

Volume 4, 2012

ISSN: 2141-8349

International  
Journal of Research in  
**Arts and**  
**Social Sciences**  
(IJRASS)

Joshua Segun's Library

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# **International Journal of Research in Arts and Social Sciences, Nsukka (IJRASS)**

Volume 4, 2012

**ISSN 2141-8349**

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## **LEADERSHIP, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF OYO STATE (2003-2011)**

**Segun Joshua  
Samuel Oni  
Godwyn Agbude**

### **Abstract**

This article presents a synergy between democracy and development in Nigeria with specific reference to Oyo State between 2003 and 2010 using leadership as a connecting factor. The main purpose is to interrogate the role of leadership in bringing about development in democratic governance. The article argues that, although development is often linked with democratic governance, however, the reverse is the case in Oyo state because of leadership corruption. It therefore, suggests the need to overhaul the entire electoral process so as to provide convenient platform for the emergence of visionary, effective, selfless, dynamic and people-oriented leaders to take over power.

**Keywords:** Leadership, Democracy, Development, Corruption

### **Introduction**

The major concern of all the stakeholders since May 29, 1999 when Civilian regime took over the mantle of leadership of Nigeria, has been how to nurture the country's nascent democracy and sustain it, especially amidst an ailing economy. This concern is not misplaced going by the inability of successive governments to meet the basic demands of the citizenry. Not quite long ago, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) published its Human Development Report for 2003, in which Nigeria was placed 152 among 175 countries on the development scale. This ranking does not reflect the enormous resourced the country parades. The World Bank declared at a time that over 70 percent of Nigeria population live below \$ 1 (N130) a day. Worse still, former Commonwealth Secretary General Mr Don Mcinnon, declared that, "Cows in Europe have a higher standard of living than Nigerians this is because on the average, each cow lives on \$ 2.40 per day" (Azeez, 2004:33).

Democracy is often believed by the liberal democratic scholars, to stimulate development (Omotola, 2007; Simbine, 2000: 13-16). However, in the case of Nigeria, democracy has not succeeded in bringing about the much expected development especially since democratic rule commenced in 1999. The reason is not far-fetched. The virus called corruption has infected the body politics of the country, most especially through the political leaders. The political leaders that should lead by exhibiting principled frugally or husbanding the resources of the state (borrowing a leaf from (Okere, 2003) in such a way

that will bring development to the front burner of politics have gone beyond maximum corruption to looting the national treasuries. Corruption among citizens is bad, but it is worst at the level of leadership.

Oyo State is regarded as the pace setter of Nigeria, this is attributed to the fact that it houses the first University in Nigeria, University of Ibadan. It is also the home of Liberty Stadium, the first stadium in Africa and one of the largest cities in the world. However, leadership corruption has diminished the reputation of the state as a pace setter of Nigeria.

The principal objective of this paper is to probe the relationship between democracy and development using leadership as a determinant factor. Our argument is illustrated with the experience of Oyo State (2003-2010). We argue that although democracy should be a pedestal for development, the evidence on ground seems to point to the contrary as a result of leadership problem. The paper is hence organised into five parts. This Introduction is followed by review of literature on the key concepts: Democracy, development and leadership; as well as the nexus among them. Part three attempts a prognosis of the various regimes in Oyo State, from 2003-2010. This is followed by recommendations and conclusion.

### **Conceptual Clarification**

Although the tripartite concepts of leadership, democracy and development have generated mounting international discourse; and a sizeable amount of literature developed there from, there still exist widespread confusion about their meanings and relationships. The conceptual ambivalence, cum confusions associated with them could be attributed to the fact that, all seems to be, though in varying degrees, multidimensional and value loaded. Suffice to say that they can be appropriately grouped in the category of words like power, justice, peace, equality and freedom which Gallie (1962: 121-146) described as "essentially contested concepts" (Omotola, 2007). For us, these tripartite concepts remain "an embattled trinity", yearning for more amplification and illumination in order to unmask the ambivalence associated with their relationships.

