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# LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN NIGERIA: THE BASIS FOR DEMOCRATIC DIVIDENDS

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### Abstract

*Government at any level and in any society is geared towards providing quality service to the people. A good number of scholars have argued that development in any nation is a function of a leadership that subscribes to the principle of accountability in government at various levels. In Nigeria, this has not been so, as the leadership has not been able to provide the citizens with the much needed democratic dividends. This paper is aimed at examining leadership and accountability as they relate to the provisions of democratic dividends in Nigeria, with particular reference to the management of public resources. It employed the methodology of historical research which involves the use of secondary data from relevant books, journals, internet resources, magazines and newspapers. The study observed that since 1999, democratic dividends seem to have eluded Nigerians. More importantly, that corruption inhibits good governance and by extension the spread of the dividends of democracy. The paper concludes that for the living standards of Nigerians to be enhanced, by the way of provision of democracy dividends, there is need to enforce strict compliance of public officials to the rules governing the management of public resources, thereby curbing corruption. This paper thus recommended among other things, that Nigerians will earn the dividends of democracy when the power elites become completely subject to the powers of the electorates and consequently act only in accordance to their will. The reinforcement of the existing anti-corruption mechanisms in the country as well as the fact that the political leaders should be held accountable through their campaign promises and party manifesto are also recommended.*

Keywords: Accountability, Democratic-dividends, Government, Leadership.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Democratic governments and legitimate systems all over the world concerns, centre around providing welfare and basic necessities that will make life easier and prepare its citizens for the challenges of nation building. Therefore, Government at any level and in any society including Nigeria is geared towards providing quality service to people. This is the pattern of Democratic governance. Not just providing such services, also ensuring that the people get carried along in the process of service delivery; this is indeed the very essence of democracy. In 1999, when Nigeria, embarked upon the journey of democracy, the expectations of the people from the political leaders were high. They expected all that were absent from military rule to be achieved in the new dispensation. We have to note that the last set of military rulers were disgustingly corrupt; they ran the country aground, ruined every public institution and brought untold hardship on the people, the people anticipated a resuscitation of the country's institutions left comatose by military rule, the revamping of the economy and a conspicuously palpable improvement in the quality of life. However, since 1999, the Nigerian state seems not to enjoy the dividends of democracy. This is because, the state called Nigeria had been ravaged by many factors, which include poor leadership and improper accountability by the leaders at all levels of government.

Prior to the inauguration of the 4<sup>th</sup> Republic in 1999, Nigeria had practiced democracy between 1960 – 1966 (The Parliamentary System), the Second Republic from 1979 – 1983 (The Presidential System). In each of the occasions, the administrations were terminated by the military regimes. They (the Military) have advanced reasons for the takeover of the government from the civilians. In summary, the military top brass have blamed the political leadership for the takeover Ubani, Ehiodo and Nwaorgu (2013). During elections, the citizens entrust governmental powers to the political leaders in both legislative and executive branches. Their aspirations are that the leadership will provide the basic necessity of life, as well as other democratic dividends. Oftentimes, most political leaders in Nigeria had failed to appreciate that governance is a position of trust and all those holding governmental positions at all levels should be trusted by the electorates/or citizens based on their exemplary leadership and proper accountability, while in the office. In practice, the electorates that voted these public officers into position of trust are often times, disenchanted by the actions or inactions of the political leaders over the years. The political leaders have failed to account for the huge resources which are endowed within the country. The citizens who voted them into power had hopes and aspirations. However, the political leadership over the years have failed in their own part of the social contract.

But with the democratic rule in Nigeria from 1999 till date certain questions need to be answered: Will the Nigerian people testify to any meaningful development that has brought about any positive change in their lives? Have they reaped any meaningful dividends of democracy? Is their will at the polls true reflection of their leaders and representatives? Are their leaders and representatives' performance anything to hail up about? And have they held the trust invested on them sincerely? These and more are the questions we need to ask, as a way of finding out if indeed Nigerians enjoy the benefit of democratic values. Again, this paper seeks to explain why democratic dividends seem to have eluded Nigerians. The paper is of the

view that corruption by the political leaders inhibits good governance and by extension the spread of the dividend of democracy. The paper seeks to encourage policy makers in Nigeria and other African countries alike, to initiate well-defined strategies aimed at curbing corruption and underdevelopment through an effective leadership and proper accountability. It is only when this is done that Nigeria will begin to reap the dividends of democracy. Consequently, the main argument of this paper is that for Nigeria to achieve greatness and for her citizens to benefit from the much talked about dividends of democracy, suggest that she has to imbibe good leadership and proper accountability at all levels of government in the management of public resources.

