

LEADERSHIP, FOLLOWERSHIP AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

**Tobi Folasade Ejumudo (Ph.D.)¹, Elvis Adogbeji², Samuel Ejeba³ and
Prof. Kelly-Bryan Ovie Ejumudo (Ph.D.)⁴**

**¹Department of Business Administration and Entrepreneurship, ²Department of
International Relations, ³Department of Political Science, ⁴Department of Political
Science and Public Administration, ^{1,2,3&4}Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba, Delta
State, Nigeria**

Email: ejumudotobi@gmail.com; +2348063728507
oghenyerhovwo.adogbeji@dou.edu.ng
Ejumudo.kelly-bryan@dou.edu.ng +2348037145137

ABSTRACT

The study examined leadership, followership and national development in Nigeria. Three hypotheses derived from the specific objectives of the study were tested. This study is quantitative in nature and adopts the descriptive research design. The study used quantitative data and this was gathered with the questionnaire. This data collection instrument was validated and also subjected to reliability test, before it was used for the collection of data. The questionnaire was used to elicit responses from 120 respondents that constitute the sample size. The data generated from the field work was extracted from the measuring instrument and then subjected to inferential statistical analysis for the testing of the hypotheses. The chi-square statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses. The study revealed that Nigerian leaders have not been able to satisfy the desire of her people; expenditures have not been able to match productivity, the welfare and security of her people cannot be guaranteed and the vision, goal and the national morale of her people cannot be assured by her leaders when there is no change to foster good followership. This study recommended among others that leadership and followership relationship should always be harmonized as to enable the society or group to achieve her vision and set goals and leadership and followership should adopt a new paradigm shift were values, and leadership traits, integrity and other discussed qualities herein will serve as the basis for consideration or determining leadership.

Keywords: Leadership, Followership, National Development, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Leadership and followership are mutual activities of great influence to national development in all parts of the world. In Nigeria, after her independence in 1960, Nigeria has moved from Parliamentary system of government to Presidential system of government, she has experienced both civilian and military regimes yet, her leaders have been unable to deliver to her citizens the quality of life commensurate with her numerous endowed resources. In Nigeria, government has failed to provide portable drinking water, electricity, good roads, effective service delivery, employment, housing scheme, quality health care, quality education, credible electoral system etc. According to Achebe (1983) in Ngwube (2010), the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is the inability of Nigerian leaders to rise to the challenge of personal example which according to Achebe, the hallmark of true leadership. In fairness to Achebe, our leaders have not led by example. Ngwube affirmed that, sycophancy; and mere oratories have not helped the situation but have rather compounded it.

The quality and ingenuity of a country's leadership can make or mar a country's development or growth. Leadership can decisively influence the quality of life of her people and her national power vis-à-vis annihilating them through war and poor governance. The perception of the followers of their leaders in Nigeria is an issue of great importance. In most cases the followers

hold the view that their leaders lack the skill required for governance, and that the leaders act not in accordance with the needs and aspirations of the people but in accord with their personal agenda or interests not unconnected with imperialistic forces.

Leadership is the life wire of any nation and its importance cannot be overemphasized. Leadership is a kind of direction, which a person can give to a group of people under him in such a way that these will influence the behaviour of another individual, or group (Omolayole, 2006). Omolayo (2005) describes leadership as an essential oil that keeps the wheel of government working without any difficulty or hindrance sort of. According to him, leadership makes the difference between success and failure in a country. It involves giving direction to citizens who are the critical assets of the nation (Lawal, Imokhuede and Johnson, 2012). Leadership is a dynamic process, influenced by the changing requirements of the task, the group itself and the individual member (Cole, 2000 as cited in CIPM, 2013). Therefore, Leadership is crucial to any successful organization or nation (Thom-Otuya, 2012).

In Nigeria however, after her independence in 1960, Nigeria has adopted various forms of leadership styles ranging from parliamentary to presidential system of government. She has experienced both civilian and military regimes yet, her leaders have been unable to deliver to her citizens the quality of life commensurate with her numerous endowed resources (Thom-Otuya, 2007, 2012). One could rightly say that the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership (Achebe, 1983). Furthermore, the nurture of indigenous human resources to serve as a pivot through which economic growth and development is achieved is no doubt an ingredient to Nigeria's socio-economic and political development (Ake, 1989).

Followership in Nigeria has not generated much debate. But there have been cases of resistance movements that have been spearheaded by followers. These resistance cases are protest against poor governance and ineptitude of Nigerian Leaders. Nigerian followers are very loyal and supportive to leadership and have participated actively in the achievement of the nation's goals. Though when a people are ravaged by poverty, it will weaken their ability to rise up to their challenges of checkmating the excesses of their leaders. This docility will have a great negative impact on Leader- followership relationship. Leaders that are checkmated by their followers will limit their excesses and realign themselves to public opinion. But in the midst of docility and sycophancy, leaders will be getting away with their misappropriations and ineptitude. But competition among elites seeking leadership status can be a major source of conflict and check on leadership. The study therefore assessed leadership, followership and national development in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, the dynamics of leadership, followership, and their impact on national development present critical challenges. Despite abundant natural resources and a large workforce, the country faces persistent socio-economic and political hurdles. The relationship between leaders and followers is often fraught with distrust, inefficiencies, and a lack of mutual accountability, hindering sustainable development. Many leaders in Nigeria are perceived as self-serving, corrupt, or lacking in vision. This compromises their ability to inspire and effectively lead towards national development goals. There seems to be the problem of good leadership quality expressed in the lack of accountability. Most politicians and bureaucrats see leadership as designed for them and devise all means to get into the corridors of power, and do things without recourse to constitutional provisions and drive for development. This affects the state, and brings upon the people harsh economic conditions upon the masses.

