

Leadership and Accountability

The Challenges of Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

A sizable number of scholars have argued that development in any nation is a function of a leadership that subscribes to the principles of accountability in government at various levels. This paper employs the methodology of historical research, which involves the analysis of secondary data obtained from relevant books, journals, internet resources, magazines and newspapers, to examine leadership and accountability as they relate to the challenges of development in Nigeria, with particular reference to the management of public resources. It observes that these challenges are premised among others on poor leadership at various levels of government. The paper concludes that for the living standards of Nigerians to be enhanced, there is need to enforce strict compliance of public officials with rules governing the management of public resources, thereby curbing corruption.

Key Words

Leadership, accountability, government resources, development, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Research has shown that a leadership which subscribes to accountability in the management of public resources is fundamental to development in any nation, and Nigeria is no exception (Ninalowo 2003, 1-32; Agweda 2007, 176-187; Otinche 2007, 20-34; Richardson 2008, 15-20). In addition, some scholars have argued that there is a positive relationship between effective leadership and proper accountability in the handling of public affairs in a nation's quest for development (Edoho 2007, 96-113; Kuada 2010b, 9-24). Thus where government poorly manages public resources, wastage is inevitable (Richardson 2008, 15-20). Furthermore, some scholars have argued that one of the factors that have militated against the initiatives for development by various governments in Nigeria since independence in 1960 is that of leadership that failed to embrace the culture of proper management of public

resources. The outcome has been that of poverty and hunger among the people, and that of political and social instability in the country (Onah 2005, 129-137; Agweda 2007, 176-187; Gberevbie 2011, 149-158).

Consequently, the main argument in this paper is that underdevelopment in Nigeria is a function of poor leadership at various levels of government (federal, state and local) that fails to subscribe to proper accountability in the management of public resources. The paper seeks to encourage policy makers in Nigeria and other African countries to initiate strategies to overcome the challenges of development by focusing on effective leadership and proper accountability in the management of public resources.

The methodology employed in this paper is historical research. In this regard, secondary data from relevant books, journals, the internet, magazines and newspapers were analyzed to determine ways in which poor leadership and lack of accountability in the management of public resources have been obstacles to development in Nigeria. According to Osunde (1993, 33-43), the historical research method is very important because it involves investigating, recording, analyzing and interpreting events with a view to arriving at a plausible explanation. The next section of the paper offers a theoretical perspective of leadership. The subsequent section is an overview of the relationship between accountability and development, and that is followed by a section on the challenges of development in Nigeria as they relate to poor leadership and lack of proper accountability in the management of public resources.

2. Leadership: A Theoretical Perspective

Leadership theories abound in literature to explain the character, attitude, disposition and behaviour of a leader requisite to achieve enhanced performance either at the organizational or national level. These include authentic, path-goal, inspirational, visionary, charismatic, transformational, transactional, complexity, distributing, contingency, trait and situational leadership theories (Avolio *et. Al.* 2009, 421-429;

Kuada 2010b, 9-24; Gberevbie 2011, 148-157). According to Hartog and Koopman (2001, 166-187), these theories “attempt to explain how certain leaders are able to achieve extraordinary levels of follower motivation, admiration, commitment, respect, trust, dedication, loyalty and performance.”

In this paper, the authentic leadership theory is adopted as the framework of analysis. The justification for adopting this theory is the fact that organizations, whether in the public or private sector, require leaders that are transparent and exhibit proper ethical behaviour in the management of resources as a basis for enhanced performance (Luthans and Avolio 2003; Kuada 2010b). According to Luthans and Avolio (2003, 241-258), authentic leadership is “a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviours on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self-development.” The main argument of the theory is that authentic leaders, whether at the organizational or national levels, tend to exhibit transparent and proper ethical behaviour that focuses on accountability, which is required for efficient and effective management of resources for enhanced development (Avolio *et. Al.* 2009, 421-429; Kuada 2010b, 9-24). Leaders with traits of character such as transparency, honesty and accountability motivate people to share information with them and with each other, resulting in the realization of an organization’s or a nation’s quest for enhanced development (Kuada 2010b, 9-24).

