

Development Plans as Veritable tools for National Development: Evidence from Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Development planning is recognized as a veritable instrument to advance development across all the sectors of any economy. Nigeria since inception has embraced development planning as a tool to advance overall development in the economy. This study was therefore carried out to analyze Development Plans as important tools to enhance development in Nigeria. Content analysis was employed as data were obtained mainly from the secondary sources such as articles from reputable journals, official publications and textbooks. Data obtained were critically analysed and the following findings were made – that development planning has significantly contributed to the provision of some critical infrastructure in Nigeria; that development plans have significantly encouraged fiscal discipline in public expenditure in Nigeria and that development planning in the country is bedeviled by some factors such as corruption, plan indiscipline among others. On the basis of the foregoing, the following recommendations were made – that national development planning should be sustained to ensure government intervention in the provision of life touching infrastructure and maintenance of existing ones; that national development plans should be regularly employed as a veritable tool to check excesses in public expenditure by government in power; that stringent punishment should be meted out against corrupt persons that usually truncate the intentions of the plans irrespective of their status or positions among others. These measures are very necessary should we attain enviable development via the instrumentality of development planning

Keywords: *Development Planning, Plan discipline, National Development, Infrastructure, Fiscal discipline*

I. INTRODUCTION

Government the world over makes some reasonable efforts to bring about development to better the lots of the people. Development is seen as a change, improvement in the living conditions of the people; an improvement in the political, economic, social and cultural institution as well as an advancement in the living standards of the people (Nnamani, 2009). As development cannot take place by chance, several strategies have been adopted by different administrations to induce development in their respective countries. However, development planning has been widely used as a veritable instrument towards addressing developmental challenges. It is along this reasoning that Tordoff (1993), maintained that there is a general consensus that the main instrument for both diagnosis and remedy to development is the development planning.

Nigeria no doubt has adopted development planning particularly from the period of independence as a veritable tool to meet the yearnings and aspirations of Nigerians. For over four decades, Nigeria has initiated and implemented several development plans in order to facilitate economic growth and sustainable development. Specifically, four national development plans have been formulated and implemented from the year she attained independence from colonial rule in 1960. They include - the First National Development Plan (1962-1968), the Second Development Plan (1970-1974), the Third National Development Plan (1975-1980) and the Fourth National Development Plan (1981-1985). The fifth national development could best be described as a still born as it could not see the light of the day.

The importance of planning in any economy cannot be overemphasized. It provides a set of directions in sufficient details to specify what should be done, when it will be done and what resources to be expended in order to achieve a specific objective or a group of objectives. It has been widely argued that the more time one spends planning, the less time he/she will expend in the course of implementation. Planning particularly development planning is strategic to harnessing abundant resources at the disposal of any country to achieve overall growth and development in all the sectors of the economy, which in turn enhances the standard of living of the general populace.

It is important to note that apart from development planning, Nigeria has experimented with three year rolling plans between 1990 and 1998 as well as a long term perspective plan known as vision 2010. However, between 2003 and 2007, the federal government introduced the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). This was a medium term planning concerned with wealth creation, employment creation, poverty reduction and value reorientation. The most recent in the list of plans to enhance the fortunes of Nigeria to become one of the leading economies in the world was the vision 2020. It is the

intention of the plan to transform the socio-economic, political, cultural and technological condition of the country to rank among the first 20 leading economies in the world. The Buhari's civilian administration has equally introduced the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) aimed at providing practical and plausible answers to problems militating against comprehensive and sustainable development in the country (Okolie, 2018).

Notwithstanding the series of plans that have been put in place and subsequently implemented by several administrations in Nigeria, the indicators of development have continued to show a downward trend. It is no longer news that Nigeria was rated as the poverty capital of the world (Brooks Institute, 2018) even as the infrastructural facilities have continued to decay. There is still mass unemployment, low capacity utilization, infant and maternal mortality, environmental degradation, technological backwardness, etc. In 2016, Nigeria receded into recession which further worsened the development situation in the country. To Obikeze & Obi (2004), a review of the various plans clearly shows that the country is still very far from where it was envisaged to be today. They submitted that the above situation is a consequence of faulty implementation of plans, distortions or even non-implementation of effectively designed plans.