Also, the Nigerian populace, though diverse and resilient, often feels disconnected from decision-making processes. Limited civic engagement and empowerment contribute to a passive followership that fails to hold leaders accountable or actively contribute to national development efforts. Most of the followers in Nigeria are not engaged in information provision, active involvement

in the day to day running of the government and this result in lack of participation in many quarters. This is because the followers are disoriented and lack interest in the activities of government

Weak governance structures, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and inadequate regulatory frameworks undermine development initiatives. These systemic issues perpetuate a cycle of poor leadership outcomes and hinder the effective implementation of policies. This leads to institutional weaknesses and lack of trust by followers. Nigeria's diverse ethnic and regional landscape often exacerbates tensions and limits cohesive national development strategies. Fragmented support bases for leaders based on ethnicity or region can lead to divisive politics and undermine efforts towards national unity and progress. Despite economic growth in certain sectors, significant portions of the population remain marginalized and impoverished. Inadequate distribution of wealth and resources perpetuates socio-economic disparities, fostering discontent and hampering inclusive development. These issues collectively impede Nigeria's progress towards sustainable development goals. The lack of effective leadership, passive followership, institutional weaknesses, ethnic divisions, and economic inequalities undermine efforts to build a prosperous and stable nation. Addressing these challenges requires transformative leadership, active citizen engagement, strengthened institutions, inclusive policies, and equitable economic opportunities which this study sought to address.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine leadership, followership and national development in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine how effective leadership leads to supportive followership.
2. Examine how followership engagement leads to effective participation.
3. Determine the relationship between leadership, followership and national development.

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between effective leadership and supportive followership.
2. There is no significant relationship between followership engagement and effective participation.
3. There is no significant relationship between leadership, followership and national development.

Concept of Leadership

Leadership is defined in various ways. We shall examine some of the definitions and apply them to this study. Bryman (1992) in Ngwube (2010) define Leadership as a process of social influence whereby a Leader steers members of a group towards a goal. Leadership here involves influence. It is concerned with how the Leader affects followers and the leader is the focal point. Fafowora et al (1995) also see leadership as implying a purposeful direction of the affairs of the Led. Leadership is all about influence. Northouse (2001) defined leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. Tannenbaum in Thom-Otuya (2007) define Leadership as interpersonal influence exercised in situation and directed through communication process, toward the attainment of goals. Utomi(2004) defined Leadership as the art of mobilizing in a least cost manner to achieve a clear goal. Stogdill in Irikana and Orisa (2007) define Leadership as the process of influencing the activities of an organized group towards goal setting and goal achievement. R.J House in Thom Otuya (2007), described leadership as the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization of which they are members. According to Newman (2022) leadership is the special and unique ability to influence people to move towards goals that are beneficial and meet the group's best interests. In these papers, leadership will be seen as one who is in a position of integrity or trust, direct and conduct the affairs of a group or group of persons,

influencing their behavior and decisions towards complying to the achievement of some desired goals. Leadership therefore involves the element or skills of: vision, motivation, integrity, initiative, courage and successfully mobilizing an organization or group of persons towards a goal.

Concept of Followership

Followership: can be described as adherence to a leader. But in this exposition, followership is the virtue of supporting leaders and helping them to lead well. For followers to help their leaders do well, they have a responsibility to actively participate in the achievement of a nation's goal. Jehn and Bezrukova (2023) contended that followership is a people oriented behavior, and this behavior builds relationships between leaders and followers, providing an environment that promotes all organizational members to focus on a common goal. Both authors suggested that good followers may be a catalyst for change in an organization as followership "inspires others to follow toward a common goal; creates enthusiasm and desire to excel; fully engages others, build confidence; moves the organization ahead as one entity rather than separate parts" (Jehn and Bezrukova, 2003 p.728). Werlin (2023) contended that good followership relationships must build on motivation rather than control, and that instilling values into followers is essentially to develop a culture of trust and good relationship. He asserted that, the balance of power between leader and follower; however, must be maintained in order to provide a culture of openness that promotes self-engagement.

Concept of National Development

Lawal and Oluwatoyin (2021) describe national development as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation. However in this paper, it will be describe as the ability of a country or countries to improve the social welfare of the people, by providing social amenities like quality education, potable water, transportation, infrastructure, medical care, etc.

Leadership and Followership in Nigeria

Every society needs to be led by their leaders. Ever since the social contract between man and government, in which man surrendered some of his right to the centre called government, there was a social contract that as a result of the surrender of these rights, government should be able to use law to regulate the society and ensure the security and welfare of the people. It is this situation that gave rise to Leadership and followership in any human society. The relationship of leadership and followership is anchored on leadership because he is the driver of the relationship. It is incumbent on a leader to give direction and for the followers to comply. In Nigeria, ever since her independence, she has been facing leadership crises hence, she has moved from a Parliamentary system of government to a Presidential form; Nigeria has wobbled from one civilian regime to another military regime yet.

Leadership in Nigeria has not been able to deliver the needed dividend of our God-given resources to her people nor a satisfactory social welfare services, even social amenities; yet her followers have been very faithful. There is great need to sustain the relationship between the leadership and her followers. A clarion call for new generational leaders is very necessary to take Nigeria to another great level of self-sufficiency and effective leadership. The traits of a leader like intelligence, integrity, charisma, and dynamism, dominance, extroversion and level headed could project leadership in a better light in the eyes of his followers. These qualities will endear him to the followership. Newman (2022) listed ten essential qualities which he referred to as Laws in which an effective leadership should possess to enhance followership. They are: a leader should have vision, discipline, wisdom, courage and humility. A Leader should be a decision maker, have executive ability, be tactful and diplomatic, able to develop friendships and exude enthusiasm. Leadership is put in place in other for her to achieve a certain goal. To do this, Irikana and Orisa (2007) affirmed

the leader must be efficient, skillful, insightful, and courageous and motivate members to work towards the goal.