For Kuada (2010b, 9-24), “a derivative of the authentic leadership is the servant and coach leadership theory.” According to him, “servant leadership is based on the devolution of power to followers.” Under this condition, “leaders see themselves as stewards, serving their followers in a manner that allows them to contribute their very best to fulfilling organizational (or national) objectives” (Kuada 2010b, 9-24). Consequently, where a nation lacks authentic leaders, it is bound to face challenges in its endeavours to develop. Avolio *et. Al.* write:

Authentic leaders were leaders who acted in accordance with their core personal values and beliefs in order to build credibility and earn the respect and trust of their followers through the process of actively encouraging diverse viewpoints and building transparent and

collaborative relationships with them. Such leaders could be described as charismatic ...participative, or transformational, in addition to being described as authentic (Avolio *et. Al.* 2004, 801-823).

Leadership is vital to the realization of organizational or national goals (Ujo 1995; Klenke 2007, 68-97; Otinche 2007, 20-34; Kuada 2010a, 5-8). However, Hartog and Koopman (2001, 166-187) correctly observe that leadership means different things to different people. Nevertheless, Bryman (1992) posits that “most definitions of leadership emphasize three main elements: group, influence and goal.” According to him, “a leader steers members of a group towards a goal”. On his part, Kuada (2010a, 5-8) asserts that “leaders articulate vision, encourage innovative thinking and motivate individuals and groups to exert themselves beyond the normal call of duty.” Emphasizing the importance of leadership for development, Maxwell (1995, 6) posits that “everything rises and falls on leadership.” For him, “the strength of any organization is a direct result of the strength of its leaders. Weak leaders equal weak organizations. Strong leaders equal strong organizations.” Torrington *et. Al.* (2008, 333) see leadership as “a process where one person influences a group of others to achieve group or organizational goals.”

In the same vein, Otinche (2007, 20-34) posits that “good leadership facilitates the process or task of governance, which ensures social progress and stability.” Therefore an effective leadership is a manager of resources for the enhancement of organizational performance (Gluck *et. Al.* 1980, 154-161). In this regard, Johns and Saks (2005, 274) point out that “effective leadership exerts influence in a way that achieves organizational goals by enhancing the productivity, innovation, satisfaction and commitment of the workforce.” In addition, Kuada (2010a, 5-8) contends that “effective leadership ensures efficient resource utilization in societies and organizations as well as the unceasing exploration of new resources.”

Thus it is evident that the importance of leadership for development, whether at the organizational or national level, cannot be overemphasized. This is particularly so since leaders are supposed to lead by example; that is, followers are to see desirable character traits in their leaders and thereby be motivated to act in such a manner as to

promote enhanced performance. Consequently, no organization or nation is likely to develop beyond the capacity of its leaders to uphold accountability and transparency in the management of resources.

3. Accountability and Development

Development is actually a function of proper accountability at the individual, organizational and national level (Thomas 1998; Ninalowo 2003, 1-32; Agba *et. al.* 2008, 187-204; Richardson 2008, 15-20). According to Ninalowo (2003, 1-32), “accountability implies that government functionaries should be prepared to be answerable for their actions at all times to members of the public and be able to justify their actions at the level of moral and ethical standard.” In the same vein, Agba *et. al.* (2008, 187-204) posit that “accountability demands that the public should know when money came into government treasury and how the money was used.” On his part, Richardson (2008, 15-20) holds that accountability is a fundamental requirement for proper management of resources for development in any society. According to Koppell (2005, 94-108), accountability has five dimensions, namely, transparency, liability, controllability, responsibility and responsiveness. These five dimensions are fundamental for the proper management of resources in an organization or a nation for enhanced performance.

Furthermore, accountability is vital to good governance; and good governance “seeks to improve the capacity of the state, encompassing a variety of strategies to increase efficiency and effectiveness of government performance” (Omona 2010, 129-159). For Adamolekun (2005, 3-16), a government is accountable when its leaders are responsive, when they have respect for the rule of law, and when citizens can seek redress in the courts for acts of omission and commission by the government and its officials. In the same vein, Gregory (2007, 339-350) holds that accountability arrangements “are intended to ensure both the constitutionally appropriate use of elective political power itself, and the coordinated, systematic and planned bureaucratic implementation of the policy purposes defined through the exercise of that power.”

