



The Role Of Leadership Integrity In National Development Of Developing Countries: The Case Of Nigeria

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Abstract:

The paper examined the role of leadership integrity in the national development of developing countries with focus on Nigeria as a case study by identifying issues in leadership integrity and national development; investigated the link between leadership integrity and national development and also assessed the role of leadership integrity in national development. The research made use of primary and secondary data for the work where random and purposive sampling techniques were adopted in the distribution of the questionnaire which was developed along the 5 point Likert Scale technique to 136 respondents but 105 were returned out of which 94 questionnaires were found useful representing 69% of the entire respondents that cut across all sectors of Nigerian economy in three different states of the federation namely Lagos, Ogun and Osun. Data obtained from the respondents were analysed by simple percentage and illustrated by table distribution as well as using descriptive, correlation and analysis of variance at 0.01 sig. level where leadership integrity is independent variable and national development is dependent variable. It was revealed that sound ethical environment will herald leadership integrity thus leading to keeping promise and implementation of development plans with positive cumulative effect on national development. It was suggested that there should be introduction of ethical value programmes in the curriculum of studies of students at all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) to inculcate moral value system and that leadership in the country should embark on building of life styles of integrity that would take into consideration honesty, fairness, selfless service, reward for hard work, sincerity, discipline, trustworthiness and promise keeping.

Keywords: leadership, Integrity, Development, National, Environment, and Ethical value

1. Introduction

Leadership the world over is instrument par excellent for effecting national development and this explains why there are had been a remarkable attraction in ethical atmosphere for many researchers e.g (Martin and Cullen, 2006; Parboteeah and Kapp, 2008; Wimbush and Shepard, 1994; Ruppel and Harrington, 2000; Schminke, 2005) and these researchers have been eager to explore the different related issues to identify in ethical behaviour most especially about the character of leaders. Armstrong (2005) was of the opinion that The United Nations (UN) offers a unique and vantage point which to view development in the administration around the globe vis-a-vis integrity, transparency and accountability. Integrity is honesty or trustworthiness in the discharge of official duties, serving as an antithesis to corruption or the abuse of office while national development is national development can be explained to mean totality of improvement in collective and concrete terms across socio – economic, political, technology as well as religion and is best achieved through strategies mapped out by government as contained in the nation development plans (Oginni, 2012). The implication therefore, is that the overall development that will cut across the environment should be rooted in leadership integrity to give room to transparency and accountability thus heralding public trust and cumulate to national development. The choice of leadership should not be accidental; it should be a deliberate preparation. The task of preparing individuals to assume leadership role in the developing countries like ours must consequently entail devising ways and means of imprinting on potential leaders certain qualities of leadership (humility, honesty, vision, patriotism, fairness, commitment, firmness, integrity, values and morals) apart from establishing the criteria for identifying such individuals (Obasanjo, 1991).

1.1. Statement Of The Problem

No matter how effective a system itself may be, in the final analysis it is the people who work within the system that provide the key element to determine its success. The people can make meaningful impact if they are encouraged and developed in ways that will support ethical behaviours through delivery and sustenance of integrity. By the passage of time, the environment is becoming more complex and still there is a regular change in its behaviour which gave rise to ethical challenges and threats therein. The ethical and unethical leaders are ever there since the evolution of the humanity which are becoming the most critical factors for the development of any country (Samir and Yameen, 2012). One major issue that cannot be swept under the carpet is the lack of continuous expose to

leadership challenges and their consequences in respect of ethical and unethical behaviour of leaders. The challenges as well as the consequences are multi-dimensional most especially in the developing countries of which Nigeria is one of them which can be linked to various crises ravaging the country at the moment. However, where the people working in a system in a given environment are without or weak in integrity, lack strengths and Will to be decisive, lack commitment to ethical behaviour, what kind of leadership would emerge in this type of situation and what would be the implication on the nature of development of such environment. Hence, a study into the role of leadership integrity in national development of developing countries with respect to Nigeria.