The perception of the followers of their leadership can distance or endear them to leadership. In midst of a very corrupt environment like Nigeria, it takes a leader of high integrity to be able to command genuine followership. Integrity is the quality of honesty and trustworthiness, and leaders who adhere to a strong set of principles and take responsibility for their actions are exhibiting integrity (Northouse, 2001). Northouse further noted that leaders with integrity inspire confidence in others because they can be trusted to do what they say they are going to do. Cunningham (2002) in Ngwube (2010) stated that of all the qualities a leader must possess, integrity may be the most important one of them. He added that integrity involve the three Rs: Respect for self; Respect for others; and Respect for all your actions. Integrity is one of the greatest challenges facing Nigerian leaders. Overtime, Nigerians have been good followers but her leaders lack integrity. Corruption is very massive; it deters the progress of the people, dwarf government concrete achievements, deters foreign investments due to lack of trust at the international level, and reduces the confidence of the people on her Leadership. Integrity is therefore a platform for effectiveness in leadership. A chief executive with integrity will have positive impact on his subordinates/followers and the organization will subsequently experience strong followership, performance and high productivity. Nigeria needs paradigm shift – a positive change in attitudes and value system in order for her to achieve her set goal of national unity and economic growth, including warding off poverty; and further military incursion into governance.

Types of Leadership

There are various classification (or types) of Leadership. This paper classified the types of Leadership according to Thom-Otuya (2007:pp.58-59) they are:

- i. **Autocratic (boss centered) Leadership:** This is a type of Leadership where the leader makes decisions on his own without consulting others. This type of leadership is also called 'dictatorial'. In this context, the leader assumes monopoly of knowledge. He is personal in his praises and criticisms of individuals but remains aloof from the group. The leader decrees what will be done and the followers have no choice but to accept it. All the military regimes in Nigeria are good examples of a dictatorial leadership.
- ii. **Democratic (subordinate centered) Leadership:** This is one in which the leader invites the participation of subordinates or followers in decisions that affect them. This type of leader is characterized by his concern for the achievement of set goals with the group. He is sensitive and understands the need of the individual, groups within the organization and helps them to fulfill their needs as well as the functions of the group. In his relationship with his members, the leaders offer both praises and criticisms. He tries to influence without dominating the thinking and behavior of the group. Nigeria's present democratic dispensation projects this type of Leadership by structure/form, not by substance.
- iii. **Laissez-Faire (free-reign) Leadership:** This is a leader that leaves many of the decisions up to the subordinates or followers to make. He gives his subordinates a "free reign" over their activities; has little or no attempt to evacuate or regulate the members of the group of their progress towards achieving their goals and objectives. In most cases, the laissez-faire leaders can be said to be enjoying leadership of position and not that of functions. In other words, he is a leader in the real sense. Such leaders are not prepared to shoulder blames for their failures but prefer to share praises for any achievement.

Functions of Leadership

Leadership functions are very numerous and articulated differently by various author, but all pointing to the ability of a Leader to mobilize his people to achieve a set goal. These functions of Leaders are:

- i. **Taking initiative:** constitutes the most fundamental function of Leadership. A leader must be creative and logical enough in order to take action for every situation that confronts him. Initiators of action in an organization or states become history's most important Leaders. Taking initiative in detecting and remediating problems distinguishes leaders in many modern organizations and nation-states.
- ii. **Evaluating Followers Needs, Aspirations, and Capabilities:** For Leadership to command high followership there must be deliberate attempt by leadership to motivate their followers. Every person needs hope to survive, and motivation has to do with the leader understanding the needs of his follower. Understanding the needs of your followers has to do with another leadership skill of patiently listening to your followers. It equally involves knowledge of their capabilities, including energy, endurance and commitment. Irikana and Orisa (2007) noted that, a purposeful and insightful leader creates new ideas, project discussion, etc and positively and invariably lead others in the group to develop or carry out the tasks.
- iii. **Fostering and maintaining Communication:** This is one of the leading functions of a leader. Leaders initiate instrumental relationships when they assign people to work in teams and task forces or appoint ministers, commissioners, advisers, etc. It is the task of a leader to prevent fragmentation and foster cooperation and team work amongst his subordinates and followers; this can be done through effective communication. Effective communication reduces doubt and suspicion among groups; sustain followers' interest and participation in group action or policy adoption and implementation.
- iv. **Representing Members' Aspirations and Values:** One of the consistent noted function of leadership has been the expression and symbolization of their followers' aspiration and values. In developed societies, leadership role is assigned to people believed to reflect the values and aspirations of members. Some author will refer to this as implementation of group philosophy. To achieve this (Irikana & Orisa), rules and regulations are stated and implemented. This is to guide against conflict of interest among the group, and for the general good to prevail at all times.
- v. **Providing Resources:** Command of resources both material and non-material promotes the exercise of leadership and compels the loyalty of followership. The entrepreneur who provides capital to Start-up Company attains influence over its operators. Strategic plans formulated by executives also constitute resources, providing direction to the Management team that work under them. In war, strategy itself becomes a crucial resource. In politics, followership expects one reward or the other from their leaders. Leaders process or facilitate the passage of a budget so that, they have both material and non-material resources to provide for their followers. Followers also become more loyal to leadership as soon as budget has been passed so that, they can be involved in the material gain of implementing the budget.

Functions of Followership

- **Surrender to leadership:** Followers must be willing to obey the laws of the land, and to be directed and guided by a constituted authority.
- **Obey the command of a leader:** followers should be loyal to leadership.
- **Act as mirror of leadership:** follower must checkmate the activities or excesses of leadership; for this to be done, followership need to be articulate, vibrant and vocal, this will act as a check on the leadership, and this will assist to reduce the excesses of leadership to the barest minimum.