The methodology employed in this paper is purely 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 become an obstacle to development in Nigeria. Thus making it difficult for Nigerians to enjoy the dividends of democratic rule. According to Osunde (1993) cited in Gberebie, Shodipo and Oviasegie (2013), 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.

This paper is divided into four parts, the first part is the ongoing introduction, second part is the conceptual clarifications, third is the discussion of the paper, the fourth is the conclusion and recommendations.

## **2.0 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS**

Here we tend to clarify the following key concepts: Leadership, Accountability and Democratic dividends.

### **2.1 LEADERSHIP EXPLAINED**

There are so many meanings associated with leadership. However, for a better understanding of the concept, we intend to identify first with what leadership is not. According to Kevin Kruse ([www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com) retrieved 24/3/2016 23:16am), he expressed what may not be seen as leadership. To him,

*Leadership has nothing to do with seniority of one's position in the hierarchy of an organisation;*

*Leadership has nothing to do with titles;*

*Leadership has nothing to do with personal attributes;*

*Leadership is not management.*

Again, Kevin Kruse listed some definitions put forward by some scholars thus:

Peter Crucher, "The only definition of a leader is someone who has followers."

Warren Bennis, "Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality."

Bill Gates, “As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others.”

John Maxwell, “Leadership is influence – nothing more, nothing less.”

There is no generally accepted definition for the term, leadership. According to Udofia (2013), this stems from the fact that the issue has always been approached from various perspectives. So what then constitutes leadership? The Collins English dictionary defines leadership as “the leader(s) of a party or group”. However, Kevin Bruse has provided a working definition of the concept: For him, “Leadership is a process of social influence, which maximized the effort of others, towards the achievement of a goal. Also, “leadership is the art of leading others to deliberately create a result that wouldn’t have happened otherwise.” In all, leadership is the ability to inspire or influence others towards the leader’s goal (c2.com/cgi-bin/wiki/whatisleadership retrieved on 24/3/2016/ 23:06). According to Steven Smith (stevenmismth.com, google on 23/3/2016 23:06am, Leadership is the ability to adapt the setting, so everyone feels empowered to contribute creatively to solving the problems. He further posits that leadership entails ability, adaptive act on people’s feeling, empowering the subjects as well as solving the problems. Leadership is said to be the ability lead, to show the way, conduct, guide and direct the course of others by going before or along with them (Iwuchukwu, 2009). This supports Arcus Dictionary that simply sees leadership as the activity of leading.

According to Alamu (2004) leadership in its simplest form is the ability to inspire, direct, motivate and encourage others positively to a targeted end. He also explains that leadership has to do with organizing and adequately coordinating the resource of time, relationship, skills, expertise and finance to achieve a goal for the common good of all (Alamu 2004; Udofia 2013). This is why Udofia (2013) rightly posits that;

*For any organization, association, institution or nation to succeed in whatever it set out to accomplish, there must be a good leader. The quality of leadership in any organization affects to a large extent the success or failure of that organization.*

### **2.1.1 LEADERSHIP: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Research has shown that 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 (Gberevbie, Shodipo and Oviasogie 2013). These theories include authentic, path-goal, inspirational, visionary, charismatic, transformational, transactional, complexity, distributing, contingency, trait and situational leadership (Avolio et al, 2009, Juada 2010b; Gberevbie 2011).

According to Harlog and Koopman (2001), these theories ‘attempt to explain how certain leaders are able to achieve extraordinary levels of the following – 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 (Gbervbie, Shopido and Oviasogie 2013, Luthans and Avolio 2003; Kuada 2010b). The main argument of the theory is that authentic leaders, whether at the organization 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 (Gberevbie, Shodipo and Oviasogie 2013; Avolio et al 2009; Kuada 2010b). Often times, leaders with traits of character such as transparency, honesty and accountability tend to motivate people to share information of an organization or nation's quest for enhanced development (Gbervbie, Shodipo and Ovaisogie 2013; Kuada 2010b). Therefore, we are of the view that for any meaningful development to occur in organization or nation there must be an authentic leader. According to Gbervbie, Shodipo and Oviasogie (2013), where a nation lacks authentic leader it is bound to face challenges in its endeavours to develop. Here Avolio et al has captured it thus,

*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 view points 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 (Gberavibie, Shodipo and Oviagogie 2013, Avolia et al 2004).*

