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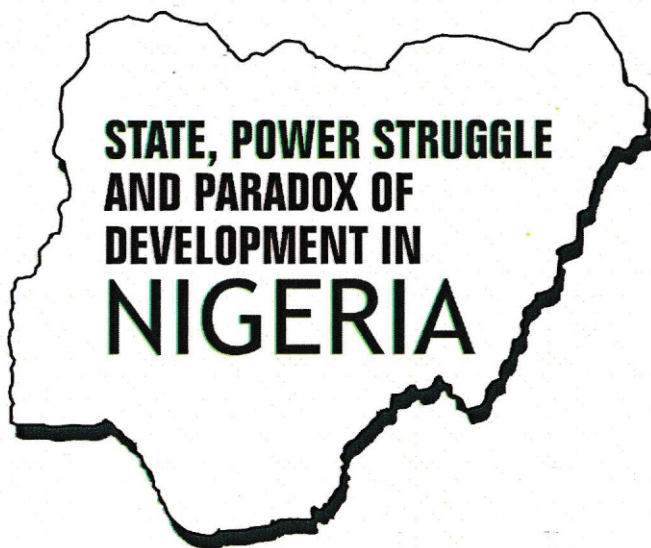
**STATE, POWER STRUGGLE
AND PARADOX OF
DEVELOPMENT IN
NIGERIA**

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Professor of Political Economy and Development Studies
Department of Political Science

June 25, 2024



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DEDICATION

This Lecture is dedicated to the loving memory of my father, Jibrin Muhammad, and my mother, Hajiya Hauwa'u Jibrin, who laid the foundation and brought me up strictly to know the difference between right and wrong and to avoid wrongdoing that will tarnish our family name.



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STATE, POWER STRUGGLE AND PARADOX OF DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Professor Abdullahi Dan'Asabe Jibrin

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Federal University of Lafia

Preamble

At independence on October 1, 1960, there was much expectation that Nigeria would soon be a leading power in Africa. This high expectation was based on the country's enormous material and human resources that the country is blessed with. Nigeria has an estimated land area of about 910,770 sq-km, 34% of which can support all-year farming, thus holding enormous potential for agriculture and food security (World Bank, 2021). Similarly, Nigeria's estimated population is 228,293,150 people, making it one of the world's most populous countries. As the World Bank (2021) has also revealed, 65% of the estimated population are young people between the ages of 15 and 35. That means that about 140million Nigerians are youths. This has a significant implication for the global market and political economy. Another advantage that Nigeria enjoys is its ethnic and cultural diversity. Nigeria has about 250 ethnic groups speaking almost 445 different languages. However, despite these potentials, Nigeria remains underdeveloped, raising questions as to why a country with such enormous potential remains underdeveloped or fails to translate its potential into security, development, and prosperity for its people. Put differently, why has development eluded Nigeria despite its enormous potential? Indeed, the National Bureau of Statistics (2022) puts the percentage of unemployed youths in Nigeria at 46.5 percent and the population below the poverty line at 83 million or 43 percent of the country's total population.

Vice-Chancellor, Sir, I have devoted myself to interrogating the problems of the post-colonial Nigerian Socio-economic formations from the perspective of the Marxian Political Economy, particularly as they relate to the issues of development, resource conflict, poverty, ethno-religious crisis, power contestation, and inequality. In doing so, I have not only raised questions on the vexing issues of powerlessness and destitution but also the unequal access to political power and resources.

In this lecture, I have interrogated the state, power struggle, and the paradox of development in Nigeria. I hope that the peculiar development problems and the intricate dynamics shaping political and economic choices will be brought to the fore. Vice-Chancellor, Sir, this is the first inaugural lecture from the Department of Political Science.

Introduction

The tradition of inaugural lectures is not only as old as the university system, but its hosting is seen as reflecting and keeping up with the best academic character of a university. This is so because inaugural lectures are not the normal lectures ordinarily identified with a university. Inaugural lectures are the genre of lectures given by those whom one can say have arrived as far as the university academic career is concerned.

At this juncture, I want to congratulate the vice chancellor and his administration for reviving the practice of giving inaugural lectures at this university and sustaining it. Indeed, of the 17 inaugural lectures given at this university since its inception, 16 were presented during Abdul Rahman's tenure.

May I, therefore, use this occasion to urge all of us to justify the administration's efforts in this direction by attending these seminal lectures. Even if the subject is complex and the language technical, with some lecturers seemingly speaking in tongues, you can get interpreters after the lecture. Fortunately, Mr. Chairman, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, political science, my discipline, is a discipline of the masses. The subject matters we deal with are commonplace, and our language – though technical at times – is more often than not comprehensible enough, so we have no problem and need no interpreters today.

Vice-chancellor, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, my lecture revolves around the State, Power Struggle, and the Paradox of Development in Nigeria.

Mr. Chairman, discourses on the state, power struggle, and the paradox of development in Nigeria, while not new, have recently been on the front burner of scholarly and national concern. The reasons for this are plausible. First is the fact that there has been a

swift decline in the ability of the state to provide for the basic socio-economic needs of the people (citizens). Secondly, there has been increased exclusion of segments of the elite and the bourgeoisie in distributing the spoils of office and an acute marginalisation of the majority of the population from the benefits of development projects and social provisioning. All these have led to an increased state legitimacy crisis (Amin, 1996).

Taken together, the import of these developments confirms that the struggle over power in Nigeria is not yet a settled matter, despite a civil war that owed its origin primarily to these contestations.

In Nigerian academic circles, the problematique of power struggle and access to its derivable benefits are the Achilles heels of the legitimacy status of the Nigerian state. The pervasiveness of the struggle (contestations) and its acute dimensions in the current dispensation explain its pre-eminence in current discourses on the Nigerian state. Before we delve into the dilemma of the state, power struggle, and paradox of development in Nigeria, we need to understand what we mean by state (Nigerian State) and how it has evolved historically within the local and international dimensions.

State

“The purpose of the state is always the same: to limit the individual, to tame him, to subordinate him, to subjugate him” (*Max Stirner, 1845*)

A state is a form of political association, and political association is only one form of human association. Other associations range from clubs to business enterprises to churches or mosques. Human beings relate to one another, however, not only in associations but also in other collective arrangements, such as families, neighbourhoods, cities, religions, cultures, societies,

and nations. The state is not the only form of political association. Other political associations include townships, international organisations (such as the UN), and supranational organisations (such as the EU).

To conceptualise a state is to account for its kind of political association and describe its relation to other forms of human association and different types of human collectively more generally. This is no easy matter for several reasons. First, the state is a form of association with a history, so the entity to be described has evolved or developed and, thus, cannot readily be captured in a snapshot. Second, the concept of the state has a history, so any term invocation will have to deal with the fact that it has been used subtly differently. Third, not all the entities that claim to be, or are recognised as, states are the same since they vary in size, longevity, power, political organisation, and legitimacy. Fourth, because the state is a political entity, any account must deploy normative concepts – such as legitimacy – that are as contentious as the notion of the state. Although the state is not uniquely difficult to define, these problems must be acknowledged. For this reason, the understanding of the state occupies a prominent place in today's discourse.

What Is State?

To begin with, the term “State” refers to a set of different but interrelated and often overlapping theories about a specific range of political phenomena. According to Scheidel (2013), mainstream definitions of the state have the following in common: centralised institutions that impose rules and back them up with force over a territorially circumscribed population; a distinction between rulers and the ruled; and elements of autonomy, stability, and differentiation. These distinguish the state from less stable forms of organisations, such as the exercise of chiefly power.

The most used definition is by Weber (1991), who describes the

state as a compulsory political organisation with a centralised government that maintains a monopoly on the legitimate use of force within a particular territory. Neuberger (1990) offers a slightly different definition of the state concerning the nation; the state is “a primordial, essential, and permanent expression of the genius of a specific (nation).

Marx (1917) portrays the bourgeois state as parasitic, built upon the superstructure of the economy, and working against the public interests. He also argues that the state mirrors class relations in society, acting as a regulator and repressor of class struggle and as a political power and domination tool for the ruling class. He claims the state to be nothing more than “a committee for managing the common affairs of the Bourgeoisie,” so for Marxists, the role of the modern bourgeois state is determined by its function in the global capitalist order. Scholars of various ideological orientations, like Bodin, Hobbes, Spinoza, Locke, etc., define the state in multiple ways. The debate of what the state is has taken extensive scholarly work.

However, for today's discourse, the state comprises the various institutions of government, the bureaucracy, the military, the police, the courts, the social security system, and so on. We can say that the state covers almost every human activity, from education to economic management, from social welfare to sanitation to external defence. The state shapes and controls, regulates, supervises authorities, and prescribes even those aspects of life usually thought of as personal or private (marriage, divorce, abortion, religious worship, and so on), which are ultimately subject to the authority of the state.

From the above, the state is a territorial society divided into government and subjects claiming, within its allotted physical area, supremacy over all institutions.