It is against the above backdrop that this research was carried out to examine development plans as important tools for national development in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this is to review the implications of National Development Plans for national development in Nigeria. However, the specific objectives of the study include the following –

- i. To find out the extent to which development plans have contributed to provision of critical infrastructure in the Nigerian economy.
- ii. To examine the extent to which the development plans have encouraged fiscal discipline in public expenditure in Nigeria.
- iii. To ascertain the challenges affecting development planning in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarifications

The key concepts that form the corner stone of the study will be analyzed in this segment of our discourse so as to assist us appreciate the topic under study. The concepts that are of interest in this study are:

Planning

Planning according to Grover (2011), is reasoning about how an organization will get where it wants to go. He went further to add that it is embarked on for purpose of perceiving opportunities and threats in the future and exploiting or combating them through making decisions in the present. Cole (1993), views planning as an activity which involves decisions about ends as well as means to achieving the end results. Iheanacho (2014), sees planning as deciding what actions to be taken in the future for purpose of achieving organizational goals; it involves thinking ahead, initiating and taking a pre-determined course of action. We can conceptualize planning as the process of taking critical decision on the courses of action to be taken as well as allocation of resources directed towards attainment of pre-determined goals. Planning is thus a veritable strategy for the allocation/utilization of resources to enhance the standard of living of the citizenry.

Development Planning

Todaro (1992), conceives development planning as the conscious governmental effort to influence, direct and in some cases, even control changes in the principal economic variables of a country over the course of time in order to achieve predetermined set objectives. This definition emphasizes that development planning is a deliberate efforts by a given government to exert her control over economic elements in an economy for purpose of achieving already set goals. Egonmwan & Ibodje (2001), perceive development planning as deliberately directed activity with predetermined goals and predetermined means to achieve the set goals. Development planning is a long-term programme designed to effect some permanent structural changes in the economy by government as it sets out objectives about the way it wants the economy to develop in the future (UNDP, 2008). The concern of development planning is to harness all available human, material, physical, financial and technological resources at the disposal of a given country so as to guarantee overall development in all facets of the economy.

Development planning is important because development is neither accidental nor does it take place naturally and quickly on its own accord, it is very necessary to engage in planning (Ejumudo, 2013).

National Development

For us to conceptualize national development, it is important we first and foremost decompose development. Development has been viewed from various standpoints reflecting social milieus of scholars who

have shown interest in the concept. From any perspective that one tries to look at the concept the fact remains that development is a positive change and transformation in socio-economic, cultural, institutional, attitudinal, infrastructural and political conditions of a given society (Abah & Nwokwu, 2017). According to Nnadi (1999), development is the totality of the process of economic and social transformation, which results in broader outlook, higher standard and quality of life, political awareness, economic opportunities and self confidence in people.

National development is seen as the ability of a country to significantly enhance the social conditions of people through provision of social amenities such as quality education, potable water, infrastructural facilities, medical care, etc (Abimbola & Adesote, 2012). In the words of Balogun (1972), national development is defined as the production of more and better food to eat, healthier and happier individuals, better living accommodations, improved transportation and communication system, sound education and enlightenment among generality of the people and more money floating around. From the foregoing, we can safely argue that national development is the exploration, harnessing and exploitation of available natural and material resources of a given economy for improved standard of living of the mass of the people.

II. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on developmental state theory expounded by Chalmers Johnson in his 1982 publication entitled "MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975." It is not in dispute that the developmental state theory has been widely adopted to explain the unimaginable economic growth and development witnessed by countries in the East Asia such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore after the devastating effects of the Second World War.

To Johnson (1982), the theory argues that any state intending to achieve the same level of economic prosperity as Japan's must as a matter of urgency adopt same priorities that the country embraced. That is to say, it must first and foremost become a "developmental state - and only then a regulatory state, a welfare state, an equality state, or whatever other kind of functional state a society may wish to adopt" (Johnson, 1982 p. 306). He further argued that a developmental state must be able to accord priority attention to economic development of the entire country. However, he was quick to emphasize that the state was not only the instrument for Japan's economic development but that it played very significant roles which invariably resulted to Japan's inexplicable economic prosperity. He added that the state did not only set the rules of economic activities but also set the agenda and religiously took part in all aspects of economic activities and development.