Leadership is an essential ingredient to the realization of organization or national goals (Ujo 1995; Klenke 2007; Otinche 2007; Kuada 2010a). This is because "a leader steers members of a group towards a goal (Brymam, 1992). Also Kuada (2010a,) rightly asserts that "leaders articulate vision, encourage innovative thinking and motivate individuals and groups to exert themselves beyond the normal call of duty." Again, Maxwell (1995) has re-emphasized the importance of leadership for development. For him, "everything rises and falls on leadership." He further posits that "the strength of an organization is a direct result of the strength organizations." No wonder, Otinche 2007) posits that "good leadership facilitates the process or tasks of government, which ensures social progress and stability." For instance, President Buhari during this year 2016 Muslim Ramadan fast had acknowledged that leadership in any society entails accepting responsibility. According to him, the period provides them the needed consciousness of what leaders at every level ought to do. Furthermore, he stated that leading the people is not a joke. It means accepting responsibilities for good or wrong in the society (Linda Ikeji Blog retrieved 22/6/16 18:45am).

## **2.2 ACCOUNTABILITY**

Webster's Dictionary defines "Accountability" as the quality or state of being accountable, an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility for one's action; from the above therefore, we need to note certain key elements from the definition to include: Quality, obligation, willingness and responsibility. In other words, Accountability emphasizes the ability to prevent something from going wrong. Put differently, Accountability is about high performance and not fear or stress. According to Moller (2007), Accountability means having to answer one's actions and

particularly the results of those actions. Reyes (2006) sees it as part of leadership roles. To him, accountability is the acknowledgement and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, decisions, and policies including the administration, governance and implementation within the scope or role of employment position, encompassing the obligation to report, explain and be answerable for resulting consequences. Again Clarence (1939) views the concept from the standpoint of ethics and governance. He summed it up by stating that accountability is answerability, blame worthiness, liability and expectation of account-giving. There are different dimensions of viewing accountability. Here, Jabbra and Dwivedi (1989) have identified eight (8) types of accountability namely moral, administrative, political, managerial, market, legal/judicial, constituency relations and professional.

However, leadership accountability cuts across many of these distinctions. Leadership is a necessary factor in every sphere of life, especially at the political level, where decisions and actions affect the entire members of a nation. In this paper, our emphasis is on political and constituency relations, type of accountability which concerns being responsible to the mandate and functions of that government, civil servants and politicians to public and to legislative bodies such as national assembly at the centre or the various 36 states of House of Assemblies. It may also mean that one is being reasonable towards the local community of which one is a part. For instance, in Nigeria, every four years, we change our leadership in both the executive and legislative branches. When the political leaders are voted into power, the political leadership is meant to manage and allocate the nation's resources within the stipulated period. Here Agba et al (2008) posit that "accountability demands that the public should know when money came into government treasury and how the money was used". Therefore, it beholds on them to account for their stewardship on or before the expiration of their tenure. This may be through town hall meetings or tangible manifestation of democracy dividends. This goes to support the view held in the business dictionary, that the obligation of an individual or organization for them, and to disclose the results in a transparent manner ([www.businessdictionary.com](http://www.businessdictionary.com) retrieved on 24/3/2016, 11:26am).

### **2.3 DEMOCRATIC DIVIDENDS**

In contemporary societies like ours - Nigeria, the general assumption is that democracy has a central goal or role to play, in the development of the society. Simply put, the goal is to bring about some form of dividends to the citizens in a given society just as the shareholders expect dividend from their investment in a firm. Since democracy is about the people, therefore, their wishes and aspirations, should form part of the dividends of democracy. Ultimately, their concern is simply how democracy can bring about development in the society through good governance: Again, it suffices that democratic dividend is based on the social contract usually entered between the electorates and the political leaders that are voted into power every four years, as the case of Nigeria. The paper is of the view that democratic dividend is largely seen as the expectations of the people from the leaders they voted into power. In Nigeria for instance, the expectations include but not limited to the following:

- Protection of lives and property

- Maintenance of law and order
- Participation in the global peace efforts.
- Provisions of basic necessities of life (food, clothing and shelter)
- Provision of infrastructure facilities.
- Provision of health and educational facilities at both urban and rural areas.
- Provision of gainful employment opportunities.
- Provision of the enabling environment for private and public businesses to flourish.
- Provision of fundamental human rights of our citizens as enshrined in the federal constitution.