Problem of Leadership in Nigeria

There are different problems that leaders have which impact on their productivity and inability to neither deliver the common goal nor motivate her people. The problem is not universal rather

peculiar to some variables such as: environment, cultural, historical experiences, etc. This study will discuss the problems as it affects Nigeria. The notable problems that affect leadership in Nigeria are:

- **Lack of legitimacy:** Legitimacy is the foundation of leadership. Most Nigerian leaders come into power through a questionable or spurious process. When a military dictatorship imposes himself on the people as their leader, he creates an atmosphere of fear which is very inimical to good governance. The people are only coarse to followership; they cannot criticize or dialogue with their leaders. In the same manner civilian leaders come to power through questionable electoral process. Most election results that brought our Presidents into power have been widely contested in a tribunal or Supreme Court. This issue of legitimacy reduces the people confidence on their leaders because their votes do not count in the election of their leaders.
- **Lack of vision:** Nigerian Leaders are not voted to power due to their manifesto; hence they profess no ideological creed that governs their sense of judgment on general issues and issues of public welfare. Their dream for the larger society cannot be determined due to lack of robust debate before they ascend to leadership position. Newman (2022) wrote that, vision is the key to understanding leadership. That imagination is one of the most powerful things a leader must possess because; imagination is a leader dream machine.
- **Lack of integrity:** This is the quality that makes subordinate and followership to trust their leaders. Integrity and character is synonymous with honesty. This is a platform for effectiveness in leadership. A chief executive with integrity will have positive impact on his subordinates and the organization will subsequently experience performance and productivity improvement. Nigeria is a country that parades corruption as a value system; this can be attributed to lack of integrity on the part of her leadership.
- **Ethnicity:** Nigeria parades over two hundred and fifty ethnic tribes. She was not a country until 1914 when her Colonial masters amalgamated the southern and northern protectorates of communities and tribes within the river Niger geographical zones into one Country. The amalgamation brought different perceptions, some saw it as a mistake, while others saw it as a necessity for the administrative convenience of the colonial masters. Since then till now, Nigerians including her leaders pay more allegiance to their tribe than to the country. Even in time of elections people vote according to their tribal interest, when leaders emerge too, they reciprocate these tribal gestures.

Problem of Followership in Nigeria

- **Poverty:** Followership in Nigeria has some problems that prevent her from playing certain roles that is identified with followership and, that can check the excesses of leadership. Poverty is one major factor that impairs the role of followership in Nigeria. In Nigeria those who are rich are very rich and wealthy; the poor are really poor; the middle class wobbles between self-sufficiency and poverty. Followers that are poor are afraid to criticize or checkmate the excesses of their leadership because of fear of oppression from the leadership. A poor followership is a weak and fearful crowd that is constrained to be docile over the activities of her leadership.
- **Ethnicity:** The second problem that confronts followership in Nigeria is ethnicity. Followers pledge loyalty to their tribe first before the larger society Nigeria. Nigerians protects corrupt leaders without integrity and shield them from criticism and prosecution. When a corrupt leader is prosecuted, his tribes' men will come to his defense and rescue. Even the way we vote or choose our leaders is influenced by ethnicity because it is believed that if the leader is there, he will empower his tribes men first before others and programme some projects to his tribe and empower his people with robust government and corporate contracts.

- **Sycophancy:** Nigerian followers are fond of not telling their leaders the truth, they praise them, tell them lies; as soon as they leave their office, that is when followers turn against their leader to criticize his lapses.
- **Negativized quietude:** This is a situation where followers remain adamant and aloof of the excesses of leadership activities.
- **Powerlessness in influencing government decisions:** This is a major problem of followers in Nigeria. Elections in Nigeria are highly manipulated. Leaders do not come to power through the people's vote, they manipulate election and election results to the extent that votes cast do not make any meaning. Since people's votes do not count, their opinion too is undermined. The case of fuel subsidy is a vivid example, despite people's protest, government stood their ground.

Followership and National Development: Implications for Social Change in Nigeria

In the opinion of Robert (2014) it is possible that the most important characteristic of followers is the characteristic of followers as an agent of change. Kellerman (2008) stated that "followers who do something are nearly always preferred to followers who do nothing and that followers can be agents of change". Ekundayo, Damhoeri, and Ekundayo (2010) paid particular attention to the premise that the act of followership has made great strides globally as they asserted that more followers around the world are creating ripples by initiating change(s) in organizations and politics especially as they synergize by coming together in groups to fight a common cause. Some of these followers in groups have made government functionaries sit up and try doing their best in order to bring about better governance in their nation.

According to Dike (2008), Nigeria's history has been packed with successions of social changes which cut across the different strata of the nation. There has been the shift from regions to states, farms to cities, agriculture to petroleum and political power has shifted from the north to the south and now back to the north. The implication of followership for social change is seen in influencing, creation, and sustenance of change. Today, there is massive advocacy for community participation and ownership of development projects and action plans. Followers ought not to wait on the leadership or leaders all the time to rise to the concern of every problem in the society. This has necessitated the rise of things like neighborhood watch, followership intervention in solving social problems.

Followers just like leaders have the capacity to influence, create or sustain social change in the society. The solution to the problems that leadership has failed to solve over time in the country lies on followership. Ogbonna, Ogundiwin and Uzuegbu-Wilson (2012) opined that "while leadership in Nigeria has for sure been irresponsible, corrupt, self-serving, personalizing, clueless, etc, it is only critical followership that can reverse the trend". This implies that followership has enormous place and stand in the creation and sustenance of social change in every society. Everything does not nowadays rest on leadership. According to Umeobi, Aigbiremhon, Nnaji, Eze, & Aguiyi (2019), we have many followership structures whose activities and works have favored the serious positive changes in the country.

Apart from changes created or sustained by the leadership or the government of the nation, there are a lot of others that have or can be caused by the followers. In Nigeria, many followers in the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme have created, influenced and sustained many social changes. These gallant corps members through their respective community development services have created a long-lasting change in their host communities. Other followers through some Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and Faith-Based Organizations (FBO) have equally created a long-lasting change in the society. It is good to note that the capacity of creating or sustaining social changes by followers depends on the type of followership. Not all kinds of followers can prompt creative response or thoughtfulness to

participative problem solving in the society. This is because, the way the different types of followers would view or approach a situations or problems in the society varies.

