

Nigeria and the Attainment of Sustainable Development in the 21st Century

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Doi:10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n4p645

Abstract

This research examines the capacity of Nigeria to attain sustainable development in the 21st century, using the extant parameters of the nation's governance system and political economy. We stated that the link between governance system and political economy is that the former is shaped and determined by the texture and structure of the latter. Our study reveals that the architecture of governance, sustained by elitist preferences, cannot engender sustainable development, due mainly, to a prebendalist leadership class and a reinter economy, sustained by a defective federal system. This explains why, Nigeria's human and infrastructural development trajectory is on the downward trend, despite the upswing in oil revenue over the last three decades. Evidently, the activities of political and economic managers, who depend largely on oil rent, subjected the Nigerian State to oil resource curse. We concluded that rejigging the governance system and "escaping" oil resource curse are precedent conditions for achieving sustainable development in the 21st century and beyond.

Keywords: sustainable development; governance system; federalism; political economy; oil resource curse.

1. Introduction

About twelve years ago, the entire globe witnessed the dawn of a new millennium. While nations categorized as advanced social formations marked the transition from 20th to 21st century with genuine commitment to positive development indices, others, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, simply epitomized disgraceful misery index; a state largely defined by tragic failure of leadership, poor governance system, venal political elite, rent seeking economy, resource curse malaise, institutionalized corruption, inefficient public service, large-scale unemployment, decrepit physical infrastructure, inadequate and decayed social facilities, heavy external debt burden, fragile federal system, frail judiciary, attenuated legislature, insensate executive, battered foreign image, pervasive poverty, low life expectancy, economic buccaneering, complex and cumbersome justice administration, high levels of crimes and debauchery, extra-judicial killings, environmental despoliation, 'garrison' political parties, high maternal and infant mortality, over ambitious military, comatose educational system, intemperate police force, traumatized citizenry, etc. The inexhaustible list is symptomatic of a nation, may be not failed or failing, but obviously in perpetual distress.

The debate about the fragile future of Nigeria is closely related to the failure of governance, prompting the 'baptism' of Nigeria by sections of the international community, media, civil rights organizations and separatists groups as 'a failed state, rogue state, or prebendal state'. These groups claim that Nigeria spells failure on all fronts; political, economic, social and moral (Olayinka, 2006). On the other side, and understandably so, operators of the Nigerian State dismiss these tags of failure as 'figment of the imaginations of 'failed, desperate and frustrated politicians', 'ethnic chauvinists' 'religious bigots', 'merchants of violence', unpatriotic and disgruntled elements', 'habitual prophets of doom', 'unrepentant alarmists' and other derogatory labels. While these disputations and vituperations go on over cause and effect of the crisis of the Nigerian state, one fact remains incontestable; the coefficient indices for development remain abysmal. As a matter of fact, most, if not all the 'disgraceful misery index' outlined above are not only visible but palpable in Nigeria. This is, probably, why Olayinka (2006) remarks that 'the prevailing economic, political, and ethno-religious crisis in Nigeria and their violent expressions, all call to question the whole process of statecraft and culture of governance by successive governments'.

There are those who have argued that the unsavoury state of affairs is linked to the inability of post-independence governments to 'carry on the torch of independence and civilizations which was handed over to us through the founding fathers of our nation by our civilized colonial masters', which in part, is the structure of governance. There are also those

who think that military interventions arrested Nigeria's development due to the corruption of the military itself and their subversion of democratic institutions (Kukah 2007). These reasons notwithstanding, globalization train is here and several nations of the world are gearing towards attaining sustainable development, with or without Nigeria on board. Moreso, it is almost fifteen years since Nigeria witnessed a smooth transition to democratic rule. As Caleb (2006) noted, 'democracy is both the harbinger and catalyst for sustainable development'.

The crisis of the Nigerian state as briefly mentioned above is that the economy, political institutions, education, health, culture, security and governance structure have all broken down. Therefore, the major task of this paper is to interrogate the capacity of the Nigerian state to join committee of nations, in this epoch of globalization, that are 'condemned' not only to attain, but entrench sustainable development in the 21st century. We shall examine sustainable development with the 'conceptual lenses' of social scientists, and in a more narrow scope, as teachers of Political Science. The paper is divided into four sections including this introduction. Section two is conceptual explication of sustainable development. A broad range of issues within the governance system and the political economy of Nigeria that are critical to attaining sustainable development are x-rayed in the third section. The former is shaped and determined by the texture and structure of the latter. The final section draws a conclusion.

2. Conceptual Explications of Sustainable Development

In the last three decades, the issue of sustainable development has increasingly come to the fore in global discourse. But it was not until the global conference on sustainable development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992 that the urgency of the debate was put on the front burner (Nyewusira 2004). The protections of the environment, social and economic development are fundamental to sustainable development based on the 'Rio' principles. Again, the Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey-Mexico in 2002 concludes that:

Poverty eradication, changing consumption and production patterns, and protecting and managing the natural resources base for economic and social development are overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development.