## 2.4 LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

In this section, we tend to discuss leadership and accountability in Nigeria, from 1999 to 2015. However, we need to find out what has the Nigerian leadership done in response to the societal challenges and their statutory obligations as stated above, which if fulfilled becomes democratic dividends. But with democratic rule in Nigeria from 1999, will the Nigerian people testify to any meaningful change in their lives? Have they reaped any meaningful dividends of democracy? Is their will at the electoral polls a true reflection of their leaders and representatives? Are their leaders and representatives performance anything to hail up about? And have they held the trust invested on them sincerely? Answering these questions will perhaps help us to analyze issues leading to leadership and accountability. Recent reports show that despite Nigeria's plentiful resources and oil wealth, she is considered as one of the 20 poorest countries in the world, with over 70 per cent of its population classified as poor and with 35 per cent of these people living in absolute poverty. This is in agreement with McNamara. A former World bank President, who sees absolute poverty as a condition of life, so characterized by malnutrition, illiteracy, disease, squalid surroundings, high mortality and low life expectancy (McNamara 1978, cited in Ubani et al (2013). Also, reports indicate that 59,000 women die during or soon after childbirth every year. This ratio is the second highest in the world after India. In this paper, we rely on the argument put forward by Ademolekun (2005) that a government is accountable when its leaders are responsive in dealing with these expectations which the electorates had in mind before voting them into positions of authority. 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. Based on the views of Ademolekun, therefore accountability of our leadership in Nigeria will largely depend on the responses to problems and challenges of the society such as:

- Health challenges (HIV/AIDS, Lassa Fever, Child/Maternal Mortality, Ebola Virus, Zika Virus etc).
- Insecurity challenges arising from Boko Haram in the North Easter Nigeria, militancy in southern states, political killings in Nigeria, especially in Rivers State, the Fulani Herdsmen/Farmers clash across the federation over issue relating to grazing.
- The falling standard of Education at all levels.

- Increase in crime rate such as prostitution, kidnapping for ransom, armed robbery, child trafficking, cyber crime.
- Poor state of infrastructure.
- Poor leadership response to the principle of rule.

In the same vein, Gregory (2007) hold 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”. For example, the Nigerian constitution provides the legislative powers and control over public funds in sections 80 (1-4), 81 (1-4) and Sections 82, 83 (1-2) respectively, so for proper accountability the Federal executive ought to present an annual budget of the entire federation to the National Assembly in order to achieve the purpose of providing good governance to the people. Therefore, good leadership and proper accountability suggest that, the budget should provide for a well-defined time frame for its implementation, amount allocated to each Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), the contractors/or officers that ought to execute each of the projects and the mechanism to determine whether those projects were actually executed through the process of project evaluation.

As Nina (2003) puts it, “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.” Let us use the 2012 and 2013 national budget to support that in Nigeria, there is poor leadership and non-accountability in the budget process. In 2012, the national budget as presented in December 2011, showed that recurrent expenditure accounted for 71.5 percent or NGN 2.47 trillion (USD 15.94 billion) of the total national budget of NGN 4.697 trillion (USD 30,303 billion) and capital expenditure accounted for 28.53 percent (Ameh and Josiah 2001). In 2013, national budget as presented to the National Assembly in October 2012 by former President Goodluck Jonathan, the recurrent expenditure accounted for 68.7 percent of NGN 2.41 trillion, of a total (USD 15.55 billion) while capital accounted for 31.34 percent of NGN 1.54 trillion (USD 6.93 billion) of the total national budget, and government intends to borrow NGN 7.27 billion (USD 4.69 billion) to finance its deficit in 2013 (Nzeshi and Ogbodo, 2012). Using the data presented above, it shows that within the period under review, the political leaders have failed to render proper account to the electorates that voted them into power. In fact, the Nigerian government’s dismal effort at achieving development and the poor management of the resources by most public officials in the country are to the detriment of the people. Take for instance, a situation where the government spends more on recurrent than capital expenditure in the budget, the tendency therefore, is for development to stagnate, thereby negatively affecting the living standards of the people. In the world best practices, it does not show good leadership nor proper accountability on the part of the political class. As part of the accountability process, the National Assembly ought to have questioned the executive branch on how they intend to finance its deficit as recorded in those budgets as well as ensure that the national budget reflects the aspirations of the people.