Emergence of Modern State

The state is a modern political construction that emerged in early modern Europe but has been replicated in all other parts of the world. The most important aspect of the state that makes it a distinctive and new form of political association is its most abstract quality: it is a corporate entity. It emerged in Europe because of the limitations of the innumerable forms of political organisations that existed before it. The crucial innovation that made for the development of the state was the idea of the corporation as a legal person. It enabled the emergence of a political entity whose existence was not tied to the existence of particular persons -such as Chiefs, Lords, and Kings – or specific groups – such as clans, tribes, or dynasties. The modern state represents a different form of governance from European feudalism in the Roman Empire or the Greek city-states.

To put it succinctly, the modern state emerged in Europe from the 13th century through to the 19th century from the decline of the power of the church against kingdoms and principalities to the development of new political power structures with the transformation and eventual disappearance of Holy Roman Empire, from the disappearance of towns and city-states, and extended associations like the Hanseatic League, to the rise of movements of national unification.

The emergence of the Nigerian state

“In every society, from advanced industrial to a third world primary goods exporter, and in every aspect of society not just politics, but in economics (production, finance, distribution), to individual ideology (schooling, media), and law enforcement(police, military) --- the state appears to hold the key to economic development, to social security, to individual liberty, and through increasing weapons

sophistication to life and death itself. To understand politics in today's world economic system, then, is to understand the society's fundamental dynamics" (Martin, 1984).

Vice-Chancellor, sir, any discourse of the emergence of the Nigerian state must consider the Berlin conference of 1884/85, which saw the then superpowers of France, Britain, Portugal, Germany, Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands fiercely scrambling for their sphere of influence and taking formal control of the territories of Africa.

Britain colonised the societies known today as Nigeria after the annexation of 1861, using missionary activities, treaties, and military conquest (subjugation) to achieve their economic interests.

In 1906, Britain merged the small Lagos colony and the southern protectorate into a new colony of southern Nigeria. In 1914, the northern protectorate was combined with southern protectorate to form the Nigerian state.

The Nigerian state is, first and foremost, a colonial creation. Historically, it came into being a super-imposed and, arguably, over-developed colonial structure, attending to the requirement of British conquest and imperial domination (Ala-Alavi, 1972). Since independence in 1960, segments of the Nigerian elite associated with the critical organs of the state, such as the military officer corps, the so-called political class, and the bureaucratic-technocratic elite, have come to assume and play a prominent role in the Nigerian political economy. This role has been profoundly facilitated as well as conditioned by the phenomenon of prolonged military rule. They do so, however, in close alliance and collaboration with other segments of the dominant classes in Nigerian society.

Partly on account of its colonial origin, the Nigerian state has acquired certain characteristics that have remarkably impacted how Nigerian society has been transformed. For instance, it seems detached from, and relatively autonomous of, the Nigerian society. But this is partly so, for as Vincent (1987) has observed, virtually all states derive from society but operate more or less over and above it. This relative autonomy has been significant in how the state has directed capitalist development, especially in class formation, conflicts, struggle and accumulation. The historical specificity of the Nigerian state, its colonial origin, and its role in the development of capitalist production processes and relations, it is argued, broadly defined its role and impact in the accumulation process in the post-colonial dispensation. Thus, the role of the post-colonial state in Nigeria has been drastically affected and conditioned by essentially three major factors: its colonial origin, excessive factionalism amongst a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and regionally segmented elite, and prolonged military authoritarian rule – (Jega, 2003). These define the pattern, character, and essence of its role in the capitalist development processes, state-civil society relations, international relations, and the dynamics of resource utilisation and accumulation in the Nigerian political economy. A regionally segmented elite struggles for political power by mobilising religion, regionalism, and ethnicity. The faction that gains power relies on these to establish hegemony and perpetuate its control of state power. This means that, historically, identity-based politics has been significant in struggles for political power and control of the state with severe consequences for the political economy.

Power struggle

"Political power is not to be served in a restaurant;
it's not served in a la carte; it's what we are doing.
It's been determined to do it at all costs. Fight for

it, grab it, snatch it and run with it.”

(President Ahmed Bola Tinubu, December 2022)

The notion of power struggle encapsulates the intricate interplay, contestation, and dynamics within the complicated fabric of social and political frameworks wherein individuals and collectives ardently contend for dominion and sway. It involves challenging and deliberating over power, allocation of resources, and formulating decision-making protocols, frequently culminating in tension, conflicts, and calculated strategic manoeuvres. Power struggles manifest themselves across multiple tiers, involving the interpersonal, organisational, and societal realms, exerting a profound influence on the fabric of social, political, and economic dynamics. Power struggles frequently revolve around the dynamics of power allocation and resource distribution within a given society. It is a battle between factions and fractions of the power elite around how to capture and monopolise the state at the expense of other groups and marginalised constituencies. In the Nigerian context, Power struggles involve not only the manifestation of competition but also the emergence of conflicts within both formal and informal institutions. This encompasses the arduous endeavours pertaining to the attainment of leadership roles, the exertion of influence on policy matters, and the establishment of dominion over the processes of decision-making.

The Nigerian ruling class derived both its origin and wealth from the state, around which it gravitates, using every available means to secure power and access. However, in facilitating capitalist development, the Nigerian state is paradoxically shaped and conditioned by intense competition, conflict and struggles by contending classes in the Nigerian civil society, and

particularly by incessant factionalism and in-fighting amongst the active and dominant forces in the political economy. This factionalism and in-fighting have been nurtured and sustained by the mobilisation of regional, ethnic, and religious sentiments. This phenomenon substantially accounts for the military intervention in politics, the culture of coup d'état and counter-coup d'état, the prolonged nature of civil-military rule, and its domineering control of and influence on the Nigerian state. But it especially accounts for the mobilisation of all sorts of sentiments by the dominant classes in order to garner popular support in their struggles to capture and control political power and access to state revenues for expanded accumulation.

The Nature and Character of the Post-Colonial Nigerian State

The Nigerian state is said to have three distinguishing characteristics: rent-seeking, prebendalism and patrimonialism (Jega, 2000, 2002). The rent-seeking element of the Nigerian state relates to its role vis-a-vis the oil and other companies from which it receives huge rents. These rents are important for the execution of programmes and projects and are lodged in a federation account. This centralisation results in a situation of a wealthy and domineering federal government in stark contrast to the previous era when the regions kept most of their revenue in accordance with the doctrine of derivation. The former mechanism of derivation as the basis of revenue sharing resulted in a situation where the regions were much richer than the central government. The vast revenues from oil are then used as prebends, which the federal government dispenses at will. A situation which Kukah (1995), called Donatus state (from the latin-dono-are-avi-atum, to give), such prebends strengthen the power of the central government as well as lead to its patrimonious relationships with the components units (state) (geo-political-regions) and the citizens. In this way, the state

cuts the image of a generous father figure. This situation bolsters its internal legitimacy even when it is weak in relation to its foreign partners.

These characteristics make the state an object of power struggle and contestation. Central to the power struggle is access to the state and the material benefits which flow from it. This power struggle, most of the time, takes the shape of ethno-religious regional conflict among members of constituents, ethnic groups, and religious groups. Because of the characteristics of the Nigerian state, the distinction between the public and the private domains has become blurred and power, which has become a major source of wealth, has become personalised.

Nigeria, being a rentier state, has a relationship with society mediated through its expenditures on military and state security, development projects, consumption subsidies, construction, etc. (Scocpol, 1982). Rent is not merely an income earned by landlords but is generally a reward for the ownership of all natural resources. A rentier economy relies on substantial external rent. The creation of wealth is centred around a small fraction of society, and the rest of society is engaged mainly in the distribution and utilisation of the wealth so created. In a rentier state, the government is the main recipient of external rent. One of its major features is that production efficiency is relegated to the background, and, in fact, there is, at best, a tenuous link between individual income and activity. Getting access to the rent circuit is a greater preoccupation than attaining production efficiency (Beblawi and Luciani, 1987). The importance of access in a rentier economy leads to what has been termed a rentier mentality, which embodies a break in the work-reward causation. Reward income or wealth is not related to work and risk bearing but rather to chance or situation. For a rentier, a reward becomes a windfall gain, an isolated fact,

situational or accidental, as against the conventional outlook where the reward is integrated into a process of the result of a long, systematic, and organised production circuit (Beblawi, 1987). There is, thus, a glaring contradiction between rentier and production ethics. The rentier state is oriented away from the conventional role of providing public goods that have been extracted from the people through taxation; it is a provider of private favours. It becomes what Luciani (1987) has called an allocation (as distinct from a production) state. At least most of the percentage of state income is derived externally (usually from oil). Luciani argues that the fact that rentier states do not have to wrest taxes from their citizens has serious implications for political reform or, instead, the lack of it.