Adding his voice to the debate, Ghebremusse (2016), maintained that a developmental state is used to define a state that intervenes in the economy and uses it as a veritable tool to attain economic growth. Similarly, Johnson (1982) submitted that successes recorded by Japan in terms of development were "state-guided". Therefore, this implies that state should actively lead the way to economic development instead of allowing it to be determined by the forces of demand and supply (market forces).

Ghebremusse (2015), identified four features of the successful developmental state – development-oriented political leadership, an autonomous and effective bureaucracy, performance-oriented governance and production coordination and conflict management. On his own part, Mkandawire (2001), revealed two components of developmental state viz – the ideological and the structural. The ideological aspect perceives a developmental state as a state that is "developmentalist" in orientation. That is to say that it must have its mission of engendering economic development in terms of high rates of accumulation and industrialization. The structural component entails a state's capacity (institutional, technical, administrative and political) to effectively and efficiently carryout the formulated policies and programmes.

The relevance of the theory is that the Nigerian state adopts the development plans as veritable tools for ensuring that all the endowed abundant resources at her disposal are explored, harnessed and deployed to areas of need in the economy for purpose of economic growth and development. Government uses the plans not only to holistically intervene in the economy but also to actively participate in the process of advancing development. These measures are aimed at bringing about overall economic development which has the capacity to trickle down to the generality of the people. The adoption of the development plans becomes necessary as the forces of demand and supply cannot sufficiently address allocate resources in the economy. Therefore, for government to succeed in her efforts to engender development via national development plans, it must enhance the capacities of its bureaucracy, ensure good governance, demonstrate strong political will towards development, etc.

A Critical Analysis of Previous Development Plans in Nigeria

As we pointed out earlier on, development plans have since been adopted by Nigerian leadership as a veritable strategy to address the ever changing yearnings and aspirations of the Nigerian citizenry. However, this section of our discourse will concentrate on the review of all the national development plans that have been formulated and enforced to better the lots of the people. The development plans are as follows:

1. Pre-Independence Plan: It is not contestable that development planning in Nigeria commenced with the Ten-Year Plan of Development and Welfare for Nigeria which was introduced in 1946 by the colonial government (1945-1956) via a circular from the secretary of state for colonies to all British colonies (Onah, 2010). The machinery for both the formulation and implementation was the Central Development Board established in 1944. The board was composed of senior colonial officers under the chairmanship of the Development Secretary (Obikeze & Obi, 2004).

The intention of the plan as alleged was to meet the needs of colonial government rather than any conscious efforts to positively influence the overall performance of the Nigerian economy (Egonmwan & Ibodje, 2001). The colonial government was interested in mass production of agricultural products such as groundnuts, palm oil and cocoa required to feed British factories. To Onah (2010), the interests of Nigerians were not incorporated into the objectives and priorities of the development plan. The development plan according to Ayo (1988), could not succeed because it suffered from non-specialized colonial administrators' approach to development planning, the inadequacy of planning machinery and absence of clearly defined national objectives. The Lyttleton Constitution of 1954 which made Nigeria a federal state led to the scrapping of the plan in that year (Obikeze & Obi, 2004). However, the plan set the pace for subsequent development plans that came on board.

2. First National Development Plan (1962-1968): This development plan was introduced following Nigerian attainment of independence in 1960. The main objectives of the plan were to bring about equal distributions of national income; to speed up the rate of economic growth; to generate savings for investment in order to reduce its dependence on external capital for the development of the nation; to get enough capital for the development of manpower; increase the standard of living of the citizenry in areas of food, housing, health and clothing and to develop the infrastructure of the country, (Onyenwigwe, 2009).

To Obikeze & Obi (2004), the plan proposed a total investment expenditure of about ₦3,484.3 million. Out of the above total sum, the public sector was expected to finance about ₦2,132 million of the plan while the private sector was to make an investment expenditure of the remaining ₦1,352.3 million. The plan implementation achieved some successes among which were the establishment of the security and minting plant, the Jebba Paper Mill, the sugar mill, Niger Dam, the Niger Bridge Onitsha, Kainji Dam and Port Harcourt refinery. It is believed that the plan contributed to GDP growth from 5% in 1960 to 8% in 1970.

