan Africa, the political leadership and administration should be anchored and focused on the pursuance of a united, strong and self-reliant nation a great and dynamic economy; a just and egalitarian society; a land of bright and full opportunities for all its citizens and a free and democratic society. All these lofty ideas and aspirations of the founding fathers notwithstanding, development in Nigeria in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has not met public expectations over the years, but have remained a mirage, a shifting sand, which intentions and ideals did not approximate reality and now has become a chasm in need of a serious bridge to enable the country attain nationhood, peace, security and progress. This is the reason why the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria appears to be a paradox, despite being blessed with vast abundant human and natural resources which if adequately had been managed by the past and present administrations of the country would have made Nigeria an Eldorado' (i.e. paradise and envy of the world).

The methodology adopted for this study is the dialectical materialism which gives primacy to material conditions, particularly economic factors, in the explanation of social life. The justification(s) for giving economic factors such primacy is because man is first and foremost an economic being. The full import of this methodology on the theoretical foundations of the work will be seen in the subsequent analysis of the paradox of development and security challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria.

### **Methodology and theoretical foundations of the study**

A very important feature of this work is its method of analysis, which is based and anchored on dialectical materialism. It is therefore necessary to begin with an explanation of what this method is and why it is desirable to use it in this study. What are its characteristics and features?

Dialectical materialism according to Ake (1981) is predicated on the primacy of material conditions. In other words, the method gives primacy to material conditions, particularly economic factors, in the explanation of social life. The justification(s) for giving economic factors such primacy is because humans represented by man are first and foremost an economic being. To begin with (Ake, 1981) economic need is man's most fundamental need. Unless man is able to meet this need, he cannot exist in the first place. Man must eat before he can do anything else. For example, before he can worship, pursue culture, education or political leadership. When an individual achieves a level of economic well-being such that he can take the basic economic necessities, particularly his daily food, for granted, the urgency of economic need loses its edge. Nevertheless, the primacy remains. The fact that one is not constantly preoccupied with, and motivated by economic needs, shows that the needs are being met; it does not show they are not of primary importance.

It is important to emphasize that, just as economic need is the primary need of man or citizens of a country, so economic activity is also man's primary activity. The primacy of work, that is economic productivity, is the corollary of the primacy of economic need. Man is first and foremost a worker or a producer. It is by man's productive activity that he is able to obtain the economic means which he needs to sustain life. In short, man must eat to live but he must work in order to eat. Thus productive activity is the condition for all other activities. This fact is aptly captured in the popular consciousness, for people to invariably to identify themselves in terms of their economic role in society or country. For example we often hear people say: I am a farmer; John is an engineer; Emeka is a teacher; Ademola is a civil servant or Yusuf is a politician etc. It is true that man does not live by bread alone. But it is a more fundamental truth that man cannot live without bread.

The methodological implication of dialectical materialism on the theoretical and empirical foundations of this work is that we must pay particular attention to the economic structure of the Nigerian society and indeed use it as the point of departure for studying and understanding the other aspects of the society. Once we understand what the material assets and constraints of a society are, how the society produces goods to meet its material needs, how the goods are distributed and what types of social relations arise from the organization of production, we have come a long way to understanding the culture of that society, its laws, its religious system, its political system and even its modes of thought. Thus applying

dialectical materialism to analyze the paradox of development and security challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria, anyone who makes an empirical study of historical Nigeria societies, including our contemporary 21<sup>st</sup> century societies will find the following features in the country:-

- Those from the economically privileged groups tend to be better educated, more cultured; to have higher social status, to be more 'successful', professionally and politically. This means that economic inequality is extremely important in Nigeria, tending to reproduce itself endlessly in a series of other inequalities.

In Nigeria of today, these inequalities are clearly shown and demonstrated through the impoverishment of over ninety percent of the population who constitute the less privileged masses. Nigeria is currently one of the poverty capital countries of the world with shocking statistics of low literacy rate; low gross enrollment in primary school; secondary school and tertiary institutions; poor access to health services; high infant mortality rate; low life expectancy; low per capita income, poor access to water/sanitation environment especially access to safe drinking water etc.

