Social Infrastructure as Catalyst for Nation Building Nigeria

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Abstract: The development of any nation’s infrastructure is the catalyst and most singular factor for nation building. Social Infrastructure development is the basis of any society be primitive or modern and it is the foundation of good governance. Infrastructure is the medium, the tools and techniques of a project or programme or strategy that is use in building a viable nation and functional state. Even before the independent, social infrastructure is the unique feature that could be attributed towards nation’s development. These infrastructures made us realized the amalgamation of 1914 as a way of bringing Nigerians together even though it was purely for the British economic gain. The civilian government as contributed in no small ways toward provision of social infrastructural development in Nigeria. The military era in Nigeria was for the most part of the economic boom succeeded in widening the gap in infrastructure demand and provision. Most infrastructures are now decayed and need repair or replacement. Demand for infrastructural development is higher and resources used in provision of infrastructure are limited. As well the challenges are numerous and include finance, technology for development and maintenance. Ethnic-interest agitation and lobbying are common things in democratic governance. A major reason that has been responsible for her socio-economic stagnation is bad leadership and corruption which had mar development since 1960 and deter the purpose of nation building. Therefore, there is an urgent need for rapid improvement in the Nigeria infrastructure to avert impending dangers towards nation building. This paper therefore, examines the social infrastructure as a panacea to build a viable and united Nigeria.

Key words: Social Infrastructure, Nation Building, Governance, Corruption, Leadership.

1. Introduction

Once, nations were forged through "blood and iron. Like German and Italian Unification in 1870s, American civil war (1861-1865) as well as Nigeria civil war. Today, the world seeks to build them through conflict resolution, adequate provision of social infrastructure which is equitably distributed as enshrined in the constitution. Nigeria had embarked on various policies and programmes directed to socio-economic reforms since independence. These reflected in the 1962–1968, 1970–1974, 1975 -1980 and the 1981-1985 development plans among others. These plans according to Osisioma went beyond mere economic prescription to address social, human and political goals but in fostering unity among diverse ethnic nationalities that make up Nigeria. Nigeria is a deeply diversified state. It is made up of about 250 ethnic groups. Apart from diversity in ethnicity, the country is also divided along religious lines. For nation building to work, provision of social infrastructure that will cut across all ethnic nationalities, devoid of parochialism and political affinity is the answer. Deplorable of most infrastructural facilities and the state of disrepair and lack of maintenance especially in electricity, roads railways, and water facilities as experienced in Nigeria seems to negate some of the above importance due mainly to the drastic reduction in government spending on facilities, vandalisation, corruption, bureaucratic delays in construction, maintenance and repair of damaged facilities. What has therefore resulted from this situation is popular agitation sometimes violent such as Niger-Delta avenger in the South and Boko Haram in the North which have destroyed many infrastructures like schools, hospital, oil installations, shelters to mention but a few and exacerbate the stringent situation of the nation building. In view of this, the paper discusses social infrastructure from colonial period especially 1914 to present. It will look at the contribution of these social amenities on the nation building and the challenges that hampered, as it affects oneness in the Nigerian state.

2. Conceptual Clarifications

Nation-Building: Omoniji put it that a nation consists of people living in the same territory, having the same language, same orientation, with the same consciousness and the same culture.
Anifowose observes is concerned with those factors as common history, common territory, common language or literature, common culture and similar characteristics. From the above definitions, one can uphold that Nigeria is not a nation but a multi-nation state. Ogunbemi also believes that Nigeria is a heterogeneous entity with over 250 indigenous ethnic groups. Therefore, we can assert that Nigeria consist of over 250 nations. The major and noticeable ones are Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo.

Nation Building involves the psychological reconstruction of individuals, a process of infusing into the people of new independent territories who differ widely in language, religions and values with a new sense of common belonging and share identity. According to Omoniji, nation building involves the building of the individual and the structuring of his environment, the creation or recreation of a political community with a relevant economic system and the search for it, of a cohesive and enduring ethos capable of making the individual identify with the political community. From the foregoing, Akinlade and Igbalajobi assert that, nation building implies the building of spirit of patriotism, solidarity and understanding among the large ethnic that make up a country, where everyone becomes loyal to the country and stop subordination of national interest to regional interest. This state of affairs importantly raises some serious concerns about the question of good governance in Nigeria where the politics of deprivation and mismanagement of resources appears to be taking over the principles of accountability, transparency and responsibility.