Whenever the state essentially relies on taxation, the question of democracy becomes an unavoidable issue, and a strong current in favour of democracy inevitably arises. This is the result of the fact that people will naturally be induced to coalesce according to their economic interests, and those groups that find no way to influence the decision-making process in their favour claim appropriate institutional choice. The state, for its part, must give credibility to the notion that it represents the common good. That is how state legitimacy is constructed. While it is logical that the necessity for sustained taxation demands the construction of legitimacy in production states, it does not follow that the marginality of taxation in rentier states reduces the importance of legitimacy and democratic reforms. Rentier states are capable of generating a level of legitimacy when they succeed in guaranteeing access to resources to a relatively large cross-section of society. When they are no longer able to do that due to a shortfall in rent or to the fact that a small oligarchy or both monopolises the rent, they lose their legitimacy. They are often able to remain in power only through extreme coercion. They tend to face regime crises when they experience a drastic

shortfall in rent and are thus unable to allocate resources at a level they have accustomed their populations to. The tendency is for a ruling elite to exclude more and more people from access to state resources, thereby creating the basis for a widening political crisis. This has been the situation in Nigeria.

Vice-Chancellor, sir, the Nigerian rentier economy is like the Arab rentier economies described by Beblawi and Luciani (1987), which revolves around petroleum revenues. Petroleum exports, which accounted for only 10% of export earnings in 1962, rose to account for 82.7% of total export earnings in 1973 and, for a period, peaked at 90-93%. The price of crude oil jumped from 11 US dollars per barrel to 40 US dollars per barrel in 1980, with output reaching 2.05 million barrels a day in the same year (Olukoshi, 1991). The country was turned overnight into an allocation state, and there was a dramatic rise in public expenditure. Government spending rose from N1.1 billion in 1970 to N6.5 billion in 1975, thus raising state expenditure as a percentage of GDP from 15.5 per cent to 30.5 percent (Olashore, 1989). The then Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, declared that "finance was not a problem to Nigeria" (Ayagi, 1990), and a spending spree on cement imports, festivals of arts, sports jamborees, universal primary education, and all sorts of public works commenced. The boom did not last long. Indeed, by 1978, an economic crisis was set in motion due to a decline in oil exports and revenues. Income from petroleum dropped from N7 billion in 1977 to N5.9 billion in 1978, while production plummeted from 2.1 million barrels in 1977 to 1.57 million barrels in 1978 (Olukoshi, 1991). Oil revenues rose briefly to a record N10.1 billion in 1979 but collapsed to N5.161 billion in 1982. By 1985, oil prices had fallen to 28 US dollars a barrel, and by 1986, a barrel of oil had been selling for only 10 US dollars (Olukoshi, 1991). The economic crisis was by now at full steam. Meanwhile, the rentier state of Nigeria had lost much of its

economy's production capacity. Agricultural production, which was the mainstay of the economy in the colonial period and during the First Republic, had gone into decline. Its contribution to the GDP declined from 61 per cent in 1964 to 18 per cent in 1982 as the state lost interest in the extraction of peasant agricultural surpluses. Manufacturing and employment also declined significantly, and between 1980 and 1983, over one million workers were retrenched (Olukoshi, 1991). As a way of getting out of the economic crisis, the state, under the impulsion of the IMF, adopted a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986 aimed at reducing the staggering external debt that had built up, the chronic balance of payments crisis, hyperinflation, and rising unemployment. However, the positive effects of SAP have yet to be seen. The employment scene has been devastated by mass retrenchment, galloping unemployment and underemployment, and under-utilisation of installed capacity. The workforce of the UAC, one of Nigeria's most giant conglomerates, has been compressed from 23,850 workers in 1985 to 9,000 in 1988 (Fadahunsi, 1993). Capacity utilisation since the introduction of SAP in 1986 has remained low, between 30 and 37 per cent, and income per capital has collapsed from 778 US dollars in 1985 to 108 US dollars in 1989 (Fadahunsi, 1992). All indices of economic production and efficiency are on the decline, the standard of living has been reduced to a historic low point, and the rentier state seems to have given up on the economy. The various sections of the power elite have focused their attention on struggles for access to the declining rent produced by the state. It is, therefore, not surprising that ethno-regional identities have hardened under SAP, and conflicts, including violent ones, have increased.

Paradox of Development

Paradoxes are nothing but trouble. They violate the most elementary principle of logic.

Something cannot be two different things at once. Two contradictory interpretations cannot be accurate. A paradox is just such an impossible situation, and political life is full of them. Stone (1976).

Vice-Chancellor, Sir, to understand the paradox of development in Nigeria, it is essential to comprehend the concept of development. In this sense, a few definitions of the concept are considered.

Development is a relative and mostly contested concept (Hettne, 2010). Nevertheless, it is possible to arrive at some specific indicators of development that are widely acceptable. For instance, it is easy to argue that every human society aspires to robust, efficient, and dynamic economic and political institutions that anticipate the yearnings of their people and respond to them accordingly and promptly. It is also possible to argue that in every society, there are minimum expectations that all members share. These include access to functional health facilities, access to safe drinking water, universal qualitative education, and equal opportunity for all members in public affairs where competition based on merit is upheld over and above other considerations. All these are universal values that transcend cultural and political boundaries. Thus, if there is anything actually relative about our conception of development, that may largely be because of the perspectives from which one chooses to understand it; for example, Gopilath (2008) argues that development can only be measured in monetary terms. Consequently, a developing country has "significant potential to raise the per capita standard of living" of its people. This, no doubt, is the hangover from the intellectual segregation that dominated developmental literature in the 1960s and the 1970s when most models of development drew their theoretical

sustenance to classical economics (Jibrin, 2016).

It is possible to discern an overriding understanding in which the notion of a qualitative transformation occurs in space and time through the trickle-down effect. Therefore, development is no more than a description of a particular state or physical condition in which there is a corresponding progress in both the physical growth and the maturity of the object. Applied to human societies, development refers to a state, condition or stage which entails a positive transformation in both quantity and quality of life for all members of a particular society. Where there is a corresponding decline or retrogression in the quality of life for a significant portion of the population, we describe that as the state of underdevelopment (Rodney, 1972). Askari (2010) argues that development means “quantitative growth, qualitative improvement, and expansion in the capabilities, capacities, and choices of individuals, groups or states.”

Development is not a unilinear process; it is multifaceted and contiguous in terms of the socio-economic well-being of the people and political development towards the provision of the good life. According to Rodney (1986), development is a multi-dimensional process that involves many aspects of human endeavours. Development connotes diverse things at the personal level and the group level as well. He further stressed that at the individual level, it connotes evolving aptitude and skills, better self-determination, inventiveness, restraint, accountability, as well as provision of welfare packages to the citizens. To the social groups, it infers an increase in the capability to regulate foreign and local relations.

However, the concept of development usually needs to be clarified with economic growth. The duo is different to a certain extent. Economic growth is determined exclusively based on the yearly surge in per-capita income or gross national product

irrespective of its circulation as well as the importance of the involvement of the individuals; development deals with improving upon the worth of output fashioned not certainly bargaining wellness of the environment (Abuiyada, 2018).

The best, succinct, and analytical conception of development remains that given by Dudley Seers, who raises fundamental socio-economic and political questions in his definition and seeks to relate them to human development. According to Seers (1972).

The questions to ask about a country's development are--- what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from higher levels, then beyond doubt, this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it will be strange to call the result 'development,' even if the per capita income doubled.

A distinct thread that permeates these conceptions of development concerns the recognition that improvement in the quality of life of all members of human society is the fundamental objective as well as the primary goal of development.

It is in this context that the role of the state in development becomes very crucial, particularly if one considers the fact that the state derives the process of development by deliberately constructing the infrastructure necessary for the goals of development to be attained. This, the state does by pursuing an evolving set of political, economic, and social goals. It also

creates and regulates appropriate conditions for the development to take place. The Asian example is a case in point(Jibrin, 2022).

Putting the Paradox of Development in Context

Nigerian political economy faces developmental challenges in the economic, political, and social dimensions. Though analytically distinct, these problems are integrally related. (Joseph, 1987; Forest, 1995; Osagye 1998) Economic stagnation arises from a generalised crisis of governance, just as poor economic performance contributes to the infirmities of the state. The weakness of central political authority and the insecurity of rulers exacerbate social tensions and undermine capital formation. Nigeria's deep diversities significantly impede state formation and economic growth and are themselves aggravated by political uncertainty and privation. Economically, Nigeria has been on a roller coaster in the decades since independence, culminating in a long period of stagnation following the apex of the petroleum boom. The problems of flagging growth, rising poverty, and widening inequality arising from several factors, including an unfavourable economic structure, detrimental policies, adverse political conditions, and negative external shocks, are harmful to development.