It is important to note that the political upheaval that culminated into the Nigerian Civil War negatively affected the plan as the plan almost became redundant. However, there were some criticisms leveled against the plan. Nnadozie (2004), argued that the objectives and targets of the 1962 -68 plan were too large and over ambitious and therefore out of tune with financial, technical and managerial capabilities of the country. To Onah (2010), the plan lacked clarity and precision in areas of the formulation of objectives and targets.

3. The Second National Development Plan (1970-74): Abinitio, the development plan was originally designed to cover four year period, 1970-1974, but it was later extended to cover the fiscal year of 1974-1975. Sequel to the end of the war, the attention of the federal government was focused on how to bring about national reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation. The plan was seen as a veritable instrument to achieve the above objectives on the one hand and to fasten the growth of national economy and ensure equitable distribution of national income on the other hand. Onyenwigwe (2009), captured the objectives of the plan in the following lines – to achieve a united, strong and self reliant nation; a just and egalitarian society; a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens; and a free and democratic society.

The plan had a total projected expenditure of about ₦4.9 billion. The public sector was to invest about 3.3 billion whereas the private sector was expected to invest about ₦1.6 billion in the development plan (Obi, 2006). The plan was also interested in achieving economic independence in the country. In the words of Okowa (1991), indigenization was seen by this plan as an instrument towards achieving long term objective of economic independence. The indigenization policy was carefully crafted to encourage Nigerians to participate fully in the commercial, industrial and financial activities of the Nigerian economy (Iheanacho, 2014).

Some achievements were recorded in the economy following the plan implementation particularly in areas of industry and agriculture. Many industries especially in the war affected areas were rehabilitated, coupled with establishment of two salt factories in Kaduna State. Super phosphate project and two vehicle assembly plants were also set up. There were equally establishment of colleges of technology and trade centres by state governments and reconstruction of about 3000 kilometres of roads (Egonmwan & Ibodje, 2001).

The plan could not achieve much in its indigenization stance. For instance, close to two years after the enforcement of the Indigenization Decree (1972), out of about 950 affected enterprises, only 34 or 33 percent were confirmed as having fully complied with the provisions of the decree (Onah, 2010). Moreso, there were over 16 multinational oil companies representing the United States, Dutch, Japanese, British, Italian, German and French interest that had firm grips on Nigerian economy. In addition, the plan's objective of returning

Nigeria to a free and democratic society was a pipe dream as the plan failed to clearly state the means of returning to civil rule.

4. The Third National Development Plan (1975-1980): Iheanacho (2014), revealed that the development plan had a projected jumbo investment of ₦30 billion that was later upwardly reviewed to ₦43.3 billion. The core objectives of the plan were – increase in per capita income; more even distribution of income; reduction in the level of unemployment; increase in the supply of higher level manpower; diversification of the economy; balanced development and indigenization of economic activities (Obi, 2006). The resources from oil were channeled towards the development of productive capacity of the economy which in turn had the capacity to enhance the living standard of the people. The plan was based on the notion that public sector should provide facilities for the poorer sections of the population in areas of education, health services, urban housing, water supply among others.

A critical assessment of the plan showed that some enviable heights were attained in some fronts. In the words of Okowa (1991), the manufacturing sector recorded the fastest growth rate with an average of 18.1 percent per annum. Other areas that witnessed growth were building and construction as well as government services.

The plan was accused of lack of focus. This is because the key priority projects and programmes - agriculture and social development schemes that would have had direct positive impact on the rural dwellers unfortunately received meager allocation. Okigbo (1989), revealed that agriculture and social development scheme such as education, housing, health, welfare, etc were not given needed attention as they received only 5% and 11.5% respectively of the financial allocations contained in the plan.

5. The Fourth National Development Plan (1981-1985): This development was remarkable because it was the first plan to be articulated and crafted under civilian regime. To Obi (2006), the plan had the following objectives – increase in the real income of the average citizen; more even distribution of income among individuals and socio-economic groups; reduction in the level of unemployment and underemployment; increase in the supply of skilled manpower; reduction of the dependence of the economy on the narrow range of activities; increased participation by the citizens in the ownership and management of productive enterprises; development of technology; increased productivity; greater self reliance i.e. increased dependence on local resources in seeking to achieve the various objectives of society, etc.