In 1987, a United Nations Commission chaired by then Norwegian Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, published a report called "The Brundtland Report". It defined sustainable development as development that 'meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. The presumption that sustainability has something to do with non-depreciation of the natural capital stock is explicit in the Brundtland Report.

The World Bank Report (2003) defined sustainability in terms of opportunities for future generations using a triangular framework to illustrate the idea of sustainable development. According to the Report;

The new framework includes economic, social and ecological objectives, expanding each of these objectives from the traditional economists' perspective. Under the framework, equity is a new economic objective, and social objectives are expanded to include things like empowerment, participation, social mobility and cultural identity.

The crux of the report is the goal of sustainable development to further each of these objectives; economic, social and ecological, simultaneously over a long term, so that they may be enjoyed by future generations.

Ahmed et al (1989:61) said the concept of sustainable development grew out of the recognition that resources are finite. That means that there are not limitless supplies of clean water and air, oil, natural gas, minerals, farm land, space and other resources. They contend that;

As the earth's population grows, the share of resources available to any given individual use of the resources depletes. Building more roads, for instance, means paving over large amounts of land that can no longer be used for other purposes. One day oil will run out, no matter how worthy the use for which it might be put in progress.

The objective of sustainable development, according to Almad et al, is to ensure that resources are not used up by bringing into practice 'conservation of resources, elimination of wasteful practices and environmentally friendly technologies'. This submission is made in the light that all development uses resources; human, natural and capital.

Adeniyi (1999:114) viewed sustainable development in the context of the management of resources in such a way that societies can fulfill their needs while maintaining the essential 'economical processes, biological diversity and naturally occurring life support systems'. This concern for ecological sustainability is of course important for our study in a

country where we tend to base our development on a single asset of crude oil.

Sustainable development is a situation in which access to resources does not decrease over time (Pearce et al 1992:3). They advanced a definition that;

Sustainable development is a development that manages all assets, natural resources, and human resources, as well as financial and physical assets, for increasing long-term wealth and well-being. As a goal, sustainable development rejects policies and practices that support current living standards by depleting the productive base, including natural resources, and that which leaves future generations with poorer prospects and greater risks than our own.

Ahmad et al (1989:61) see the above submissions as tending to offer rationales for conserving natural capital in terms of 'moral obligation and mutual interdependency of development and natural capital conservation'.

Anwana (2003) understands the concept of sustainable development as a way of shifting support for conservation and environment to make it also play a part in improving human welfare. Anwana suggest that in the spirit of sustainable development, in utilizing natural resources, there must of necessity be the allowance and consideration for the next user or generation. Bankole (2002) while writing on the *Challenges of Development* said the concept of sustainable development is a vision of the world built on the principle of 'peace, solidarity, equity and shared power, environmental integrity, social justice, human rights and biological diversity'.

The United Nations Secretary – General, Mr. Kofi Annan said at a closing press conference of World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg that sustainable development 'will put us in path that reduces poverty while protecting the environment, a path that works for all people, rich and poor, today and tomorrow'.

The General Assembly resolution gave a basis for sustainable development at the local level. The basis reads thus;

Sound environmental, social and economic policies, democratic institutions responsive to the needs of the people, the rule of law, anti-corruption measures, gender equality and an enabling environment for investment.

It is instructive to look at the works of Chinsman (1999:332) that introduced the concept of Sustainable Human Development, which he said, emerged as a synthesis of the original human development and sustainable development. According to Chinsman, Sustainable Human Development has neatly fused the two concepts to mean that;

Sustainable human development is a development that not only generates economic growth but also distributes its benefits equitably; that regenerates the environment rather than destroying it; that empower people rather than marginalizing them. It gives priority to the poor enlarging their choices and opportunities, and provides for their participation in decision affecting them. It is development that is pro-poor, pro-nature, pro-jobs, pro-women and pro-children.

The synthesis of these reviews indicate that sustainable development is a condition which requires that an appropriate balance between environment, social and economic well beings of communities and nations exist for the benefit of present and future generations.

Agenda 21 of the 1992 'Earth Summit' held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil conceives sustainable development as a way to reverse both poverty and environmental destruction. Agenda 21 option for achieving this target demands;

Broad public participation in policy development, combined with greater accountability, individuals, groups and organizations need to know about, and participate in, environment and development issues affecting their communities.

