

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Intricacies and Dynamics of Development Administration

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Abstract

Development administration is primarily concerned with the various strategies to achieve accelerated national development, especially in developing countries. One major instrument for achieving national development objectives is the development plan. The plan stipulates development goals and targets, various policies, programs and projects, and finances to achieve national development objectives. However, despite all these efforts in Nigeria, the level of underdevelopment is still high, considering the various obvious statistics and realities on the ground. The paper examines the government's efforts at national planning over the years and the achievements made on SDGs. It identified the intricacies and dynamism involved over time in the achievement of SDGs and as well proffered solutions for better management. Secondary data was derived from books, journals, online publications, and government official reports in gathering information for the paper. Content analysis was adopted in analysing the data collected. The study concludes that attempts at achieving the SDGs' various targets were unsuccessful due to certain peculiarities in Nigeria. High poverty, unemployment, inequality and insecurity, low infrastructural development, and poor social services like education, health services, housing, and electricity. There are peculiar indicators of these failures. The paper suggests, among others: the building of institutional capacity and fit for governance, the need to confront the structural impediments confronting attempts at achieving public policy through a constitutional review, emphasis on infrastructural development adequate for achieving national development and enhancing technological development, and capacity building through a viable and efficient educational sector.

Keywords: Development; Development Administration, Sustainable Development, National Development.



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I. INTRODUCTION

Development Administration relates to the overall achievement of national development's socio-economic, political, cultural and administrative objectives. Most developing countries, including Nigeria, have over the years adopted various development policies and programs to accelerate the development pace. The quest to achieve accelerated national development as a newly independent country and to meet up with other developed nations led to the formulation of the first national plan in 1960. The country has adopted several long, medium and short-term development plans to achieve its objectives and accelerate national development. The country is also a signatory to various regional and international treaties and development plans. Some include NEPAD, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Vision20: 2020 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs, as propounded by the United Nations, help sort global solutions to the mirage of problems affecting the Economy, lives, peace and environment of countries before 2030. The SDGs constitute 17 goals and 169 targets, and 230 key performance indicators. Over time, institutional and legal frameworks were established to implement several policies and programmes to achieve the country's SDGs. The goals of these development plans are detailed and all-encompassing capable of meeting the needs and solving the numerous development problems and other challenges confronting the country's development.

A look at the various socio-economic indicators in Nigeria indicates that much has not been achieved. The country is still bedevilled by a high rate of hunger, poverty, unemployment, inequality, illiteracy, diseases, decaying and dilapidated infrastructures, environmental pollution and degradation and excessive debt burden, among others. Statistics as of 2021 show that 50 per cent of Nigerians are still wallowing in abject poverty. Forty per cent of Nigerians are unemployed, the rate of inequality is still high, and the health, housing, education, power, and transport sectors are at the stage comatose. The country is yet to achieve self-sufficiency in food production due to a bad agricultural sector. The country is import-dependent due to low industrialisation. Achieving self-reliance in food production, essential goods, and services has been a mirage. The various development plans in Nigeria have failed. Also, the implementation of the SDGs has been ongoing for one and half decades, remaining only seven years to the end of the plan. Nothing seems to have changed based on the socio-economic indicators of Nigeria. Against this backdrop, the paper seeks to identify some impediments to achieving Nigeria's SDGs. Looking at the government efforts over the years in realising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by aligning them to the national development plan of the country, the paper seeks to ask the following questions:

- a. What are the efforts in place by the government to achieve SDGs in Nigeria?
- b. What are the major impediments to achieving SDGs and national development plans in Nigeria?
- c. What could be the solution to these impediments?

The primary objective of this study is to examine the challenges that could impede the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their consequences on national development in Nigeria. The specific objectives include examining government efforts at achieving the SDGs in Nigeria and Examining the challenges that could impede the achievement of SDGs in Nigeria. Then, to identify the best way to ameliorate the challenges impeding the achievement of SDGs in Nigeria.

The research is descriptive qualitative research. The study solely utilises secondary data derived from journals, books, newspapers, magazines, and official government and non-governmental institutions documents. The data were analysed by describing the contents related to the subject matter. In other words, the study adopted content analysis in presenting and analysing the data collected.