The proposed capital investment in the plan was N82 billion. Out of the total projected amount, the public sector was to invest N70.5 billion while the private sector was to inject N11.7 billion into the plan.

The following were the milestones recorded by the plan in the course of implementation – the successful implementation of Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) in most states, the commissioning of Egbim Power Station, Dry Dock Project at Snake Island, Lagos and the 87 telephone exchange located all over the federation with increased subscribers (Egonmwan & Ibodje, 2001).

The plan encountered some hiccups. There was a significant shortfall in the project revenue which was expected to be generated from exports. It was projected that N79.419 million would be gotten from petroleum exports between 1980 and 1984 but unfortunately only N52.78 million some 66.4 percent of the projected figure was realized (Okigbo, 1989). There was also the problem of rise in the cost of living that significantly reduced the standard of living of a common man. There was also an increase in unemployment among school leavers in the country. The period according to Alapiki (2009) could best be described as the most dismal in the economic history of Nigeria.

6. The Fifth National Development Plan (Late 1980s): Assessment of the Fourth national Development Plan revealed that the plan has performed poorly and this therefore brings to the fore the need to carryout extensive consultations as a prelude for the formulation of the fifth National Development Plan. A national conference was held at the University of Ibadan in November, 1984. The conference put forth some measures on the basis of which the fifth National Development was prepared. The main objectives of the plan were – diversification of the nation's economy away from the monocultural one; revitalization of the agricultural sector to achieve integrated rural development programmes; domestic production of raw materials for local industries; promotion of employment opportunities in order to arrest the deteriorating mass unemployment (Onyenwigwe, 2009). Ayo (1988), maintained that the linkages between the agricultural and manufacturing sectors of the economy were to be emphasized during the plan period. Unfortunately, the Fifth National Development Plan did not materialize in 1987 and the year was taken as one-year of economic emergency period and programme. According to Okigbo (1989, p. 193), "the plan was to have been launched first in 1987 and again in 1988 but was postponed twice in a row because of the need to consolidate the gains of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which was introduced in 1986." The plan was later incorporated into the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The introduction of SAP brought to an end the regime of five-year planning in Nigeria. Later on, the Federal government replaced it with rolling plans that spanned between two and three years.

7. The Perspective Plan and Rolling Plans (1990-1998): The Babangida's administration abandoned the initial five-year planning model and subsequently adopted two types of planning in its place. They include the perspective plan that was expected to cover a period of 15-20 years and the rolling plan which was billed to cover three years but would be subject to review each year so as to ascertain the performance of the economy. The perspective plan could not take off until 1996 when Late Abacha set up the Vision 2010 Committee. The report of the committee which was submitted to government in September, 1997 among other things recommended that the vision should serve as the basis on which all plans including long (perspective), medium (rolling) and annual (budget) plans would be formulated (Adubi, 2002). There is no doubt that the Vision 2010 was the first perspective plan for the country inspite of its inability to go beyond 1998, the year in which its initiator, Abacha died.

However, the three year rolling plans kicked off in 1990 sequel to the introduction of the First National Rolling Plan (1990-1992). The main thrust of the plan was to provide the country with ample opportunity of revision in the midst of increasing socio-political and economic uncertainties (Ikeanyibe, 2009). It is important to note that the rolling plan became a yearly event so that it became almost impossible to distinguish it from the annual budgets. At the end of the medium term planning which covered the period from 1990 to 1999, it was found that the standard of living of Nigerians was not better than the situation during the fixed five years planning model.