Environmental Right Action (ERA), a non-governmental organization founded in 1993 as an environmental pressure group, agrees with Agenda 21 that, sustainable development requires 'participation, wealth and knowledge of local people'. ERA believes that empowerment of the local people is the key to sustainable development. ERA is of the view that for sustainable development to be achieved, every provision of Agenda 21 must be implemented. ERA is specifically of the view that;

Wealth creation without local knowledge and participation do not equate sustainable development. If local people are kept ignorant and unable to participate in or benefit from the creation of wealth, environmental degradation will result. Poor people may even directly damage the environment, if they cannot afford to think about tomorrow. Sustainable development of local communities, involving the elimination of absolute poverty and of gross income inequality, is therefore vital to any real conservation.

Ahmad et al (1989:62) believes that applying the principles of sustainability can save individuals, corporations and government money, while benefiting the environment.

Harold Brookfield (1991:32) in his contribution on sustainable development, begins from the recognition that, while there is indeed a set of natural limitations, there may also be a sustainable way out. He said the role of human activity in relation to nature is to modify ecosystems and to accelerate change in natural systems. Brookfield concludes that making sustainable development realizable involves;

Maximizing and optimally distributing the net benefits of economic development, so far as these can be achieved, while establishing and reaffirming the condition of security under which the services and qualities of natural resources can be maintained, restored or improved into the foreseeable future.

To make development sustainable, he contends that;

It is necessary that natural reproduction of capabilities be not drawn down, that investment in conserving or improving capabilities be undertaken and sustained. So that the environment of future generations becomes a productive and wholesome artifact built of artifice allied to and enhancing natural reproduction.

For the overall success of sustainable development, Brookfield insists that a strong and civil society is needed. Chinsman (1999:333) on his part recognizes a strong focus on meeting the basic needs of the people with emphasis on food security, health education and employment, all of which are essential for enhancing human capacities and enlarging opportunities to meet the challenges of sustainable development. Pearce et al (1992:3) summarized the key condition for achieving sustainable development as 'constancy of the natural capital stock'.

In stating the necessary conditions for sustainable development, Udoh (1996:32) insist that local communities must be treated as true stake-holders in exploration, extractive and exploitation activities of natural resource in this words;

We must involve the people who live on, work on and love the land. Citizen participation in the stewardship of natural resources helps people take conservation into their own hands by undertaking projects at the local level. Investors and private organizations must network with the local people. Building strong relationships and capacity within the local community would reduce conflicts and restiveness.

It is clear that the number one goal Udoh's thesis will achieve is that of supporting the economic and social development of people living close to natural areas, thereby ensuring the 'sustainable use and benefits of our heritage'. He states clearly that achieving sustainable development would mean that;

On the policy level, we do not trample on the knowledge of local people, who we realize, have extensive environmental knowledge. This knowledge must be fully utilized and harnessed, and they must form an integral part of any management strategy as principal stakeholders.

Ndubuisi (2002) on proffering conditions for sustainable development focuses on institutions of government. He contends that the government of the day must of necessity, put in place policies and legislations that takes into cognizance the 'multifaceted role of the rural poor in their relationship to biodiversity'. He also maintained that the issues of land ownership and use must be addressed. The unsustainable practice of most predator investors on natural resources operating in Nigeria is inconsistent with and diametrically opposed to Udoh and Ndubuisi's view as shown by Diofie (2000) in this comments;

Agreement on extractive activities especially oil and gas production are negotiated and signed, contracts for the sale of oil and gas are sealed, yet the local people whose communities harbor these resources are neither part of it nor are they consulted.

In attempt to shift emphasis from the extractive use of natural resources, Anwana (2003) introduces the 'concept of Ecotourism' which he said offers a viable alternative to economic activities in the process of achieving sustainable development. The concept according to him, offers a direct link between 'biodiversity conservation activities by local people and long-term economic benefits'. In the example of Monteverde Cloud forests, Costa Rica, Anwana's study showed that conservation is considered a way of life as a result of the local communities' realization of the 'value of biodiversity for tourism'.

Several groups at the centre of initiatives to promote the integration of development and environmental protection that met in Canberra, Australia (2001) and Copenhagen (200) were unanimous in their assessment of sustainable development. The groups according to Don-Pedro (2001) remarked that;

The dreams of a more responsive attitude to the issues of environmental protection, conservation and poverty banishment globally, had been subverted by a conspiracy of overriding economic considerations and lack of will by government and other stakeholders to put these issues on the political agenda of their countries.

In analyzing this remarks, Don Pedro argued that 'nearly all the indicators for sustainable development have got worse' and agrees with the groups that sustainable development is hampered when 'private accumulation blinds the human race to the fact that the paths being currently beaten lead nowhere except to the precipice'.

Environmental Right Advocacy groups in Nigeria, according to Omolade (2003) are insisting that the same path to sustainable development is the return of the responsibility of protecting the environment and its resources to local people through a restructuring of the policy. It is the recipe for 'environmental protection and total elimination, not alleviation of poverty'. Omolade agrees that;

This is the way out of the abyss of poverty and apron strings of underdevelopment to a pavilion of sustainable development... it is the only way out. When the oil, for instance, dries up in the Niger Delta, the multinational oil companies and the government backing them, will abandon the area, leaving the people to their dead rivers and farmlands.

