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## Politics and Policies as Adventures and Misadventures of Development in Nigeria

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### Abstract

This paper undertakes a critical examination of the intricate relationships between politics, policies, and development in Nigeria, with a focus on the post-independence era. Despite being endowed with substantial human and natural resources, Nigeria's development has been hindered by ineffective governance and policy implementation. The research seeks to investigate how political structures and institutions have either facilitated or impeded development in Nigeria since 1960. The study reveals that politics and policies

involve inherent risks, with outcomes that can be either favourable or unfavourable to development.

**Keywords:** *Adventure, Development, Misadventure, Policies, Politics*

## **Introduction**

In today's global landscape, the intersection of politics and policies continues to shape the trajectory of human development. These underlying complexities often catalyse a series of institutional breakthroughs and setbacks, both of which leave a permanent imprint on the evolution and advancement of the social order. Politics, as the process of decision-making within groups, and policies, as the documented principles that guide these decisions, are inherently intertwined with the development of nations, economies, and communities. When we examine politics and policies through the lens of adventures and misadventures of development, we can gain a deeper insight into the dynamic nature of this interaction. The term "adventures" alludes to the deliberate and strategic initiatives undertaken to foster progress, innovation, and positive change. These adventures can take the form of visionary policies, diplomatic breakthroughs, and societal movements that propel the development agenda forward. They embody the conscious endeavour to negotiate the multifaceted challenges of governance, ensuring that executive decisions are aligned with the requirements of long-term sustainable development. Conversely, the notion of "misadventures" underscores the potential pitfalls, miscalculations, and setbacks that can impede the journey of development. Misadventures may stem from flawed policies, political conflicts, or governance failures that hinder the realisation of developmental goals. They serve as cautionary tales, highlighting the need for resilience, adaptability, and constructive change in the face of adversity. The relationship between politics, policies, and development is inherently marked by uncertainty, competing interests, and the need for continual adaptation. The interaction between these forces demands a critical appraisal of past and present experiences, offering vital insights into how the nexus of political decision-making and policy architecture determines the developmental path of societies.

From time immemorial, man has been described as a socio-political animal (Stumpf 1994). He lives in a socio-political environment with the rest of his kind. Yet, in contrast to other social animals, man does not just live in a society; he produces society in order to live in it. The need

to produce a society that would suit both his nature and aspirations, however, becomes the sole business of man on the planet earth. Yet, man cannot achieve such unless he develops methods, systems, and policies aimed at arriving at the ideal and desired political state. The realisation of this yearning now depends on how man is able to relate, articulate, and/or galvanise all the potentials at his disposal. These potentials encompass the diverse theoretical frameworks, methodologies, and strategic policies that an individual has systematically integrated to pursue the overarching objective of human flourishing and self-actualisation. Man is therefore a being on a mission to self-actualisation. An inquiry into the workings of man and the strength of his relationship in the articulation of his tools—systems, methods, theories, and policies—for a complete and total achievement of his goal is equally an investigation into the status of development of man as a socio-political animal generally and as a self-actualising being living in a given socio-political environment like Nigeria. In other words, an attempt to examine the role of politics and policies in the development of a nation like Nigeria is an attempt to explore the status to which man has succeeded in galvanising his potentials to develop alongside his nature as a socio-political animal in the same situation in which he lives out his life. Largely, therefore, an investigation of human development remains an inquiry into how man has achieved the over-all purpose of his existence as a social and political animal in Nigeria—the purpose that we see as the development of his full potentials as a rational being.

The problem plaguing politics and policies in the Nigerian state lies with what Aristotle calls ‘efficient cause’, which designates the means or that by which a thing is made (Stumpf, 1994:93). In a socio-political context, the efficient cause comprises the leadership and those in government who are policymakers, and occupy offices that shape the politics of the Nigerian state. Thus, politics and policies in Nigeria are largely deficient in pragmatic ideas necessary for enhancing national and human self-actualisation. Referring to this, Gregory Chinweuba (2020:31) argues that,

there is apparently a gross disconnection of the larger political class with practical intellectualism and fundamental philosophical values...Nigerian politics stunts economic opportunities, frustrates the prosperity of the masses, neglects the education sector and jeopardises philosophical reconstruction of the country and sustainable development...Nigerian kind of politics is a conscious effort

towards renegeing the social contract and creating poor human condition.