II. DEVELOPMENT: A CONCEPTUAL DEBATE IN NIGERIA CASE

Development as a concept is multi-dimensional and all-encompassing. It permeates every facet of human existence and that of a nation. Among the various definitions of this concept, one that stood out in explaining the intricacies of development in most developing countries, including Nigeria, was that of Dudley Seer. He raised three fundamental questions relating to development in any nation. According to Dudley Seers (1969), the first is about what is happening to poverty. The second is what is happening to unemployment.

Furthermore, the third is what is happening to inequality. If the three indicators are on the low side, the country concerned is experiencing development. Nevertheless, if one or two of these indicators are on the high side, it implies a retrogressive situation for such a country. Based on the above analogy, it could be said that most developing countries, including Nigeria, are not developed. The ravage of poverty, unemployment and inequality is high and can be attributed to the low standard of living among the populace in Nigeria. Despite the economic growth witnessed over time, it has not culminated in the welfare of the populace.

Therefore, from the above assertion, development is meant to be a continuous process of positive changes, which must be a qualitative and quantitative transformation of productive capacity and human welfare. However, development occurs when there is an improvement in the general welfare of man and more equitable distribution of the increased goods and services among the people.

The quest for national planning necessitated the emergence of development administration, and government interventionism which emerged as a consequence of the great depression witnessed in the industrial nations in the late 1920s and early 1930s, World War II, post-war reconstruction and other developments after the war. It was later adopted by countries emerging from colonisation. Development administration is the strategy adopted by developing countries to achieve developmental objectives. It is a carrier of innovative values, "action-oriented, goal-oriented administrative systems". Development Administration constitutes the array of new functions assumed by

developing countries embarking on modernization and industrialization.¹ Development administration is the implementation of development programmes and projects geared towards meeting the peculiar needs of the citizens and achieving national development. It is a strategy for enhancing the capacity of the public bureaucracy in developed countries to carry out their functions effectively.

A development plan is a blueprint for achieving the development objectives of a nation. It constitutes the various strategies, programmes and projects aimed at achieving development. It stipulates the financial and human costs and time frames for achievement. In Nigeria, the development plans are implemented in the annual budgets. The financial implications for each project are stipulated in detail for implementation. The institutional and legal framework for implementing these projects is clearly stated.

Conceptually, sustainable development was first used in the Brundtland Report released in 1987 by the United Nations. The report warned of the negative environmental consequences of economic growth and globalization caused by industrialization and population growth.² The Brundtland Commission³ defined sustainable development as the development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainability is the development that satisfies the needs of the present without compromising the capacity of future generations, guaranteeing the balance between economic growth, care for the environment and social well-being.⁴ In essence, sustainability could be described as a lasting improvement in the quality of life. Accordingly, Su⁵ asserts that sustainable development involves materials, aesthetics, ecological systems, agriculture and forests and human health.

Briggs⁶ sees sustainable development as a socio-ecological process characterised by fulfilling human needs while maintaining the quality of life and the natural environment indefinitely. It considers human welfare and the long-term effects of today's activities, including global cooperation, to reach viable and long-lasting solutions. Sustainable development also entails that resources need to be explored and exploited concerning the future such that they are not depleted; hence sustainable development is the development that is not truncated, aborted or short-termed but is long-lasting and affects the present and the future. Furthermore, sustainable development seems to be hinged on human solidarity, environmental sustainability, democratic governance, supporting technologies and secular and religious non-violence, while violence is the main obstacle to development.

¹ F.W. Riggs, 'Relearning an Old Lesson: The Political Context of Development Administration', *Public Administration Review* XXV (1965).

² ACCIONA, 'What Is Sustainable Development and What Are the Global Goals?', n.d., <https://www.acciona.com/sustainable-development/>.

³ Brundtland Commission, *Brundtland Report : Our Common Future* (Oxford University Press, 1987).

⁴ ACCIONA, 'What Is Sustainable Development and What Are the Global Goals?'

⁵ Felicia Su, 'All That Smog- External' (University of California, Berkeley Spring, 2002), <https://are.berkeley.edu/courses/EEP101/spring03/AllThatSmog/home.html>.

⁶ C. Briggs, 'Empowering Youth for Sustainable Development', *Journal of the Nigerian Institute of Management* 44, no. 1 (2008): 18–28.