8. National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) (2003-2007): Following the re-election of Obasanjo in 2003, he realized the urgent need to have a comprehensive plan in the place so as to enthrone socio-economic prosperity for the country as the previous plans could not achieve much in areas of ensuring sound economic footing in the country. The NEEDS which was seen as a veritable tool to address the development challenges in Nigeria was introduced. The main objectives of NEEDS include – empowerment, wealth creation, employment generation and poverty reduction as well as value reorientation (Iheanacho, 2014). Although the NEEDS document stated in clear terms that it is Nigeria's home-grown poverty reduction strategy and it happened to conform to what a country Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) should be (World Bank, 2010). It suffered from some pitfalls. Among the challenges were weaknesses on poverty diagnostics, cosmetically descriptive rather than analytic in approach and weakness in setting economic objectives (Ohiorhenuan, 2003). The most fundamental challenge of NEEDS as a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) is its 'trickle down' approach to poverty reduction instead of the 'Rights Based Approach' that is internationally recognized as the best approach.

9. Vision 20:2020: Vision 20:2020 is yet another long term plan introduced as an appropriate strategy to address the development challenges in the country. The main thrust of the vision 20:2020 is to make Nigeria one of the first 20 economies in the world by the year 2020 (Iheanacho, 2014). For this dream to be realizable, Nigeria's GDP per capita must grow at an incalculable rate (different from the present 0.8%) from US \$752 to \$30,000 at least and the GDP of those countries (over US \$29,000) (Eneh, 2011). The rural areas in Nigeria must be transformed from age-long poverty and misery centres to urban status of world standard (Iheanacho, 2014). Nigeria's education, health, power, agriculture, manufacturing and other sectors must receive such miraculous boast that in 10 years time, the country will comfortably compare with high income OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) nations in all respects of development (Eneh, 2011).

Nigeria's Vision 20:2020 like other previous plans is only a dream until its objectives are fully realized. As it stands now, Nigeria is still faced with some daunting challenges such as extreme poverty, dilapidated road networks, epileptic power supply, insecurity across the breadth and width of the country, underdeveloped rail system and lots more. From every indication, one may rightly conclude that this Vision 20:2020 might not see the light of the day. The annual budgets and government priorities appear not to pay much attention to the attainment of the objectives of the plan.

Development Plans and Provision of Infrastructure in Nigeria

There is no doubt that infrastructure is directly related to standard of living of people in a given country. The higher the quantity and quality of public infrastructure, the better the living conditions of the people. By way of definition, infrastructure is the basic physical and social structures needed for the operation of a society such as industries, buildings, roads, bridges, health services, governance and so on. It is the enterprise or the products, services and facilities necessary for an economy to function (Sullivan & Sheffrin, 2003). This definition captures the relevance of infrastructure in any economy. The quality and quantity of infrastructure are parameters to distinguish between developed, developing and underdeveloped economy. Infrastructural facilities are very essential in the economy especially in encouraging and sustaining effective production and distribution of goods and services for people's consumptions. As pointed out earlier on, they are very significant for the good life of the people. In the same vein, infrastructure refers to the technical structures that support a society,

such as roads, water supply, sewers, electrical national grids, telecommunications, and so forth. It can equally be seen as the physical components of interrelated systems providing commodities and services essential to enable, sustain or enhance societal living conditions (Fulmer, 2009). From the foregoing, we could safely argue that infrastructure is a sine-qua non for the effective and efficient performance of an economy as they serve as the grease that oils it.

However, it is not out of place to state that there is a correlation between development planning and provision of infrastructure. The reason is not farfetched. Infrastructure does not spring up on its own accord. They are put in place through conscious and deliberate efforts – planning. Resources both human and material may abound in any economy but it requires conscious actions to harness them and allocate same to areas of priority to engender socio-economic development. Therefore, as submitted by Todaro (1992), development planning is the conscious governmental effort to influence, direct and in some cases, even control changes in the principal economic variables of a country over the course of time in order to achieve predetermined set objectives. Development planning has continued to serve as a veritable instrument through which government intervene in all sectors of the economy to revitalize them. It enables government to direct as well as control important economic variables within a stipulated period of time. This explains why successive Nigerian governments have employed development plans to redirect our economy on the path of progress through provision of critical infrastructure. Most critical infrastructure that we presently enjoy are the results of several development plans that governments have experimented with. According to Edun, Akinde, Olaleye & Idowu (2013), most of the current infrastructural facilities in Nigeria were developed during the second national development plan between (1970- 1974). Similarly Ekundare (1971), submitted that it is no surprise that the main emphasis of the second national plan is on social change, which is to lay the foundation for the development of public infrastructure for productive, and consumption purposes due to the oil-boom accruing to the country. The implementation of the First National Development Plan (1962-68) resulted in the establishment of many industries and the contribution of industrial sector to GDP rose from 5% in 1960 to 8% in 1970. The Third National Development Plan secured the following projects to the economy among others Ajaokuta Iron and Steel Complex, Aladja Direct Steel Reduction Plant, The Eleme Petrochemical Complex, Oku-Iboku Newsprint Paper Mill, and the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) plant at Bonny. In the period under review, manufacturing sector recorded the fastest growth with an average of 18.1% per annum; building and construction grew at 13.9%; Government services leaped at 17.7% and other services grew at 15.7% (Egonmwan & Ibodje, 2001).