Consequently, the Nigerian national vision appears to lack a modern economic framework and a coherent trade philosophy conducive to sustainable development, instead maintaining structures that benefit political elites and facilitate the large-scale misappropriation of public funds. Nigeria's development puzzle is a paradoxical issue. Despite having numerous development plans and policies, the country still struggles with growth. This study delves into the intricate relationships between politics, policies, and development, setting the stage for deeper understanding of the interplay and possible pathways to development. Thus, the paper examines the impact of governance policies on socio-economic development in Nigeria and examines the complex relationships between politics, policies, and growth by identifying the significant factors that determine a sustainable path toward development.

This study is guided by the following research questions: How do politics and policies shape development outcomes in Nigeria? What are the power dynamics and social structures influencing development policies? How do historical and cultural contexts impact development trajectories? The expected outcomes of this study include a nuanced understanding of the complex relationships between politics, policies, and development in Nigeria; identification of key factors contributing to development successes and challenges; and recommendations for policy reforms and strategies to promote equitable and sustainable development. Utilising a philosophical lens, this enquiry aims to elucidate the intricate connections between governance and national progress, thereby contributing to the refinement of development strategies to ensure they are both efficient and socially just within the Nigerian context.

The paper is divided into eight sections, beginning with an introduction that sets the stage for exploring the complex dynamics between politics and development. A review of relevant literature provides a conceptual framework for understanding the subject matter, followed by an in-depth examination of the concept of development. The interplay between politics, policies, and development is then analyzed, with a focus on how politics influences policy decisions in Nigeria. Subsequent sections delve into the impact of colonialism on Nigeria's development, identify challenges such as corruption and policy

inconsistency, and explore reasons for development planning failures before concluding reflections and recommendations, emphasising the need for effective governance, homegrown developmental strategies, and commitment to implementation to drive meaningful developments. Therefore, this paper examines the intricate relationships between politics, policies, and development in Nigeria, a country plagued by development challenges despite numerous plans and policies.

## **Perspective or Theoretical Framework**

This work's theoretical framework is grounded in critical realism (Bhaskar, 2016), which acknowledges that social reality is shaped by both material and ideational factors. This perspective recognizes the existence of power dynamics and social structures influencing development outcomes (Giddens, 2019). The epistemological stance adopted is interpretivism (Creswell, 2020), seeking to understand the meanings and interpretations of political actors and policymakers in reference to development. This work also leverages postcolonial theory which analyzes the legacy of colonialism and its impact on Nigeria's development trajectory (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020).

The concept of "adventure" and "misadventure" in development policies is central to this study (Afolayan, 2020). 'Adventure' refers to policies and politics that promote development, equality, and social justice, while 'misadventure' denotes policies and politics that hinder development, exacerbate inequality, and undermine social justice. Development encompasses economic, social, and human development (Sachs, 2019).

## **Perspective of Development**

Almost every developmental theorist seems to have reached one salient conclusion about the real nature and status of the word 'development'. This conclusion is predicated on the premise that development necessitates holistic progress across all facets of human society, encompassing cultural, economic, educational, and political spheres. This notwithstanding, the concept 'development' originated from the French verb 'veloper' meaning to unwrap, develop, or cause growth gradually, fuller, larger, stronger, and better (Udoidem, 1992). Thus, the word 'development' is said to denote a type of change: a positive, purposeful, or goal-oriented change (Rodner, 1982; Udoidem, 1992; Izunwa &

Ehujuo, 2011). Change refers to any form of adjustment of a given thing or state in shape, size, or position. A purposeful alteration is a positive change because its movement is not random. But a random change or alteration of any given entity is purposeless and hence does not denote or qualify as development at all.

Inability to make progress is seen as a sign of underdevelopment; hence, in a given society like Nigeria, lack of progress in the lives of people is a sign that Nigerian society is un-developed. Psychologists consider development as a purposeful change at the level of the individual person. Here development is understood as human development. Human development is ‘the scientific study of how people change and how they stay the same over time’ (Papalia & Olds, 1992:3). Change can be in the form of quality (as in qualitative change) or quantity (as in quantitative change). A quantitative change is a change in the number or amount of something. A qualitative change, on the other hand, bears in kind, structure, or organisation.

The preoccupation that development is a positive and purposeful alteration of an entity makes it clear that it is a capacity that unfolds, unveils, and advances forward the given situation for the better, considering the value that the society cherishes. It is also ‘the pooling together of resources for the enhancement of the members of the society. In other words, it is a movement aimed at production: the creation of new things away from the old.