Scholars believe that nation building is the problem of winning for the political system, the loyalty and commitment of its subjects. In this sense, nation building is synonymous with National integration. National integration refers to the process of bringing together culturally and socially discrete groups into a single territorial unit and the establishment of a national identity. In this sense national integration presumes the existence of an ethnically plural society like Nigeria, in which each group is characterized by its own language or other self-conscious cultural qualities, but the problem may also exist in a political system which is made up of once distinct independent political units with which people are identified. Nation-building refers to the process of constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state. This process aims at the unification of the people within the state so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long run. Nation building is the process of politically socializing the people into becoming good citizens of the political order and making the citizens feel they have a stake in the community worth fighting for.

For the purpose of this paper the following concepts of nation-building are provided: Nation-building can involve the use of propaganda or major infrastructure development to foster social harmony and economic growth. It is also the development of behaviors, values, language, institutions, and physical structures that elucidate history and culture, concretize and protect the present, and insure the future identity and independence of a nation. Nation-building also includes efforts to promote institutions which will provide for economic well-being and social equity. Nation building is a process of mobilising available resources, human, and materials and financial, for socio-economic and political developments of a given nation state. Therefore, it is paramount for any country wishes to build a united front to pay adequate attentions to its infrastructural development.

Social Infrastructure: Research on infrastructure dwells on different issues such as education, roads, water supply, power grids telecommunications, and hospitals. Major infrastructures can be classified into the following categories: (a) Energy/ Power infrastructure: electricity, gas and petroleum pipelines (b) Transportation infrastructure: surface roads, rail system, ports, and aviation (c) Water infrastructure: surface piped water and irrigation (d) communication infrastructure: mass media, internet, phones and postal services. (e) Health Infrastructure: primary and tertiary health care services (f) Education Infrastructure: all categories of schools and higher institutions.

Infrastructure can be described generally as the set of interconnected structural elements that provide framework supporting an entire structure of development. It is the means of achieving an objective or set of objectives and also includes the objectives. It is an important term for judging a country, region or state’s and individual’s developments/status. The term typically refers to the technical structures that support a society, such as roads, water supply, sewers, electrical national grids, telecommunications, and so forth, and can be defined as” the physical components of interrelated systems providing commodities and services essential to enable, sustain, or enhance societal living conditions. It is important to note that provision of infrastructure goes a long in poverty reduction. Two possible ways are identified by which new or improved infrastructure activity can help reduce poverty. First, there is link between infrastructure and economic growth that could lead to poverty reduction. The second link arises through the contribution of infrastructure to the
process of pro-poor growth. The poor are usually identified with inadequate access to infrastructure services such as clean water, sanitation, transportation, communication that are considered as “input indicator” of poverty. In order to stimulate the economy, government must provide basic infrastructure, such as good roads, water, rail transportation and steady power supply, which would facilitate the movement of goods, services and people. In addition, building of these infrastructures also creates jobs. Good infrastructure induces economic activity and opens new markets which are necessary inputs to enhance economic productivity. The development of modern infrastructure and functional public service systems are the keys to Nigeria’s economic development which will impacted on the lives of the citizens.

Good Governance: Governance, according to the World Bank Report is the exercise of political power in the management of a nation’s affairs. This definition thus implies that governance encompasses and embodies the state’s institutional and structural arrangements, decision-making processes and implementation capacity, and the relationship between the governing apparatus and the governed- that is the people in terms of their standard of living. Good governance is “a system of government based on good leadership, respect for the rule of law and due process, the accountability of the political leadership to the electorate as well as transparency in the operations of government.” Governance typically emphasizes leadership which suggests the way political leaders utilize the apparatus of the state, use or misuse power, to promote social and economic development or to engage in those agendas that largely undermine the realization of the good things of life for the people. These governance qualities have the capacity to provide the development process of a country. Good governance is the making and implementation of policies that would impact positively on the citizens of the country. This means bringing public policy in alignment with social needs. Governance therefore, denotes how people are ruled and how the affairs of the state are administered and regulated and how the politics of a nation is carried out. Public authority is expected to play an important role in creating conducive environment to enhance even development of every states. At this juncture, governance encompassing state’s institutional and structural arrangements, decision-making process and implementation capacity as well as the relationship between government officials and the public.