Nnimmo et al (2001) share the view that for sustainable development to be institutionalized in the third world, there must be a change in attitude of people to the environment which they live through;

- i. Global environmental regeneration efforts.
- ii. Control over resources, which must be by those who hold the stakes, and not those who hold the (cheque) leaves.
- iii. Accepting globally binding rules, elimination of double standards that permit a set of people to be considered less human and their environment as having no value except for the resources that can be extracted from it.
- iv. A halt to the conversion of forests to mono-crop plantations
- v. Fair trade, not free that is being often enforced.
- vi. A rethink in consumption; the root of wars, violent disputes and brutal environmental assaults must be uncovered and shown out to be what it is; private/corporate economic gains.

Bankole (2002) affirmed that it is of critical importance that the government of nations takes serious steps towards developing action plans and measurable targets in the five critical issues the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 addressed. They are; water and sanitation, energy, agricultural productivity, biodiversity and ecosystem management, and health.

Mrs. Nane Annan, wife of the former United Nations Secretary General agrees with Bankole that sustainable development in a globalised world in these five areas would offer all human beings a chance of achieving 'prosperity that will not only last their own life time but that which can be enjoyed by their children and grand-children too' (Ezeji 2002).

Ron Van Den-Berg (2001), Managing Director of Shell Petroleum Development Company, said increased participation in sustainable development of communities should be through education initiatives, skills acquisition programmes, and micro credit schemes that are intended to make communities 'more commercially and economically viable'. To achieve this he said;

We must gradually shift focus away from community assistance to people development. We must now focus on the individual, the empowerment of people through Micro Credit Schemes, Agricultural Project and Small Scale Industries to create wealth, employment and reduce poverty.

Uwejamomere (2001) acknowledges that sustainable development is a 'trans boundary and multidimensional endeavour inter-linking virtually all sectors of national economy and life'. He however, observes that the greatest challenge to Nigeria's sustainable development efforts is 'energy development, efficiency and consumption' and regretted that;

No direct policy or linkage have been enunciated between energy and environment or transportation, and environment by the government. The closet reference occurs due to the notorious impact of crude oil exploitation in the Niger

Delta... the implication is that the already poor, rural and disadvantaged people of the region would face an environmental crisis.

In this regard, Ezeji (2002) while focusing on the pillar of sustainable development; environmental protection, suggest that the only way out of the endangered scenario painted by Uwajamomere above is that priority in the implementation of environmental protection should centre on facilitation of local preventive initiatives. Such initiatives, he found out, would have the capacity to eradicate poverty by giving people more access to the resources they need to live 'sustainable lives and make environment friendly decisions'. To achieve this end, he wrote:

It is important that in combating poverty and implementing environmental protection programmes, the participation of local communities, rural organizations, local and state governments, international and regional organizations should be mobilized.

On obvious lapse noted by Owolabi (2003) in the above submission is the neglect of the development of information and monitoring systems for the people and therefore observed that there is the need to strengthen the knowledge base of the people and communities prone to 'environmental degradation and traditionally excluded from decision making processes'.

In a speech entitled *From Doha to Johannesburg by Way of Monterrey: How Development can be Achieved and Sustained*, former United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Anan, told an audience of Britain's political, academic and Business life at the London School of economics (2002) that their way of life, and that of people living in other developed countries generally, must change if the planet was to be inhabitable by the number of people likely to live on it in decades to come. He charged them to view sustainable development as 'an opportunity and not a disaster' in this words;

Far from being a burden, sustainable development is an exceptional opportunity – economically, to build markets and create jobs, socially, to bring people in from the margins; and politically, to give every man and woman a voice and a choice, in deciding their own future.

He believes that this behavioural change could have a major impact on effort to 'unlock the financial resources necessary for development and for fighting poverty'.

The point being made here is that sustainable development can be made profitable. It is in this light that Osuntokun (2002) posits that those who manufacture clear process mechanism would have a global market and they would also be helping to conserve the global environment without 'sacrificing their lifestyle or arresting development.

We shall conclude this review by quoting Mr. Kofi Annan's opening statements at World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg between 26th August-4th September 2002. The statement which emphasizes the need to pursue with vigour the tenets of sustainable development and discard unsustainable practice reads thus;

The model of development we are accustomed to has been fruitful for the few, but flawed for many. A path to prosperity that ravages the environment and leaves a majority of human kind behind in squalor will soon prove to be a dead-end road for everyone. Unsustainable practices are woven deeply into the fabric of modern life. Some say we should rip up that fabric. I say we can and must weave in new strands of knowledge and cooperation.