### **On Leadership**

The concept of leadership has generated a harlot of arguments since the idea of organised society came into existence. Ologbenla, (2007) noted that Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, Locke, Marx, Engel, Heidegger, etc have written on the importance of leadership in nation building and development project. Although they differ in approach, their basic concern however, centres on who governs, who should govern and what should constitute political authority in a community, ditto the role and influence of political actors. While Plato and Aristotle subscribe to idealist orientation in their analysis on leadership, Locke and Rousseau analysis are weaved within the matrix of prescriptive method for generalising on the nature of man, society and authority. Marx and Engels' work is crafted in historical materialist theory

Leadership simply means "the quality of being good at leading a team, organization, a country, etc" (Ologbenla, 2007:100). Leadership is the process of providing direction, energising others, and obtaining their voluntary commitment to the leader's



vision. Thus, a leader creates a vision and goals and influences others to share that vision and work towards the goal (Wendy, Cook and Hunsaker, 2003). Okadigbo (1987) sees leadership as the process through which an individual consistently exerts more influence than others in pursuing group behaviour. According to Seteolu (2004) leadership theories include trait, behavioural, attribution, characteristic, transformational and visionary. He went further to describe leadership as a combination of strategy and character. To Yakub, leadership can be categorised as “weak, competent, foolish, stupid, corrupt and hedonistic, such that many be frolicking while “Rome is burning” (Adu, 2010:3). Within the context of politics, political leadership is seen as the decision on social policy and allocation of resources by partisan representatives. Thus, political Leadership is a ruler that guides the people to achieve development vision or goals. It is critical to a country’s development (Eneh, 2007). The interdependence of leadership and development is illustrated by societies that have risen above the natural limitations of their environment to achieve sustainable development under transformative and visionary leadership of which Japan is a good example. Conversely, are societies greatly endowed with natural resources but have failed to achieve development that commensurate the level of endowment because of poor leadership characterised by self-centeredness, corruption and short-sightedness (Bammeke, 2005). Thus, leadership is a catalyst of development.

### **On Democracy**

The concept of Democracy is a problematic one. In fact, it has been subjected to all forms of abuse. Almost all governments lay claim to being democratic. However, from the Athenian to contemporary definition, the nucleus has been political pluralism which allows for several parties to contest in a free, fair and periodic election. In a sense, democracy is characterised by political practices that guarantee representation, accountability and participation under the condition of liberty provided by the rule of law (Robert, 2001). Some analysts have aptly drawn attention to certain probable misconceptions of democracy. Firstly, although periodic election is a requirement, it is not enough yardsticks to define democracy. Little wonder that Jega (2003) asserts that civil rule, contrary to popular thinking, is not necessarily democratic rule. Some scholars have therefore attempted a distinction between “electoral democracy” and “popular democracy” (Olufemi, 2000:32).

Democracy has become a normatively relative concept. In short, what constitutes democracy in one society may not necessarily be in another. This has led to measuring democracy along a continuum. That is, country A is “more democratic” than B and so on. The problem has to do with establishing a definite threshold and standard for measurement (Aremu, 2004).

Another Kernel of controversy has to do with the critical distinction in the understanding of democracy from two worlds. The advanced Capitalist societies see the significance of democracy derivable from the avalanch of freedom and inalienable rights it guarantees, while developing countries see it as a panacea to all societal ills (Saliu, 1999).

This misconception is germane for background understanding of the high hope reposed on democracy to provide solutions to socio-economic problems bedevilling countries that subscribe to democratic rule.

### **On Development**

Like most social science concepts, the problematic of the term Development is evidently made manifest in the literature. The current pluralism in the development literature, as being dominated by different school of thought So, cited in Omotola, (2007) attests to this. The concept is further made complex going by the fact that development is multi-dimensional. Suffice to say that the concept is often viewed from political, economic and social dimensions.