Nigerian political economy grew modestly in the early years of independence under a pragmatic policy regime linked to an open economy based on agriculture. Significantly hampered by the devastating civil war (1967-70), economic growth in the first decade of independence averaged 2.9 percent (World Bank, 1979). The country then entered a heady period of volatile expansion during the decade-long oil windfall of the 1970s. Post war recovery coincided with a build up of oil production, and the economy expanded by an impressive average of 9 percent from 1970 to 1975, achieving an overall average of 7 percent for the

decade. The massive inflow of resources sent public spending on infrastructure and social programmes soaring, alongside an ambitious (though ill-fated) programme of state-led industrialisation. Revenues fluctuated with the vagaries of world prices, however, and state expenditures were supplemented by extensive international borrowing. (Rimmer, 1981).

The boom gave way to an equally dramatic bust in the first half of the 1980s, as oil markets flagged and the country's financial position deteriorated. Export revenues plunged by 53 percent between 1980 and 1982 (from US\$27.1 billion to US\$12.7 billion), dropping another 60 percent by 1986 (World Bank, 1979). Meanwhile, the value of external debt grew as commitments accumulated, short-term borrowing increased, and interest rates escalated. Foreign obligations increased from US\$5.1 billion in 1978 (14 percent of GDP) to US\$17.6 billion by 1983 (50 percent of GDP), reaching US\$29 billion by 1987 (124 percent of GDP). Between 1980 and 1987, Nigeria's gross domestic product declined at an average rate of 1 per cent a year. The downturn began under the Second Republic, whose politicians were loath to curtail spending or undertake politically costly adjustment measures (Lewis, 1995). In the throes of the oil markets' collapse, the civilians were ousted by the military. Still, the regime of General Muhammadu Buhari avoided essential policy reforms as the economy spiralled downward.

Another coup brought General Ibrahim Babangida to power, promising decisive action to revive the economy. Babangida entered into a standby agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and initiated a package of policy reform in cooperation with the IMF and the World Bank. The government's stabilisation efforts, embodied in the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), yielded an interlude of recovery.

Macroeconomic reforms, aided by a fortuitous surge in oil prices during the Gulf War, boosted growth to an average of about 6.6 percent from 1988 through 1992. After that, however, Nigeria experienced a decade of stagnation. Oil prices dropped soon after the war, and the Babangida regime veered toward economic indiscipline and malfeasance (Lewis, 1996). Political uncertainty gripped the country after the abortive 1993 transition to democratic rule, giving way to the predatory autocracy of General Sani Abacha. During Abacha's rule, prodigious corruption, political insecurity, and the deterioration of public institutions served as a brake on investment and growth.

From 1993 to 1998, Nigeria managed an anaemic 2.5 percent average rate of growth. Since the transition to civilian rule in 1999, performance has generally been lacklustre, though higher world oil prices have intermittently buoyed the economy. The elected government moved inconsistently in its early years to impose fiscal discipline and pursue needed policy changes. Nigeria's aggregate economic growth from 1961 through 1998 averaged 3.6 percent, while the country achieved merely 2.2 percent average growth in the period from 1981 through 1998, significantly below the annual rate of population increase (about 2.9 percent). These trends, especially in the context of increasing income inequality, yielded a substantial increase in poverty. From 1961 through 1998, per capita GDP increased by a scant 0.7 percent annually, providing for little advance in living standards (Word Bank, 1979).

Average incomes have in fact declined during the last four decades, by slightly less than 1 percent a year. Despite the general scarcity of statistics in Nigeria, credible figures show that the incidence of poverty has escalated steeply since the end of the petroleum boom. The rate of poverty (those at or below two-thirds of mean expenditure levels) expanded from 28

percent in 1980 to 71 percent in 1999 (Akanji, 2000). Similarly, measures of income distribution (whether using the Gini index or household income shares) describe a society where inequality is rising and income disparities are pretty high by international standards. Other indicators of social welfare are even more challenging to come by. However, available statistics show declining primary and secondary school enrolment during the late 1980s, as well as diminished access to such amenities as clean water (World Bank, 1999).

Nigeria's significant economic fluctuations since the early 1970s have closely followed changes in global oil markets. The emergence of a petroleum "monoculture," in which a single export provides nearly all foreign exchange and government revenue, renders the economy highly sensitive to external shocks and hinders the emergence of internal sources of growth (Bienen & Gelb, 1988). The failure to diversify from this narrow export base is an essential underlying source of Nigeria's economic stagnation. At independence, the country inherited a reasonably heterogeneous export economy based on a range of agricultural commodities and solid minerals. The sparse manufacturing sector consisted mainly of final consumption goods produced in a few urban centres and constituted no more than 6 percent of GDP. Crude oil production proliferated in the early 1970s, and by the middle decade, petroleum exports accounted for 75 percent of state revenues and more than 95 percent of foreign exchange (Forest, 1995).

In the wake of the oil windfall, agricultural exports atrophied, and non-oil mining collapsed. Manufacturing proliferated in the boom era, spurred by massive state investments and protectionist measures. Subsequently, however, declining public revenues, import constraints, and inconsistent reform fostered deindustrialisation, leaving Nigeria's export profile and productive structure little changed from the patterns that were

obtained three decades earlier.

The diversity and the complication

Vice-Chancellor, ladies and gentlemen, the rising trend of violence underscores the deep divisions in Nigerian society and the enduring dilemmas of national cohesion and identity. Nigeria's borders, a colonial inheritance, contain at least 250 ethnic and linguistic groups (some put the number closer to 445). Ethnic competition (power struggle) is relatively concentrated, however, as three groups—the Hausa-Fulani in the northwest, the Yoruba in the southwest, and the Igbo in the southeast—together constitute about two-thirds of the population. Religious identities overlay this pattern, as the northern half of the country is majority Muslim, while the southern portions are predominantly Christian (Coleman, 1958).

The early years of the republic were dominated by intensifying competition among the three major ethnic-regional groups, each of which controlled a sectional political party and a discrete region within the federal structure. A mounting political crisis from 1965 to 1967 led to the collapse of the democratic regime, the federal structure, and eventually the nation itself, with the economy an ancillary casualty. Federal victory in the civil war, which quelled the Biafran (Igbo) bid for secession, upheld the territorial integrity of the state, though at great human cost, including more than a million deaths. For most Nigerians, the conflict affirmed the nation's boundaries as a political entity, if only by default. Yet the terms of the national community, still tenuously defined, became more contentious with the development of the oil economy and the political assertion of additional groups and identities (Suberu, 2001).

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Nigerian governments obtained social peace through a combination of institutional reform, fiscal redistribution, and patronage, periodically supplemented by coercion. The federal system was transformed

by replacing the regional structure with two subnational tiers of states and local governments and changing the formula for the allocation of central revenues. The number of states grew steadily (from twelve in 1966 to thirty-six three decades later), and these changes, along with the formal devolution of petroleum revenues, provided a degree of stability to the system. The constitutional reforms leading to the Second Republic provided for communal diversity in personnel appointments and distributive policies, while a decisive compromise in the 1979 constitution allowed for the exercise of civil shari'a law in Muslim-majority states. These formal mechanisms to balance sectional interests and regulate the distribution of federal resources were supplemented by the expedient use of patronage to secure elite compliance and furnish instrumental benefits to politically strategic communities. During this period, national equilibrium was aided by Gowon's reconciliatory stance in the wake of the civil war and by the flood of oil revenue that substantially assuaged distributive concerns.

By the middle of the 1980s, however, the decline of central resources was hampering the use of patronage to obtain sectional accommodation, and new sources of communal tension arose. The proliferation of states and the strategies of competing political parties gave rise to political assertions by ethnic minorities that often challenged the tripartite contention among the major ethnic groups. The communities of the southern Niger Delta, the centre of Nigeria's oil production, were increasingly visible, as well as various groups in the heterogeneous North-central region of the country and non-Hausa minorities in the northern states. These groups and others exerted new pressures for redistribution and identity (Suberu, 1996). Moreover, the 1980s witnessed growing religious assertions in Nigeria and the accentuation of a north-south divide along confessional lines. Religious cleavages were sharpened by the rising influence of fundamentalist leaders

within the Islamic community, as well as the expansion of evangelical Christianity. An unbroken succession of northern Muslim rulers for two decades (1979-99) contributed to both regional and religious polarisation, especially disaffection by southern Christians and within the Yoruba heartland.

The 1990s witnessed a marked deterioration of national cohesion and stability. Apart from economic factors and authoritarian rule, several policy decisions were incredibly corrosive. In 1986, Nigeria's membership in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) came to light. It was viewed with particular suspicion by non-Muslims since it had apparently been undertaken secretly by an earlier military regime. In addition, the governments of Generals Babangida and Abacha undertook ill-considered partitions of state and local governments in 1989, 1991, and 1996, fostering boundary conflicts in the affected communities and giving rise to further tensions over ethnic balance at the national level.

Furthermore, Babangida's abrogation of the 1993 elections and the arrest of the putative winner, Chief M. K. O. Abiola, a Yoruba Muslim, outraged the population of the southwestern states, deepening disaffection between the Yoruba minority and the central government. His successor, General Abacha, aggravated these tensions by jailing Abiola, harassing prominent Yoruba, and crudely suppressing dissent—for example, through the assassination of Abiola's wife and the peremptory executions of Ken Saro-Wiwa and other Ogoni activists from the Niger Delta. Abacha also supervised an opaque, convoluted constitutional reform in the mid-1990s, which exacerbated ethnic tensions.