3. Governance System in Nigeria

Governance, in its widest sense, refers to the various ways through which social life is coordinated. It is a process of social engagement between the rulers and the ruled in the society. In other words, governance system is determined by the relationship between the ruling class and the ruled class. (Nnoli 2003, Nyewusira 2007). Governance is also the process of exercising power and decision-making for a group of people, and include the processes by which such decisions are implemented or not implemented (Okerengwo, 2011:149).

One recurrent issue on the constitutional framework of Nigeria since 1922 when the First Constitution was made by the colonialists up to 2010 when sections of the extant 1999 constitution were amended, is that, all the constitutions, without any exception, are impositions on the people by the dominant forces that organize or constitute the Nigerian state at any point in time. Thus, all the constitutions enacted in Nigeria reflect not the interest of the people but of the dominant constitutive elements of the Nigerian State (Aturu 2010:2). The elitist, non-inclusive and undemocratic approach to constitution making has largely influenced public policy making. As a matter of fact, Aturu (2010) is of the view that a constitution is 'the will of the dominant class in a given society for the perpetuation of its rule and interests and for the

concomitant subjugation of the dominated class'.

The process and output of most, if not all, public policies in Nigeria is predominantly characterized by the Elite Preference Model of public policy making (Egonmwan 2002). Under this model, public policy outputs are conceptualized as reflecting the values and preferences of the ruling elite rather than those of general citizenry. Simply put, public policies, emanating from government institutions, do not reflect the demands and needs of the people but the interests and values of governing elite, and to that extent, it is only policy options that fall within the shared consensus of elite that enters the policy agenda. At best, 'dividends' of public policies 'trickles down' to the masses. This explains why and how public policy in Nigeria is oriented towards the 'affluent few' and only pays lip service to the 'afflicted majority'. The rapid transfer of public wealth to the ruling elite and their cronies under the cloak of privatization, the allocation of 25% of the recurrent expenditure of the federal government to only 469 members of the National Assembly, as Governor of the Central Bank, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, revealed in 2012, allocation or sale of the nation's oil blocs to stooges, cronies and clients of the ruling elites and phenomenal rise in economic and other forms of corruption among the governing elite are instructive. Infact, Aturu (2010:33) analysed the unwholesome and rapacious privatization programme implemented by successive governments in Nigeria as one that the Nigerian State 'cannibalized public corporations and parceled them to or among leading members of the ruling class'.

At the state levels, the governance system that subsists and is entrenched is what Mike Igini, a Human Rights Activist, refers to as 'structural capture': a system where governors decide and determine who becomes members of the National Assembly, State House of Assembly, Federal Ministers, Local Government Chairmen and Councilors, Board members of Federal Agencies and Parastatals, Party Officials etc. Worst Still, budgetary provisions at all levels of government in Nigeria rarely reflect the needs of the people. A shocking revelation on budgetary provision was made in *Kakaki*, a Television programme of African Independent Television (AIT), on Thursday 28 February, 2013. A Guest in the said programme, Dr. Otiye Igbuzor, Executive Director of African Centre for Leadership, Strategy and Development, revealed that a Research conducted by the Centre showed that budgetary allocations to Government Houses in Bayelsa and Delta States, from 2007 to 2011 is higher than allocations to four key Ministries (Education, Health, Works and Sports) put together within the same period. As Amuta (2011:65) observed, what obtains in virtually all states of the federation is 'constitutional absolutism'. The main reason for this according to Amuta is that the oversight function of the state legislature is weakened by the domineering influence of the governors. In the words of Amuta:

Governors as leaders of the parties handpick state legislators and literally tell them what to do. In the process, there can be no credible oversights. No checks. No balances. No accountability, only officially sanctioned creative bookkeeping. So our state governors once elected are absolutists. This is why the majority of cases before the EFCC and the ICPC on matters of official malfeasance are heavily weighted on the states.

Amuta is also in the league of those who think that 'most governors run their states like very dysfunctional private estates' such that there exist in some states 'privatization doctrine of political powers'

The federal government, on its part, has become 'alarmingly unwieldy'. Nwogwugwu (2011) made reference to the statistics given by the chairman of Federal Civil Service Commission, Ahmed Al-Gazali, to underscore the enormity of the problems created by unwieldy governance system. According to Ahmed Al. Gazah, the federal government currently maintains over 400 parastatals that 'are drain on public funds'. He said most of the parastatals have over-bloated staff while there is a duplication of mandates and functions in several others. Ahmed Al-Gazel, went further to describe these parastatals as 'cesspit of corruption, resulting in over-bloating of contracts, loss of value for money, and vandalism of public property'. Similarly, the Stephen Orosanye-led Presidential Committee on the Rationalization and Restructuring of Federal Government Parastatals, Commissions and Agencies also bemoaned the nation's over-bloated bureaucracy with 541 Government Parastatals, Commissions and Agencies (statutory and non-statutory) with duplicated and overlapping functions (Businessday April 17, 2012). The truth remains that there is a subversion of the natural goals of the bureaucracy with the multiplication of Ministries, Department and Agencies, which have become tools of rewarding stooges, cronies and clients of the ruling class.