Todaro (1980:96) for instance; views development as: "a multi-dimensional process involving changes in structures; attitudes and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of absolute poverty". In another work this same scholar identified three core values of development (Todaro, 1989) they are; ability to provide as many people as possible with their basic needs or the ability to acquire adequate food, shelter, health care and protection. It also include perception of individuals or groups of self-worth and esteem as a respected member of the society; and freedom in the sense that individuals and society at large have an expanded range of choice, not only material necessities for self reproduction but also in their ability to have a say in, if not to determine, the method and process by which values are allocated in the society (cf Ogwu, 2002:12-13).

Howard (2004:43) argues that development takes place only when the central problems of poverty, unemployment and inequalities in a society have reduced from high levels. It is necessary to state that the objective of development is to extend the frontier of human lives.

### **Theoretical Framework**

There is hardly any valid research study that has no theoretical construct. It is on this note that this research work will be anchored on the elite theory. In general sense, the elite theory is based on the idea that "every society consists of two broad categories: (1) the selected few, who are able and, therefore, have the right to supreme leadership, and (2) the vast masses of people who are destined to be ruled" (Varma, 1999:143). In politics, the elite denote specifically those who exercise preponderant political influence in a community. They are differently designated as the power elite, the ruling class, political entrepreneurs, the establishment, the governing minority.

Politics is seen in terms of a small group dominating the whole society and taking the decisions which make the mark and history in politics. Even when there is a mass participatory democracy, consensus is generally brought about by a few or supported by few people who constitutes informal exclusive group (Mba, 2006).

The proponent of classical elite theory Pareto (1848-1923) believed that every society is ruled by a minority that possesses the essentials qualities needed for accession to full social and political power. Those who get to the top are always the best. They are christened the elite. The elites consist of those successful persons who rise to the top in every occupation and stratum of society. Thus, there are elite of lawyers, elite of mechanics, elite of thieves, and even elite of prostitutes (Varma, 1999). Pareto has a belief that elite in different occupation and strata of the society generally come from the same class: those who are wealthy also are intelligent. This is reflected in their aptitude for mathematics, musical

talent, moral character etc. Pareto argues that society is divided into two classes: a higher stratum, the elite, which are divided into governing elite, and a lower stratum, the non-elite.

Gaetano Mosca (1858-1941), who further developed the theory of political elites cum the concept of circulation of elites, was vehemently in opposition to the classification of governments into monarchy, aristocracy and democracy initiated by Aristotle. He asserted that there was only one kind of government named Oligarchy. He postulated that in all societies, there are two classes of people- a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first class, less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first. To him, the distinguishing characteristics of the elite is ability to command and exercise political control. Once, the ruling class loses this aptitude and people outside the ruling class cultivate it in large numbers, the possibility of replacing the old ruling class by the new one will be very high.

Roberto Michels (1876-1936) is associated with what is referred to as the "iron laws of oligarchy" which he argues as "one of the iron laws of history, from which the most democratic modern societies and within those societies, the most advanced parties, have been unable to escape". No human collectivity can succeed without organisation and organisation is another way of spelling "oligarchy". To him, leadership is a necessary phenomenon in every organisation. All civilization must exhibit aristocratic features. As a movement or party grows in size, more and more functions have to be delegated to an inner circle of leaders, and in course of time, the members of such an organisation are rendered less competent to direct and control then, as a result of which the officers acquires the great freedom of action and a vested interest in their position. Since majority of human being are apathetic, indolent and slavish and are permanently incapable of self-government the leaders take advantages of that and become irremovable.

Ortega Y. Gasset(1883-1955) contends that a nation's greatness depends on the capacity of the "people", "the public", "the crowd", "the masses" to find their "symbol in certain chosen people, on whom it pours out the vast store of its vital enthusiasm". The "chosen people" are the ones that are outstanding, and it is they who lead the "masses" who are not so chosen.

In summary, people in the society fall into two divisions: those who have important or decisive political power and those who have none as a result cannot exercise any decisive power over government output functions.