Development is also taken to occur when there is high-impact growth on the structures that hold the society together. Value systems, norms and policies, politics, and culture all come together to form the bedrock upon which substantive development and progress are made. When dysfunctional policies emerge, particularly when value systems are hollowed out and political participation is reduced to a vehicle for self-aggrandisement—as observed in Nigeria—the foundational fabric of society faces the imminent risk of systemic corruption and total instability. Positive development is attached to the aspiration and well-being of a people. Iwuoha (2013:305) captures this as the changes that provide the individuals control over their own destiny. Whether structurally or essentially, development denotes a process that creates growth, and progress; hence, positive change brings about physical, economic, environmental, and social transformation. While each of these is dependent on politics, the purpose of development remains the increase in quality of life of people. Lewontin (2000:5) observes that

development denotes ‘unfolding’, but it is the progressive unfolding of a pre-existent form or pre-existent capacities.

The mechanistic understanding of development is rooted in the 17th-century worldview. Mechanistic understanding of development contrasts sharply with the ordered and purposive understanding that development is natural.

### **Interplay of Politics, Policies, and Development**

The politics of policies can significantly impact good governance in developing countries. The formulation, implementation, and manipulation of policies by government officials can have major consequences for a nation's development. In many cases, poorly formulated or manipulated policies can stunt the growth of a country, leading to issues such as poverty and underdevelopment despite the existence of seemingly progressive policies. Therefore, it is crucial for developing countries to critically assess their political landscape and the impact of policies on governance in order to foster positive development outcomes. Issues of the politics of policies have garnered significant attention in recent years as scholars (Hall, 2016; Tsebelis, 2017; Beland & Cox, 2019) seek to understand the complex interplay between political processes and policy outcomes. These studies advance understanding of the complex interplay between political processes and policy outcomes, offering new insights and theoretical refinements. Central to this field of study is the investigation into the procedural aspects of policymaking, specifically how shifting political pressures and power structures shape the final results of the legislative process. Political thinkers have underscored the influence of political factors such as interests, power dynamics, and institutional arrangements in shaping policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962). Interest Groups and Policy Influence Scholars have also delved into the role of interest groups in influencing policymaking processes (Berry & Wilcox, 2018; Weible, 2017). A significant body of scholarship, including works by Jenkins-Smith et al. (2020), Béland and Cox (2019), and Pierson (2017), has examined the mechanisms through which interest groups deploy strategies such as lobbying and advocacy to influence policy frameworks in accordance with their specific agendas.

By identifying the channels of interest group intervention, this study highlights the broader implications for the effectiveness of public policy and the overall health of the democratic process. The examination of

political ideologies and their impact on policy preferences has been another focal point in the study of the politics of policies. Researchers over the years have sought to understand how ideological orientations and partisan dynamics influence the prioritisation of policy issues, the framing of policy debates, and the formulation of policy solutions. Studies have highlighted how institutional characteristics, such as decision-making processes, the distribution of authority, and checks and balances, shape the trajectory and content of policies (Weible & Sabatier, 2017).

The impact of politics on policies and how they affect good governance in developing countries is a crucial and complex issue. The decisions made by policymakers, the implementation of various policies, and the political climate all have a significant impact on the overall governance of a country. In many developing nations, the interaction between politics and policies often determines the effectiveness of governance and the welfare of citizens.

Firstly, the political environment in a developing economy can heavily influence the formulation and implementation of policies. The presence of political instability, systemic corruption, and a deficit in transparency often results in the formulation of policy frameworks that fail to align with the public interest or broader societal well-being. Furthermore, political agendas and power struggles can overshadow the genuine need for effective governance and policy-making.

Secondly, the way policies are managed and executed plays a critical role in good governance. Weak institutions, inadequate resources, and inconsistent enforcement can hinder the successful implementation of policies. This can result in a lack of public trust, increased societal inequalities, and limited access to essential services for the most vulnerable populations. Moreover, the alignment of political will and policy objectives is essential for fostering good governance. When political leaders prioritise the long-term interests of their nation over short-term gains, and when policies are designed to address the fundamental needs of the population, the result is more effective governance and improved socio-economic outcomes. The conceptualisation of politics and policies as developmental adventures and misadventures offers a sophisticated lens through which to examine the intricate and often volatile dynamics inherent in political society. By acknowledging the deliberate strides and unexpected challenges inherent in this relationship, we can better comprehend the complexities of

nurturing sustainable development for growth in an ever-evolving human society like Nigeria.