Governance, in Nigeria, as Ibeanu (2008:10) rightly observed, is about 'creating affluence for a few, not about eliminating affliction for the many'. Rather than governance being anchored on common good, it has turned the commonwealth into personal fiefdoms. That is why Nyewusira (2007), argued vigorously that the bane of Nigeria's development is that critical institutions of government are superintended by a ruling class that lacks governance fitness and contract management culture. Nweze (2012) situated the context rightly when he said that it is reason why President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan promised Nigerians 'breathe of fresh air' during his electioneering campaigns in 2011 and unleashed 'breathe of fresh pains' on Nigerians by his crass insensitivity and inhumanity to the poor masses by removing

fuel subsidy on 1st January 2012. The situation is made worse by the claim of Dr. Otiye Igbuzor that Nigeria, at all levels of government, are governed by 'policy and development illiterates', to the extent that, most decision makers adopt unicentric system of policy formulation; one in which only the government is responsible for policy formulation resulting in a regulated system in which everything revolves around the authorities. The consequence, as Ekere (2009) observed, is 'alienation and exclusion of the masses from the policy arena with its concomitant effect of increased poverty'.

According to Soludo, (2012) the poverty incidence, as released by National Bureau for Statistics in 2012 shows that poverty has worsened from 54 percent in 2004 to 69 per cent in 2010, and 72 per cent in 2011. This is inspite of the official records that economic growth moved from 6% in 2004 to 8% in 2011. In fact, National Bureau for Statistics shows that the economy has been growing since 2003 by an average of 7% or more (Soludo 2012). Again, the observation of Soludo that Nigeria has earned over 600 billion dollars from oil since 1973 but cannot guarantee basic necessities such as food, water, food roads, electricity, education, health etc to the citizens speaks volume of Nigeria's governance system. As Soludo said, 'Nigeria is holed up in some traps and if the current constitutional-political-economic arrangement continue, Nigeria will continue to move in circle of occasional three steps forward and five backwards'. Our argument here is that the governance system, anchored on the existing order, cannot guarantee sustainable development in Nigeria in the 21st century and beyond.

4. The Political Economy of Nigerian State

Political economy is, simply, the understanding of the ways in which economics and government policies interact. It is a method or rule of state management. Political economy focuses attention on not only the production and management of material wealth of the society but also its distribution among the various segments, groups or classes. It provides for a holistic study of issues, phenomena and policies of any state. Such questions as why some people are poor while others are rich, the social responsibility of the state and the forces and motives driving government policies and programmes, the social relations of production, distribution and exchange in a society are treated within the prism of political economy (Akani 1996, Nwaorgu 2002, Ntete-Nna 2004, Momoh & Hundeyin 2005).

A major variable that has defined the political economy of the Nigerian state is the texture of its federalism. Between 1952 and 1966, Nigeria operated a federal system that allowed each of the three regions then to develop in consonance with the dominant values of its culture and at its own pace. It was a competitive federal structure. Ideally, federation involve the amalgamation of autonomous or semi-autonomous units, with each surrendering aspects of its power to the centre. All those changed in Nigeria with military intervention in government and the 'oil boom' of the 1970s to the extent that Nigeria now operates what is referred to as 'unitary-federalism' or 'feeding –bottle federalism'. The state and local government, most of which are not fiscally viable, depend on oil rents from the centre as prescribed in section 162 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended). The section makes provision for consolidating revenues from oil and other sources and sharing same to each tier of government, and each armed with the statutory powers to spend. The emphasis is on 'distribution', and it is metaphorically titled 'Distributable Pool Account'. What this means, according to Soludo (2012), is that the constitution, as 'the super architecture of governance has erected an incentive framework for consumption-oriented and unproductive governance'. Put differently, the constitution created a system of sharing 'free money' from oil and entrenching 'entitlement mentality' devoid of 'baking' responsibility. Thus, all federating states almost fully depend on the revenue from oil on the basis of 'divide –the –pile'. As Akinrinade (2012:20) argues, the states have become 'indolent federating units that waits for droppings from the table of the federal government in Abuja'. The destructive effect, according to Akinrinade, is that;

Despite its oil resources, Nigeria today remains one of the poorest countries, in the world; Nigeria has the least developed transportation system for any country of its size that possess her quantum of natural resources throughout the entire world. Its railway system is in a state of complete disrepair while its roads are abysmally decrepit. No wonder it is completely unable to sustain any meaningful industrial activity. Particularly on account of crippling lack of electric power, factories have turned to worship places just as many multinational companies have migrated to other countries like Ghana. Thousands of jobs have thus left the country in search of more stable economies.