### **Leadership, Democracy, and Development: A Synergy.**

Democracy and development are inextricably linked with emphasis on leadership as the link between them. Osaghae, (2000) looked at some concrete ways in which democracy facilitates development. He summarized the essence of democracy in ensuring development as; (i) enhancement of the responsiveness and accountability of the state, and (ii) empowerment of the citizens to participate in, and claim ownership of the development that it superintends. According to (UNDP, 2000) the right-based approach to development focuses on participation, accountability, and other elements that are similar to the values that form the fulcrum around which democracy revolves. This is also in line with Linz and

Stephen (1997) that democracy guarantees development in any society. They argue that the basic elements of true democracy include the ability to regulate social conduct, the creation of strong political institutions, the presence of a strong civil society and pressure groups, a strong and rational bureaucracy and an economic regime with a strong private sector base, increased production and economic growth. It is this perspective of viewing democracy as instrument for development that probably led Zack-Williams to conclude that "no democracy, no development" (Aremu, 2004:26). This conclusion was strongly supported by Boutrous Ghali (1992) when he noted that it is for the reason that democracy is associated with development, and the two are seen as inseparable for success.

Counterpoised to the above position is the argument that democracy hampers development, especially in the underdeveloped societies. According to this line of thought, authoritarian regimes are considered as better placed to enhance development. Some have equally argued that there is no relationship between democracy and development. Sirowy and Inkeles, (1991); Sah, (1991); Potter (2000) have given a lucid analysis on the aforementioned propositions.

However, the line of argument pursued in this paper is that there exists a correlation between democracy and development. This position is informed by the fact that, conceptually, these concepts are closely interconnected and interwoven. However, it is necessary to note that, although democracy is a veritable tool for development, yet political leadership is a major determinant factor.

Huntington (1994) averred that the two key factors affecting the future stability and expansion of democracy are economic development and political leadership. It is an incontestable fact that corruption and mismanagement on the part of Nigerian leaders have made the success of democracy and development an illusion. Adebayo (2000:49) asserted that:

*Nigeria's main problem is not its federalism, but rather its visionless and irresponsible political elite who have manipulated its politics, economy and religion to serve their own parochial interests, stashing away billions of dollars in foreign bank account while urging the masses to endure two decades of austerity and structural adjustment.*

Consequent upon mass corruption and mismanagement of the economy by the political elite, the government embarked on domestic and international borrowing in order to sustain the level of economic activities in the country.

Rather than bringing about relief, the debt crisis impedes efforts to achieve rapid economic growth. Bad Leadership is the greatest problem that has confronted Nigeria. According to Achebe, (1983:1)

The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian Character... the Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leader to rise to responsibility, to the personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership.

In the same vein, Nigeria former Head of State Late General Sani Abacha in October 1995 cited in Azeez, (2004:36) conceded that:

...we cannot achieve a stable democratic polity in the midst of dishonesty and corruption. These vices, have crippled our various institutions which otherwise could be viable assets to our economy recovery.

In summary, before democracy can bring about development political elite must be people of vision, ready to render selfless service and do away with corruption.

### **Brief History of Oyo State**

Oyo state is an interior state located in the south-western part of Nigeria, bounded by Kwara State in the north, Osun State in the east and Ogun State in the west. Oyo is mainly inhabited by the Yoruba ethnic group, which mainly engages in farming. The indigenes of Oyo State include the Oyos, Oke-Ogun, Ibarapas and Ibadan in notable towns such as Oyo, Ogbomosho and Iseyin. Oyo became a state on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February, 1976. The then military government of General Murtala and General Obasanjo carved it out from the old western region of Nigeria. The state finally took off on its own on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1976 with General David Jemibewon as the first governor (Adeoti, 2009). The state has been governed by both military and civilian governments from its inception till date.