Nigeria as a country is a paradox because it is rich and blessed with vast human and natural resources, for effective and efficient economic growth and development, yet the majorities of the citizens are poor and live below poverty level. Some of the main objectives which Nigerian budgets have tried to stress and achieve both in the past and in 21<sup>st</sup> century without any tangible meaningful effect on the standard of living of the citizens and poverty reduction in the country includes:- Efficient utilization of limited resources through the re-ordering of government priorities; Reduced government expenditure; re-engagement of the traditional resource base neglected because of the rich oil sector; fight against inflationary pressure, income redistribution; self-sufficiency in food through agricultural production; greater incentives to local industries; and an increase in the export of traditional produce in order to influence the balance of payments position and release pressure on the dwindling external reserve level.

Apart from the above main objectives, there is the broad national objective which also has to be achieved through the budget. Some of this broad national objectives include: Increase in per capital income; more even distribution of income; Reduction in the level of unemployment; increase in the supply of high level manpower; Diversification of the economy; Balanced development and indigenization of economic activity. All these well articulated objectives to be addressed through the budget over the years and especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century notwithstanding, the Federal Government of Nigeria spends several trillion naira yearly budget approval by the National Assembly but not much effect is felt by the citizens in the country. All the economic and security problems the budget ought to address have continued to increase unabated. For example the rate of unemployment and joblessness has continued to rise; poverty has continued to increase; food inflation is on the increase; Health services and educational facilities deteriorating; social services infrastructures such as regular electricity, roads, transportation, airports e.tc, continues to deteriorate- Above all, insecurity has become the order of the day in the forms of terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, herdsmen killings; militancy and secessionist agitations. The true situation in Nigeria is that the

institutionalized public corruptions and mismanagement of the public financial resources allocated for sustainable development by the political elites and public office holders has given rise to unprecedented inequalities in the country between the few privileged group and the majority of the impoverished masses. Consequently, corruptions and abuse of power and public trust, by those in Government who has made it impossible for the masses to hold them accountable either through the ballot boxes during elections or the judiciary through the law courts are the obvious reasons for the present underdevelopment and serious security challenges being experienced currently in 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria. Thus making development and security challenges in 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria a paradox

- Those who are economically privileged tend to be interested in preserving the existing social order and those who are disadvantaged by the social order, particularly its distribution of wealth, have a strong interest in changing the social order, particularly its distribution of wealth. In this way the economic structure sets the general trend of political interests and political alignments. This feature of the Nigerian society encourages survival of the fittest and the tendency for the few privileged economic group especially those of them in Government and positions of public authority to do everything possible within the corridors of political power in order to firmly clinch their hands on economic power through the control of the public state treasury. Similarly, those outside the realm of economic and political power privileged positions, do everything possible to scheme themselves into the corridors of power to be able to have access to the public treasury in order to fortify their position in the war of the survival of the fittest. This is the situation Acha (1991) observed in Nigeria, when he referred to the country as a “Giant Zoo”. He noted that the problem of Nigeria’s development and insecurity emanated from bad leadership. Nigeria, according to him, groped for good leadership and proper development for good governance and adequate security of lives and properties, both of which have continued to elude it. The two tragedies of systematic self-deception and systematic corruption were blamed for the failure. As self-deception and systematic corruption compounded each other, Nigeria was forced into ‘a classic vicious circle of corruption comprising endemic corruption, planned corruption and developmental corruption’, ‘a circle capable of destroying Nigeria completely’.

Similarly as observed by Osioma (2021) in support of the views of Acha (1991), noted that; This generation of leaders in Nigeria has failed both themselves and the nation woefully. They inherited a nation of great values and enviable standards; a clime in which the national currency was strong; the people were healthy, fully employed and possessing great skills and competencies; the institutions were robust, thriving and strong, the envy of an entire continent; and politics that were lively, dynamic and creative. However what is passed on to the succeeding generation is a culture of failed values, devalued norms, downward slide in basic morals, and flight of the truth. Both religion and professionalism offer a bouquet of values that can launch firms and nations at micro and macro levels- into a new orbit of growth and development. It is only as we adhere to enduring values that cohere with profession and faith, that we will return the individual and the state to meaningful existence and life. (Osioma, 2021)