On the other hand, 'development' has been viewed in various ways by different scholars. Ajagun (2003, 107-116) conceptualizes it as advancement which makes life more meaningful in its various aspects, including the economic, administrative, political, social, cultural and religious. On their part, Uga *et. al.* (2005, 7) see development as the process of economic and social transformation within countries. According to Yunusa and Okeke (2008, 51-59), "development is about the issue of self-reliance. It is a self-generating and self-sustaining phenomenon." For Ibude (2008, 1-6), development implies the manner in which individuals cooperatively cultivate the capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships to bring about growth in the quality and quantity of goods and services that are readily available in a country for the enhancement of the living standard of its people.

From the various conceptualizations of development outlined above, we can infer that development is all about improvement in the living condition of people in a society. This is more likely to be realized by a leadership that subscribes to proper accountability and transparency in the management of public resources. According to Wart (2003, 214-228), effective leadership in an organization provides higher-quality and more efficient goods and services; it provides a sense of cohesiveness, personal development, and a higher level of satisfaction.

4. Challenges of Development in Nigeria

Poor leadership is a major obstacle to development in Nigeria, particularly due to inadequate levels of accountability and transparency in the handling of public affairs. According to Akinkuotu (2011, 16-17), this is so because most political leaders in Nigeria owe allegiance to 'godfathers' who sponsored them into political offices, so that they (the politicians) do everything possible to satisfy them (the 'godfathers') even to the detriment of the nation's development. According to Babawale (2007, 7-16), one of the major challenges to development in Nigeria is that of bad leadership and 'politics of belly' that abound at all levels of governance in the country. He posits that "Nigeria lacks good quality leadership. To move forward as a nation, we need a

new breed of leaders that are sensitive, patriotic, and accountable and have demonstrable vision.” For Yunusa (2009, 166-172), over the years, Nigeria’s failure has been traced largely to a failure of leadership: most Nigerian leaders have come to power unprepared, and therefore unable to grapple with the modern world where democracy is the dominant ideology.

Nigeria lacks effective leadership to harness its rich human and material resources for development. Lack of accountability and transparency in government has helped to create wide distortions of income distribution throughout the society, thereby militating against development (Buhari 2008, 72-78). Ninalowo (2003, 1-32) sees transparency as a process whereby public officials are open and honest in the performance of their functions.

In a society where the culture of accountability is treated with contempt, the culture of unethical practices as a means of doing business, both in the public and private sectors, is bound to be enthroned. As a result, the funds that would have gone into development programmes are wasted by public officials. Thus there is a relationship between, on the one hand, authentic leadership that subscribes to proper accountability in the management of public resources and, on the other, development in a society. In this section, the discussion on the major obstacles to development in Nigeria is premised on the fact that there is poor leadership in government which manifests in two major areas, namely, poor management of resources by public officials, and corruption amongst leaders at various levels of government.

4.1. Poor Management of Resources by Public Officials

Currently, Nigeria has a population of 168 million, with over 250 ethnic groups. The country is a major crude oil exporter at 2.53 million barrels per day on an average sale of USD100 per barrel in the international oil market (Gberevbie 2012, 187-210; Soyinka 2012, 46-57). In spite of this enormous revenue accruing to the country, most of the nation’s population still lives in poverty, without any meaningful means of livelihood and shelter (Ibaba and Ebiede 2009, 65-89; Gberevbie 2012, 187-210;

Nzeshi and Ogbodo 2012, 1 and 6-7). Despite this sorry state of Affairs, over 70 percent of the recurrent expenditure in the 2012 national budget went to the maintenance of political office holders. For instance, the presidency alone had a feeding allowance of NGN1 billion (USD6.45 million), the budget for medical treatment at the Aso Rock Villa - Presidential Villa Clinic was NGN1 billion, the budget for the fuel and electricity generating set was NGN1 billion, that for two bullet-proof cars was NGN280 million (USD1.81 million), and that for a dining set was NGN300 million or USD1.94 million (Soyinka 2012, 46-57).

In addition, the cost of maintaining each member of the 109 member Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for four years is approximately NGN3 billion or USD19.35 million. Besides, each member of the 360 member Nigerian Federal House of Representatives receives NGN 128.4 million or USD828, 387 as annual salary.