3. Social Infrastructure as a Panacea for Nation Building

Infrastructure development in democratic governance involves identifying the right project, carrying out feasibility and viability studies and carrying out physical development of the project such that it gets to target people and equitably distributed. There is an agreement among scholars that infrastructure affects development of a society. Different infrastructure development has been witnessed in the country especially after the independent. It is not a gainsaying that when there is provision of social amenities people of different ethnic tend to forget their differences. Evidence abound in the Post-Civil War Nigeria, many places which had been bombarded, devastated and destroyed during the war witnessed development of infrastructure, special reference could be made of Eket in south eastern Nigeria. In an attempt to reintegrate the Eastern part of Nigeria with the rest of the country after the civil war, the Gowon administration put in place 3Rs; reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. Part of these efforts is reconstruction of Niger Bridge which links Eastern to Northern part of the country. These infrastructures have done more in uniting Nigeria especially, transportation, education, telecommunication and many others. Even the banking sector has make transactions among different ethnic group easy and accessible to one another. One must note that infrastructure is like blood which serves as oil in lubricating the body; such is the social infrastructure in promotion of oneness in a country.

Transportation: The advances in transportation technology have had a very substantial impact on long distance and less regular travel. With the advents of the railways, intercity buses, air services and private cars, travel at long distance is now common, not only for extended vacations but even for a single day of weekend trips. As mobility increases, the ability to travel long distances has enabled people to travel to other sections of the country and even to other countries which have different cultures, dominant industries and patterns of living. This has undoubtedly had a very considerable effect in the level of understanding of different groups and the mutual respect of one socio-economic group for another. This has also helped to bring nations with multiple cultural heritages together. Modern development of the Nigerian roads started in 1925 with the establishment of the Road Board during the British colonial administration. The road however lacked standard designs and were in single lane, with sharp bends and poor drainage system. The quality of road construction later improved in the 1950s
with 15785km of bituminous road and 75,200km of earth/grave surface roads. Road construction received a major boost in Nigeria in the 1970s due to increase in government revenue. The Nigerian road network grew from its total length of 6,500km in 1960 to 10,000km in 1970 to 29,000km in 1980 and 194,000 in 2003. The Nigeria road network serves to link different states of the federation and managed under different tiers of government. Today road networks serves as a means of intergroup relations. Railway is one of the oldest means of modern transportation in Nigeria. The actual railway construction started in in 1892 with 32km line of 1,067mm gauge from Iddo in Lagos to Otta in Ogun. Ibadan-Jebba in 1907, Kano-Bornu, 1922-1927, Jebba-Minna 1914-1916, Port Harcourt-Enugu, 1922-1927. By 2003, the Nigerian poorly maintained rail system had 3,357 kilometers of tracks. The country has two major rail lines connecting major areas from Lagos (west) to Nguru (north) and Port Harcourt (south) to Maiduguri (north). The series of construction was meant to connect areas with abundant raw material that served colonial economy. The emergence and convenience of administration was part of factors that led to the amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914 redefine the intergroup relation because of movement of traders from one region to the others. New commercial towns were formed and this led to intermarriage, inter-culture and linguistics exchange among the peoples from different ethnic.

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The history of aviation industry is dated to 1920s in Nigeria and the earliest commercial aviation is credited to Mr. Bud Carpenter, who frequently undertook high-risk flight between Kano and Lagos, using the rail tracks as his guide. Air transport development in Nigeria received government special attention in the 1970’s more for political and social consideration than economy. Sixteen (16) Airports were developed and expanded. Four (4) of them simultaneously in Lagos, Ibadan, Benin, Enugu, Kaduna, Jos, Calabar, port Harcourt, Abuja, Ilorin, Makurdi, Sokoto, Maiduguri and Kano. Lagos, Kano, and PH have been developed to international standard. The runways aprons and terminal buildings have been completed. At present, Lagos airport alone handles about 80% of the domestic and international passengers, which makes it to be recognized as the most viable and functional airport in the country. As at 2011, total number of international airport in Nigeria were eight (8) and domestic were twenty (20) as well as other landing station for private organization and Nigeria military.