Another instance of poor management of public resources is in the area of privatization of public enterprises. For example, the Nigerian senate as part of their oversight functions constituted an Adhoc Committee to investigate the transactions of the Bureau of Public Enterprises that acted on behalf of the Federal Government of Nigeria. The committee in a celebrated case, discovered that the Aluminum Smelter Company of Nigeria (ASCON) at Ikot Abasi, Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria whose construction was completed by the Federal Government in 1997 with a 540 mega watts capacity electricity power plant for USD 3.2 billion, was valued by the Nigerian Bureau of Public Enterprises in-house consultants for USD 250 million and was eventually sold to a Russian company for a mere USD 130 million in 2010 (Philips 2011). This shows insensitive and ineffective leadership on the part of the executive, while the legislative that investigated the bureau did nothing to that effect. Neither did they account to the citizens the reasons for the under-pricing of the firm which was built through the taxpayers money nor did they terminate the sale. Another case of accountability and transparency of public officials in the management of nations resources occurred again in 2005, when the government of former President Olusegun Obasanjo (1999 – 2007) gave out USD 2 billion to the defunct National Political Reform Conference (NPRC) comprising 398 delegates without recourse or the approval of the National Assembly (Yunusa 2009, Oloyede 2014, Owele 2016). To show lack of poor leadership, the amount spent by the committee was not captured in the 2005 national budget. Neither the committee nor the presidency after the exercise rendered proper account. At the end of the exercise, it was deemed to be a failure, according to Prof. Ishag. Oloyede, a Co-chair of the 2005 conference on April 23, 2014 admitted that the conference was a failure, due to the fact that the Nigerian National Assembly was not carried along by the executive arm while initiating the programme. This goes to support the view that in Nigeria, the leadership lacks the needed impetus to propel the society for effective followership. This is because, if the political leadership under Obasanjo had envisaged the need to amend the constitution, they should have carried the legislature along. Moreover, since it is the right of the National Assembly to carry out any amendment to the nation's constitution. Again, the leadership of Goodluck Jonathan in 2014 organized yet another National Conference, aimed at amending the federal constitution. By that time, his administration ended, the report of the conference had been thrown away by the successive government of President Buhari. This goes to show inept Nigerian leaders are. It is important to note that the National Assembly has the sole right to amend the constitution with the various state legislature. Again, the constitution empowers them to allocate funds for any government business. Yet due to poor leadership they were not carried along ([www.nav.com](http://www.nav.com). Retrieved on 1/4/2016 12.15am). the fund used to prosecute the failed reform, which was mainly aimed at achieving third term for political leadership then would have been used to provide lots of infrastructure for the teeming population. Also, the political elites in Nigeria have failed to lead the people right. A good example is the poor management of resources, which was evident in the importation of goods that ought to have been produced in the country. For instance, between January and March 2011 alone, even though the country is a leading member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), she imported refined petroleum products to the tune of USD 1.34 billion or NGN 201 billion (Omoh, 2011). In agriculture, our leaders refused to launch

a road map for increased agriculture production so as to safeguard food sufficiency for the nation.

According to Mr. Audu Ogbeh, the incumbent Nation's Agriculture and Rural Development Minister, the high cost of food is because over the past 30 years, Nigeria migrated completely from culture of food production to food importation (Naij.com. retrieved 9/6/2016 14:10pm), thus depleting the country's external reserves. Some schools of thought believe that the youth restiveness is largely caused by hunger and starvation raving the society.

The argument here, is that if there was a good leadership and if the political leadership were accountable to the people, that is, by doing according to expectations of the citizens that voted them into power, such funds would have been used to build more oil and gas facilities, as well as make investment in agricultural production and agricultural business across the states of the federation.

Another example of poor leadership and insensitivity on the part of our political leaders since the birth of the fourth republic, can be seen from the deplorable state of the federal roads in Nigeria. Using the deteriorating condition of federal roads in Abia State, such as Aba – Ikot Ekpene, Bende – Ohafia – Arochukwu, Umuahia – Ikot Ekpene, Azumnini – Ikparakwa, Aba end of the Port-Harcourt Enugu Expressway and Aba-Port Harcourt Road in the heart of Enyimba city. To support this view, the state Governor Dr. Okezie Ikpeazu had appealed to President Muhammadu Buhari to urgently intervene by fixing the road before the state is cut off from the rest of the country (Iheaka and Kalu 2016). The Abia State example cuts across almost all federal roads in the country. Yet funds are usually allocated to fix these roads annually.