As a corollary and empirical evidence in support of the paradox of development and security challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria, Zibiri (2021), said he observed the followings stated here under about Nigeria:

I worked and lived in Abuja for 18 years. I ran my own private company from 2001 until 2014. Two million of the likes of Buhari cannot change Nigeria. Everything is wrong with Nigeria. The director won't give you contract except you pay up front. The banks won't give you loan unless you concede a certain percentage. The man supervising the contract won't pass the job except you play the ball. The accounts department won't raise your payment voucher or cheque unless you see them. I can go on and on. The worst thing is that it has become a norm that nobody sees anything wrong with it. If you think otherwise, they began to think you are sick and not normal. If you get killed, there is no justice system in place to seek redress and bring the perpetrators to book. The police is corrupt, the judiciary is the same. Even the religious circle is not spared. Everything in Nigeria revolves around corruption. Nobody cares about anybody. No law and order. I looked from my left to right; everybody is desperate about one thing 'money'. I am an electrical engineer with MNSE and COREN. The system doesn't care about my qualifications. Distribution and transmission jobs are given to alhajis, pastors, friends and relatives without any basic skills. I started asking myself, how do I convince my kids that education and hard work is rewarding? When fools, agberos and touts are running the country from the local government to the presidency. Is this what my four sons will also go through?

In 2014, I decided I have had enough, I decided I was leaving. I migrated to Australia with my family. Don't put yourself in harm way for any reason. The problem of Nigeria is in the hands of Nigerians living in Nigeria. Try starting a gate house in your village; everybody wants to profiteer from it. The bricklayer, the carpenter, the mason, and even your brother who claims to be supervising on your behalf. They are corrupt, morally bankrupt and selfish. Everybody there thinks about himself and nobody is thinking about Nigeria. You don't have to be the one to go there to change anything. Let those under the hammer start the revolution. I beg make you hear word. This post is gonna anger a lot of my followers. I'm still gonna post it anyway. Analogy of OPPRESSORS & FOOLISH CITIZENS: (A case study of Nigeria citizens & their elected oppressors) (Zibiri, 2021).

From the analysis of Zibiri (2021), it clearly shows that Nigeria itself is a paradox. Everything in Nigeria appears to be the opposite of the intentions of the founding fathers of the country and even the ruling political elites in power in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The unintended consequences of the political leadership and administrations of the country called Nigeria are greater than the good intentions especially in terms of development and provisions of adequate security for the lives and properties of the citizens. For example, the present administration of president Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR, before he came to power on 29<sup>th</sup> may 2015, he campaigned and strongly promised the Nigeria citizens that if voted into power his administration will end terrorist insurgents called Boko Haram in less than six months as a former army General, create 3million jobs every year, ensure strong economy and food security which would end poverty; strengthen Naira to the extent that it would be at par with the dollar or at least \$1 US dollar to #20, and reduce the pump price of petrol motor spirit to below #50 per liter etc. Above all, he promised Nigerians that he will restructure the country's

federalism to make it more economically viable for states and local Governments by ensuring true federalism. Also he made it emphatic that within his tenure in office, there will be comprehensive electoral reforms to ensure free, transparent and credible elections to throw up the right leaders Nigeria deserves, having been victim of electoral malpractices. The political agenda and manifesto of All Progressive Congress (APC) and president Muhammadu Buhari GCFR in 2015, was so mouth-watering, inviting and promising that most Nigerians did not want to listen or hear the former president Jonathan Ebele Goodluck GCFR, what he has to say or offer to improve on some publicly observed lapses of his administration then, especially the fight against the Boko Haram insurgents in the North-East then and corruptions in his administration. Most Nigerians in 2015 believed that president Muhammadu Buhari GCFR is the expected messiah and answer to all the economic and security challenges Nigeria was experiencing prior to the election. Today, Nigerians know better. Your guess is as good as mine. While not agreeing completely with some observations of Zibiri (2021) concerning Nigeria, but I must have to observe that over seventy percent of his assertions and claims about the situation of affairs in the country are right and correct. The real problem and true enemy of the Nigeria state has been the bad leadership foisted on the country by both the military and civilian leaders in the past and at present, which thrives on two tragedies of 'systematic self-deception and systematic corruption, which has culminated into Nigeria in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century been described by scholars and development experts as a near or complete failed state. In all honesty and frankness, Nigeria exhibits all the indices, indicators, signs, features and characteristics of a failed state clothed with the toga of underdevelopment and insecurity, making it a paradox in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century despite her vast rich human, natural and financial resources. To many scholars and pundits, the continued existence of Nigeria as a corporate entity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a miracle and paradox, which has been carried too far through the divine interventions and grace of God, which if nothing is urgently done now may have the Goodluck keeping the unity of the country together since the 1914 amalgamation disappear. That the country is still intact today could be best described as a miracle and paradox, because all the statements made and written by patriots and lovers of Nigeria to salvage it from disintegration were disregarded according to Okogie (1991) by the leaders and their followers, who were not ready to hear God and morality and would often drum into people's ears, 'You are in Nigeria,' 'Be a Nigerian', expressions which implied acceptance of immorality as one's way of life.