**Housing:** Babawale noted that the issue of housing is of paramount concern to governments across the globe. He stated further that since man has gone through a transition from primitivity to modernity, the problem of providing suitable and conducive accommodation/shelter has been of crucial importance. Housing is a complex product that is crucial for national development in terms of both economy and welfare. In macroeconomics housing is an important source of national capital formation, of employment generation and income production. Consequently, a sound approach to the formulation and implementation of housing policies will greatly promote the development of economic and social welfare of the populace, particularly of the poor, in Nigeria. Learning from Singapore’s Housing and Development Board (HDB), housing or shelter represented a crucial instrument in the governance of ethnic diversity in the City-State, in the context of recurrent race riots in Singapore, among which the 1950, 1961, 1964 and 1969 events are only the most spectacular examples. The Singapore of the first years of self-government and independence was a city in which the situation could degenerate any moment both in echo to the political convulsions of neighbouring Malaysia, in which animosity between the Chinese and the Malays was high, and in reaction to the domination of the Chinese elite over the rest of the population in the city itself. Through a careful (and authoritarian) distribution of populations of different ethnic backgrounds in the HDB estates, Singapore’s ruling party aimed at avoiding the constitution of ethnic enclaves, and managed to avoid the worsening of the ethnic tensions. All was made in order to avoid the resurgence of intercommunal riots. From this moment on, fashioning new patterns of ethnic coexistence has been one of the central objectives of the mechanisms of social engineering in Singapore, of which the HDB was one of the expressions of instrumental nature. Nigeria government should emulate the Singapore in this regard by providing adequate and decent housing for the diverse ethnic groups so as to foster unity in the nation. Housing can be recognized as one of the basic necessities of life and a prerequisite for the survival of man.

**Telecommunication:** The importance of communication in any country whether developed or developing like Nigeria is so obvious so to say. In fact the interrelationship between the economy development of a country and effective telecommunication services is so interwoven that is difficult to tell which one comes first. Post and telegraph services had started during the colonial period that by 1904 places like Forcados, Bonny, Calabar, Eket and Benin were linked to Lagos. Five years later (1909), it reached Ikot-Ekpene, Afikpo and Bende while Zungeru was linked to Lagos in 1910. In fact, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) rated the telecommunication sector in
Nigeria as the fastest growing in Africa. Public emphasis has shifted from communication devices like cables and telegrams to the use of new information and communication technologies (ICT) such as Global Standard for Mobile Communication (GSM) and the internet. With 11 million internet users Nigeria is ranked second among the top ten African countries in relatively high level of internet use, following Egypt with 12.6 million users (Internet World Stats). In 2012 the Jonathan administration introduced hand set to the agricultural sector where by farmer in Benue can learn new farming system in Taraba and link with farmer in Ilesa, Osun state. The advent of telecommunication infrastructure in Nigeria brought infrastructure to the front seat as the products and services necessary for the performance of an entity. Today, thousands of people are employed in this sector of economy. It has also served as a means of reaching family members in different parts of the country. The influence of social media in uniting the nation cannot be quantifiable.

Energy/Electricity: Electricity generation began in Nigeria in 1896, fifteen years after its introduction in England. The Nigeria electricity supply company (NESCO) commenced operations as an electric utility company in Nigeria in 1929 with the construction of a hydroelectric power station at Kurra, in north-central, Nigeria. The electricity Corporation of Nigeria (ECN) was established in 1951, while the first 132kv line was constructed in 1962, linking Ijora power Station to Ibadan. The Niger Dams Authority (NDA) was established in 1962 with a mandate to develop the hydropower potentials of the country. However, the ECN and NDA were merged in 1972 to form the National Electricity Power Authority (NEPA), which was restructured in 2005 under a new name called Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN). The PHCN comprises 18 Electricity companies including six Electricity Generating Companies, one Electricity Transmission Company and 11Electricity Distribution Companies. Today, Nigeria has increased in term of power generation even though at a slow pace. With adequate power supply across the states of the federation, many enterprises will thrive and some youths who are jobless and being manipulated by unscrupulous leaders in society would get engaged in one thing or others.