Followers-Based Impediments to Leadership and Good Governance

The continuous blame on the leadership architecture and functionality in Nigeria for the imbalances and societal fall tactically exonerates followers from the fall in the national progress and development architecture. There are many areas in which we can see the existence of a strong collaboration of the leaders and the followers in the fail of policies societal structures. In some of these cases, failure of leadership brought in the failure of the followers and in others, failure of followers brought about the failure of the leaders.

Economic behaviours: There are so many economic behaviours of the followers that lead to or constitute failures in leadership or diminished good governance. Citizens that produce and sell substandard goods and services are not exempted from this category as they cause a lot of harm in the economy of the nation. Some of the funds spent in the health sector are due to substandard drugs in the market space. The government spend a lot of funds in re-awarding the roads that were sub-standardly constructed by the citizens whom the contracts were originally awarded to.

Service theft also is another way the followers/citizens contribute in leadership and system failures. So many people use services and payless than they use of fail to pay entirely. Some illegally adapt these services and all these cause falling revenue generation of the state or the nation thereby affecting the development progress and mapping. Electric distribution companies in Nigeria record heavy loss in revenue caused by power theft and illegal and unmetered connections in companies and domestic residences.

There are many other ways that the economic activities or behaviours of citizens affect leadership progress in the country. Some citizens or followers who run errands or work directly under some leaders fail to fully account for the funds given to them for one task or the other. Some see any opportunity to run errands or acquire something for their organization or the government as a lucrative endeavor and the fund as their personal entitlement.

Excessive Demands on the leaders: Many people stay up all day in a leader's office or house with enormous demands. These leaders are human beings and most of them do not have other means of making money while in office. So if they at some points must meet the demands of the people in their social clan and constituencies, they will have to meddle with funds allocated to very important projects thereby causing those projects to suffer. Religious groups, family members, friends, other social groups, the needy and all you have make endless personal demands on the leaders for funds, to attend their programs which after the meeting they expect the leader to give them some financial support.

Work behaviours: Ethics in the workplace is in a big slack in many agencies and organizations both those privately and government owned. There is no doubt how bad workers in different sectors of the country's affairs have contributed to the dilapidation of their sectors through unethical work attitude. Work ethics breaches include but not limited to lateness to work, absenteeism from work, and collection of "settlement" from clients or customers in their offices to perform the same work for which they were employed and paid for. **Aiding Corruption:** The rate of corruption in the society increases by the day and every one of the citizens cry out for the rate of increase. However, not a single corrupt practice is perpetuated without a trace to the followers. The citizens bribe their way into offices, bribe their children into unity schools, bribe their way out of police nets, pay heavily to have what they are ordinarily not qualified to have. People also collect bribes and other forms of monetary inducements to do so many forms of sabotage on the government or their

organization. Many organizations lose a lot of money and resources because their workers collect bribes to issue clearance to customers or clients.

Civic Responsibilities: The high rate of isolation and bystander apathy at play among some followers are the reasons for some of the leadership failures. When followers are not engaged, they will not be able to hold the government or leaders accountable for the failures in the state. Many followers contribute to the flaws in the system by their failure to take responsibility in certain civic issues. Some of the areas of concern is in election and voting, cooperation with the law enforcement agencies in crime detection, illicit disposal of wastes in the environment, poor maintenance of government or public appliances and facilities under one's care or within one's vicinity.

Theoretical Framework

The System theory was used to support the argument in the study. The system theory argued that the society consist of interrelated part which functions as a whole. It is to be mentioned here that a defect in one part will have an impact on other parts. System theoretical approaches were later appropriated in other fields, such as in the structural functionalist sociology of Talcott Parsons and NiklasLuhmann. This approach looks at society through a macro-level orientation, which is a broad focus on the social structures that shape society as a whole, and looks at both social structure and social functions. The societies consist of five major institutions including family, religion, political, economic and educational institutions.

It is a known fact that the term "development" is a multi-dimensional concept which entails all the sectors of a nation which connotes that a defect in one part will affect others. Therefore, it is right to conclude that a defect in the political institution that intervenes in societal issues through social policies (representing the leadership) will have a corresponding impact on the educational institution which represents an institution for human resources development. At the micro/organizational and macro/national level, leaders should initiate efforts to diagnose all employees or the populace in terms of the knowledge skills and abilities through different method amongst which is performance appraisal, manpower planning and the like to identify those (KSA) that needed to be improved through training and development programme. This will equally breed sound and up-to-date employees/ followers which will work towards the predetermined goals of the organization that will eventually result to national development.

An Assessment of National Budget on Education and Human Development Index Report

Nigeria is abundantly blessed with both material and immaterial resources. Putting aside its immense mineral wealth with which crude oil resources are currently the most prominent; the country is also endowed with rich agricultural lands, with a population of over 165 million, by far the largest in Africa. Nigeria has one of the best human resource bases in the world. Despite these resources, over 62.60 percent of the population is still poor (Nigeria Millennium Development Goals report, 2013). However, the education sector in Nigeria is in dilemma, the reasons being adduced include policy inconsistency, poor implementation of policy, lack of adequate infrastructural facilities, poor funding, among others. Successive governments in Nigeria have also continued to pay lip service to the issue of investment in the educational sector.