However, it appears that man's productive and consumptive activities contribute to the non-sustainability of the planet and this, in turn, affects the environment and the welfare of society. To this end, there tend to be substantial human-driven threats to sustainable development when viewed from the perspective of the future of life on the planet, especially threats arising from the harmful effects of science and technology and gender inequality.⁷

Furthermore, various indicators were developed and used to assess sustainable development progress worldwide. The need arises for rating sustainable development to increase human awareness of the dangers posed by the non-sustainability of the planet that man and he search inhabit for a solution. The rating could be well sustainable, which is ok; almost sustainable, which is medium; poor, which is almost unsustainable and destructive, which is unsustainable. The outcome of such a rating is expected to spur the nation-state into finding means of reversing alarming trends to return the Earth to its average capacity of environmental sustainability or else extinction of humanity.

Indicators of sustainable development include the Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare (ISEW), Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI), Human Development Index (HDI), Environmental Development Index (EDI), and the Sustainable Development Index (SDI), Wellbeing Index and Ecological Footprint (EF). The most popular indicator is the Human Development Index, developed by the United Nations.⁸ The assessment reflects the state of socio-economic welfare and quality of life of the people and the nation.

National Development Plans in Nigeria began during the colonial era as a platform for the colonial government to allocate the country's resources efficiently. The first was the 1945-1955 development plan aimed at distributing development and welfare funds across the country; the ten years development plan was abruptly stopped due to the new constitution that divided the country into three regions. The country was divided into three regions, i.e. Northern Region, Western Region and Eastern Region. The new constitution allows each region to develop its plan in line with national objectives. Thus, each region developed its plan in the next, which was the 1955-1960 Development Plan. The plan was not significant because of certain defects inherent in the plan. First, the plan was bedevilled by implementation problems due to overlaps and duplications in the contents of the plans from the three regions. The confusion and conflicts that followed led to the plans' total failure. The plan also concentrated on the public sector expenditures, neglecting the private sector. The officials responsible for implementing the plan also lack the professional, technical and administrative experience to implement the plan. The financial resources to implement the plan were also grossly inadequate. The above plans are termed the pre-independent plan. It was seen as an anti-indigenous Nigerian plan as it only considered the interest of the colonial

⁷ Wikipedia, 'Education for Sustainable Development', 2010, <http://www.wikipedia.com>.

⁸ P. Bartelmus, *Indicators of Sustainable Development: In Encyclopedia of Earth* (Washington D.C., 2007), https://www.library.snls.org.sz/Encyclopedia%20of%20the%20Earth/editors.eol.org/eoearth/wiki/Indicators_of_sustainable_development.html.

masters. The indigenous Nigerian were not included in the planning and implementation of the plan. Thus, Nigerians were excluded from the whole process of the plans.

The next plan was the independence plan. The country attained independence in 1960, and there was a need to have a genuinely indigenous development plan to meet the needs and aspirations of the citizens in the country's three regions. Thus, the 1962-1968 National Development plan was conceived to achieve this objective. The six years development plan was the first national development plan in Nigeria because the plan was conceived and implemented by Nigerians. The plan also recognised the diversity of the federation, and attempts were made to integrate the various programmes and needs of the regions in one blueprint to achieve the national objectives of the plan. The plan was successful, but the inter rivalry among the three powerful regions in the implementation of the plan made it very difficult and almost impossible to achieve the objectives of the plan. The major reason for this failure was the country's structure, as provided for in the 1960 independent constitution, which makes the regions very powerful and leaves the central government very weak. Thus, the central government lacks the power to impose its will in resolving the excesses of the powerful regions. The plan was obstructed due to the various political conflicts and the war from 1966-1970.

The Second National development plan from 1970-1975 was a medium-term plan aimed at achieving the reconstruction process due to the war's ravage. The plan aimed to achieve the three Rs, Rehabilitation, Reconciliation and Reconstruction. The plan was predicated on five national development objectives. They are; the establishment of Nigeria as a strong and self-reliant nation, a great and dynamic economy; a just and egalitarian society; a land of pride and full opportunities for all citizens; and a free and democratic society. The plan was highly successful because the country witnessed a high rate of infrastructural development. However, some of the targets were not met, especially regarding the Economy and welfare of the people. There was enough money to implement most of the projects, but corruption on the part of the military rulers and the public servants was a significant constraint. The political will on the part of the military government to implement the plans later was lacking.