Education: Education is both an end in itself and a means to attain other ends. ‘Education should be to a nation what the mind is to the body.’ Just as a diseased mind is handicapped in coordinating and directing bodily activities, so also is a defective educational system. The single most significant complex apparatuses which facilitate rapid national development are to be found in the system of education, both formal and informal. This was reason why Chief Obafemi Awolowo brought about Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1955 in West while that of East was in 1957 and North later. At the first post-independence National Education Conference on Curriculum development organized in 1969 by the Nigerian Educational Council, a new policy of education was evolved for the nation. The conference reviewed the old goals and identified new national goals for the Nigerian education bearing in mind the needs of youths and adults in the task of nation-building and national reconstruction for the social and economic wellbeing of the individual and the society. At a point when the country is on the verge of collapse, his magnanimity at the end of civil war and the seriousness of purpose with which is regime tackled the 3Rs which led to the speedy integrating of Easterners were gesture of rare statesmanship. More unity schools (Federal Government Colleges) were established, with the students from all the states of the federation on the quota basis. In 1973, Gowon administration introduced the National Youths Service Corps (NYSC). The same year also saw the introduction of the National Sport Festival, which complemented the National Festival of Arts and Culture in promoting greater understanding among various ethnic in the country.

In 1981, Shagari administration introduced a new education programme tagged 6-3-3-4 system. It was a great stride which was designed to lead the country on the part of industrial and technological advancement. Its twin brother followed in 1999 when Chief Olusegun Obasangun led fourth republic by changing it to Universal Basic Education (UBE) 9-3-4 system. He declared while launching of the program in Sokoto that the nation “cannot afford to fail this time around”. This gave a new look to universal education in Nigeria. The university education in the country started with university of Ibadan admitted 200 students across Nigeria in 1948. Due to increasing in the enrollment for university education, the government established more university across the region such as University of Ife, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, University of Nigeria Nsukka and University of Lagos.

It is important to note that apart from university, other education sector have also received a national outlook. As at year 2000, there were over 55 colleges of education, owned by federal and state government and two recognized private ones in Nigeria. The progress Report revealed that the government has commissioned Almajiri Education programme in Sokoto, introduced Girls Education Programme in Adamawa, Yobe, Zamfara, Nasarawa, Ebonyi,
Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation:

Measures like the establishment of the Directorate of Food, Roads, and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRRI), the Better Life for Rural Women movement, and the People's Bank of Nigeria, were expected to help increase food production and lower inflation. DFRRRI, which is meant primarily to promote rural development, was set up in 1986 and has four broad programmes: rural road construction/rehabilitation, agriculture, rural water supply, and rural electrification. The Better Life Programme for Rural Women, initiated by Mrs Maryam Babangida and begun in 1987, encouraged women in the rural areas to form cooperatives, intensify commercial activities, and learn new skills and techniques to improve their standard of living. The People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN) was set up in 1989 to bring financial relief and a new economic deal to the poor but honest and hardworking masses. It grants between N50 and N2,000 to people in this group at a service charge of 5%. The PBN's contribution to inflation reduction, one may say that its activities are good on equity grounds, but it helps to increase money stock while favouring many service activities (artisan and related activities). The Babangida administration will be remembered for establishing agencies and institutions such as National Directorate of Employment (NDE) created to generate non-public ‘self-employment’ and to promote the development of small scale enterprises.

In order to further integrate the Niger Delta area, the Tafawa Balewa administration recommended a development board for the areas to bring about developmental needs via an act of parliament in 1961. Due to increase agitation and mobilization Niger-Delta Nationalities, the Babangida administration created the OMPADEC in 1992 for infrastructure development in the region. In 2000 the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) was created to achieve what government described as lasting solution to the socio economic difficulties of the region and facilitate the rapid, even and sustainable development of the region. It is an acknowledged fact that the government has so far been able to curb the protracted crises in the Niger-Delta region through the amnesty program and establishment of the Ministry for Niger Delta. Through skill acquisition, many youth have been gainfully engaged. This had helped to increase oil production from Amnesty level of 700,000 bpd to the current 2,500,000 bpd. There has also been reconstruction, construction and rehabilitation of roads, water Supply and electrification projects in the region and the implementation of environmental management in other to protect the environment and safety of the people in the region.