Their fringe benefits include:

- Wardrobe allowance - 25 percent of annual basic salary.
- Recess allowance - 10 percent of annual basic salary.
- Accommodation allowance - 200 percent of annual basic salary.
- Utilities allowance - 30 percent of annual basic salary.
- Domestic staff allowance - 75 percent of annual basic salary.
- Entertainment allowance - 30 percent of annual basic salary.
- Personal assistant allowance - 25 percent of annual basic salary.
- Maintenance of vehicle/fuel allowance - 75 percent of annual basic salary.
- Leave allowance - 100 percent of annual basic salary.
- Constituency allowance - 250 percent of annual basic salary.
- Hardship allowance - 50 percent of annual basic salary.
- Furniture allowance - 300 percent of annual basic salary paid once in tenure at the commencement of duty as a Federal Legislator.
- Newspaper allowance - 15 percent of annual basic salary.
- Severance gratuity, paid after tenure in office - 300 percent of annual basic salary.

- Motor vehicle loan - 400 percent of annual basic salary payable in six years (Mokwugwo 2011).

In fact, Nigeria's 2012 national budget as presented in December 2011 showed that recurrent expenditure accounted for 71.5 percent or NGN2.47 trillion (USD15.94 billion) of the total national budget of NGN4.697 trillion (USD30.303 billion), and capital expenditure accounted for 28.53 percent (Ameh and Josiah 2011, 1 & 21). In the 2013 national budget as presented to the Nigerian National Assembly (House Senate and Federal House of Representatives) in October, 2012 by President Goodluck Jonathan, the recurrent expenditure accounted for 68.7 percent or NGN2.41 trillion (USD15.55 billion) of the total national budget of NGN4.92 trillion (USD31.74 billion), while capital expenditure accounted for 31.34 percent or NGN1.54 trillion (USD9.93 billion) of the total national budget, and government intends to borrow NGN727 billion (USD4.69 billion) to finance its deficit in 2013 (Nzeshi and Ogbodo 2012, 1 and 6-7).

The data presented above show the Nigerian Federal Government's dismal effort at development, and the poor management of resources by public officials in the country to the detriment of the people. As is often pointed out, where government spends more on recurrent than capital expenditure, the tendency is for development to stagnate, thereby negatively affecting the living standards of the people.

Another instance of poor management of public resources is in the area of privatization of public enterprises in Nigeria. Alarmed by the poor handling of privatization of public enterprises in the country, the Nigerian Senate constituted an ad hoc committee to investigate the transactions of the Nigerian Bureau of Public Enterprises on behalf of the Federal Government. The committee discovered that the Aluminium Smelter Company of Nigeria, located at Ikot Abasi, Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria, whose construction was completed by the Federal Government in 1997 with a 540 Megawatt capacity electricity power plant for USD3.2 billion, was valued by the Nigerian Bureau of Public Enterprises in-house consultants for only USD250

million, and was eventually sold to a Russian company for a mere USD130 million in 2010 (Philips 2011, 39-41).

Similarly, the ad hoc committee constituted by the Nigerian Senate to investigate the activities of the Bureau of Public Enterprises in the country discovered that Global Infrastructure, an Indian company that bought Delta Steel Company at Aladja, Delta State of Nigeria never bid for it, yet bought it for USD30 million. Angered by the situation, the Nigerian Senate ordered the revocation of the sale of the company in 2011 (Utomwen 2011, 46-47).

Furthermore, lack of accountability and transparency of public officials in the management of public funds manifested in 2005 when the government of former President Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007) gave USD2 billion to the National Political Reform Conference (NPRC) without the approval of the Nigerian National Assembly (The Senate and Federal House of Representatives) (cited in Yunusa 2009, 166-172). Poor management of public resources was also evident in the importation of goods that could have been produced in the country. For instance, between January and March 2011, even though the nation is a leading member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Nigeria imported refined petroleum products to the tune of USD1.34 billion or NGN 201 billion (Omoh 2011). Thus the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, has lamented:

Nigeria does not support the growth of her local industries, but subject them to stiff competition. We export crude oil and we import refined petroleum products. We are the world's number one producer of cassava but we import refined starch. We have a large cotton belt and we import textile fabrics from China. We have hides and skin and we do not have a leather goods industry. Nigeria spent USD1 billion in 2010 on the importation of rice, why should Nigeria import rice? Is there no land and the intelligence to farm? Or rice processing plants are high technology that is beyond the understanding of Nigerians? (quoted in Akowe 2011, 2).