### **Political Leadership and Corruption in Oyo State (2003-2010)**

Ever since the inception of the fourth republic, leadership crisis and corruption had become the order of the day in Oyo state. The condition of democracy has deteriorated and now we have a government of illiterates, politics of hooliganism, violence and money bags. Adeyemo (2009) argued that these were the kinds of people Adedibu (the late godfather of Oyo state) brought into all levels of government.

Oyo state known for its reputation in the fields of rich culture, commerce, education and sports has been hijacked by dubious politicians that believe that the only way to settle their grievances is through violence, patronage and extortion without paying attention to the natural resources that are not well tapped (Akande, 2011). In addition, the state education is also on the brink of collapse as well as the commercial system. Corruption and impunity has become the order of the day in Oyo state. It is not surprising that Asakome (2011) argued that the basis of corruption and other socio-economic problems in Nigeria are based on electoral frauds which bring to power unwanted and mediocre political leaders. Such deceitful and crime-infested have no people-oriented programs except to mount the seat of power in order to loot the natural treasury.

It is important to stress at this juncture that Godfatherism is a major factor responsible for leadership corruption in Oyo state. The late Chief Lamidi Adedibu was the political godfather of the state before his demise. Adedibu was a prominent figure in Nigerian politics and in Oyo state in particular. Obadare (2007:115-116) contends that Lamidi Adedibu has been involved in Oyo state politics since the 1950s. His many detractors alleged that he got his start as a small time organization of political thugs for the Action Group (AG) party of Chief Obafemi Awolowo. By the late 1980s he had emerged as a

powerful political force through a combination of populist politics, patronage, violence and extortion (Obadare, 2007:118).

He was indeed a defacto king maker. This he often accomplished through his tremendous activity to mobilize violence and money in support of the politician he sponsors. Everybody who is who in Oyo state politics passed through Adedibu (Human Rights, Watch, 2007). Thus, he used his influence to milk the state through his protégés thereby, leaving Oyo in a deplorable state of underdevelopment.

#### **Leadership Corruption Under Ladoja Tenure (2003-2007)**

Rashidi Ladoja served as governor of Oyo state, from 2003-2007. Adedibu supported Ladoja as the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) candidate in 2003 elections. It is widely believed that Adedibu assisted to rig the elections in favour of Ladoja. Ladoja confirmed this fact but argued that once he was in office, he tried immediately to break free from Adedibu's influence (Akeeb, 2007). Ladoja in his interview with the Human Rights Watch argues that, he fell out with Adedibu shortly after coming into office in 2003 because he refused to allow Adedibu access to treasury, he alleged that Adedibu ordered him to turn over twenty-five percent (25%) of the government security vote of roughly fifteen million (#15 million) per month directly to him (Akeeb, 2007:8).

Lamidi Adedibu attested to this statement "Is that all my offence that you kept government away from me for 28 months? The government that, by the grace of God, I gave to you. I put him there, so if I am demanding for money will it be wrong? Do I need to ask for it before he gives it to me?" (Osuntokun, 2006:20-21). Ladoja also refused to yield to overtures from Adedibu by not allowing he (Adedibu) to name the commissioners who would serve in his cabinet; this did not go down well with Adedibu who described Ladoja as an "ingrate". The above scenario led to the impeachment of Ladoja which was hatched through the instrumentality of Oyo state House of Assembly.

However, aside the influence of Adedibu on Ladoja's regime it was also discovered that Ladoja was corrupt. For instance, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) alleged that Ladoja stole funds belonging to the Oyo state government and that he also engaged in fraudulent sale of shares belonging to Oyo state government, the sum of both accounting to #6.5 billion. He was accused of committing this crime with some state's officials (Iriekpen, 2008). Ladoja was alledged, among other offences, to have stolen #51 million to buy two (2) SUV cars for his personal use. He was also accused to have used the agency of Atanda to divert the sum of £600,000 to one Miss Bimpe Ladoja, his daughter among other allegations levelled against him. Senator Rasheed Ladoja was briefly remanded in prison by the federal high court in Lagos on 30<sup>th</sup> of August, 2008 and was granted bail on 5<sup>th</sup> September with the sum of #100 million with two sureties for the same sum (Nafiu, 2008)