### **3.0 CORRUPTION AMONGST PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

One of the major obstacles to development or dividend of democracy since the inception of the fourth republic in Nigeria is corruption amongst public officials at all levels of governments. Adebayo (2004) laments that the rate at which Nigerian leaders are perpetrating corrupt practices is terrible. He explains "the looting of the nation's treasury by these unpatriotic and infidels leaders has contributed to the high rate at which Nigerians are languishing in abject poverty" (Adebayo, 2004). For example, within a span of 20 years, the country earned a total of USD 300 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, Ikelegbe, 2004). According to Nnabuife (2010), cited in Gbervbie, Shodipo and Oviasogie (2013), the Nigerian situation is that corrupt practices emanates from the top? "When the overall always afraid of reporting s unethical activities...., the reporting officer may be transferred if he/she is seen as an obstacle (Nnabuife 2010)." Since 1999, there are reported cases of corruption at all levels of government. Here, we tend to mention some of these cases which include:

- i. The National Identity Card Project (NICP), initiated by President Olusegun Obasanjo was ravaged by corrupt practices. The Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) in 2003, reported that about USD 240 million was mismanaged in a contract scan involving some top government officials, which included the then minister of Internal Affairs, Chief

S. M. Afolabi, Dr. Okwesilieze Nwodo then Secretary-General and later Chairman of People's Democratic Party (PDP) who received USD113,000 as the link person between the Nigerian business partner of the firm. Husseini Akwanga, the then Permanent Secretary in the Federal Ministry of Inland Affairs, who received US D30,000 and Alhaji Yayala Ahmed the then Head of Service of the Federation, who got US D250,000 to mention but a few. He was charged for receiving USD 345,000 as an inducement to obtain his ministry support to enable a company, Sagem S.A. of France, to executive the contract. Against a lower bid from the Nigerian Security, Printing and Minting Company (NSPMC) that handles all the printing of Nigeria's security jobs, (Onah 2009).

- ii. In 2003, the ICPC operatives revealed a scam in the contract awarded to Solgas Energy Limited at the cost of USD 3.6 billion, for the construction of Ajaokuta Steel Company Limited in Kogi State, Nigeria. However, the actual cost for the work is estimated at USD 1.5 billion, thus giving a contract inflation of USD 2.1 billion, Onah (2009). This is a project that was initiated prior to the second Republic. Yet the political class have underestimated the multiplier effect of this project to the Nigerian economy.
- iii. In Taraba State, Rev. Jolly Nyame, who was the state Chief Executive was charged by EFCC for illegally withdrawing NGN 285 million or USD 1.8 million of public funds between March 2003 and March 2007 which would have been used to develop the state (Musasi and Agbana 2012).
- iv. Between 2003 and 2012, former top government officials from across the states whose cases have either been delayed or totally abandoned by the government arising from the inability of the Attorney General of the Federation (AGF) powers to initiate prosecution include former governors, Senator Abdullahi Adamu of Nasarawa State, Chief Achike Udenwa of Imo State, Dr. Peter Odili of Rivers State, Chief Lucky Igbinadion of Edo State, Chief Orji Uzo Kalu of Abia State, Chief James Ibori of Delta State, Chief Ikedi Ohakim of Imo State, Mr. Boni Haruna and Murtala Nyako of Adamawa State, Chief Ayo Fayose of Ekiti State and former Speaker, Federal House of Representatives, Mr. Dimeji Bankole (Adegbamigbe, 2007, Ayorinde and Orilade 2007; UtomWem 2010).
- v. There is also the case of Colonel Sambo Dansuki, the former National Security adviser (NSA) to former President Goodluck Jonathan, who is currently standing prosecution with others for illegally spending USD 2.1 Billion, being amount budgeted for the procurement of arms for the Nigerian military to fight Boko Haram in the North Eastern states of Adamawa, Taraba, Yobe, Borno, Gombe and Bauchi. The question we ought to ask our political leaders is how comes the National Assembly nor the Presidency did not notice this scam prior to this period.

However, due to poor leadership and improper accountability, most of the former public officers mentioned in the item IV above have either been previously appointed as federal ministers, or elected into the National Asembly, within the period under review. To showcase the magnitude of corruption in the nation's public sector, the Federal Government under the

leadership of President Buhari, revealed that a total of NGN 116.2 billion cash and 239 property were recovered from corrupt public officials at interim base. The said amounts were illegally stolen from government treasury. Below is the details of cash, assets seized in Nigeria and overseas