At the level of politics, however, development co-mingles with policies. Hence, political policies can either drive or restrain development. Political decisions and policies do influence development choices and outcomes. Being transformative and affecting the social, economic, and political affairs, it brings fundamental challenges to established interests and demands political sustainability. Politics is central to development; hence, it plays a great role in the decision-making of the government. The vitality of a state's political life is assessed by its level of maturity and the degree to which its institutional frameworks have effectively catalysed broader societal development.

Politics and policies are so implicitly essential to development because development is a political process, as well as the end of leadership policies. The word 'politics' was derived from the Greek term 'polis', meaning city, city-state, state, and society. With time, the meaning of the word 'politics' was broadened to incorporate decision and policy making regarding what a society should do; when, how, and why; and who should determine what is done (Elijah & Ette, 2018:25). As such, politics raises questions about who has the power to do what, to whom, how, and what share should go to one or another in the society.

Policies, conversely, constitute the formal decisions and strategic frameworks adopted by a government to delineate the specific methodologies and actions by which a state is to be administered. Also, policies are sets of rules or guidelines followed by a state, an organisation and employees to achieve a specific goal. Conceived as a guide, policies are an effective way of outlining what employees must do or not do. Policies serve as directions, limits, principles, and guidance for decision-making; hence, they help the government in the discharge of its task. Policies are results of politics, and politics and policies gear towards societal development. Yet, development in a given society helps in assessing the politics and policies of the government in-charge. Given the interwoven relationship, it becomes problematic to insulate development from politics or policies from development. Even Hegel (1956) argues in this favour when he posits that progress is linear and development curvilinear. Thus, the essential alignment between political will, policy architecture, and national development is undermined in the Nigerian context, as the actions of the governing elite often act as a structural barrier to systemic advancement.

## **Legacy of Colonialism and Its Impact on Development**

The problem with the mechanistic logic is that laws and policies of government are made to dominate rather than to create progress in a society. People see politics as an avenue to manipulate and dominate. The upper class influences legislation and other government policies to work in their favour, hence, society collapses, and lawlessness, corruption, anarchy, etc., becomes the order of the day. Also, this kind of situation breeds revolution because the enslaved would one day want to be free.

Therefore, colonialism represented a developmental model of imposition, executed through the application of foreign political authority over a subjugated populace and specifically engineered for the economic exploitation of the colony's resources. To demonstrate how bad this logic is, one can understand while till today, though these policies of indirect rule appear to have left the land of Africa, especially Nigeria, their effects and ripples are still being felt all over the countries where they were practiced. For example, Britain till today still determines and influences the affairs of Nigeria, including her politics, policies, and legislations (Osaghae, 1998; Mamdani, 1996, p. x; Efebe & Onofere, 2020;). In French colonised territories such as Cameroun, Togo, Gabon, etc., the same story continues as the French policy of assimilation is still on-going and its effects heavily felt. In a more concerning development, the French state retains a decisive role in the political and financial administration of Senegal and various other African countries, leveraging its control over currency operations and leadership to maintain a neo-colonial advantage. This was affirmed in the Al Jazeera report of 10<sup>th</sup> February 2019, when the then Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte blamed France for the incessant African migration through the Mediterranean Sea to their shores, stating that the French grip on African states had led to hardship and that Africans were forced to leave their countries.

With all these manipulations, Africans, till today, have been made to feel that without the West, they are nothing; that they are poor and need to be helped by their colonial masters. This kind of philosophy and thinking has continued to influence politics and development policies in Africa. This informs the collapse of all efforts by some revolutionary Africans who think the time has come to free Africa from the bondage of their colonial masters. The instrument of this antagonism is mainly the politicians who ironically do not know that they are political stooges

implanted and used by the West to drag home their evil policies of indirect rule and assimilation.

### **Politics and Policies as Adventure and Misadventure: Development Challenges**

From the foregoing, it stands that politics in the Nigerian State is a cabal-controlled endeavour. These cabals comprise local elites operating like 'gangster clubs', driving governance based on subjective morality that hampers development. The subjective morality glaring in Nigerian politics also extends to tribalism, ethnicity, and religion, which are divisive differences applied by politicians to gain popularity and win supporters. This trend has not only stunted development; it has from time to time plunged the country into tribal, ethnic, or religious conflict in which thousands of lives and properties worth billions of naira have been lost. Following this, Nigeria continues to grapple with stagnation as its citizenry is confronted by substantial obstacles and a lack of the essential support systems necessary for socio-economic mobility and national growth. Formulation of policies, especially those that uphold ethical values, is very essential for societal development. As these policies define the prevailing ways of life, they establish the rules and regulations that govern the perceived rightness or wrongness of individual conduct, thereby shaping the ethical fabric of society.