Beneath the rough stability imposed by military repression, growing discord was manifest in episodes of religious strife, recurrent violence in the southwestern states and the Niger

Delta, intercommunity conflicts in the North-Central region, and confrontations between the authorities and terrorists in several northern cities.

Turmoil followed in the wake of the 1999 transition to civilian rule. In the four years of the first administration, more than forty incidents of ethnic violence nationwide claimed an estimated 10,000 lives (Manby, 2002). The violence took many forms: interethnic conflicts in several southern cities; religious confrontations in major urban areas in the north; property clashes among communities in the southwest, the North-Central, the northern states, and the Niger Delta; and political violence in numerous locations. The move by a dozen governors in the northern states to expand the writ of Sharia law from voluntary use in civil matters to mandatory application in the criminal domain was a major catalyst of violence and had destabilising effects throughout the country. Other conflicts arose from such diverse sources as land and chieftaincy disputes, electoral rivalries, and grievances toward government.

The uncertain political terrain exacerbated the public disorder, a rising sense of insecurity, and the actions of opportunistic politicians. The central administration responded sporadically to social unrest but generally needed to construct a reliable framework for addressing conflict.

The Dimensions of the Development Failure

Economic malaise, weak governance, and communal polarisation speak to a profound social dilemma at the heart of Nigeria's political economy. Public choice theorists define a social dilemma as a situation in which actors pursue individuals or utilities at the expense of collective welfare and where it is not possible for a third party to resolve the tension between personal and collective interests. In other words, the self-interested

behaviour of individuals and groups leaves everyone worse off than a cooperative solution. Yet, political authorities or institutions are unable to induce coordination for common goals (Ostrom, 1998). This essential problem of collective action highlights the political obstacles to resolving the country's developmental challenges. In the economic realm, investment and capital formation are stymied by pervasive distributive struggles among ruling groups. Consequently, no regime or power centre within the state has been capable of overseeing a project of growth and transformation. Politically, elite division and instability erode the foundations of governance. The alternation of civilian and military regimes, each troubled by internal discord and uncertainty, is inimical to effective leadership, the consolidation of capable institutions, or the provision of essential public goods. In the social domain, a striking aspect of Nigeria's ethnic politics is the absence of a broad social compact that would establish consensus on national identity and the meaning of citizenship. Such an accord is necessary for the development of institutions to manage intergroup relations, yet efforts at accommodation have repeatedly been eclipsed by invidious ethnic contention.

By framing the problem of Nigerian development as a social dilemma, I focus attention on governance. Additional factors are obviously relevant. Economists have rightly drawn attention to how the flawed policy choices of various governments have contributed to slow growth. Jeffrey Sachs, for instance, has observed four types of crises in poorly performing states: a "poverty trap," implying that a low level of resources hampers growth; state bankruptcy, in which the government faces a chronic fiscal crisis and insolvency; liquidity crises, where abrupt changes in capital flows create transitory shortfalls; and transition crises, which emerge in circumstances of regime change, where institutional turbulence disrupts policymaking and exchange relations (Sachs, 2001). Nigeria clearly reflects

two of these syndromes: state bankruptcy, attributable mainly to policy choices rather than external shocks, and a transition crisis arising from domestic political and economic disruption. In view of the country's abundant petroleum revenues, it is challenging to ascribe its poor performance to a poverty trap, and its isolation from global capital markets obviates the type of liquidity crisis associated with the Asian financial downturn. There is little question that the country's decades-long economic stagnation has been instigated and protracted by harmful government policies. Still, this observation fails to explain why Nigeria's various rulers have selected and maintained policies that were demonstrably harmful to development. Answering this question calls for consideration of the political context of policymaking and market relations.

Sachs, along with others, has also emphasised the geographic foundations of underdevelopment in the tropics generally and in Africa in particular. Adverse endowments of climate, soil, and disease and limited integration in global trade have contributed to slow growth and lagging productivity (Uke, 1998). These conditions undeniably hamper many countries, but it is essential to ask why contemporary governments have yet to undertake public health measures, agricultural reforms, or trade initiatives to surmount an unfortunate geographic inheritance. Other lines of analysis, focusing on structural and historical factors, run up against a similar problem. Many authors have emphasised Nigeria's colonial legacy and the problems of economic dependence (Onimode, 1982). It has also been suggested that states with dominant resource-export sectors confront special impediments to growth (Shafer, 1999). These factors are important to understanding Nigeria's developmental performance. Yet, in each instance, one can observe significant variation in performance among countries with similar structural conditions or historical legacies. These differences in

performance can be attributed to policy choices arising from the political conditions of different countries and regions.

What accounts for the political syndrome at the heart of Nigeria's lagging development? The underpinnings are found in the structure of ethnic competition, the evolution of a rentier economy, and the course of institutional degeneration.

Ethnic Competition

Nigeria exhibits substantial ethnic fragmentation. There are hundreds of ethnic groups, including politically significant dozens (Easterly & Levine, 1997). Ethnic competition, however, is highly concentrated among the three largest ethno linguistic groups (Hausa Fulani, Igbo, and Yoruba), although these demarcations are frequently offset by broader regional divisions and by the participation of smaller groups (for example, (Tiv, Ijaw, Nupe, Kanuri, Edo, Efik, among others), competition and conflict have been shaped by different economic attributes and resources for collective action (Medson & Nolpe, 1971). During the colonial era, British policies reinforced disparities between northern and southern populations: southern peoples had greater access to modern education, commercial opportunities (by virtue of coastal access and urbanisation), and integration in the colonial administration; by contrast, the Northern Region, under the colonial doctrine of indirect rule, remained under the sway of traditional authorities in the Emirates; Islamic religion, judicial, and educational institutions; and prevailing agrarian structures. In the postcolonial era, these historical patterns of socioeconomic development yielded substantial advantages for southerners in entrepreneurship, administrative experience, and education. The consolidation of three regional governments controlled by distinct ethnically oriented parties served to reinforce and politicise these disparities.

Paradoxically, the Northern Region, despite lagging educational

and economic resources, proved most adept at collective action on behalf of sectional interests (Lubeck, 1994). Elites linked to the emirate system retained influence throughout the colonial era, and they built upon common religious and cultural identities to forge an influential political network during the years of nationalist mobilisation. Northern elites coalesced in the 1950s under the Northern People's Congress (NPC), organising a voting block and wielding legislative discipline to achieve dominance of the post-independence parliamentary system. The Northern Region held a plurality of legislative seats, whereas dissension among southern groups prevented a countervailing regional coalition. The growing influence of northerners in the armed forces, especially after the Civil War, bolstered regional supremacy (Lioyu, 1970). Over the six decades following independence, politicians and military officers from the northern states held executive posts for twenty-seven years; the country was continuously governed by northern Muslims from 1979 through 1999. These regimes furnished a semblance of inclusion through expedient political alliances, selective appointments, and patronage, but most southern groups and non-Muslim northern minorities felt marginalised and excluded (Osagbe, 1998).

These polarities of political and economic power define ethnic competition. The persistence of social and economic disparities along the north-south divide has prompted northern rulers to use political power to pursue their goals of geographic redistribution. Northern elites have consistently favoured statist strategies as a means of directing economic resources and opportunities toward "disadvantaged" regions and mitigating the presumed advantages of the South. Groups in the south are more frequently (though not uniformly) proponents of economic liberalisation, as they perceive advantages in an environment of

relatively competitive markets. All, however, share basic assumptions about political and economic competition. First, access to the state is viewed as essential for sectional opportunities and claims on resources. Strategies for ethnic advancement, therefore, focus on securing control of government or gaining important representation through electoral office, cabinet appointments, the civil service, or public enterprise (Joseph, 1987). Having a "son of the soil" in a high position is the only assured channel for advancing group interests. Second, the coincidence of political and economic power enables a particular sectional group to consolidate its dominance. Political authority is therefore seen as instrumental, zero-sum terms: state positions are used to direct resources towards one's group while denying access to competitors. Elites in power are motivated not only by the patronage demands of their constituencies but also by a desire to prevent other groups from building an economic base that could yield competitive political resources.

Vice-Chancellor, Sir, to be sure, ethnic competition in Nigeria has created a proliferation of points of access to state resources while forming a set of mutual vetoes among groups over market access and distribution. The resulting political stalemate is antithetical to economic development. Without a stable governing coalition across ethnic lines, it is mainly impossible to organise concerted state action on behalf of growth and capital formation (Watts & Lubeck, 1994). For political leaders, time horizons are short, economic decision-making is particularistic rather than general, and discretion over resources is prized above institutional credibility. Distributive pressures on state actors impel the immediate dispersal of resources, hindering cooperation over broader policies or institutional changes that would enhance investment and exchange.