A corollary to the above is the argument of Okowa (1994), that the Nigeria political economy has been structurally damaged and deformed by systemic corruption financed by oil, and that what exist now is 'a system in which more and more people have come to realize that hard work does not pay; wealth is to be made by being well connected to the state'. In this case, systemic corruption has induced in the citizens a desire to be 'wealthy without production'. Soludo (2005) puts the situation in perspective when he wrote that;

In Nigeria, excessive dependence on oil was compounded by the concentration of the commanding heights of the economy in the hands of government. Government then became the fastest and cheapest means of making quick money, a rentier state emerged, intensifying the politics of 'sharing' rather than 'production'. This created a horde of 'rent' entrepreneur'. That is, 'Big men' without any productive source of livelihood except proximity to state power.

Soludo further asserted that majority of elite in Nigeria do nothing for living other than government patronage, and that this had led to distortion of the value system. Ezekwesili (2013) added that oil resources not only entrenched corruption and mismanagement in government, it also vitiated value for work, creativity and innovation in Nigeria's public and private sectors. The result is that Nigeria is now defined by majority of the Seven Social Sin identified by Mahatma Gandhi of India; politics without principle; wealth without work; knowledge without character; pleasure without conscience; commerce without morality; science without humanity; and worship without sacrifice. (Adeniyi 2012)

The Nigerian situation exemplifies the apt submission of Ake (1996) that 'politics is warfare and governance spoils of war'. In the circumstance, the state becomes the private resources of the dominant group among the political class, which defends its power and privileged position by every means against other groups also seeking state power by all means. This creates what Ake calls 'politics of anxiety'. In this type of politics, there is deep alienation and distrust among competitors, who are profoundly afraid of being in the power of their opponents. The trepidation in turn breeds 'a huge appetite for power', which is sought and used without restraint, as competitors turn on the calculus of strength and resources. In the assessment of Nyewusira (2006), this state of affairs largely explains why politics in Nigeria has become a lucrative business through which public resources and funds are diverted to private use. As Ezekwesili. (2013) observed, the governing class through the decades 'has spent more time quarrelling over their share of the oil 'national cake' than they have spent thinking of how to make it benefit the entire populace' Garba (1995) also analysed thus:

In a country like Nigeria where the prizes are so few, and the stakes so high, the fight for booty or 'national cake' is fierce and often vicious. It has at times led to a debilitating corruption in the arena of public policy making and implementation.

'Wealth without Work' character of the elite has also translated to formation of militant groups, in most cases, sponsored by the elite across the country with clear intention of sharing from the national cake. The 'sharing' culture has benefited most leaders of the armed group and their elite sponsors in a Nigerian State that rewards criminality. Today, billions of Naira goes into the Niger Delta to 'settle' militant groups without addressing decrepit state of human and physical infrastructure in the region. The Boko Haram insurgents and their elite sponsors are unleashing terror on businesses, multinationals, government institutions, churches etc as a means of attracting government patronage. These cases best explain the violent competition for the nation's resources by the elite that Nigeria is witnessing currently.

Soludo (2012:64) links the non-developmental direction of Nigeria's political economy to the increasingly popular resource curse thesis. He analyzes oil resource curse as:

The easy money from oil which has created a culture of helpless dependence on manna from the Delta, and the consequent political economy based on sharing and consumption rather than baking the cake or wealth creation. Under such a system, production-oriented politics is an anathema.

Soludo revealed that a democratic government such as Nigeria that is sustained by 'natural resource rent as oil' is made very vulnerable by two critical factors. The first is that, 'any sustained collapse of oil prices in the medium term will lead to a catastrophic implosion of the economy'. Secondly, it has entrenched a 'rentier consumption- oriented political economy'. This simply means that the political economy of Nigeria is defined by logic of consumption and sharing rather than logic of production. It is characterized by what development analysts refer to as 'divide –the –pile syndrome', which is common in rentier states. The bitter contest for political power in states afflicted by oil resource curse is about who will preside the sharing of the oil rents rather than service to society. Amuta (2012) writes that the only economy left in Nigeria today is 'the money changing hands in Abuja's political industry; the money from oil royalties which is being used to oil the political industry'. As presently constituted and conceived, the state and local governments functions more as centres for collection and disbursement of monthly allocations from the Federation Account. Thus, the 36 states and 774 local government areas are more of centres of resource dissipation than centres for the creation of values and wealth (Amuta, 2011). States are simply created and exist on the basis of the politics of allocation of rents and royalties. This explains why salaries of civil servants, as elementary as it is, are not paid in any state of Nigeria whenever there is delay or issues in Federal Allocation Account Committee (FAAC). As Ekwesili (2013) said, Nigeria suffers the effect of 'oil enclave economy'.