Dialectical materialism as a method of analysis and theoretical foundations of this work recognizes the fact that in so far as there is economic inequality in a society, like in Nigeria, that society cannot have political democracy because political power will tend to polarize problems around economic power. Also, a society where a high degree of economic inequality exists must necessarily be repressive. This repression arises from the need to curb the inevitable demand of the have-nots for redistribution. We see here economic conditions not only setting the tone of politics like "money" in Nigeria, but also defining the role of coercion in society. The rise of coercion in maintaining economic inequality and perpetuating firm control of political power in Nigeria was aptly captured by Zibiri (2021) with the analogy of comparing the overbearing powers of the Nigerian Executives, president and the Presidency" who constitutes the cabinet with the reign of the former president of Soviet Union Joseph Stalin. The Nigerian masses in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Nigeria according to Zibiri (2021) are psychologically and economically in the same helpless and despondent state of conditions



which the Soviets found themselves under the dictatorship of Joseph Stalin. According to Zibiri (2021);

During the Soviet dictatorship of Joseph Stalin, He was a brutal dictator with mind of his own. On one fateful day, Stalin came to Politburo meeting with a live chicken, standing in front of audience; he started to pluck the feathers of the live chicken off one by one. The chicken trembled in pain, blood tricking out of its pores. It gave out grievous cries, but Stalin being a cruel dictator continued without remorse plucking the feathers out until the chicken was completely naked. After which, he threw the chicken on the ground. The naked chicken was staggering in pain. Stalin goes into his pocket and from his pockets; he took out some chicken food and started to throw it at the poor and helpless creature. The poor chicken in pain started eating and Stalin started walking towards his seat. As he walked away, he kept dropping some feeds on the floor and the chicken followed him and sat feeding from his feet.

Joseph Stalin then turned to members of his political party leadership. He said, " This chicken represents the people". You must dis-empower them, brutalize them, beat them up, starve them and then leave them" If you do this, go into your pocket and give them peanuts when they are in that helpless and desperate situation, they will blindly follow you for the rest of their life, worshipping you" They will think you are a hero forever. They will forget that you're responsible for their sorrowful situation in the first place. Now take a look at all the people, some Nigerians are busy defending on social media, electronic media, print media and political rallies. Take a look at those they call their heroes. They are the same people who plunged Nigeria into situation she is today. They are the same people who are responsible for their predicaments..... Nigerians kill those they should defend and defend those they should kill (Zibiri, 2021).

The powers that be in Nigeria, if there is anything they hate with passion, it is speaking truth to power. The Nigerians leaders and Government both in the past and present are intolerant to criticisms and usually prefers the use of "propaganda" to run the affairs of the state. This is the reason for the high level of deficit trust and misgivings between the Government leadership and the followers (masses). The majority of the citizens hardly trust their leaders on whatever they say are their intentions and goodwill for the people. Consequently, as observed by Acha (1991), which is a replica of the situation in Nigeria in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, which makes development and security challenges in the country a paradox:

Each nation has a garden from which it derives its development and security. This garden can be made a garden of hope, joy and comfort, which are radiated to the entire nation. It can also be made a garden of hopelessness, sadness, and discomfort which also radiated to the entire nation concerned. The quality of the garden depends on the quality of the people who are there. If the quality of the people is high (high moral quotient, high intelligence quotient and high physical quotient – in that order) life in the nation will be sweet to the degree of the highness of the quality of the people. If it is low, life will be equally bitter to the degree of the lowness. Thus, a nation may have a garden of paradise or garden of Eden, or a zoological garden depending on the people who are in the garden. Nigerian leadership since its independence from Britain in 1960, is here described generally as a Giant Zoological Garden of Africa where irrationality prevails.