Deficits of Governance

Nigeria's crisis of governance is equally conspicuous. Ruling elites and public institutions have not provided essential collective goods, such as physical infrastructure, the rule of law, or legitimate symbols of state authority and political community. One of the most contentious problems is democracy. Nigerians tenaciously maintain aspirations for democratic rule, as evidenced in the recurring political struggles since independence and in public attitudes toward government (Lewis, Alemika & Brathon, 2002). Democracy has proven elusive if not chimerical, as cycles of civilian and military government have been punctuated by false starts, failed transitions, and recurring challenges to the stable rule (Osagbe, 1995).

Elected regimes have faltered over precarious institutions, factionalism among elites, and pervasive corruption. The First Republic, a parliamentary system put in place by the departing British colonists, suffered from an institutional design that encouraged ethnic segmentation and invidious regional competition for power. The regime quickly succumbed to communal polarisation, political conflict, and social strife. The military stepped into the maelstrom with a coup in 1966. However, the officers were themselves vulnerable to ethnic antagonism, leading to a counter coup and the ensuing civil war. Over the next thirteen years, there was a succession of "corrective" military regimes, promising a return to democracy but deferring political reform until 1979, when General Olusegun Obasanjo handed power back to the civilians. The Second Republic, a presidential regime modelled on the American system, fared worse than its predecessor, lasting merely four years. Massive corruption, mismanagement, political chicanery, and epidemic violence quickly eroded the regime's ability to govern and undermined the legitimacy of the democratic system in the eyes of the public. Once again, the armed forces stepped in with promises of remedial action. Despite their reformist pretensions, military regimes have

proven no more capable than civilians at resolving central challenges of state building and development. The turbulent military interventions of 1966 yielded nearly a decade of rule by General Yakubu Gowon, who prosecuted the civil war, sought to address problems of national unity, and presided over the early years of the petroleum boom. His dilatory response to pressures for democratisation and mounting evidence of corruption amid the oil windfall prompted further intervention by senior officers. General Murtala Muhammad replaced Gowon in July 1975, promising rapid movement toward a transition to civilian rule, greater economic probity, and administrative reform. Only six months later, Murtala was assassinated in a failed coup attempt and was replaced by his second in command, Olusegun Obasanjo, who continued the regime's programmes. Apart from overseeing the transition to civilian rule, the Murtala/Obasanjo government advanced an ambitious programme of state-led industrialisation and expansive social provision. The four-year civilian interregnum was terminated in 1983 by General Muhammadu Buhari amid widespread hopes that his regime would overhaul the corrupt shambles left by the Second Republic. In the event, Buhari's regime instigated a new era of military dominance that proved more corrosive to state capabilities, economic development, and social stability than its predecessors. The tenures of Buhari (1983-85), Ibrahim Babangida (1985-93), and Sani Abacha (1993-98) traced a downward spiral of repression, arbitrary rule, economic predation, and the erosion of such central institutions as the military, the central bureaucracy, significant services, and infrastructure (Lewis, 1996).

With the ouster of the regime of General Buhari (and his close associate General Tunde Idiagbon), whose autocratic style and economic ineptitude dissipated popular support, General Babangida pledged essential political and economic change, delivering a schedule for transition to democratic rule along with

a programme to stabilise the economy. The reformist impulse was fleeting, however, as Babangida repeatedly postponed and amended the political programme, wavered on economic reform, and soon jettisoned even the pretence of stable management. The general employed coercion to quell opposition, while his regime was shadowed by evidence of prodigious corruption. The nadir of Babangida's rule was his abrogation of the democratic transition in June 1993, when he annulled the results of a presidential election that had been widely regarded as fair by a nation anxious to return to civilian rule (Lewis, 1999).

The ensuing crisis provoked widespread uncertainty, ethno-regional antipathy, and further economic decline. Babangida was induced to depart, leaving a flimsy civilian caretaker committee in his wake, which was scrapped in a matter of weeks by the defence minister, General Sani Abacha.

Abacha, with none of the finesse or political alacrity of his predecessor, displayed an even more dictatorial and venal style of rule. He wielded the state security apparatus to intimidate, harass, jail, or murder political opponents and contrived a political "transition" that would perpetuate his own rule as a civilian president. After briefly tinkering with populist economic policies, the regime returned to a semblance of orthodox measures, but fiscal indiscipline and unalloyed economic predation left the economy in the doldrums. The accelerated decline of the education and health systems, public administration, utilities, and domestic fuel supplies mirrored the speed and magnitude of plunder at the centre. Social and political tensions intensified as the general's "self-succession" seemed imminent. Abacha's death in June 1998 opened the way for reformers in the military to pursue political change. General Abdulsalami Abubakar, selected by the ruling military council,

elaborated a programme to return Nigeria to civilian rule. The regime adhered to its expeditious schedule of transition, transferring power to an elected civilian regime in May 1999. The newly elected president was Olusegun Obasanjo, the retired general who had handed power to the politicians of the Second Republic two decades earlier.

The resumption of civilian rule has brought a semblance of improvements in the climate of popular participation and human rights in Nigeria. In other areas of governance, the changes have been less favourable. The accumulated depredations of preceding rulers burdened the regime, manifesting in a depleted treasury, a huge debt overhang, dilapidated public institutions, endemic corruption, and simmering social antagonism. The first presidential term has seen little progress on the chronic problems of the economy, while communal violence has exploded in myriad conflicts across the country. A contentious and largely inexperienced political class shows little capacity to address the country's pressing economic and social challenges. These challenges continue to escalate to where the country is now inundated with banditry, kidnapping and general insecurity (Jibrin, 2017).

The Rentier State and The Dutch Disease Syndrome

The emergence of the oil economy significantly increased the political impediments to development. The growth of oil exports created a rentier state, a government relying principally on revenues from resource rents (Karl, 1997). Nigeria's fiscal transformation occurred suddenly in the early 1970s, with far-reaching effects on public finance, economic strategy, distributive politics, and private economic activity. In the first decade after independence, the federal structure and a varied export profile produced substantial fiscal decentralisation. The

three regions, each with different cash crops and minerals, retained their export revenues (Helleiner, 1966). Their budgetary autonomy and the reliance of regional governments on local production created incentives for promoting and sustaining output across the economy. These incentives shifted abruptly with the advent of petroleum exports. First, revenues became substantially centralised in the hands of the federal government, and the fiscal discretion of the central authorities was significantly increased. The replacement of regions by states limited the fiscal autonomy of subnational governments, and the subsequent growth of petroleum exports quickly overshadowed other revenue sources. The precipitous decline of non-oil exports spurred the concentration of resources at the centre.

A second set of effects is associated with the "Dutch disease," a syndrome of price distortions and structural changes in resource-exporting economies that are generally adverse to growth (Gelb, 1986). Briefly, countries experiencing a resource windfall see a shift in relative prices as non-tradable goods (for example, construction and services) appreciate relative to tradable (for example, cash crops and manufactured goods). The appreciation of the exchange rate causes imports to become cheaper and lower returns on exports. This creates disincentives for investment in productive sectors such as agriculture and (non-oil) industry and thus reduces their competitiveness and economic flexibility. The dynamics of the Dutch disease are frequently associated with inflation, a proliferation of prestige projects, accelerating urbanisation and crime, and heightened corruption (Watts, 1987). These are undoubtedly evident in Nigeria.

Paradoxically, state bankruptcy (defined by Sachs as an inability to service external debts) is a common problem for resource

exporters. In Nigeria, the windfall prompted steep growth of public spending, and fiscal expansion quickly outpaced the increase in revenues. Significant commitments to ambitious capital projects, as well as a growing public sector wage bill, made it challenging to adjust spending in response to periodic declines in revenue. The gap was bridged through foreign loans, producing a large debt overhang by the 1980s. A sense of fiscal myopia also comes into play: leaders' perspectives (and incentives) shifted so dramatically with the initial windfall that they regarded the gains as permanent despite abundant evidence of volatility. In the face of revenue shortfalls and rising external obligations, policymakers have regularly behaved as if exports would provide a bailout.

Occasional boosts in revenues from favourable oil market shocks have not provided fiscal deliverance but added to a mounting trend of insolvency. The rentier state draws revenues primarily from a foreign-dominated enclave; state resources are therefore divorced from domestic output. This shifts the basic concern of governing elites from revenue generation (through taxation and expansion of the economic base) to the distribution of proceeds derived mainly from abroad (Guyer, 1991). An independent revenue base reduces the pressures on ruling groups to maintain general conditions for production and allows them to use their fiscal discretion to bolster political power. A key to this strategy is an expansion of the public sector, which will enable leaders to use employment, subsidies, public works, and development spending in the course of building patronage networks.