The implication is that the development of the country is tied to the quality of its human resource. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommended that all countries should allocate 26 percent of their annual budgets to the educational sector. However in Nigeria, an analysis of the Federal Government's allocation to the sector in the last decade is nothing to cheer about. The budgetary allocation into education by successive government in Nigeria is presented in the table below:

S/N	Year	Budgetary Allocation (%)
1	2000	8.36
2	2001	7.0
3	2002	5.9
4	2003	1.83
5	2004	10.5
6	2005	9.3
7	2006	11.0
8	2007	8.09
9	2008	13.0
10	2009	6.54
11	2010	6.40
12	2011	1.69
13	2012	10.0
14	2013	8.70
15	2014	10.7

For example, in 2000, the allocation was 8.36 percent, it decreased to 7 percent, 5.9 percent and 1.83 percent in 2001, 2002 and 2003 respectively, and it increased to 10.5 percent in 2004. In 2005, it went down to 9.3 percent, only to rise to 11 percent in 2006. The fluctuation continued in 2007, as it fell to 8.09 percent, but increased for the first time to 13 percent in 2008, and fell again to 6.54 percent in 2009. In 2010, 6.4 percent was allocated and decreased to the lowest for the very first time in 2011 to 1.69 percent. Furthermore, it increased sharply to 10 percent in 2012 and decreased to 8.7 percent in 2013 to 8.7 percent. However, it increased to 10.7 percent in 2014. The situation becomes more worrisome when one considers that the bulk of these allocations to the educational sector goes into recurrent expenditure i.e. salaries, allowances, emoluments, personnel welfare among others, to the detriment of infrastructural development and other capital intensive projects (Oseni, 2012).

In comparison with other big African countries, it is vividly clear that Nigeria needs to invest by improving its allocations to the education sector. For instance, Ghana's spending on education over the years has been between 28 percent and 40 percent of its annual budget, which is above the UNESCO prescription of 26 percent. South Africa, on the other hand, devotes 20 percent of the total annual budget to education. This makes the quality of education in these countries to be far better than what is obtainable in Nigeria, today. The consequence is that Nigerian tertiary institution graduates are becoming unemployable and are now rejected in favour of their few counterparts that schooled abroad.

Furthermore, evidence shows that despite the resources possessed by Nigeria, she is still ranked 152nd in the Human Development Index report (HDI) of 2014 released by the United Nations Development Programme. The Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite statistic of life expectancy, education, and income indices used to rank countries into four tiers of human development. To ensure as much cross-country comparability as possible, the HDI is based primarily on international data from the United Nations Population Division, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Institute for Statistics (UIS) and the World Bank. The HDI makes it possible to track changes in development levels over time and to compare development levels in different countries (Investopedia, 2014).

HDI Report of Selected African Countries between 2010-2014

COUNTRY	Cameroon	Tunisia	Gabon	Egypt	Nigeria	Namibia	South Africa	Ghana
Year								
2000	0.528	0.703	0.592	0.623	0.439	0.632	0.697	0.556
Rank (th)	134	101	123	119	151	115	103	129
2001	0.506	0.714	0.617	0.635	0.455	0.601	0.702	0.542
Rank (th)	125	89	109	105	136	111	94	119
2002	0.512	0.722	0.637	0.642	0.462	0.622	0.695	0.548
Rank (th)	135	97	117	115	148	122	107	129
2003	0.499	0.740	0.653	0.648	0.463	0.627	0.684	0.567
Rank (th)	124	91	118	120	152	124	111	129
2004	0.501	0.745	0.648	0.653	0.466	0.607	0.666	0.568
Rank (th)	141	92	122	120	151	126	119	131
2005	0.497	0.753	0.635	0.659	0.453	0.627	0.658	0.520
Rank (th)	148	89	123	119	158	125	120	138
2006	0.506	0.760	0.633	0.702	0.448	0.626	0.653	0.532
Rank (th)	144	87	124	111	159	125	121	136
2007/2008	0.532	0.766	0.677	0.708	0.470	0.650	0.674	0.553
Rank (th)	144	91	119	112	158	125	121	135
2009	0.523	0.769	0.755	0.703	0.511	0.686	0.683	0.526
Rank (th)	153	97	103	123	158	127	129	152
2010	0.428	0.683	0.648	0.620	0.423	0.606	0.606	0.467
Rank (th)	131	81	93	101	142	105	105	130
2011	0.482	0.698	0.674	0.644	0.459	0.625	0.625	0.541
Rank (th)	150	94	106	113	156	120	120	135
2012	0.501	0.719	0.670	0.681	0.500	0.620	0.654	0.571
Rank (th)	152	90	111	108	153	127	117	138
2013	0.504	0.712	0.683	0.662	0.471	0.624	0.608	0.573
Rank (th)	152	90	112	110	152	127	118	138
2014	0.504	0.721	0.674	0.682	0.504	0.624	0.624	0.573
Rank (th)	152	90	112	110	152	127	127	138

Source: United Nation Human development Index Report (HDI) between 2000-2014

The table above presents the positions of some selected African countries in the Human Development Index report (HDI) released by the United Nations Development Programme. In 2000, Nigeria was ranked 151st but rose sharply to 136th in 2001, but dropped below the former position in 2002, and was ranked 148th. Furthermore, she was ranked 152nd, 151st and 158th in 2003, 2004 and 2005 respectively. The scenario became worrisome in 2006 as she was ranked 159th in 2006. However in 2007/2008, she was ranked 158th and maintained her position in 2009. Nonetheless, it rose to 142nd rank in 2010, ranked 156th in 2011 and 153rd in 2012. However, she was ranked 152nd in 2013, but stabilized in 2014.

The HDI report further revealed that non-oil producing countries like Cameroon, Tunisia, Gabon, Egypt, Namibia, South Africa and Ghana ranked better than Nigeria on all HDI indicators including education (HDR, 2000- 2014). This can be linked to the fact that these countries invest huge amount of their budget into human capital investment. By implication, the quality of education that prevails in these countries is far beyond the quality found in Nigeria. This has led to the migration of many Nigerian citizens to these countries to take up school admissions at all levels, especially at the tertiary level which could amount to brain drain as many of the then students would not return to their home land as unemployment looms large in Nigeria.

Research Design

This study is concerned with leadership, followership and national development in Nigeria. Thus, the appropriate research design for this study is the ex post facto research design. The rationale for choosing this design is predicated on the fact that the researcher cannot manipulate any of the variables in the study.