The next was the third National Development Plan from 1970-1980. It was a long-term development plan. Due to the defects associated with the second development plan, the core objectives of the new plan were increased to cover economic revitalisation and the welfare of the people. Apart from the five core cardinal objectives of the second development plan., other objectives of the third national development plan include an increase in per-capita income, an increase in even distribution of income, a reduction in the level of unemployment, diversification of the Economy, balanced development, indigenisation of economic activities and increase in the supply of indigenous human resources. The plan's success was insignificant due to some challenges. These include political instability in the country, a high rate of corruption among the military rulers and public servants, a lack of professionals to implement the plan, global fall in crude oil prices, among others.

Another plan was initiated to prepare for the new democratic dispensation and address the country's numerous problems. The fourth national development plan is a medium-term plan from 1980-1985. The plan was launched in 1981, and the objectives included increasing average citizens' real income and income distribution among individuals and economic groups. The reduction of unemployment and underdevelopment, diversification of the Economy, and balanced development, particularly from different sectors of the Economy and geo-political areas of the country, become crucial to be maintained. They were increasing indigenous participation in the ownership and management of productive enterprises, greater self-reliance on food production and indigenous technology, increased supply of skilled human resources, better attitude to work and value orientation, and a clean environment. The main feature of the post-independent plan was that they were designed by Nigerian professionals, unlike the pre-independent plans. However, the plan was bedevilled by corruption, lack of political will to implement the plan later by the stakeholders, declining revenue, and poor implementation.

The failure of the various national plans leads to adoption of the Three years rolling plans. The plans were short time aimed at meeting short time development needs of the country. The first was 1990-1992, 1992-1994, 1994-1996 and 1996-1998. The advent of the third republic in 1999 led to the abandonment of the rolling plan. The third republic marked the end of the long-time military regime in Nigeria. The Rolling plans achieved little success due to the high rate of corruption, lack of political will on the part of the government to implement the plan later, and lack of proper planning, among others.

The three-year plan failure led to the medium and long-term plan initiatives. The plan was supposed to be in three phases, but unfortunately, it was abandoned in 2007. One is the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). NEEDS was initiated in 2003 as a home-grown development strategy aimed at galvanising the Economy to reduce unemployment, poverty and inequality and improve the welfare of the people. The four key mandates of NEEDS include wealth creation, employment, poverty reduction and value re-orientation. The NEEDS were also replicated at the state and local government levels. State Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) at the state level and Local Government Empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS) at the local government level are the key. The major weakness of NEEDS is that it is foreign in content and is not home-grown, as speculated in the document. The blueprint of NEEDS is superlative, but it is cosmetic in nature and modality of implementation. It constitutes another jamboree project with much fanfare and publicity but without commiserate results.

The abandonment of NEEDS led to the initiation of Vision 20:2020 in 2007. The Vision is to be implemented in three phases of medium-term plans. The first is from 2009-2012, the second from 2013-2016 and the third from 2017-2020. Vision 20: 2020 aimed to make Nigeria one of the 20 most developed economies in the world. Unfortunately, the lack of political will and policy continuity by the previous governments within the period

led to the plan's failure. The plan was later abandoned without achieving significant success. Another major weakness of the NEEDS, as noted by AAIN⁹ was its "trickle-down" approach to poverty reduction instead of the "Right Based Approach" that is internationally recognised and accepted as the most fruitful approach. It is common parlance by successive governments to abandon the plan of the predecessors without recourse to whether it succeeds.

Another development plan, tagged the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan, was launched in 2017. ERGP is a medium-term plan from 2017-2020. The purpose was to restore economic growth battered by the effect of the 2017 economic recession and Covid-19 that led to economic recession in many countries, including Nigeria. The plan aimed to achieve sustained inclusive growth to consolidate national cohesion and structural economic transformation, improve efficiency in both public and private sectors, increase national productivity, achieve sustainable diversification of production, grow the economic significance and achieve maximum welfare of the citizens by ensuring food and energy security. The plan from all indicators did not achieve the desired results due to the multiplicity of problems bedeviling the Nigerian Economy. These include corruption, inappropriate economic policies, misappropriation of state resources by state and non-state actors, depreciating local currency, high insecurity rate, infrastructure decay, and global economic phenomenon.