The growth of government largesse increases the state's role in conflicts over distribution among elites and average citizens. For politicians and military officers, the stakes of winning and losing political office are significantly heightened. For the

public, the state becomes a font of resources and the gatekeeper of economic opportunities. For business elites, in particular, opportunities are multiplied through the government's role in allocating petroleum rents and the copious growth of the state sector. Business gravitates toward government contracts, licenses, quotas, and employment and auxiliary relationships with state enterprises. The rentier state fosters a rentier economy, in which the principal avenues of accumulation are found in access to politically mediated rents, and state elites are the central arbiters of resource distribution and market entry (Watts, 1987). As a corollary, fiscal discretion, a lack of accountability, and abundant pressures for special preferences generate massive corruption throughout the state and private sectors.

The Decline of Institutions

An additional factor, particularly in the wake of the oil boom, has been Nigeria's course of institutional decline (Utomi, 1998). This is both a manifestation of poor governance and a cause of further deterioration in governance. Although institutional weakness is sometimes difficult to distinguish from other effects, there is no question that the degeneration of major state institutions has been an essential factor in the poor developmental performance of the past six decades. Nigeria, like most postcolonial countries, had weak institutional foundations at independence, and the process of institution building in the early years of the new state was slow and uneven. The petroleum boom was a period of rapid institutional expansion. The precipitous growth of the civil service and the proliferation of public enterprises in the 1970s and 1980s magnified the challenges of institutional design and local staffing (Greene, 1981). The burgeoning state became overextended, and public institutions descended into inefficiency, disarray, and corruption.

The situation worsened markedly in the 1980s as resources declined and political instability further eroded government

capacities. The slump in the oil market gave rise to fiscal shortfalls, salary arrears, and the deterioration of essential services. Under the Second Republic, the resource gap was aggravated by budgetary indiscipline and epidemic corruption. Following the civilians, the Buhari regime implemented stringent austerity measures in response to dwindling export revenues and rising debt, including large-scale retrenchment in the civil service and state enterprises. This trend continued under Babangida, whose Structural Adjustment Programme called for further cuts in public employment and subsidies, along with widespread liberalisation and divestiture of state firms. From the 1980s forward, therefore, the situation has been characterised by increasing resource constraints, faltering public services, and pervasive insecurity within state agencies (Forest, 1995).

State bankruptcy, however, is only one facet of the picture. A notable deterioration in professionalism and organisational cohesion within the armed forces was equally apparent during the 1980s. Internal divisions and instability had long afflicted the military, as reflected in two coups in 1966, the 1975 action by Murtala, and the unsuccessful revolt that took Murtala's life. Several years later, in the aftermath of Buhari's coup, internal weaknesses in the military had clearly multiplied; indeed, the Buhari-Idiagbon regime was ousted in just twenty months. Babangida put down two significant revolts in his first five years in power, both of which suggested a disturbing fragmentation of the military along factional, ethnic, and generational lines. Moreover, corruption within military regimes became increasingly conspicuous. Officers grew more openly interested in continued political control and were less concerned with presenting a rationale for reform (Diamond, 2001). The persistence of military rule politicised the armed forces, and the attraction of power at the fountainhead of oil wealth intensified venal impulses throughout this crucial Institution.

These pathologies were evident in the dictatorship of Sani Abacha, who fashioned his regime around an agenda of economic predation and political domination. Abacha personalised power to an unprecedented degree by employing widespread repression, encouraging a cult of personality, and manipulating the political process to perpetuate his rule. Historically, Nigeria's military regimes have been relatively collegial, as leaders worked within consultative processes and broader decision-making institutions. Abacha moved decisively toward the creation of a "sultanistic" regime based upon personal rule and a monopoly of patronage (Lewis, 1999). His efforts to gather power at the centre—eschewing consultation, bypassing, manipulating or remaking state institutions, and plundering resources—accelerated the decline of major instruments of governance. The education and health systems, starved of funds and wracked by professional protests and government repression, grew moribund; the traditionally independent judiciary, manipulated by autocratic rulers and short of resources, became increasingly ineffectual and corrupt; the civil service was organizationally weak, demoralised, and suffused with misconduct; and the banking system, following a hasty, politically inflected, liberalisation in the early 1990s, descended into full-blown financial crisis. The declining legitimacy of the military and other leading public institutions further undermined the capacity to govern. Mounting anti-government violence and social conflict were further indications of a state in crisis (Lewis, 1999).

With Abacha's demise and the subsequent transition to civilian rule, the trend of institutional decline has been initially arrested, though hardly reversed. The institutions bequeathed to the new administration were enfeebled by years of mismanagement and plunder, and the civilians had neither the resources nor the programmes to revive services and overhaul the machinery of

government. The Obasanjo government has restored a modicum of fiscal control and transparency while promising to stem corruption. The new democratic institutions, however, brought additional problems, not least of which are the untested nature of the party system, the legislature, and many elected offices, as well as inexperience among much of the political class. Tensions between the presidency and the National Assembly have impaired budgeting and spending, while major reforms have stalled in the assembly or subsequent bureaucratic implementation. Institutional malaise is evident in the poor state of public services and government functions, as well as the intractable political wrangling that seems to block effective reform, which has led to the state of insecurity today.

This analysis underscores the domestic political constraints on development. Background factors of Nigeria's geography, history, and international position frame the essential challenges of development. The principal external shocks of recent decades, arising from energy and capital markets, are also of great importance. However, the policy response of Nigerian governments to these structural conditions and exogenous factors lies at the heart of the problem. Nigeria's poor developmental performance, therefore, requires political solutions, though since the civilian transition, promises of reform and political reconfiguration have been overshadowed by increased turbulence and uncertainty.

Summary

Many analyses of the current development problem in Nigeria usually put all the blame on colonialism. This should only sometimes be: while one recognises the enormous and perhaps irreversible consequences of colonial imperialism on Nigeria, it will be intellectually indolence to explain the Nigerian predicament in terms of colonial domination and exploitation alone. There is a neo-colonial dependency, and there are imperialistic agencies like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), otherwise known as the World Bank (WB), Paris and London Clubs, etc. that constitute the external variables in the crisis. Still, the major factors remain the domestic social forces that create and nurture the crises and, of course, reap enormous profits (Jibrin, 2016).

The crisis becomes a necessity for the maintenance of their control over the means of production and the perpetuation of their hegemony over the state and other social classes within it. After independence, some of those who assumed political power did not initiate good policies that would move Nigeria forward economically, socially and politically. Politics became an arena for primitive accumulation. It became a zero-sum game.

As a matter of fact, this tendency of political instability and the quest for primitive accumulation led to civil war in 1967. The oil boom of 1970 was mismanaged. There was economic planlessness. Nigerian doors were thrown open to foreign exploiters and investors who were not interested in the economic development of the country. This continued into the second republic of 1979 when democracy was introduced for the second term (Jacob, 2017).

The civilian leaders continued with the mismanagement/corruption and planlessness. Nigeria has accumulated much foreign debt. Poverty became endemic in the social system. This is the situation even in the Fourth Republic. In spite of these, there is a new breed of billionaires who bought private jets overnight.

The military, even after promising to bring sanity each time they took over power, ended up worse. This is because of the political infighting and fractionalisation within the ruling class. As a result, those who suffer remain downtrodden and poor. Unfortunately, members of the ruling class continue to deceive members of the lower class into thinking that they are fighting on their behalf.

Conclusion

Vice-Chancellor, in this lecture, I arrived at an understanding of a fundamental flaw in the Nigerian political economy, which explains why a country with so much potential remains mired in poverty. Ruling elites at all levels feel that their positions entitle them to unbridled access to public resources with which they not only satisfy their own material needs but also service the needs or wants of subaltern clients. This criminal diversion of public resources for selfish private ends starves the state of funds for development, increases poverty and inequality, and intensifies an unhealthy rivalry and competition for public office that triggers perverse instability. There is, therefore, a fundamental contradiction between the abundance of human and material resources and the lack of development, which is a paradox.

What is to be Done?

To reduce the attraction and influence of power, there is the need to make it less attractive, such that the national assembly is made to be on a part-time basis, and members are only remunerated based on the number of sittings they have in a month. In addition, those occupying executive positions should also be made to be accountable and transparent in all their personal and official dealings with the citizens, and an arrangement should be made which will reduce their access to the resources of the State.

There is also the need for a change of the conception of development away from the emphasis on growth objectives towards a more people centre conception of development, which places emphasis not only on growth, as has been the case, but also on reducing poverty and inequality and empowering people to take decisions on matters that affect their lives and livelihood, i.e. we need to begin to conceive development not as something that can be directed from above but as the development of, for and by the people. This notion of development involves investing in human capabilities, ensuring a comprehensive and

equitable distribution of the proceeds of economic growth and concerted efforts towards achieving self-reliance and self-centred development.