1.2.Objective Of The Study

In the context of this research work, the main objective is to investigate the role of leadership integrity in national development. Other objectives the researchers developed to achieve the main objective are to:

- identify elements of leadership integrity and national development
- investigate the link between leadership integrity and national development
- assess the role of leadership integrity in national development

1.3.Research Questions

The following research questions were considered in order to give direction to the research work;

- What are the elements of leadership integrity and national development?
- Is there any link between leadership integrity and national development?
- What are roles of leadership integrity in national development?

1.4.Significance Of The Study

It is significant by providing information on knowledge that will create awareness on the impact of leadership integrity on national development through development of ethical standards for leadership in all sectors of the economy that will invariably transcend regional, national, professional, institutional as well as continental borders. Exposing the evils brought by instituting unethical standards through leaders without integrity.

1.5 Limitation Of The Study

The research work is limited to Nigeria as the developing country and the scope of the work covers leadership and national development however emphasis is placed on integrity aspect of ethical behaviour of leadership. Middle and senior managers were made used as the respondents in the research work as junior staff and those without adequate work experience were ignored because majority were not playing active role in the decision making process and educational level was also took into consideration.

2. Literture Review

2.1. Leadership Integrity

In an attempt to arrive at a conventional understanding of what leadership is all about, different scholars had postulated theories as well as conception to illustrate this such as Traits, Behavioural and Contingency theories; X and Y by McGregor, Managerial grid by Blake and Mouton, Hersey- Blanchard model, Tannenbaum and Schmidt model as well as Adair's Action centred model (Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Brown and Trevin'o, 2006; Luthans and Avolio, 2003; Walumbwa etal, 2008). The focus of it all is that in leadership there is followership that tends to lean towards the dictate of the environment. Integrity is one of the elements of ethical behaviours imbibed through ethical values therefore leadership integrity is truthfulness, probity, impartiality, fairness, honesty on the part of a leader without prejudice to any party. When populace are talking about leadership their focus is always on good leadership who is strong in ethical behaviours in day to day running of affairs, handles situation ethically and exceedingly productive (Ciulla, 1995).

2.1.1. Leadership And Integrity

There had been a lot of arguments on leadership and integrity. Some were of the opinion that for any leader to function effectively in whatever capacity, there need for integrity while some were in different dimension. The works of Covey (1992) supported the view that leaders need integrity to function effectively with an example "followers of leaders without integrity sense the leaders' duplicity and become guarded" and says followers of leaders with integrity confided and willing to be associated because integrity allows honestly matching words and feelings with thoughts and actions, with no desire other than for the good of others, thus encouraging principle-centred leadership. Gardner

(1993) supported this, on account that leaders need to demonstrate trust and reliability because people cannot rally round a leader if they do not know where he or she stands. Kerr (1984) supported by Yukl and Van Fleet (1990) added another dimension by listing ten values of integrity that would assist a leader to deliver and excel in leadership position to include; tell the truth; obey the law; reduce ambiguity; show concern for others; accept responsibility; practice participation, not paternalism; provide freedom from corrupting influences; always act; provide consistency across cases; and providing consistency between values and actions. Other works include that of (Beckers, 1998; Badaracco and Ellsworth, 1990; Srivastva, 1988; Simons, 1999; Kaptein, 2003; Morrison, 2001; Morgan, 1993; Trevino, Brown and Hartman, 2003).

The other proponents that were of the opinion that the lack of integrity is not a criterion to determine leadership functionality argued this from the Machiavellian views (1469-1527) which was of the opinion that the justifies the means. Machiavelli eloquently described this when he said “a prince who desires to maintain his position must learn to be not always good, but to be so or not as needs may require” similar to is that “the principal foundations of all states are good laws and good arms; and there cannot be good laws where there are not good arms” and “as a prince must be able to act just like a beast, he should learn from the fox and the lion; because the lion does not defend himself against traps, and the fox does not defend himself against wolves so one has to be a fox in order to recognize traps, and a lion to frighten off wolves”. His best-known work, *The Prince*, describes cunning and unscrupulous methods for rulers to gain and keep power. However, the work of Jackall (1988) supported that stand of Machiavelli by demonstrating convincingly that success can be obtained through actions that seem to lack integrity, such as not taking responsibility for failure and taking credit for successes one had barely anything to do with. Adeosun and Oyewale, (2010) also supported this by drawing inference from the Biblical Jacob who got his brother’s blessings and birthright thus, becoming a pillar in the history of great men in religion circle. Hooijberg and Choi (2000) lend their voice to this through analogical behaviour in public and private sectors. To them the bosses of managers in both public and private sectors primarily associate goal achievement oriented behaviours with effectiveness without reference to mentoring.