Another plan which is still ongoing is the National Development Plan 2021-2025. It is a medium-term plan expected to succeed the ERGP, which ends at the end of 2021. The plan is predicated on the following mandates, economic growth and development, infrastructure, public administration, human capital development, and regional development. The target is to achieve 5 % GDP growth per annum. According to the government, this fact will be achieved by broadening the tax base and enhancing the capacity of the private sector through creating investment opportunities and deliberate policy engagements and incentives.

The plan is failing due to the country's economic and political predicaments. The government might not have the financial muzzle to implement the budget due to the economic downturn witnessed in the country. Some of the constraints include the high rate of the exchange rate, low revenue generation, high rate of debt commitments that take almost 80% of the revenue generated in the country, high rate of revenue committed to the payment of petroleum subsidy, low economic activities due to the economic downturn, high rate insecurity and high rate of corruption in the country. The scenarios from the analysis above are a strong indicator that achieving the SDGs might be a herculean task.

⁹ AAIN, 'Fighting Poverty Together in the Midst of Plenty', Annual Report, 2005.

III. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) IN NIGERIA

The SDGs were adopted during the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly on September 25 2015. The SDGs were initiated to replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which will end in 2015. The SDGs were predicted on five pillars, popularly called the 5Ps. The 5Ps include People, Prosperity, Partnership and Planet. The essence is to eradicate global poverty, secure the planet from environmental constraints due to activities of man and weather change, and ensure that people across the globe enjoy peace and prosperity by the year 2030. 17 SDGs were adopted to achieve the 5Ps. They include. Poverty eradication, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, reducing inequality, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water, life on land, peace, justice and strong institutions, and partnerships for the goals. The United Nations also has state-specific targets to achieve each of the goals. Specific timeframes were adopted to achieve specific targets for each of the SDGs. Each country is encouraged to implement the necessary machinery to achieve these targets between 2020-2030. The UN also initiated indicators to measure the progress made by each country in achieving the targets of the SDGs.

The Nigerian government became a signatory to the SDGs in 2016, and various institutional and legal frameworks have been put in place over time to implement the various strategies adopted to achieve the 17 SDGs. To implement the SDGs, the government has alienated its various national plans over time from those of the SDGs. Some institutions and legal frameworks were also put in place to ensure the effective implementation of the SDGs. A particular office (Office of the Senior Special Adviser to the President on SDGs) was created in the Presidency to coordinate and monitor the SDGs' implementation and achievement across Nigeria's states. The government collaborates with other international stakeholders like the UNDP and the UN.

The government's efforts and commitments to achieving the SDGs are expected to provide the necessary solutions to the multiplicity and arrays of development problems bedeviling the country. This situation is not the case based on the Voluntary National Review (VNR) report showing the country's performance in achieving the SDGs. The VNR is a tool used to monitor and review seven key areas of SDGs' priorities that are beneficial to the country's development. The prioritized SDGs include SDG 1 (Poverty Eradication); SDG 3 (Health and Wellbeing); SDG 8 (Inclusive Economy); SDG 4 (Education); SDG 5 (Gender Equality); SDG 16 (Enabling Environment for Peace and Security and SDG 17 (Partnership). The VNR report shows a gloomy picture of the situation in Nigeria.¹⁰ Some of the claimed achievement in the report seems to be an exaggeration.

¹⁰ United Nations, 'Nigeria: Sustainable Development Goals: Voluntary National Review (VNR)2020', 2020, https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26210Main_Messages_Nigeria.pdf.

For instance, the report indicates an improvement in the under-five mortality rates from 157 to 132. The score cannot be said to be a good indicator of achievement in the health sector. According to the USAID report, the country's health indicators are some of the worst in Africa and maternal, and child health constitutes one of Nigeria's most critical development challenges. The report also shows Nigeria's major causes of child illness and death.¹¹ The fact remains that health and well-being of the majority of the populace in Nigeria have deteriorated over time. The health sector has deteriorated to the level that health care tourism is high in Nigeria. The state of healthcare delivery also affected the low life expectancy rate. According to the USAID report, Life Expectancy in Nigeria is 54 years compared to the United States and the United Kingdom, with 98 and 97 years, respectively.¹² The VNR report also indicates that the Nigerian Economy is one of the largest in Africa, estimated at 53% of the labour force and accounting for 65% of the GDP. This data has not commensurate to better well-being for most people as most Nigerians still wallow in abject poverty and hunger. Nigeria has consistently been adduced as the poverty capital of Nigeria. Nigeria was the poverty capital of the world from 2016- 2021. In 2021, 93.9 million people in Nigeria will be below the poverty level. In 2022, Nigeria was the number two poverty capital of the world, with 70 million people living below the poverty line, with India taking the first position.¹³