Life in Africa changed with the advent of colonialism and its fundamental social changes in traditional African societies. For new structural arrangements and their concomitant values, many of them in direct conflict with African values, were imposed on the traditional political, economic, social, and religious systems (Udoidem, 1992). This brought a shift in indigenous Nigerian formulation of policies and autochthonous development trajectory, which were communalistic and egalitarian in character. As such, post-colonial formulation of policies in Nigeria became general in principle but more individualistic and materialistic in approach and implementation. Thus, the subsequent Nigerian formulated policies, such as the Green Revolution of the Obasanjo administration, Operation Feed the Nation of the Shagari administration, the Directorate for Food, Road, and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), and Better Life for Rural Women of the Babangida administration, etc., failed to achieve development for the country (Udoidem, 1992). Other failed plans include the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), Economic

Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP). 2017 - 2020 and Nigeria Vision 20:2020 Economic Transformation National Development Plan 2021-2025 Not just that these and other policies failed to achieve the expected Nigerian development, but they also became enclaves of pandemic corruption as funds were siphoned and embezzled through them; hence they even contributed to hindering the sustenance of the existing development in the country. Yet, the impression and enticement of colonial influence that led to the Nigerian indigenous shift in the formulation of policy and plunge into corruption have undauntedly continued unabated; hence, the present conspicuous underdevelopment in the country (Nduka, 1975).

Given this, Omoregbe (1990) questions how development can be possible in a society where public funds were embezzled by those who controlled them; how development can be possible in a country where self-interest is the dominant rule of action; how development and economy can exist in a society where citizens lack the moral sense of duty, the right attitude to work, and the sense of moral responsibility to the society? He again asks how development can be possible in a country where bribery and corruption, breakdown of law and order, moral laxity, selfishness, lack of sense of duty and social responsibility, and disrespect for public good prevail. Omoregbe (1990) insinuates that development emanates from a morally conscious citizenry. As such, societal development anchors on the virtue and self-discipline of both the leaders and the led. This means that Nigerian national development is possible when a premium is placed on moral virtues and policies that uphold them.

### **Reasons for Development Planning Failures in Nigeria**

Nigerian national policies are hardly sustained because they are not backed by ethical values. Policies often fizzle out as quickly as they are formulated or set for implementation. Among the indices of development, the misadventure of Nigerian policies is more evident in the education sector. The Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy, for instance, surfaced in 1969 and later metamorphosed into Universal Basic Education (UBE) in 1999. This policy aims to provide 'free, compulsory, and qualitative education, from primary to junior secondary school...offer nomadic and adult education...emphasise religious and moral values' (Abiogu, 2010:25). Nevertheless, these opportunities have largely been withheld from nomadic populations, the average Nigerian

child, and youths or adolescents from less privileged or incapacitated backgrounds. The streets in urban areas are still replete with child hawkers because of their inability to pay one fee or the other demanded in school. Worse still, teachers' better salaries and other emoluments are constantly denied, leading to incessant strikes in which pupils and students stay out of school for a long time. It is, however, disheartening to state that although substantial financial resources are annually allocated for the implementation of these developmental policies, the intended outcomes remain unfulfilled in the Nigerian context. Yet, larger parts of this fund end in private pockets where nobody accounts for them. Testifying to this, Dike (2003) reports that out of every 10% of the annual budget set for education in Nigeria, only 2% gets to the classroom. This dire trend has lowered the quality of the education system in Nigeria and slowed human capital and resource development, leading to a stunt in national development.

The problem of ineffective leadership hampers optimal development. Nigeria, since the end of colonial rule in 1960, had been struggling to enjoy effective leadership as a country. The adverse effects of such struggles are several regime changes, civil war, and continued social and economic crises that have drastically reduced the citizens' trust in institutions of the government. Leadership is central to policy success and optimal development of a society. Millennium Development Goals (MDG) failed to achieve its optimal goals because of bad leadership in Nigeria. Leadership affects policy implementation negatively because of the lack of political will to implement policies according to plan for reasons that may be more political than social or economic.