Reference to the zoo is to stress the level of quality of leadership which has astounded and shocked the world that had looked at Nigeria as a symbol of hope and success in Africa in 1960. The responsibility of changing or perpetuating this situation is mainly that of Nigerians. It is not of foreigners, although foreign interests use Nigerians to achieve their selfish ends and thereby perpetuate zoo leadership. These Nigerians, who are used, being myopic, do not foresee the damage they do to their nation and to themselves. This is also another aspect of the zoological picture. Nigerians should realize that the installation of people, who think and act like the immediate descendants of apes, as Nigerian leaders, will bring its natural results, namely, leadership that is irrational, corrupt, purposeless and highly immoral.

The question of morality does not apply to apes and their predecessors in human evolution. It would be unfair if humanity applied the criteria of moral development to them. The choice is open to Nigerians. The legal profession, like the education profession, is very important to Nigerians under the prevailing situation in Nigeria in making a judicious choice. Here comes the judicial challenge. There is, however, only one good choice open to Nigerians, and that is, to convert the Nigerian Zoological garden to Garden of Eden or paradise or continue to face the consequences of zoological leadership, which are the current underdevelopment and insecurity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, despite her rich vast human, natural and financial resources (Acha, 1991).

Therefore, the paradox of development and security challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Nigeria, are attributable to bad governance, inept leadership, corruption and the general acceptance of the zoological garden life by the majority of the citizens, through the election of “mediocres” into public offices; celebrating the oppressors as heroes and killing those they should defend. Finally, dialectical materialism as the analytical and theoretical framework for this work further states that the morality and values of a society tend to support the preservation of the existing division of labour and distribution of wealth in that society. The autonomy of morality and social values is more apparent than real. Contemporary western morality which Nigerian leaders adopted for the country, condemns theft, corruption, terrorism, killer herdsmen attacks, militancy etc. and we forget that these social vices and evils as a moral value are something created and dependent on a particular economic condition where there is no scarcity and no private property, the idea of theft, fraud, corruption, terrorism, banditry, killer herdsmen, militancy, secessionist agitations etc would not arise.

In Nigeria between 1970- 1980, when there was oil boom and excess petro- dollar in the country, the economy was strong, there was several employment opportunities for the citizens and foreigners, the naira was stronger than the dollar and at par with the pound sterling; the foreign reserve was very high and development projects were going on, educational and health institutions very strong and the poverty level very low. Nigeria in those years was the toast and delight of the business world. This was the time Nigeria assumed the role of the giant of Africa and made Africa the center piece of Nigeria's foreign policy. Nigeria was involved in several liberation struggles, sponsoring liberation movements to achieve and accelerate independence for those African countries still under the vestiges of colonial rule and colonialism.

In the period under reference above which is between 1970-1980, Nigeria was very peaceful, united, economically progressive with abundant employment opportunities, qualitative education, good health services, effective and efficient police force, strong armed forces capable of defending the country and African continent and above all, no internal or domestic security challenges and threats. The big question now is how did Nigeria degenerated to the present situation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that the country have lost all its previous gains of being a progressive developing country to assuming the present status of an undeveloped and a near failed state with shocking and terrifying statistics of being the poverty capital of the world; a country with the third most dangerous terrorist organization in the world called Boko Haram; banditry, cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom, incessant herdsmen attacks, militancy and violent secessionist attacks.