Development Plans and Fiscal Discipline in Public Expenditure

Fiscal discipline has to do with one's ability to reasonably deploy resources especially finance to areas where they are allotted in the fiscal instrument. Usually budgets as well as other long term plans are perceived as instruments to allot resources. Being disciplined fiscally implies that financial resources are used as budgeted or planned in a particular economy within a given period of time. There is no doubt that plans help in no small measure to reduce fiscal indiscipline to the barest minimum. It ensures that available resources are harnessed and allocated to areas of need. Without plans resources may not be judiciously used. There may be dangers of wasteful expenditure resulting from lack of prioritization. Obviously, development planning in Nigeria basically came on board to encourage effective allocation of resources to critical areas of the economy to enhance socio-economic performance thereby reducing fiscal indiscipline. Although in Nigeria, we note with concern that fiscal indiscipline which is a manifestation of corruption has remained a major challenge for several administration to tackle. However, the good news is that development planning has continued to serve as a veritable instrument to curb excesses in public expenditure in the country thereby discouraging wasteful spending of public resources.

Problems of Development Planning in Nigeria

It is no longer contestable that Nigeria has overtime excelled in plan formulation but has not truly excelled in areas of implementation. This situation has compelled some critical observers to label the country as a grave yard of beautifully laid plans and programmes. Development plans have continued to suffer from this same cancer of poor implementation till date.

However, on a general note, Nigeria has recorded some significant positive achievements in some areas and woefully performed in some other areas. There is a general consensus among keen observers that though none of the development plans has been conscientiously or effectively implemented, the adoption of development plans has helped the country to achieve some feats. Nonetheless, the country is still very far from where it has been expected to be particularly among the comity of nations.

At this point, it is worthwhile to identify and discuss some of the factors that hinder effective implementation of plans especially development planning in Nigeria. The factors are:

1. **Corruption:** Corruption has remained a canker worm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of Nigeria. It has become pervasive and endemic and has defied every known solution. In the country, development plans have continued to serve as avenues for unscrupulous elements in the country to enrich their private pockets. Funds and other important resources earmarked in the development plans are oftentimes either outrightly embezzled or misappropriated. It is against this backdrop that Onah (2006), observed that all development visions and programmes fail in Nigeria because of poor handling by corrupt and poor/hungry politicians and bureaucrats.
2. **Lack of Plan Discipline:** The Nigerian political leaders as well as bureaucrats have consistently failed to abide by development plans' objectives. This situation has obviously manifested in distortion of the plans particularly in the course of implementation which invariably result in the killing of the overall objectives of the plans. In Nigeria today, distortion of development plans have been responsible for many abandoned projects that litter the Nigerian landscape. Some important projects that could serve as drivers of industrialization such as Ajaokuta Steel Complex are yet to be completed after two decades.
3. **Lack of Commitment from Critical Stakeholders:** In Nigeria, plans including development plans are often prepared without the participation of the people who are the prospective beneficiary. The result is always apathy on the part of the people who do not feel duty bound to contribute to its success. Many development plans have failed because of this singular factor. It was in an effort to correct the anomaly that the defunct Vision 2010 Committee carried out series of publicity programmes such as seminars, conferences, and public enlightenment campaigns (Obi, 2006) before it kick started.
4. **Absence of Relevant Data:** Reliable data are a sine-qua-non for successful development planning. Unfortunately, it cannot be an overstatement to say that plans are often formulated without adequate data in Nigeria. This is due mainly to inadequacies of Federal Office of Statistics, the unwillingness of Nigerians to divulge information and outright manipulation of data for pecuniary gains (Iheanacho, 2014). For instance, the exact Nigerian population has not been known even after several national population census exercises latest of which was in 2006. The national head counts have been severally compromised in order to gain undue advantage by various competing ethnic nationalities in the country. Under this circumstance, it will be difficult to effectively prepare, implement and monitor national development plans, which could address development challenges in the country.
5. **Bogus Nature of Development Plans:** National development plans in Nigeria could be described as being over ambitious as they try to achieve several objectives at the same time without putting into consideration competing priorities. Onah (2010), argued that development plans are often grandiose in design but vague on specific policies required to attain the specific objectives.
6. **Lack of Continuity of Government Programmes:** Lack of continuity of government programmes has negatively affected development plans in Nigeria. The trend is that development programmes are often abandoned once the government that introduced them is no longer in power. The new administration usually seeks to make major changes by introducing some major projects which were not originally in the plan. This has been responsible for abandoned as well uncompleted projects that are found in different parts of the country.
7. **Public Service Inefficiency:** The Nigerian public service has been notable for its inefficiency and ineffectiveness. The service has been bedeviled by many problems such as corruption, inadequate working tools, poor communication system, redtapism and political turmoil. The capacity of the public service is supposed to be enhanced and strengthened so as to serve as instrument for enforcement of development plans in Nigeria.
8. **Lack of Public and Private Sector Partnership:** In most cases, there has been poor cooperation between the public and private sectors in the process of development planning in Nigeria. Ejumudo (2013), argued that development planning in the country has largely followed bureaucratic process with little private sector participation so much so that such efforts can be appropriately described as lacking in synergy.

III. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has concentrated its attention on the review of development plans beginning from its inception to the 21st century. There is no doubt that development plans are central to the attainment enviable heights in every economy particularly those of the third world countries. Development plans have become important to articulate people's needs, yearnings and aspirations as well as allocate available scarce national resources to areas of national priorities. This is so because an unplanned economy is bound to fail. From the analysis of the data, it was found that national development plans have significantly contributed to the provision of critical infrastructure; that the development plans have encouraged the reduction of fiscal indiscipline in public expenditure and that several factors such as corruption, lack of plan discipline among others affect development plans in Nigeria.

Nigeria has for a long time realized the critical position of development plans as instrument to achieve sustainable growth and development. Unfortunately, the country has oftentimes experienced failure in her numerous development plans adopted overtime. The failure of the plans has manifested in the crisis that beset

the Nigerian economy. It is no longer news that almost all the indicators of development have continued to show downward trend. There is widespread abject poverty, acute unemployment, illiteracy, decayed social and physical infrastructure among others.

However, for the country to achieve her envisaged objectives through instrumentality of development planning, the following recommendations are very important to be imbibed -

- There should be stringent measures put in place by Nigerian government to severely punish any person irrespective of status convicted of corruption cases in the country. This is very important to serve as deterrent to would be corrupt elements.
- National development planning should be sustained to ensure government intervention in the economy through the provision of life touching infrastructure and maintenance of existing ones. This is significant to guarantee a developmental state in the country.
- The national development plans should be regularly employed as a veritable tool to check excesses in public expenditure by any government in power
- Both the political and bureaucratic leaders in Nigeria should demonstrate a high sense of discipline so as to ensure that the objectives of development plans are realized in full.
- To boost people commitment to the plans, it is imperative to involve them from the point of the plan conception, formulation, implementation, monitoring as well as evaluation.
- The agencies of government in charge of data gathering and processing should brace up to their responsibilities. This becomes necessary to make reliable data readily available to aid effective planning and subsequent implementation.
- Efforts should be made to make development plans' objectives as specific as possible by government so as to realize them.
- Every succeeding government should bear it in mind that government is a continuum hence should desist from dropping plans originally prepared by its predecessors.
- There is need to reform the public service so as to perform its role effectively as instrument to implement government policies and programmes.
- There should be synergy between the public and organized private sector for development plans that could stand the test of time to be prepared and subsequently implemented.

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