During the 2003-2007 Nigeria was attempting to implement an economic programme called NEEDS. The goal of the NEEDS is to mobilize the resources of Nigeria to make a fundamental break with the failure of the past and bequeath a united and prosperous nation to generation to come. NEEDS laid a solid foundation for sustainable poverty reduction, employment generation, wealth creation and value re-orientation. It must be added that Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) which was introduced in 1998 as an investment promotion and poverty alleviation programme by the federal government, aimed at stimulating appropriate economic activities nation-wide. It focused on the provision of loans to promote entrepreneurship and business opportunities. Emphasis should also be made of Community Action Programme for Poverty Alleviation, established in 1997, geared toward improving conditions of the poor through a targeted, cost-effective, demand driven and promptly delivered programme. As part of campaign promise of the Buhari administration that food will be given to school children inform of school feeding program and more than five hundred thousand graduates be engaged in empowerment programme as well as conditional cash transfer to IDPs and ageing. Government must as matter of urgency embark on these programmes to alleviate poverty and bring succor to the Nigerians especially at a time when recession has caused many people to agitate on different occasion for better life.

Health: Health sector just like education has equally received some attention in the last decades in Nigeria. Health infrastructure is understood in both qualitative and quantitative terms to mean the quality of care and accessibility to health care delivery within a country. It is judged by the quality of physical, technological and human resources available at a given period. Physical structure entails the buildings and other fixed structures such as pipe borne water, good access roads, electricity and so on within the healthcare environments, whilst the technology is about the equipment meant specifically for hospital use including surgeries. This also includes computer equipment and consumables while human resource comprises the health professionals including doctors, pharmacists, nurses, midwives, laboratory technologists, administrators, accountants and other sundry workers. All these put together form the structure upon which the healthcare delivery is anchored in any society and the determinants of its infrastructure. The MDG was put in place on the
need to reduce the burden of infant and maternal mortality, the scourge of malaria, HIV/AIDS and other non-communicable diseases. In order to concretize its plan, Obasanjo administration revised 1988 National Health Policy with the aim of strengthen the primary health care in the country. It increased funding for health programme; refurbish existing teaching hospitals across six geopolitical zones and generally the boost the morale of health personnel. Similarly, the government strengthens the activities of National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA); facilitated National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) as well as partner various international agencies on the control of such diseases as (Roll Back Malaria Initiative) polio and HIV/AIDS. Recently, Nigeria faced with problem of Ebola virus which was transferred through a man known as Patrick Soya from Liberia, Nigeria neighbouring country. Despite its endemic, Nigeria was able to suppress it by giving prompt attention to this deadly virus. In the same vein, the outbreak of Lassa Fever Virus met stiff resistance of Nigerian government. A lot are still needed to be done on the part of government by repair all federal government health centres across the country and put necessary facilities there. It is not enough for a laboring woman in Otuoke to travel down to national hospital, Abuja before deliver baby.

4. Challenges of Social Infrastructure towards Nation Building

The major challenge to the Nigeria’s backwardness is corruption which has been the bane of its development. Unfortunately, the political class saddled with the responsibility of directing the affairs of the country have been the major culprit in perpetuating and perpetrating this act. unfortunately, since independence a notable surviving legacy of the successive political leadership both civilian and military that have managed the affairs of the country at different times has been the localization of corruption in all agencies of the public service, which, like a deadly virus, has subsequently spread to the private sector of the country.

In consequences, the country becomes overwhelmed social economic problems such as unemployment, dilapidated infrastructure, collapse of education and social services. Commenting on the experience of the Nigerian nation, the renowned novelist, Chinua Achebe, insisted that the root cause of the Nigerian predicament should be laid squarely at the foot of bad leadership. “The trouble with Nigeria,” Achebe argued, is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land, climate, water, air, or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibility, to the challenge of personal example, which is the hallmark of true leadership.