Thus Nigeria's inability to provide for her people is a function of the absence of effective leadership capable of harnessing the country's abundant resources for the enhancement of the living standards of its people. This implies that there is a

relationship between effective leadership and proper management of resources for development in a society.

4.2. Corruption amongst Public Officials

One of the major obstacles to development in Nigeria is corruption amongst public officials, and ill which has been pervasive in governments in the country since independence in 1960. For example, within a span of twenty years, the country earned a total of USD300 billion or NGN46.5 trillion from the sale of crude oil in the international market without commensurate human and infrastructural developments to show for it due to embezzlement of public funds by government officials (World Bank 1996, 38; Ikelegbe 2004). According to Nnabuife (2010, 25-41), the Nigerian situation is that of corrupt practices from the top: “When the overall leader is corrupt, his/her subjects are always afraid of reporting unethical activities. ...; the reporting officer may be transferred if he/she is seen as an obstacle” (Nnabuife 2010, 37). Thus Adesina (2007) writes:

It is no longer news that corruption is right in our blood. Corruption is everywhere. Years back it was born, but today it has grown with two legs and two arms walking freely with its 32 teeth complete to crack the hardest bone. It has eaten deep into the system that surgical operations would be needed to root it out. It is hindering the growth of democracy and it is the root cause of the disrespect for the rule of law in our nation (Adesina 2007, 29).

Instances of corrupt practices by top government officials have continued to abound in Nigeria at the federal, state and local government levels despite the nation having launched into the fourth republic of democratic governance in 1999. For example, in the year 2000, the Federal Government under the leadership of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo initiated the National Identity Card Project (NICP). Regrettably, after 13 years of the project and investment of colossal sums of public funds, its objective is yet to be realized due to corruption on the part of government officials. The investigation carried out on the project by the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) in 2003 showed a contract scam of USD240 million involving top government officials including the then Federal Minister of Internal Affairs, Chief

S.M. Afolabi, charged for receiving USD345, 000 as inducement to obtain his support to enable a company, Sagem S.A. of France, to execute the contract (cited in Onah 2009, 40-60).

Upon further investigations into the National Identity Card Project scam, Hussein Akwanga, the then Permanent Secretary in the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs, admitted having received, via his children, USD30,000. Other proven beneficiaries of the corrupt practices in the award of the contract were Dr Okwesilieze Nwodo, the then Secretary-General of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), who received USD113, 000 as the link person between Adelagun, the Nigerian business partner of Sagem S.A. and Chief S.M. Afolabi; Alhaji Yayale Ahmed, the then Head of the Nigerian Civil Service, received the sum of USD250, 000 as gratification for his support for the award of the contract (cited in Onah 2009, 40-60). One interesting aspect of the whole saga is the fact that the Nigerian Security, Printing and Minting Company (NSPMC), that handles all the printing of Nigeria's security jobs including International Passports, was said to have indicated its interest in the contract, and even though its bid was lower, the job was given to Sagem S.A. of France at a much higher cost (Onah 2009, 40-60).

Similarly, investigations by the ICPC revealed a scam in the contract awarded to Solgas Energy Limited in 2003, at the cost of USD3.6 billion, for the construction of Ajaokuta Steel Company Limited in Kogi State of Nigeria. The investigations found that the cost of the project of USD3.6 billion, as claimed by the company through the support of top government officials, was far in excess of what was required, the realistic cost of the execution of the project having been USD1.5 billion, giving a contract inflation of USD2.1 billion (Onah 2009, 40-60).

Even at the state level in Nigeria, corruption amongst government officials, particularly at the top, has become the order of the day. For instance, the former Governor of Taraba State, Jolly Nyame (1999-2007), was charged by the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) for illegally withdrawing NGN285 million or USD1.8 million of public funds between March 2003 and March 2007 (Musari and

Agbana 2012, 4). Similarly, on 27th February, 2012 in a London Court, Chief James Ibori, former Governor of Delta State (1999-2007), pleaded guilty to a 10 count-charge of money laundering and embezzlement of public funds belonging to Delta State to the tune of 250 million pounds, and is currently serving a 13 year jail term (Obiagwu 2012, 2; Onyekwere 2012, 3). Besides, in Bayelsa State of Nigeria, former governor Timipre Sylva (2007-2012), is presently facing a six count charge of obtaining monies under false pretense and embezzlement to the tune of NGN6.5 billion or USD41.94 million belonging to the state. Bayelsa is the smallest state in Nigeria, and the least developed in the country (Ero 2012, 24).