**Fig. (i) Recoveries under interim forfeiture:**

S/N	Items	Naira	US Dollar	GB Pounds	Euro
1	EFCC Cash at hand	39,169,911,023.00	128,494,076.66	2,355	11,250
2	Royalty/tax/payment to FGN account in JP Morgan account New York	4,642,958,711.48	40,727,253.65		
3	ONSA Funds Recovery Account in CBN	5,665,305,527.41	8,000,000.00		
4	VAT recovered from companies by ONSA	529,588,293.47			
5	EFCC Recovered Funds Account in CBN	19,267,730,359.36	455,253.80		
6	ICPC Revenue Collection Recovery in CBN	869,957,444.89			
7	Office of the Attorney General	5,500,000,000	5,500,000		
8	DSS Recoveries	47,707,000.5	1,943,000.5	3,506,000.46	
9	ICPC Cash Asset Recovery	2,632,196,271.71			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>78,325,354,631.82</b>	<b>185,119,584.61</b>	<b>3,508,355.46</b>	<b>11,250</b>

*Source: SUNDAY SUN June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Volume 13 No. 685*

**Fig. 2: Recoveries under Interim Forfeiture**

Serial	Jurisdiction	US Dollar	GB Pounds	Euro
1	Switzerland	32,000,000		
2	UK		6,900,000	
3	UAE			11,826.11
4	USA	6,225.1		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>321,316,726.1</b>	<b>6,900,000</b>	<b>11,826.11</b>

*Source: SUNDAY SUN June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Volume 13 No. 685*

**Fig. 3: Non Cash Recoveries**

	Items	Quantity		
		ICPC	EFCC	ONSA
1	Farmlands	22		
2	Plots of land	4		
3	Uncompleted Buildings	1		
4	Completed Buildings	33	145	4
5	Vehicles	22	3	
6	Maritime Vessels		5	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>4</b>

**Source: SUNDAY SUN June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Volume 13 No. 685**

#### **4.0 EFFECT OF POOR LEADERSHIP AND LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY IN NIGERIA**

Nigeria is a country that is richly blessed in all ramifications, she is the sixth largest exporter of crude oil in the world, first in Africa and the seventh nation with the greatest natural reserve, she has been earning huge revenue from oil since post independence. Over 70% of the citizens are living on a dollar per day (Umejesi, 2007). Many of her citizens no doubt are languishing in abject poverty due to poor leadership style. One major effect of poor leadership in Nigeria is underdevelopment. As a term underdevelopment describes a country or society which has few industries and low standard of living (Wehmeier, 2000). There is no doubt that in Nigeria poor leadership has bred underdevelopment which is largely seen in the ravaging poverty and other related social ills like human and drug trafficking, prostitution, armed robbery, kidnapping, unemployment and decay in infrastructure. For example, the militants in the Niger Delta area and the Boko Haram insurgency, who have been slowing or stopping the growth of the nation's economy today, are as a result of bad leadership.

The economic inequality occasioned by failure of leadership, has a severe effect on health both of children and adults. According to a World Health Organization (WHO) report covering 2011 – 2015 in May 2016, 3000 cities in 103 countries were clinically scanned and 20 emerged as the most polluted in the world. Among the 20 were 4 Nigerian cities and among the 4 cities were Aba and Umuahia respectively. The health implications include among others poor air quality level, thus an increasing risk of being afflicted by lung cancer, stroke, heart disease, chronic and acute respiratory diseases such as asthma. (Thisday, Sunday May 22, 2016). In Nigeria, one fifth dies before the age of five, primarily from diseases such as malaria, measles, diarrhoea and pneumonia (United States Census Bureau). Only 2% of rural Nigerians and 52% of Urban Nigerians have access to health care due to the distances from clinic or inability to pay bills (World Health organization). Most Nigerian people who do not have connections with political class are continuing to live in hardship and uncertain future, poverty, maternal deaths, unemployment, insecurity, underpayment, corruption, rigging of elections, lack of electricity, good drinking water and roads. Again, owing to bad leadership, the nation is suffering enormously at the hands of the economic meltdown, where the leaders cannot save the huge revenue from oil and gas for a rainy day. There is uneven dispensation of resources, health and

environmental hazards, wealth and power are unevenly distributed in the Nigerian society. As a result, a vast majority of Nigerian society struggle to earn a living and many cannot afford a meal per day.