More so, a number of research reports over the last decade show that there are still hindrances to development in Nigeria due to the government's noncompliance with indigenous interests, non-inclusion of indigenous people in policy making, and disparities between the local assembly services and community needs (Adewale, 2019). As a sequel to these, many indigenous communities are adversely affected by government policies, projects, and developmental programmes, since their distinct visions of development, their concerns, and their culture are often ignored by national and local-level policy makers and administrators (UN, 2005). Moreover, even where policy and service delivery models are targeted towards indigenous communities, they often operate in a non-inclusive top-down manner, which creates dependency on government services, and does not promote sustainable

human development that protects and promotes the cultural, political, social, and economic integrity of the indigenous communities.

Meanwhile, article 7(1) and (2) of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) convention, which is an arm of the UN, made it clear that indigenous people shall have the right to decide their own priorities for the process of development as it affects their lives, beliefs, institutions, spiritual well-being, and their lands of habitation or use. The article also made it clear that indigenous people shall have the right to exercise control to the extent possible over their own economic, social, and cultural development (UN, 2005). Thus, the article supports inclusion of Nigerian indigenous people in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of plans and programs of national and regional government and their direct impacts on their social, spiritual, cultural, and environmental life.

Along with these, the Inter-Parliamentary Union for Democracy (2014) suggests that indigenous representation in parliament ensure the implementation of indigenes rights. Such representation is an important step towards building mutual trust between Nigerian indigenous people and the institutions of government.

The ever-increasing level of inequality in Nigeria is therefore a fertile ground for the growing threat to its unity and growth. But deliberate people inclusiveness in policy formulation and implementation will pave the way for indigenous contributions that would break the cycle of disunity and underdevelopment in the country. Politics plays a great role in the development of a nation; yet politics in Nigeria lacks the requisite principles that engender good policies for sound development. Policy borrowing is good but not without domesticating them alongside cultural and political values and realities that are original or indigenous to the people. Nigeria, therefore, lacks the requisite focus on indigenous socio-political and cultural values, which are essential to foster authentic growth across the human, material, and various other spheres of national.

Thus, indigenous minorities in Nigeria are still marginalised and strangulated economically, and they environmentally suffer frequent oil spillages with their consequent damages. There have been calls for compensations from major oil companies to clean up the degraded environment, but to no avail. The Niger Delta is now one of the major hotbeds of indigenous agitation, having been ravaged by government neglect and poverty. This unrest, which hinders economic development in the area, is exacerbated by poor infrastructure and the absence of

good representation from the people. There is also the problem of inequitable allocation of national resources, a situation that has fostered a sense among indigenous populations that they have been denied a fair share of their own wealth. This frame of mind is never encouraging and negatively affects the general productivity of the country. The implication is that it is no longer enough to make laws and policies that affect the people; rather, their involvement and approval are always necessary.

## **Conclusion**

The arguments above represent a rich and multifaceted area of scholarship that provides valuable insights into the intricate connections between political processes and policy development. The literature has only provided a glimpse of the diverse and evolving body of research in this field, emphasizing the ongoing relevance and significance of understanding the politics of policies. This study has underscored the intricate relationships between politics, policies, and development in Nigeria, highlighting the need for a pragmatic approach to transform the country's development journey. To achieve sustainable progress, Nigeria must adopt inclusive governance, evidence-based decision-making, transparency, accountability, entrepreneurship development, cultural revitalisation, and effective leadership. Hence, it's crucial to adopt a pragmatic approach to transform Nigeria's development journey into a constructive and forward-moving expedition. This involves embracing development-oriented moral virtues and values in policymaking, running an inclusive government devoid of ethnicism or state capture, and focusing on politics and policies that accelerate the development of Nigeria and not policies that only serve the interest of foreign donors and multinational agencies.

Inclusive governance is essential, where active citizen participation and consultation with constituents and their leaders ensure representative democracy. Moreover, to drive sustainable development, evidence-based decision-making should be implemented through data-driven policies and long-term planning. To achieve these, transparency and accountability must be strengthened through institutional reforms to prevent corruption and mismanagement. Entrepreneurship development should be fostered through interventions and support programs to stimulate economic growth. Cultural revitalization is also vital. This can be achieved by tapping into African culture to promote education and

development by aligning policies with Nigeria's unique cultural context. Furthermore, the necessity of effective leadership lies in its capacity to foster visionary governance committed to societal welfare, ensuring that the advancement of human capital and natural assets remains a primary objective.

By implementing these strategies, Nigeria can overcome its current challenges, including political instability, economic servitude, and societal retrogression. Embracing a pragmatic approach will pave the way for progress, optimal resource development, and a brighter future for Nigeria. Ultimately, this paper emphasises the importance of addressing the politics-policy-development nexus to unlock Nigeria's full potential and ensure meaningful development that benefits all citizens.

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