2.2.National Development

Development in the views of Obasanjo and Mabogunje (1991) is change or transformation into a better state. In the past, it was narrowly described and confined to

increase in Gross Domestic Product (GPD). Today, emphasis is on the contents of the GDP as well as other indicators of the quality of life. The indicators include infant mortality, maternal mortality rate, shifts in social status, employment opportunities, life expectancy, decrease in fertility as well as housing, water supply, nutrition, education etc (Akanji and Akosile, 2001). In a nutshell, development now place emphasis on people as the object of attention, it has gone beyond normal growth in the volume of goods and commodities. This notion was supported by Chrisman (1984) in Lawal and Abe (2011) that development is a process of societal advancement where improvement in the well being of people are generated through strong partnerships between all sectors, corporate bodies and other groups in the society. Evolving from the meaning of development, national development can be explained to mean totality of improvement in collective and concrete terms across socio – economic, political, technology as well as religion and is best achieved through strategies mapped out by government as contained in the nation development plans (Oginni, 2012). Consequently there had equally been a lot of theories on development such as modernisation, dependency, basic needs, sustainable livelihood, liberal, radical and classical economic theories, (Akanji and Akosile, 2001).

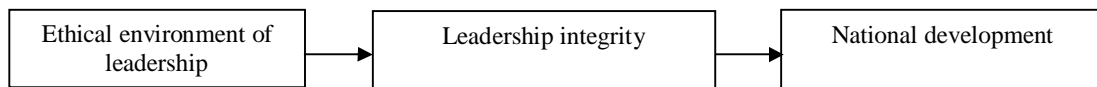
Since independence in the year 1960, successive governments have made frantic efforts towards concrete development by put in place series of plans. The first national development plan policy was designed to cover 1962-1968 and focus was on health, education and employment. The second national development plan policy to cover 1970-1974 and priority was on agriculture, industry, transport, manpower, defence, electricity, water supply, communication and provision of social services. The third national development plan policy to cover 1975-1980 and emphasis was on rural development and agricultural sector. The fourth national development plan policy to cover 1981-1985 has focus on employment generation, improving standard of living, even distribution of income among individuals and socio-economic groups (Ogwumike, 1995). Aside these national development plan policies, there had been other strategies such as Green Revolution, Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Economic Stabilisation Acts popularly known as austerity measures, Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) each deriving their names from what they were designed to achieve (Akanji and Akosile, 2001), Vision 2010 and Seven Point Agenda with Vision 2020. In spite of series of development strategies put in by successive governments with good intentions to generate and create meaningful developments, the current state of developments in the country is far from this and the

reason is not far-fetched because of high level of corruption and indiscipline exhibited due to lack of integrity on the part of the leadership of the country (Oginni, 2012)

2.3. Leadership And Development

Leadership is the gateway to national development; this is so because the focus of development is reduction of poverty, wealth creation and equitable distribution of wealth, ensuring nutrition and health, housing and ancillary, social security and welfare (Agaboh, 2010). It entails building capacities to advance material and human capital for effective production of goods and services that would enhance quality of life to the extent that a free democratic society, a just and egalitarian society, a united, strong and self reliant nation is built (Agba et al, 2010; Akanji and Akosile, 2001). It is therefore crystal clear that all these inherent elements of development can never be achieved or brought to reality without leadership. It is a leader that will develop network of activities through the people and set direction through creation of vision, goal setting, formulate strategy, mobilise people, manage change, value promotion, develop other people, strategic problem solving and decision making (Oginni, 2011). Leadership integrity is paramount to the national development to usher in maximum improvement in material, social, cultural and political well being of society. In the works of Wooden (2003) through the role of integrity as a mediator in strategic leadership buttress this stand and so also is the work of Simeon (1999).