Today, in Nigeria, there is a consensus among well-meaning individuals and foreign nations that corruption has inevitably become a major clog in the quest for sustainable growth and development. It is further agreed that it must be halted before it shut down the country. It is the single most critical impediment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); and like a deadly virus, it attacks the vital structures and systems that engender progressive functioning of the society. Like most developing countries, Nigeria is still grappling with the dilemma of corruption that has largely retarded social development, undermined economic growth, discouraged foreign investments and reduced there sources available for infrastructural development, public service, and poverty reduction programmes. Much more disturbing is the scourge of corruption which leaves the poor perpetually disproportionately under-privileged, even as it renders the development of democracy and the building of a society of opportunity more problematic. The Buhari led administration anti-corruption campaign has exposed a lot of atrocities committed by judiciary which people believe to be the last hope of common man and the bedrock of a fair judicial system. There are many cash and carry judges in court. Many people who learnt of the huge sums of money, dollars, Euro and naira allegedly recovered from the judges were alarmed. Let it be stated here that the fight against corruption in any shape or form is a fight that must be fought.

Without doubt, the unpardonable failure of the political leadership class managing the affairs and wealth of the country had inevitably brought severe misery to many voiceless and helpless Nigerians. It must also be mentioned here that Nigeria’s post-independence political bureaucratic and military elites had terribly pillaged the nation’s common wealth and national patrimony with impunity, thereby denying Nigerians access to economic prosperity and quality living condition. Also disheartening, is the fact that the volume of development assistance totaling about $400 billion that flowed into the country for socio-economic development between independence and the collapse of military dictatorship in 1999 was atrociously squandered by the political leaders of the period. The mismanagement of resources of such quantum which was worth six times the period. The mismanagement of resources of such quantum which was worth six times the
The cycle of poverty keeps growing with all its attendant consequences even as the rate of unemployment remains perniciously high. By giving mediocrity advantage over intelligence through nepotism and cronism, intellectual capital, which is the bulwark of development and advancement, has continued to drift abroad in search of greener pasture. Paradoxically, the scourge of corruption has left the country straddling two economic worlds at the same time. To state the obvious, the country has found itself in the quagmire of a country too rich to be poor and at the same time too poor to be rich. Thus, this has made it inevitable for every Nigerian to be a victim of corruption. As a consequence of unparalleled and unrivalled corruption in Nigeria, the healthcare delivery system and the education sector have become comatose and are nearing total collapse. For instance, the queries were sent to the ministry of education about the non-supply of 6,425,548 exercise books for which 175 million had already been paid. Also, another query of N17 million for the production of Coat of Arms for the ministry in 2002. Government spending has been considerably reduced towards these vital social sectors of the economy and others of equal importance, which are supposed to be of high priority to government. To this end, the resultant effects have been catastrophic as different forms of malpractices and corrupt practices have rubbished the Nigerian educational system, which is perceived from the outside as inadequate and, its product, substandard. More so, corruption in the health sector has also given room for counterfeit and adulterated drugs to find easy passage into the country with little or no resistance until 1999 when late Professor Dora Akunyili took over the leadership of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC). In spite of reforms in fourth republic the Federal Ministry of Health, and the Minister of Health, Professor Grange Adenike and the Senate Committee on Health were all, in 2008, arraigned in connection with the mismanagement of the unspent 400 million budgetary allocations. This partly suggests that in spite of insufficient allocations to the public agencies and institutions, official still divert resources for personal use.

Within federal agencies, corruption was rife. The following list is far from complete. An audit examination at Nigerian External Telecommunications traced financial abuses back to 1978 with N53m unaccounted for. Maladministration of the Federal housing scheme grew into a major scandal with N43m missing. According to the chairman of the investigating panels, the board members of the Federal Mortgage Bank acted in concert to render the bank impotent by systematic plundering and looting of its treasury, and at the Delta Steel Company there was 'stupendous fraud'. Officials of the National Youth Service Corps were found to have siphoned off over N16m. Widespread corruption was discovered at the Abuja Capital Development Authority. Those responsible were detained but never prosecuted. The illegal export of refined petroleum products cost the country over one million dollars a day.