Thus, Nigeria can be described as a country of two cities, one for the overwhelming majority of the poor and the other for the affluent parasitic class of past and present rulers and their cronies (Adebayo, 2004). Also, Adebayo (ibid) has posited that the superiority complex of Nigerian leaders is seen in their none patronage of the nation's hospitals for their medical care and sending their children to attend educational institutions outside Nigeria. Alamu (2004) described leadership in Nigeria as a means of exploitation, personal enrichment, fulfilling parochial interests and self ambition. This is in line with Jemiriye (2004) who argued that experience within Nigeria has shown that leadership has been all kinds that include the weak, unprincipled, selfish, autocratic, dictatorial and power drunk. In fact, Grabdero (2009) posits that "one problem militating against the development of our country is leadership." He quotes the former speaker of the Federal House of Representatives and a serving Governor of Katsina State Alhaji Aminu Bello Masari as saying "our leaders have failed Nigerians, we political leaders have failed Nigeria, we political leaders have failed to conduct ourselves in a manner befitting of the various offices we hold in trust, the attainment of peace, order and good governance". Lamenting the negative effect of corruption on development in the different sectors of the Nigerian economy, former President (1999 – 2007) and elder statesman, 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 procedure 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 of a myriad of conducts previously considered abominable (cited in Onah, 2009).*

The above shows that leadership and accountability problems account for the inability of citizens to enjoy democracy dividends in Nigeria. A country that is under-developed is over managed and under-led. This implies that there is non visible proof of the utilization of the revenue or benefits derive from the resource. Ideally, true leadership must be for the benefits of the led or followers not for the enrichment of the leaders. Presently, we may argue here, that there is little or no dividend of democracy in Nigeria. Because the elected and government officials remain scornful of the will of the people, for example, through the institutionalized agency of electoral fraud, the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) have stubbornly refused to allow election results to reflect the electoral choices of Nigerian citizens, as expressed through the ballot box. A case in point is the nullification of electoral results in Rivers State House of Assembly elections by the Court of Appeal, where 19 seats in the State Assembly were nullified by the Court of Appeal, 3 Senate seats cancelled and 8 Federal House seats nullified.

More importantly, equating physical development in some case with dividends of democracy could result in disregarding the more important aspect of democracy and by extension accepting any form of rule, as long as it builds better roads and bridges. For us democracy is deeper than that aspect. For instance, it can reasonably be argued that freedom of expression is an aspect of dividend of democracy; after all, democracy is about people. The consistent exclusion of the people in decisions about them is undemocratic. It is at the centre of agitations that question the relevance of democracy and minimize people's stake in Nigeria. Therefore, we posit that our government cannot be democratic, if they are not about the people or for the people.

Again, we cannot be said to be enjoying the dividends of democracy, when it does not award us civil liberties which our constitution enunciates (FGN, 2010). Our leaders have refused to account for this aspect of leadership. For the people to appreciate democratic dividend, we must expand our people's right to life, to ownership of property, to participation in politics. At present, the right to security of lives and property are facing challenges in Nigeria. A good example is the menace of Boko Haram in the North East; the Fulani/Farmers battle for grazing land in the north and south divide; kidnapping and militancy etc. Therefore, if the political leadership in Nigeria is accountable to the citizens, they should be able to track it more decisively.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

This paper has examined the relationship between leadership and accountability in Nigeria. It seeks to explain why democratic dividends seem to have eluded Nigerians. It has argued that the obstacles to development in Nigeria (that is dividends of democracy) emanate from failure of leadership at various levels of government to respond adequately to challenges of the society. Therefore, the paper is of the view that it is only when our leadership respond to these challenges raving the society, that we will say that the nation has achieved democratic dividends. No wonder the famous Achebe (1983) wrote and said:

*The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership.*

It concludes that corruption inhibits good governance and by extension the spread of the dividends of democracy. If further argues that to reduce corruption, the values must change and the Nigerian people must be rearmed morally.

## THE WAY FORWARD

- Leadership and followership in Nigeria should embrace integrity, probity and high standard of self-discipline in the management of public resources.

- The war against the mismanagement of public resources and corruption amongst public officials should be reinforced, by supporting the existing anti-corruption mechanism such as the ICPC and EFCC to prosecute offenders.
- There should be a Town Hall meeting within the life span of any administration, where the citizens should assess the performance of their leaders before the expiration of their tenure.
- Political leaders should abide by their campaign promises made to the electorates, while political parties should make available their party manifestoes to the electorates before elections.
- The code of conduct/tribunal for all public officials should be strengthened with the enabling laws to punish offenders.
- There should be an independent body to examine the implementation of budgets of government at all levels, as a way to monitor the activities of Government.
- Corruption, which is the core impediment to our growth and development should be tackled aggressively under a willed and purposeful leadership.
- Nigerian leaders should embrace integrity, probity and high standards of self-discipline, in order to achieve the much talked about dividend of democracy.

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