From the review, the below diagram depicts all the deductions with respect to input and output of behavioural pattern.



From the above emerge two different hypotheses

- H1: Leadership integrity has positive relationship with national development
- H2: Ethical environment has positive relationship with leadership integrity and national development.

3. Methodology

The research made use of primary and secondary data for the work. Questionnaire was designed and administered to 136 respondents from which 105 were retrieved but 94 questionnaires were found useful representing 69% of the entire respondents that cut

across all sectors of Nigerian economy in three states of the federation namely Lagos, Ogun and Osun. Random and purposive sampling techniques were adopted in the distribution of the questionnaire which was developed along the 5 point Likert Scale technique. The 94 respondents were made up middle and senior management from both the private and public organisations in order to lend credence to the authenticity of the information. The questionnaire was divided into three sections, section A has demographic information, section B contains information on leadership integrity (independent variable) and ethical environment while section three has information on national development (dependent variable). Data obtained from the respondents were analysed by simple percentage and illustrated by table distribution as well as using descriptive, correlation and analysis of variance at 0.01 sig. Level.

4. Analysis And Interpretation Of Data

Variables	Frequency distribution	Percentage	Percentage Rank
Gender			
• Male	61	65%	1
• Female	33	35%	7
	(94)		
Marital status			
• Single	23	24%	9
• Married	55	59%	3
• Divorced	16	17%	11
	(94)		
Educational level			
B.Sc/B.Ed/HND	34	36%	6
B.Sc/B.Ed & professional qualification	38	40%	5
B.Sc/B.Ed & Masters degree	22	23%	10
	(94)		

Variables	Frequency distribution	Percentage	Percentage Rank
Category in organisation			
• Middle management	60	64%	2
• Senior management	34	36%	6
	(94)		
Age limit			
• Less than 25years	11	12%	14
• 25-34 years	22	23%	10
• 35-44 years	33	35%	7
• 45-54 years	15	16%	12
• 55 years and above	13	14%	13
	(94)		

Table 1: Demographic information of respondents

Source: survey 2012

From table 1 above, most of the respondents were male with 61 respondents representing 65% while female were 33 respondents representing 35% which means that the majority of the respondents were male. A large number of respondents were married with 55 respondents representing 59%, a total number of 23 respondents were still single as at time the of collecting the data representing 24% while 16 respondents were divorced representing 17%. The implication is that the majority were married which is an indication that they are matured and understood what quality of life through national development is about. First degree/HND were 34 respondents representing 36%, B.Sc/B.Ed with professional qualification has 38 respondents representing 40% while B.Sc/B.Ed with Masters' degree has 22 respondents representing 23%. This shows that most of the respondents had additional qualification apart from the first degree thus implying that the questions were understood most especially what standard of living and honesty were all about. The responses to work experience shows that majority of the respondents had a range between 7-10 years work experience with 41 respondents representing 44% coupled with the fact that most of the respondents were in the middle management cadre 60 respondents representing 64% shows that they do understand how the behaviour of their leaders affected or influenced them. Majority of the respondents were between the age limit of 35-44 years with 33 respondents representing 35% and

cumulative analysis shows that 55 respondents representing 58% were more in the age limit.

Descriptive and Correlation Analysis at 0.01 level of sig. (1-tailed)

		M	SD	EE	LI	ND
Ethical Environment	Pearson corr.	4.1	0.22	1	0.95	0.90
	Sig. (1-tailed)				0.00	0.00
	N			94	94	94
Leadership Integrity	Pearson corr.	4.3	0.21	0.95	1	0.92
	Sig.(1- tailed)			0.00		0.00
	N			94	94	94
National development	Pearson corr.	3.9	0.33	0.90	0.92	1
	Sig.(1- tailed)			0.00	0.00	
	N			94	94	94

Table 2: Correlation analysis between leadership integrity and national development

LI = Leadership Integrity, ND = National Development, SD = Standard Deviation,

M=Mean, EE= Ethical Environment.