Ethnic and religious affiliations determine who gets what in Nigeria; it is so central and seems to perpetuate discrimination. The return to civil rule in 1999 tends to have provided ample leverage for multiplicity of ethno-religious conflicts. This democratic tendency in the world today led to increase in the culture of impunity in some people while political differences are believed to have fuelled some of the violence that have erupted. However, the inability of the Nigerian leaders to tackle development challenges, distribute state resources equitably and render good services to the people appear to be one of the causes of ethno-religious violence. Consequently, the major cause of what we now see as ethnic-religious conflicts in Nigeria have to do with the accusation and allegations of neglect, oppression, domination, exploitation, victimization, discrimination, marginalization, nepotism and bigotry. Ethnic agitation has caused greater havoc in this country. The meager infrastructure which is far from satisfying needs is being destroyed in the name of agitation and inclusion. Examples of these are the Boko Haram and Niger Delta militants who with their ruthless and barbaric behaviours have destroyed several billion dollars of infrastructure such as schools, Hospitals, Telecommunication installations, police stations, oil installations and many others.

It is an indication that the poverty alleviation programs, skill acquisition, vocational, technical and agricultural trades have not significantly achieved the stated objectives. It has been observed that due to power failure, many of the artisans and other related trades due to constant power failure have turned to Okada riders (motor or tricycle riders) thereby reducing productivity. However, Nigerians unemployment situation deteriorated sequel to state inability to put in place appropriate mitigating mechanisms to abate or control its spread and impacts. For instance, over ten million Nigerians were unemployed by March 2009 and unemployment is running at around 19.7 percent on average according to Aganga the former

Amidst these development challenges, the security situation in the country deteriorated drastically. Nigeria’s return to democratic rule is threatened by security disaster. Arguably, considerable progress has been achieved in the areas of freedom of speech and liberty, but series of resource based conflict (Niger Delta), ethno-religious crisis (Jos crisis), and communal conflicts persisted. The climax of these security threats is the insurence of a group called Boko Haram in the Northern Nigeria. Thus, a considerable effort to end the violence and build a sustainable peace to steer the economy to sustainability seems far from realization. The basic questions are: why development has continued to elude Nigeria in spite of numerous amounts of human and material resources? To what extent has social infrastructure impacted or contributed to the betterment of Nigeria? It is however sad that Nigeria, a country blessed with fertile land, good climate and large population finds it difficult to produce sufficient food to meet the local needs not to talk of exportation. The naked revelation manifested in 2011 when as a result of Boko Haram insurgency, food items and vegetables could not be transported from the North that led to scarcity of the products in the south. To a large extent, one can rightly conclude that the nation is yet to evolve a workable program to enhance food production after the first Republic. This same position is true of manufacturing sector that the epileptic power supply has nearly crumble as well as unfriendly investment climate on account of glaring inconsistence in government policies. Unarguably it must be stressed that security is for the citizens and not citizens for security. Thus, for the citizens to live in peace the basic necessities of life such as food, good health, job opportunities, justice, freedom and all other ingredients of life must be provided.

5. Conclusion

The development of any nation’s infrastructure is a sine qua non for nation building in a country. An important aspect of nation-building is the building of a common citizenship. But how can Nigeria have a common citizenship when a person in Ilorin has a radically different quality of life from the person in Owerri or when the woman in the Gusau is more likely to die in child birth than the woman in Ibadan? Through the development of social infrastructure and equal opportunities for all, or through the development of social welfare safety nets, mature nations try to establish a baseline of social and economic rights which all the members of the national community must enjoy. Different governments from 1960 both military and civilian have contributed in no small way to the provision of social infrastructure. However, one of the noticeable trends is that of lack of proper integration and coordination among the three tiers of government. It is not unusual to find the school without adequate material, hospital without well equip human and needed apparatus, long age road without repair and maintenance and countless social infrastructure which so required for multi-nations like Nigeria to move forward; ethnic parochialism in the distribution of infrastructure as well as corruption has not helped matter in building of Nigerian state. It is apt to remind president Buhari led- government that there exists an Infrastructure Bank in the country set-up to anchor the financing of infrastructure in Nigeria. This Bank must call to action at this time when the entire existing infrastructure has become moribund by utilizing 20 billion naira and 39,700,000 tagged in 2016 budget as “Sinking Fund for Infrastructural Development” and “Infrastructure Concessionary Regulatory Commission” respectively among others. The so-called ‘2016 Budget of change” which is anchored mostly on rigorous investments in critical infrastructure with larger percentage of this budget on infrastructure be implemented and monitored not only that, it must cut across ethnic nationalities by making people feel among in other to dissuade the call for de-amalgamation of Nigeria.

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