Population of the Study

The population of the study is made up of the estimated 34,789 policemen, public servants, traders, politicians and traditional leaders in Delta State. The population covers almost all stakeholders in Delta State. The population includes both male and female, age bracket 18 and above as well as their religious and ethnic affiliations.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size of 150 respondents was used for the study. The researcher chose this sample size bearing in mind the principle of parsimony which allows for economic considerations in carrying out a research work of this magnitude. Furthermore, this sample size is chosen because it will enable the researcher to make statistical analysis more accurately. Moreover, the simple random sampling technique was used for this study as it will give everyone the same and equal chance of being selected as a respondent.

Instrument of Data Collection

Data for this study were obtained from two main sources: primary source and secondary. The Primary source is the use of questionnaire to obtain information relevant to the study from the respondents of the study. Primary source would have been incomplete without the review of secondary materials. The secondary materials used comprises of historical materials collected from the organization, also valuable books from the library like the journal, published and unpublished works and materials from the internet. All these provided the researcher with valuable information needed for this study.

Method of Data Analysis

The statistical tools employed for analyzing the data collected for this research include simple percentage, mean and frequency distribution table. Furthermore, the Chi-square (χ^2) was used for testing the hypotheses stated in chapter one. The formula for Chi-square is:

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum (O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where:

O = Observed Frequency

E = Expected Frequency

Presentation of Data

It is pertinent to state that the information presented here-under was elicited from the respondents. Thus, the result of this study is based purely on the response of the respondents and not the opinion of the researcher. A total of 150 questionnaires were administered but 120 were retrieved. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. Section A is the socio-demographic data or information of the respondents, while section B dealt with the substantive issues.

Section A: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1: Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18 – 25yrs	95	79.2%
36 – 55yrs	21	17.5%
56 and above	4	3.3%
Total	120	100%

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

From the table above, 79.2% of the respondents were between the ages of 18 — 35 i.e. 17.5% were between the ages of 36 — 55 years, while 3.3% represented those from 56 and above. Consequently, majority of the respondents lies between the age brackets of 18 — 35 years.

Table 2: Respondents by Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	80	66.7%
Female	40	33.3%
Total	120	100%

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

The table above shows that there were more male respondents. There were 80 males representing 66.7% of the population while 33.3% represents the number of female respondents.

Table 3: Respondents by Marital Status

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Unmarried	75	62.5%
Married	25	20.8%
Divorced	20	16.7%
Total	120	100%

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

From the above table, the marital distribution of the respondents indicates that more than half of the respondents represented by 62.5% were unmarried. The table also shows that 20.8% of the total respondents falls within the married group, while 16.7% represents divorced.

Table 4: Educational Qualification of Respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
SSCE	20	16.7%
B.Sc	60	50%
Postgraduate	40	33.3%
Total	120	100%

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

The above table shows that 50% of the respondents have B.Sc, 33.3% had postgraduate certificates, while 16.7% were SSCE holders. Consequently, majority of the respondents are literate.

Table 5: Respondents by Cadre of Staff

Cadre	Frequency	Percentage
Junior	75	62.5%
Middle	25	20.8%
Senior	20	16.7%
Total	120	100%

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

From the above table, the cadre of respondents indicates that more than half of the respondents represented by 62.5% were junior officers. The table also shows that 20.8% of the total respondents fall within the middle cadre, while 16.7% represents senior officers.

Table 6: Respondents by Religious Affiliation

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Christianity	95	79.2%
Islam	21	17.5%
Others	4	3.3%
Total	120	100%

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

From the table above, 79.2% of the respondents were Christians, 17.5% were between the ages of Muslims, while 3.3% represent others. Consequently, majority of the respondents were Christians.

Testing Hypotheses

In analyzing the data, the chi-square test was found most useful because it test the correlation between variables.

Hypothesis I

H0: There is no significant relationship between effective leadership and supportive followership.

Hi: There is a significant relationship between effective leadership and supportive followership.

Calculated value of χ^2 - 10.52

Table value 7.81

Interpretation of Result: Since the calculated value (10.52) is greater than the table value (7.81), the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and the alternative (H1) is accepted. This implies that there is a significant relationship between effective leadership and supportive followership.

Hypothesis II

H0: There is no significant relationship between followership engagement and effective participation

H1: There is a significant relationship between followership engagement and effective participation

Calculated value of χ^2 20.20

Table value 7.81

Interpretation of Result: Since the calculated value (20.20) is greater than the table value (7.81), the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and research hypothesis (H1) is accepted. This means that there is a significant relationship between followership engagement and effective participation

Hypothesis III

H0: There is no significant relationship between leadership, followership and national development

H1: There is a significant relationship between leadership, followership and national development

Calculated value of χ^2 -16.62

Table value 7.81

Interpretation of the result: Since the calculated χ^2 is greater than the critical value, H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. The result shows that there is a significant relationship between leadership, followership and national development

Research Results

1. There is a significant relationship between effective leadership and supportive followership.
2. There is a significant relationship between followership engagement and effective participation
3. There is a significant relationship between leadership, followership and national development.

Discussion of Results

The study is concerned with leadership, followership and national development in Nigeria. The first research finding revealed a significant relationship between effective leadership and supportive followership. This is supported by other scholars. . Newman (2017) listed ten essential qualities which he referred to as Laws in which an effective leadership should possess to enhance followership. They are: a leader should have vision, discipline, wisdom, courage and humility. A Leader should be a decision maker, have executive ability, be tactful and diplomatic, able to develop friendships and exude enthusiasm. Leadership is put in place in other for her to achieve a certain goal. Also, Irikana and Orisa (2017) affirmed the leader must be efficient, skillful, insightful, and courageous and motivate members to work towards the goal.