#### **Corruption under Governor Alao-Akaka (2007-2011)**

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of May, Christopher Alao-Akaka took over as the governor of Oyo state. However, before his election in 2007, he had had opportunity to be the governor of Oyo state for eleven (11) months when Ladoja was impeached between 2006 and 2007. Former speaker of the state house of assembly alleged that during Akala's previous 11-

months tenure his supporters in the legislature siphoned more than #45 million (\$346,000) each month for their own personal use (Ademola, 2007).

In short, there have been series of petitions written to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission against Akala. This has made Akala a regular visitor at the offices of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC). At this juncture, some of the mind boggling corrupts practices of Akala worth mentioning. It is on record that at a time during Akala's regime, thirty- three (33) Toyota Hiace ambulances were purchased for the thirty-three (33) Local Government Councils in Oyo State at fourteen million, one hundred and ninety thousand naira (# 14, 190.000.000) per unit instead of the market price of five million, six hundred thousand naira. It was latter discovered that the vehicles brought are normal buses which cost just four million, one hundred thousand naira (# 4.1 million) per unit: while they are adapted to be ambulances through local fabrication. Thus, from estimation, there might be a differential of eight million, four hundred and ninety thousand naira (# 8,490,000.00) on each vehicle and on thirty -three (33) vehicles there was a rip-off or "gain" of two hundred and eighty million, one hundred and seventy thousand naira (# 280,170.000.00) which was shared (Adesina, 2011; Human Rights Watch, 2007).

Akala was equally alleged of defrauding Oyo state through the purchase of a twenty six (26) year old 1000 KVA generator for eighteen million (# 18 million) and over-invoiced the purchase of state customised primary school text books to the tune of five hundred and thirty- seven million (#537 million) and eight billion, nine hundred million (#8.9 billion) allegedly deducted illegally from funds due to local government and inflation of various contract sums. In October 2008, Akala signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), with ENTEC power and utility company limited a South Africa based company on an Independent Power Project (IPP). The project was expected to 250 MW at cost put at \$ 400 million which was to be completed in October 2010. It is chagrin to find out that the project did not produce a single watt before he left office (Adesina, 2011). Sometimes in 2007, Akala in connivance with his cronies were alleged of awarding contract in the sum of two billion, two hundred and seventy million, five hundred and sixty five thousand naira (# 2,270,565,000.00) for the drilling machines undertaken on behalf of the thirty-three (33) Local Government Councils in Oyo state without budget provision (Agbaegbu 2011). Part of the allegation against Akala as he stand trial before the EFCC is that he acquired two choice properties in Ibadan and two others in London with the money realised from illegal acts using false identity (Agbaegbu 2011).

Akala claimed to have constructed or rehabilitated about 800km of roads across the state at the cost of several billions of naira. But the fact that Oyo State Road Maintenance Agency (OYSRM) keeps repairing the roads at few months interval speaks volumes of the quality of road projects being executed. In addition, during his tenure, there was reduction in salaries of civil servants and civil service employment forms were jerked up from ₦200 to ₦1,800. This generated several millions of naira to the state government yet, there was no job provision for citizens of the state. The school system is in a deplorable state as there are no teachers in some schools for some important subjects like English language and some science subjects (Adesina, 2011). To cap it up till date Oyo state cannot

satisfactorily account for about twenty-seven billion accruable from the excess crude oil fund account under Akala's regime. (<http://free-press-release.com>)

### **Implication of Leadership Corruption on Development of Oyo State**

It is necessary to state that no meaningful development can take place when the state officials are neck-deep in corruption. Corruption devalues authority. The level of governance corruption in Nigeria has been described as endemic and epidemic as it takes place at the apex of government. Those who ought to fight corruption are indeed the vanguard of corruption. Suffice to say that corruption has become legalized (especially among the ruling class) (Idawoji 2010).