It is important to emphasize that this work is not to castigate or denigrate any individual, group of individuals, past and present administrations, but to offer a challenge to all Nigerians, their friends and well-wishers in particular, and to humanity in general to think outside the box, by abandoning the traditional and conventional reasons for the woes and pitiable conditions of affairs in the country. It is a thoughtful and critical challenge through the message of love and hope which this work conveys for all the lovers of the country to begin to reflect deeply on the way forward to salvage this once great country from disintegration. The hard and difficult question all lovers of Nigeria must urgently answer and address considering the paradox of development and security challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria is, does Nigeria have hope of overcoming the present challenges and attaining the national objectives and greatness envisioned by the founding fathers of the country in 1960? The answer and possible way forward the above critical question of does Nigeria have hope is what this work intend to discuss in the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The Nigeria founding fathers gave the country the 1960 independence constitution and 1963 Republican federal Constitution which inter alia emphasized the National objectives of the country to be –increase in per capital income; more even distribution of income; reduction in the level of unemployment, increase in the supply of high level manpower, balanced development and indigenization of the economy.

The Nigerian founding fathers further emphasized that for the country to have hope of attaining greatness in terms of adequate security and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the near future, the political leadership and administration should be focused and anchored on pursuance of a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; a just and egalitarian society; a land of bright and full opportunities for all its citizens and a free and democratic society.

The important question which is a recurring decimal in the minds of lovers of Nigeria, has been why the country could not attain the greatness planned for it by the founding fathers who laid the constitutional economic and political blue prints in 1960 and 1963 respectively, through the articulation of the desirable national objectives to guide the subsequent future Nigerian leaders. As a Nigerian scholar, what has worried and agitated my mind over the

years is how to explain what is wrong with the past and present Nigerian leaders? Is it the case of the barber not knowing how to barb? or the razor not being sharp? or both?

However, a problem identified, is a problem half- solved. Some great scholars like Chinua Achebe and Acha Felix Ndubuisi, through painstaking study and analysis of events and administration in Nigeria, has come to the conclusion that the problem with Nigeria is leadership. For example, Acha (1991) in his book titled *Nigeria what Hope?*, clearly without mincing words, squarely laid the problem of Nigeria's development and security challenges on bad leadership. Nigeria, according to him, groped for good leadership and proper development both of which continued to elude it. The two tragedies of "systematic self-deception and systematic corruption" were blamed for the failure. As self- deception and corruption compounded each other, Nigeria was forced into "a classic vicious circle of corruption" comprising endemic corruption, planned corruption and developmental corruption, 'a circle capable of destroying Nigeria completely', which is the case today in the country.

For avoidance of doubt, there is need to explain the concepts of endemic corruption, planned corruption and developmental corruption, which ills were recurring as a cycle of civilian and military leadership of the country went on in the past and present time.

Endemic corruption is the abuse of office which occurs in varying degrees. It prevails in the administrative systems which control exclusively the distribution of scarce welfare services. In Nigeria, this form of corruption is usually seen among the police, customs, banks, courts, hospitals, various ministries and educational institutions. Money is given to, or demanded by public officials so that they will ignore the rules of conduct set up by the government for public good. The policeman takes money to ignore enforcing traffic offences which could cost several lives; the customs official takes money from a traveler to ignore the payment of customs duties or taxes on goods which could yield thousands of naira to the government; the revenue official charges a wealthy trader or businessman low tax for some cash or gifts thereby denying his government thousands of naira in revenue; the bank official receives a bribe to approve a loan for a customer who could plunge the bank into big losses of money; the magistrate in the court sets a criminal free to commit more crimes at the payment of money to him; the medical doctor ignores a very serious patient (who may consequently die) and attends to a less serious patient because of money; the Director- General prefers an incompetent employee in his ministry because of some money given to him; the principal or a professor or a registrar squeezes in a student in an institution who does not measure up to the standard because of personal gain, and some clerks in various offices hide files, vouchers, applications etc, until some money is given to them. Some of the corrupt acts may be committed at the instance of other favors such as gifts of drinks, turkeys, buildings and sex. They may also be committed to favor relations and friends. The above examples of corrupt acts constitute an endemic disease which has been destroying social, economic and political development in Nigeria since 1960 – date (Acha, 1991; Nwankwo 2021).

Planned corruption is an instrument of control by politicians to retain power at all costs. Under planned corruption, grants, favours and rewards replace the acquisition of desired goods according to legally defined, objective need, merit or rational qualifications. The most

important person, the Chief executive, dispenses the wealth of the nation as he pleases regardless of rules of conduct. This he does to retain his power. Licking his boots, singing his praises and ostentatious allegiance to him dominate the behavior of those who want to share in the spoils. If one wants avoid disgrace or get to the top, one must comply with the dictates of the chief dispenser of spoils.