The perception of the followers of their leadership can distance or endear them to leadership. In midst of a very corrupt environment like Nigeria, it takes a leader of high integrity to be able to

command genuine followership. Integrity is the quality of honesty and trustworthiness, and leaders who adhere to a strong set of principles and take responsibility for their actions are exhibiting integrity (Northouse, 2001). Northouse further noted that leaders with integrity inspire confidence in others because they can be trusted to do what they say they are going to do. Cunningham (2002) in Ngwube (2010) stated that of all the qualities a leader must possess, integrity may be the most important one of them. He added that integrity involve the three Rs: Respect for self; Respect for others; and Respect for all your actions. Integrity is one of the greatest challenges facing Nigerian leaders. Overtime, Nigerians have been good followers but her leaders lack integrity.

Corruption is very massive; it deters the progress of the people, dwarf government concrete achievements, deters foreign investments due to lack of trust at the international level, and reduces the confidence of the people on her Leadership. Integrity is therefore a platform for effectiveness in leadership. A chief executive with integrity will have positive impact on his subordinates/followers and the organization will subsequently experience strong followership, performance and high productivity. Nigeria needs paradigm shift – a positive change in attitudes and value system in order for her to achieve her set goal of national unity and economic growth, including warding off poverty; and further military incursion into governance.

The second research finding showed a significant relationship between followership engagement and effective participation. In the opinion of Robert (2014), it is possible that the most important characteristic of followers is the characteristic of followers as an agent of change. Kellerman (2008) stated that “followers who do something are nearly always preferred to followers who do nothing and that followers can be agents of change”. Ekundayo, Damhoeri, and Ekundayo (2010) paid particular attention to the premise that the act of followership has made great strides globally as they asserted that more followers around the world are creating ripples by initiating change(s) in organizations and politics especially as they synergize by coming together in groups to fight a common cause. Some of these followers in groups have made government functionaries sit up and try doing their best in order to bring about better governance in their nation.

According to Dike (2008), Nigeria's history has been packed with successions of social changes which cut across the different strata of the nation. There has been the shift from regions to states, farms to cities, agriculture to petroleum and political power has shifted from the north to the south and now back to the north. The implication of followership for social change is seen in influencing, creation, and sustenance of change. Today, there is massive advocacy for community participation and ownership of development projects and action plans. Followers ought not to wait on the leadership or leaders all the time to rise to the concern of ever problem in the society. This has necessitated the rise of things like neighborhood watch, followership intervention in solving social problems.

Followers just like leaders have the capacity to influence, create or sustain social change in the society. The solution to the problems that leadership has failed to solve over time in the country lies on followership. Ogbonna, Ogundiwin and Uzuegbu-Wilson (2012) opined that “while leadership in Nigeria has for sure been irresponsible, corrupt, self-serving, personalizing, clueless, etc, it is only critical followership that can reverse the trend”. This implies that followership has enormous place and stand in the creation and sustenance of social change in every society. Everything does not nowadays rest on leadership. According to Umeobi, Aigbiremhon, Nnaji,Eze, &Aguiyi (2019), we havemany followership structures whose activities and works have favored the serious positive changes in the country.

Finally, it was revealed in the study that there is a significant relationship between leadership, followership and national development. The traits of a leader like intelligence, integrity, charisma, and dynamism, dominance, extroversion and level headed could project leadership in a better light in the eyes of his followers. These qualities will endear him to the followership. Newman (2017) listed ten essential qualities which he referred to as Laws in which an effective leadership should

possess to enhance followership. They are: a leader should have vision, discipline, wisdom, courage and humility. A Leader should be a decision maker, have executive ability, be tactful and diplomatic, able to develop friendships and exude enthusiasm. Leadership is put in place in other for her to achieve a certain goal. To do this, Irikana and Orisa (2017) affirmed the leader must be efficient, skillful, insightful, courageous and motivate members to work towards the goal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommends that leadership and followership relationship should always be harmonized as to enable the society or group to achieve her vision and set goals. Leadership and followership should also adopt a new paradigm shift were values, and leadership traits, integrity and other discussed qualities herein will serve as the basis for consideration or conceding leadership. Consensus selection of leaders should equally be avoided; rather leaders should be elected through democratic and transparent process. Besides, tribal sentiments should be set aside in electing and criticizing our leaders and our target and criteria for assessment should be our vision and goal as a people. This can be achieved through the following measures: enhancing leadership integrity and capacity, empowering active followership, reforming institutional frameworks, promoting national unity and social cohesion and tackling economic disparities.

REFERENCES

- Achebe, C (1983). *The trouble with Nigeria*, Enugu, Fourth Dimension Publishers.
- Fafoura, O., Adeniran, T & Dare, O. (1995). *Nigeria in search of leadership*. Lagos, Spectrum Books Ltd.
- Irikana, G.J and Orisa, Allwell (2007). *Themes in social studies education in Nigeria*, Port Harcourt; Antovic Ventures.
- Jehn, K.A., & Bezrukova, K. (2023). A field study group of diversity, workgroup context, and performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25 (1), 703-729.
- Lawal, T and Oluwatoyin, A. (2021). National development in Nigeria: Issues, challenges and prospects. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research*. 3(1), 2.
- Morgentau, Hans (1973) *Politics among nation: The struggle for power and peace*. New York: Alfred A. Knight Inc.
- Newman, Bill (2022). *10 laws of leadership*. Benin City, Marvelous Christian Publications.
- Ngwube, I.K (2010). *Leadership for change. Management in Nigeria*, Nigeria Institute of Management, July – September, 46 (3), 7-14.
- Northouse, P. (2001). *Leadership: Theory and practice*, 2nd Edition London: Sage.
- Thom-Otuya, V.C (2007). *Organizational behavior: A practical approach*. Port Harcourt, Niceprints International.
- Utomi, Pat (2004). *Leadership as Impediment to development*. Lagos, Guardian Newspaper, March 4, p.13.
- Werlin, H.H (2023). *Bureaucracy and democracy: An essay in memory of Dwight Waldo*. Public Administration Quarterly; 290-315