Given its prevalence, corruption has no positive benefits to economic development, political institutions and social value. Peter Eigher's (Chairman Transparency) report in 2004 that "corruption leaves ordinary people without essential services, such as life-serving medicine and deprives them of access to sanitation and housing. In fact, Ologbenla (2007:112) put it more bluntly "in short, corruption costs lives".

Fraudulent acts of corruption and abuse of office have been identified for Nigeria's long term economic retrogression and decay. These have ipso facto led to the underdevelopment of the Nigerian state since independence especially from the 1980s. The effect of corruption is too severe in Nigeria. Little wonder that development remains elusive to Nigeria in spite of her resource profile. The Nigerian state has continued to groan under lamentable state of infrastructure, mass unemployment, urban vagrancies, homelessness, and increased deterioration of the standard of living, regrettable diminished access to good and qualitative necessities of life such as food, good nutrition, health care facilities and educational facilities. Poverty is widespread and crudely exposes the bad economic policies and inefficient leadership structure to utilize resources for development (Ologbenla, 2009).

The above scenario is replicated in Oyo state. During eleven months of Akala as governor of Oyo state before he was "elected" in 2007, immediately he took over power, he increased the state budget of ₦50 billion to ₦60 billion, with nothing to show for it. Water stopped flowing and projects were abandoned (Human Rights Watch, 2007). The implication of the gory picture painted above is that such money embezzled or misappropriated cannot be ploughed back into the economy for job provision, security, education, improved health care delivery system to mention just a few.

### **Recommendations**

In order to nip corruption in the bud or at least mitigate its effects so as to make development a priority in governance, the following measures should be strictly adhered to:

- Citizens should be sensitized towards making their political leaders accountable.
- There should be a standing rule that will compel political office holders to declare their assets before and when leaving office.
- Stiffer punishments should be meted out to any political office holder that embezzles public money and such should be barred from holding any public office in future.



- Our electoral process should be made transparent in such a way that visionless, selfish and corrupt-minded individuals will not be able to bribe their way to political office.
- There should be aggressive drive towards providing jobs for youths so that it will be difficult for them to be used as political thugs to foment violence that often paves way for electoral victory of political profiteers.
- Immunity clause that shields public office holders from being tried while in office should be expunged from the constitution.
- Religious bodies, school system, family systems and other social forums should be used as a framework to instil the culture of honesty, integrity, hard work and moral rectitude in the citizenry.
- Privileges attached to political offices should be reduced so as to make them less attractive.
- There is need for societal re-orientation in such a way that instead of giving honour, accolades and traditional titles to corrupt leaders as the case now, such should be treated as social outcasts, while on the other hand, honesty, transparency and accountability are rewarded.

### **Conclusion**

The work has critically analyzed corruption and leadership question in Oyo state (2003-2010). The importance of leadership in enhancing socio-economic transformation and development cannot be over-emphasized. However, a common observable trend in Oyo state is that leadership corruption has plunged the state into economic nadir. The advent of democracy in Nigeria that supposed to serve as a veritable tool for economic development and consolidation has proved the contrary. Suffice to say that rather than democracy brings joy it has brought pain; rather than democracy serves as a pedestal to a higher height, it has become a burden drawing us back; rather than democracy brings development to the front burner of governance, it has brought untold underdevelopment perpetuated under the pretext of leadership. No amount of democracy can bring about development except people in positions of authority are free from corruption; no amount of democracy can bring about societal transformation without transformational leadership. In other words, the solution to underdevelopment in Nigeria and Oyo state in particular is not just democracy or democratization it is a question of leadership.

In summary, this paper reveals that corruption takes scarce resources away from the development process and it is a symptom of visionless, selfish and political profiteers parading the corridor of power which is very injurious to democracy. Hence our electoral process should be over-hauled so that it can provide convenient platform for visionary, effective, selfless, dynamic and people-oriented leaders to take over power.

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