Nigeria is a paradox of the kind of wealth that breed poverty. As a matter of fact, the world considers Nigeria 'a poster nation for poor governance wealth from natural resources' (Ezekwesili 2013). On the paradox of 'wealth that breeds poverty' Ezekwesili posits thus;

The trend of Nigeria's population in poverty since 1980 to 2010 for example suggests that the more we earned from oil, the larger the population of poor citizens; 17.1million in 1980, 34.5 million in 1985, 39.2 million in 1992, 67.1 million in 1996, 68.7 million in 2004 and 112.47 million in 2010.

According to Ezekwesili, this means that Nigeria is 'blessed with abundance of ironies'. She insists that 'resources wealth' has reduced Nigeria to 'a mere parable of prodigality' through the actions and inactions of those she referred to as the 'extractive elite class'. Ezekwesili, in her treatise, classified Nigeria as a resource rich country that has been unable to 'build up foreign asset for the citizens' to live better, nor 'evolved new and alternative sectors of production'. This is why she maintains that Nigeria is referred to as 'a tragic rentier state,' where majority of the citizens suffer the unabated 'effect of failing public health and education, decrepit infrastructure, and battered institutions'. The submission of Soludo (2012) that Nigeria has earned over 600 billion dollars from oil since 1973 but cannot guarantee any basic necessities such as food, water, good roads, electricity, education, health etc to the citizens is also instructive. Oluabunwa (2010:6) also laments that life expectancy was 54years in 1970 but 48years in 2010; unemployment was 45% in 1970 but 69% in 2010, poverty level was 45% in 1970 but 69% in 2010. These figures, according to Soludo, show that Nigerian economy is progressing in downward trends. In fact, Soludo (2007:22) argues that many resources dependent countries, such as Nigeria, are 'susceptible to the boom and burst cycles in the growth process'.

Finally, it was a stark reminder of the culture of waste, profligacy and corruption in the management of Nigeria's oil money when former United States President, Bill Clinton, said 'you haven't done well with your oil money'. Bill Clinton made the profound remarks at the recent 18th Thisday Award at the June 12 cultural centre, Abeokuta. (Thisday, March 1, 2013). The misuse of oil money by the ruling elite since independence is what has subject several people to 'intergenerational poverty' (Ezekwesili 2013). Clinton further remarked that 'solving the economic divide that is in your country will help the political divide: making better use of your resources'.

The comments of Bill Clinton to the Nigerian government should be seen as a wake up call to reflect on a number of issues related to our natural resources endowments. As Soludo (2007:21) aptly asked, 'are we getting adequate value for our resources?', 'are we spending the earning well enough such that the natural resources augment and accelerate the growth of other sectors?', 'are we saving enough of the earnings to ensure future streams of income even when the resources are gone?'. These questions and their answers are, no doubt, critical to attaining sustainable development in the 21st century. The challenge remains how Nigeria can 'escape the indolent culture or the lottery effects of easy money from oil to create competitive economies and sustainable prosperity' (Soludo 2012). Interestingly, Stiglitz in Soludo (2007:22) argues that 'natural resources curse is not fate; it is choice'. What, therefore, is Nigeria's choice in the global race to attaining sustainable development in the 21st century?

5. Conclusion

We are inclined to conclude this paper by making reference to the highly cerebral Chief Ojo Madukwe. According to Ojo, Benard Lewis aptly observed that when people realize things are going wrong, there are two questions they usually ask. One is, 'what did we do wrong?', and the other is, 'who did this to us?'. The latter tends to conspiracy theories and paranoia. The first question leads to another thinking; 'How do we put it right?'. Ojo Madukwe said that in the second half of the 20th century, most African and Latin American States choose conspiracy theories and paranoia. On the other hand, in the second half of the 19th century, Japan asked herself, 'How do we put it right? We wish to unequivocally state here that for Nigeria to contemplate developing a template for attaining sustainable development in the next 87 years left in the 21st century, leaders and decision-makers at all strata, must consciously put themselves in the position of the question Japan and other Asian Tigers asked themselves in the second half of the 19th century. Our twin reasons are simple; the world is tired of excuses and 'blame game' for Nigeria's failure. Secondly, it is high time Nigeria stopped agonizing underdevelopment and began organizing for sustainable development.

It is instructive to understand that it is only the people that can generate and sustain development within a good and democratic governance structure. In other words, political cataclysm and economic implosion are inevitable in nations that depend on oil rents that benefit only a privileged few. This is, because, there is a correlation between good and democratic governance and sustainable development; the latter is the necessary bedrock on which the former can, and should be anchored.

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