Lamenting the negative effect of corrupt leadership on development in the different sectors of the Nigerian economy, former President of the Nigerian federation (1999-2007), Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, states:

At the root of corruption quagmire in Nigeria is the failure and virtual collapse of governance, the contamination of democratic values and suffocation of civil society, the manipulation of existing laws and regulations, the erosion of accountability procedures and the prevalence of bad leadership. The erosion of public confidence in the country's political and economic institutions has promoted a culture of contempt for the rule of law and unfortunately, a societal tolerance for a myriad of conducts previously considered abominable (cited in Onah 2009, 40-60).

Similarly, the former governor of Kwara State of Nigeria (2003-2011), and now a Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr Bukola Saraki, lamented the high level of corruption in government thus: "I am not sure whether corruption is the best word to describe some of the things I've seen in government. I think it's a combination of corruption, lack of patriotism, incompetence and even sabotage" (cited in Agbo and Suleman 2012, 50-51).

4.3. The Establishment of Anti-Corruption Mechanisms in Nigeria: An Appraisal

To overcome the challenges of mismanagement of public funds and corruption amongst government officials, the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of former President Olusegun Obasanjo established the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) under the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act of 2000 (ICPORO 2000). In addition, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) was established in 2002 by an Act of the Nigerian National Assembly known as EFCC Establishment Act 2002. However, the Act was amended in 2004 as Economic and Financial Crime Commission Establishment Act 2004 (EFCC online, 2004). Sections 26 and 61 (3) of the Act establishing ICPC and Sections 5 (i) (k) and 39 of the EFCC Act vested the powers to initiate prosecution for an offence on the Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF) or any other person or authority to whom he may delegate his authority against the offender, which must be in any High Court so designated by the Chief Judge of a State or Chief Judge of the Nigerian Federation (ICPORO 2000; EFCC 2004; EFCC online, 2004).

The establishment of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) could be regarded as steps in the right direction in the efforts of the government to fight corruption in Nigeria. However, the fact that Sections 26 and 61 (3) of the ICPC Act and Sections 5 (i) (k) and 39 of the EFCC Act authorize the Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF) to initiate the prosecution of offenders has made it almost impossible for ICPC and EFCC to successfully prosecute public officials found to indulge in corrupt practices (Ali 2007, 511-540). These sections make it possible for corruption cases against top government officials to be delayed or totally put off by the AGF. For instance, between 2003 and 2012, former top government officials whose cases have either been delayed or totally abandoned by the government arising from the AGF's power to initiate prosecution include former governors Abdulahi Adamu of Nasarawa State, Achike Udenwa of Imo State, Peter Odili of Rivers State, Lucky Igbinedion of Edo

State, Uzor Kalu of Abia State, James Ibori of Delta State, Chief Fayose of Ekiti State, Sam Egwu of Eboyi State, Joshua Dariye of Plateau State, Ikedi Ohakin of Imo State, Boni Haruna of Adamawa State, and former Speaker, Federal House of Representatives, Dimeji Bankole (Adegbamigbe 2007, 28-29; Ayorinde and Orilade 2007, 20-31; Utomwen 2010, 16-23).

5. Conclusion

This paper has examined the challenges of development in Nigeria as they relate to poor leadership and lack of accountability in the management of public resources. It has argued that the obstacles to development in Nigeria emanate from poor leadership at various levels of government (federal, state and local) that fails to subscribe to proper accountability in the management of public resources.

We conclude that if the war against the mismanagement of public resources and corruption amongst public officials is to be won, the Federal Government of Nigeria must reinforce the existing anti-corruption mechanisms. In particular, there is need to amend the relevant pieces of legislation that vest the power to initiate prosecution of corrupt officials on the Attorney-General of the Nigerian Federation by transferring those powers to the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC). This will facilitate the strict compliance to rules governing the proper management of public resources by public officials as a strategy for enhanced development.

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