In more concrete terms, there is a need for adequately conceived policies and programmes which will accelerate economic growth. However, the formulation and implementation of such programmes and policies must involve the people themselves and must be accompanied by a conscious and equally participatory redistribution policy. When and where the distribution of wealth, income, power, and services is perceived to be inequitable or unjust, those who see themselves as unjustly or unfairly treated are not likely to subordinate themselves to the authority of the regime or the interest of the State in this regard. Economic policies should aim to provide relief for the unemployable and the unemployed in the short term and create jobs in the long-term. Revenue allocation formulas should seek to achieve a balance between derivation and even development, and an honest and effective implementation of power sharing should be institutionalised. In order to achieve accelerated growth and development with redistribution, a more robust rather than a reduced role for the state is imperative. It is only a strong state that can protect the internal economy against hostile international economic forces, effectively intervene in critical sectors of the economy and guarantee essential human welfare services, especially a decent minimum income level. Education and health facilities for the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in the society.

Furthermore, governments at all levels need to spend more on agriculture, information and communications technology and social welfare services especially in the rural areas. The need for greater emphasis on rural social and welfare services and agriculture seems obvious. A large proportion of the population

lives in rural areas, and agriculture remains the primary source of food, raw materials and government revenue, apart from oil. The under-development of the rural regions induces rural-urban migration, exerts pressure on urban resources and facilities, and induces social and political tension.

Also, good governance is imperative, i.e. the enthronement of governments that are open, accountable and responsive. This calls for vigorous enforcement of the anti-corruption law and the existence of virile civil society organisations and patriotic media.

Finally, there is a need for a deliberate attempt to address the ideational/behavioural component of primordial identities and conflict, i.e., the need to positively affect our existing inter-ethnic and religious conceptions, beliefs and attitudes. This calls for a mass programme of political education and mobilisation, the imaginal use of the mass media, children's story books, and history.

Contribution to Knowledge

Vice-Chancellor, Sir, my major contribution to knowledge is the application of the state theory and power struggle to the crisis of development brought about by rent-seeking, prebendalism and patrimonialism. My interest in the crisis of development in Nigeria began in 2001 with the failure of the state to address most of the ethno-religious crises that engulfed the country. This led me to research the political economy of ethno-religious crises in Nigeria, where I identified and analysed the various causes of both political and resource-based crises. It is during this research that I realised that for an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of ethno-religious crises, there is a need for a better experience and appreciation of the nature and character of the Nigerian state.

I also wrote an article titled “The Nigerian State, Rule of Law, Good Governance and Development”, which appeared in the International Journal of Innovative Research and Development, where I argued and attributed the crisis of development in Nigeria to the lack of commitment of government at various levels to promote sustainable development. I further posited that there is a nexus between underdevelopment, development, and poverty, which constitute the root cause of insecurity in the country.

In 2022, I gave a lecture on “demystifying the promise of New Nigeria” to an organisation named Confidence Building Initiative International (COBII) at the Isa Mustapha Agwai Polytechnic Lafia on 9th June 2022, where I identified widespread political violence as a failure of the governance process in the Nigerian State.

In all these and many others, I have sufficiently demonstrated that the ruling class in Nigeria has exploited the country's resources without substantial and sustainable benefits for the people.

Vice-Chancellor, Sir, this lecture has reinforced the fact that Nigeria is a class society. It has sufficiently demonstrated that the burden of the paradox of development lies with the poor, vulnerable and oppressed people of Nigeria.

Areas of Current and Future Research

For decades, I have romanticised issues of state governance, particularly those relating to ethno-religious crises, developmental problems, state failure, etc. I am also dealing with issues of poverty, unemployment, inequality, good governance, security and democracy. I intend to go beyond these to examine technology and development, environmental impact on power, rentier state and neo-liberal policies, and state and oil economy.

Vice-Chancellor, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for listening.

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Vice Chancellor, Sir, I would like to end the acknowledgements by appreciating the Almighty Allah for his gift of life, guidance, and good health. May He continue to give his endless blessings and salutations to our noble prophet Muhammad (SAW).

PROFILE OF PROFESSOR ABDULLAHI DAN'ASABE JIBRIN

PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Professor Abdullahi Dan'Asabe Jibrin is a scholar and administrator. He is a professor of political economy and development studies and the current Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Federal University of Lafia.

He started his primary and Quranic education in Laminga, Nasarawa Local Government Area, his birthplace.

After leaving primary school, he proceeded to Government Teachers College, Foron and graduated as a teacher with a Grade II Certificate.

He started work as a class teacher in primary school. After four years of teaching, his continuous search for knowledge saw him at the School of Preliminary Studies, Keffi, where he did the IJMB examination. After his IJMB, he secured admission into Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, where he earned a B.Sc. Political Science. He was also at the University of Jos for his M.Sc. Political Economy and Development Studies and earned his Ph.D. Political Economy and Development Studies from the University of Abuja.

His working career spans from Assistant Lecturer at the School of Preliminary Studies, Keffi, to Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Federal University, Birnin Kebbi and now the Federal University of Lafia.

At a certain point in his working career, Professor Jibrin was conscripted from classroom to university administration, where he rose steadily from administrative assistant to deputy registrar before reversing to the classroom. As an academic, he rose through thin and thick from an assistant lecturer to a professor.

He has rendered various administrative and community development services in addition to teaching and research.

In terms of academic output, he has attended several local and international academic conferences. He has published extensively in a reputable national and international journal in diverse areas of politics, state and economy, governance, democracy, etc.

As part of his academic output, he has participated in the development of curriculum for Masters and Ph.D. in Federal University of Lafia, and others. He has also participated in the development of new programmes in social sciences.

Professor Jibrin is a chairman and member of several university committees. For instance, he is chairman of the vice-chancellor advisory committee (2021 – To date) and several others too numerous to mention. He is also member admissions committee, committee of deans and directors, academic planning and curriculum committee, board of postgraduate studies, research and publication committee, university management committee, community service committee, reconstitution of the board of Centre for Continuing Education and professional development, committee to prepare policy on intellectual property, committee to develop proposal for sandwich programme, committee, for the establishment of Centre for the study of Nigerian culture and civilisation, committee to develop proposal for the establishment of institute of education, committee on university reward system, examination result vetting committee.

He held several positions of responsibilities, among which include: -

- o Examination Officer for the Department of Political Science – 2015 -2017.

- o Seminar Coordinator for the Department of Political Science–2015-2017.
- o Acting Head of Department–2017-2018.
- o Member, Research Team for the Faculty of Arts, Management and Social Sciences on the Socio-Economy Implication of Nomadic Education in Kebbi State.–2017-2018.
- o Acting Head of Department Political Science – 16 January 2020 – 27 January 2020.
- o Deputy Dean Faculty of Social Sciences – 8 June 2020 –
- o Acting Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences – 27th July 2020
- o Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences – 27th July 2023 till date.

He supervised and graduated M.Sc and PhD students in various fields of political science, particularly in political economy and development studies. He has also assessed some individuals for promotion to Associate Professors and Professors. He is an editorial member of the International Journal of Public Policy (2019 to date).

Professor Jibrin has received honorary awards and recognition; some of these awards and recognitions are: -

- Recognized and awarded the traditional title of “Tafidan Laminga”
- Award of recognition by National Association of Political Science Students Federal University of Birnin Kebbi chapter–2017.

- Certificate of Credence presented by the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) as Beacon of Educational Prudence on 14th June 2021.
- Award of Excellence presented by the Faculty of Social Sciences Students Association (FOSSSA), Federal University of Lafia on 1st September 2021.
- Award of Excellence by Department of Sociology, Federal University of Lafia on 3rd September 2021.
- Award of Excellence by National Association of Social Works Students (NASOWS), Federal University of Lafia, 2021.
- Award of recognition presented by Faculty of Social Sciences Students Association (FOSSSA) FULafia, Chapter on 19th April 2023.
- Award of Excellence as Best Dean in FULafia, by Faculty of Social Sciences Students Association on 16th December 2023.

He is a member of various professional associations: -

- Member, National Political Science Association (MNPSA).
- Member, Nigerian Institute of Management (MNIM).
- Member, Chartered Institute of Administrators (MCIA).
- Fellow, Nigerian Institute of Management Consultants (FIMC).

He is married with several children.

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17.	Prof. Abdullahi Dan'asabe Jibrin	State, Power Struggle and Paradox of Development in Nigeria	25th June, 2024

SIGNIFICANCE OF INAUGURAL LECTURES IN FULAFIA

The rite of passage to become a professor in a university has for hundreds of years included the test of having to profess one's knowledge to a lay audience and fellow academics. Indeed, the origin of the title 'professor' comes from the need to profess, or declare publicly, one's knowledge. The occasion of inaugural lecture presentation is therefore an essential component of the University's public events through which the institution engages with audiences with a broader interest in its research, including funders and decision makers from government, academia and industry. Professionals and academics gain a unique opportunity to engage across knowledge boundaries for the benefit of mankind.

Vision

To become a renowned institution of learning,
research and innovation for positive socio-economic
transformation of the nation.

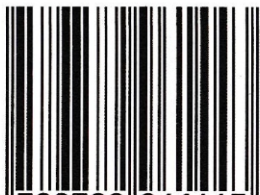
Mission

Training of graduates and equipping them with
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Core Values

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