In table 2, the mean as well as the standard deviation of the relationship were computed in order to see the distribution of the variables. It was found to be a normal distribution. The independent and dependent variables i.e leadership integrity and national development were found to be interwoven with each other and had positive and significant correlation where $r = 0.95$, $p < 0.01$ with national development.

Variables	Coefficient					
	Constant	Beta	F	t	R ²	N
Ethical environment	0.452	0.90	1.082	1.052	0.82	94
Leadership Integrity	0.208	0.95	1.190	1.210	0.94	94
National Development	0.564	0.92	1.091	1.140	0.78	94

Table 3: Regression analysis focus on Ethical environment, leadership integrity and national development

Source: survey 2012 (derived from SPSS)

Table 3 shows the highlight of the significant relationship at 0.01 which predicted that leadership integrity has influence on the national development as it is derivable from the ethical environment. Ethical environment ($\beta= 0.90$, $F= 1.082$, $t= 1.052$, $R^2= 0.82$); Leadership integrity ($\beta= 0.95$, $F= 1.190$, $t= 1.210$, $R^2= 0.94$); and national development ($\beta= 0.92$, $F= 1.091$, $t= 1.140$, $R^2= 0.78$). These were used to explain the variation in the analysis and the hypotheses formulated.

4.1. Discussions

In respect of the hypothesis 1, Leadership integrity has positive relationship with national development which was confirmed by these data $\beta= 0.95$, $F= 1.190$, $t= 1.210$, $R^2= 0.94$. β which is the predictor variable is 0.95 therefore there is a positive correlation between leadership integrity and national development i.e improvement in the integrity of leaders will bring about improvement in the overall development of the country, the correlation in relationship is positively strongly. $R^2 = 0.94$ which is the coefficient of multiple determination shows that leadership integrity can vividly explain 94% of the total variation in national development while the remaining 6% is explained by other variables not mentioned in the model. $F_{tal} = 1.190$ and $F_{cal} = 2.193$ ($F_t < F_c$) alternative hypothesis is therefore accepted that is leadership integrity has positive relationship with national development thus establishing the proposition about the relationship leadership and national development earlier speculated.

The second hypothesis 2 was arrived at in the course of the review that ethical environment has positive relationship with leadership integrity and national development. ($\beta= 0.90$, $F= 1.082$, $t= 1.052$, $R^2= 0.82$). There is strong coherence between ethical environment and national development with a positive correlation $r=0.90$, $p<0.01$. The regression model was also applied and the result was $R^2 = 0.82$ and F_{tab} value $=1.082$, $p<0.01$ thus proofing the positivity of the hypothesis 2. From the above analysis with the overall discussions, it is crystal clear that the hypotheses were positive and thus significant.

5. Conclusion

It has been established that the existence of laudable development plans to herald meaningful development is not an end in itself but a means to an ends which is bound to benefit from interaction of many variables of which leadership is the anchor for the ends to be fulfilled. Therefore, the issue of national development and leadership integrity is

central to the crisis in the environmental growth of Nigeria in its entire ramification. Nigeria is faced with the situation where those who are in positions of leadership have either abdicated their moral responsibilities or have lost the vision of the aims and purposes of their commission thereby leading to decadence in sound ethical behaviour and wasteful spending of the national wealth. It is therefore desirable that any country whose interest is quality of life as provided through national development plans should ensure that the crops of her leaders are of sound moral values of which integrity is the backbone.

5.1.Recommendations

On the basis of the conclusion, the authors arrived at the following recommendations;

- The leadership in the country should embark on building of life styles of integrity that would take into consideration honesty, fairness, selfless service, reward for hard work, sincerity, discipline, trustworthiness and promise keeping.
- There should be introduction of ethical value programmes in the curriculum of studies of students at all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary)
- There is need for attitudinal change. Nigerian should believe in Nigeria, change pessimistic attitude towards development, the belief that things cannot work in the country or Nigerian factors and to embrace moral values that would lead to integrity.
- Leadership to prevent electoral frauds to ensure that leadership position is legally occupied otherwise illegitimate leaders will display character that represses development.

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