The Chief Executive, under planned corruption, gives pardon to people and lavish donations and gifts to public and establishments and individuals which cannot be justified on constitutional or conventional bases. Many people who have no definite functions to perform in the government party leaders and retired highly placed people are paid fabulous salaries or given benefits from public funds at the pleasure and personal gains of the Chief Executive (Acha. 1991).

Developmental corruption is associated with the administrative system that handles numerous development projects without the participation of successful private enterprises in such heavy capital formation or development. The government virtually monopolizes capital development and prevents private entrepreneurs from competing with it. Consequently, the spending behavior or habits of the government cannot be controlled or even cross- checked with those of private establishment because they are virtually non-existent.

The corrupt practices involved in developmental corruption are enormous. The government, being responsible for capital investments, awards contracts for building ports, roads, airports, dams, schools, hospitals, houses etc. licenses which are usually over-issued through corruption are given to party supporters and highest bidders in bribery to import massively capital goods, factory equipment, machinery, vehicles, building materials and basic foodstuffs. The customs officials who pass these heavy imports do take their own spoils when the goods arrive at the ports. Large scale smuggling in order to avoid paying duties is part of developmental corruption. The customs officials encourage it so that while the other government officials get their bribe from the award of contracts, benefits, privileges and licenses, they ignore the illegal imports to get their own (Acha, 1991).

The dialectical materialism and content analysis method applied to the study reveals that the current underdevelopment and security challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Nigeria is a culmination and amalgam of years of economic mismanagement, bad governance and poor leadership by the past and present political administrations of the country. It also reveals that the statements made and written by patriots and lovers of Nigeria to salvage it were disregarded by the leaders and their followers, who were not ready to hear about God and morality and would often drum into people's ears, "You are in Nigeria", be a Nigerian" expressions which implied acceptance of immorality as one's way of life. Thus, giving birth to a Classic Vicious Circle of Corruption" comprising endemic corruption, planned corruption and developmental corruption, 'a circle which has almost destroyed Nigeria completely in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

To overcome the present development and security challenges in Nigeria in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the present and future leadership and administration of the country should focus all efforts and attention on fixing the economy and building a strong sustainable economic foundation

which will effectively and efficiently support good governance in the country. The roadmap to a strong economic foundations which will provide adequate food, redistribute income and wealth, adequate security, employment and sustainable development must be anchored on national dialogue, constitutional reforms to restructure the federation to enable states and local governments to take charge of the resources in their domain and provide good governance and pay agreed taxes to the Federal authority. The practice of true fiscal federalism is the panacea to several development and security challenges currently ravaging the country at moment.

Furthermore, as a way-forward, the Nigerian leadership and administration at all times must always pursue the three core values of development namely: - life sustenance, self-esteem and freedom. These values have been explained at the beginning of the work.

Finally, the only means to cure the problem of bad leadership which has become the albatross for all the development and security challenges in Nigeria, is the institutionalization of a full independent electoral system, that will ensure thorough constitutional reforms and amendments, an electoral act which is capable of producing political leaders and office holders through a free, transparent and credible polls at elections. This must include electronic voting and transfer of votes by the Independent Electoral Commission of Nigeria (INEC) who is constitutionally mandated to conduct elections.

In conclusion, the responsibility of changing or perpetuating this current situation of underdevelopment, bad governance, bad leadership and insecurity which the country is presently experiencing is mainly that of Nigerians. Therefore, Nigerians should realize that the installation of people through tribalism and ethnicity, who think and act like the immediate descendants of apes, as Nigerian leaders in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, will bring its natural results, namely, leadership that is irrational, corrupt, purposeless and highly immoral. The question of morality does not apply to apes and their predecessors in human evolution. It would be unfair if humanity applied the criteria of moral development to them and this is the reason why Nigerians should not hold their leaders accountable or blame them for their present woes and predicaments but blame themselves, for not been able to institutionalize a modernized system of leadership selection through a democratic transparent, credible and free and fair electoral system by adopting electronic voting and transmission of results.

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