The report shows that the youth unemployment rate is still high, estimated at 55.4 % or 24.5 million people. The recent reports from the National Bureau for Statistics can buttress the data. Statistical numbers from the National Bureau for Statistics NBC indicate an increase in the unemployment rate in Nigeria from 33 per cent in 2020 to 35 per cent in 2021. The 33 per cent constitute 23.2 million of about 70 million working-age citizens in Nigeria. Youth unemployment constitutes 53.4 per cent of the unemployed people in Nigeria.¹⁴

Achieving the SDGs required a robust and viable economy that will prove the necessary backing to implement and sustain the plan. The Nigerian Economy is a mono-economy depending only on crude oil as the major source of revenue. The Economy is also an import-dependent economy due to a lack of industrialisation. An economy with such features cannot be said to be a strong economy, no matter the rise in GDP.

¹¹ U.S Agency for International Development (USAID), 'Global Health', 13 June 2022, <https://www.usaid.gov/nigeria/global-health>.

¹² U.S Agency for International Development (USAID).

¹³ Victor Oluwole, 'Nigeria Is No Longer the Poverty Capital of the World but Still Has over 70 Million People Living in Extreme Poverty - the Highest in Africa', *Business Insider Africa*, 10 March 2022, sec. markets, <https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/markets/nigeria-is-no-longer-the-poverty-capital-of-the-world-but-still-has-over-70-million/2txm7g3>; Urowayino Jeremiah, 'India Overtakes Nigeria as World's Poverty Capital', *Vanguard News*, 10 March 2022, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/03/india-overtakes-nigeria-as-worlds-poverty-capital/>.

¹⁴ Okafor Endurance, 'Nigeria Unemployment Hit 35% in 2021 - Augusto & Co', *Businessday NG*, 24 January 2022, <https://businessday.ng/business-economy/article/nigeria-unemployment-hit-35-in-2021-agusto-co/>; National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 'Unemployment Rate in Nigeria 2020', 2020, <https://nigerianstate.gov.ng/>; Trading Economics, 'Nigeria Unemployment Rate 2021', 2021, <https://tradingeconomics.com/nigeria/unemployment-rate>.

The country has continued to witness a high rise in insecurity for the past decade. Most foreign investors have left the country due to the level of criminalities perpetuated by terrorists, bandits, and other criminals. Nigeria was ranked low in the Global Peace Index and Global Terrorism Index. For instance, Nigeria was ranked 21 among the 163 countries examined worldwide by the Global Peace Index in 2021.¹⁵ This problem implied that Nigeria is among the most dangerous countries in the world to live in and do business.

The Sustainable Development Report also gave a clear picture of the situation in Nigeria. The global assessment report of SDG performance ranked Nigeria 139 out of 163 countries. The country scored 53.6 in terms of the performance index. A detailed analysis of the report shows that Nigeria scored below average in achieving SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 16. The country scored slightly above average on SDGs 2, 6, 8, 10, and 14. Score about 75% in achieving SDG 17 and 15 and almost 100% in SDG 12 and 13.¹⁶

VI. FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SDG

While the above findings seem to show significant achievement of SDGs in Nigeria, similar counter-findings show that Nigeria achieved less than what it ought to achieve. However, the question now is, what could be adduced to the underachievements of SDGs in Nigeria? In the quest to answer the above question, the following are the factors responsible for the underachievement of SDGs in Nigeria.

1. 1. Lack of accurate data; information is crucial to the effective decisions that could lead to achieving development objectives. Information is derived from data made available to decision-makers. Thus, quality data are crucial for institutions and government bodies to adequately plan, identify finance, implement and evaluate the development of projects and programmes; vital development activities depend on available information on the population, demographics and other demagogues. These depend on accurate, reliable, timely and qualitative data. Effective empirical research aimed at problem-solving depends on rigorous data gathering and analysis. Unfortunately, many decisions, especially development decisions in Nigeria, are based on fake data. Fake data are not accurate, reliable or credible, and timely. Most plans aimed at national development in Nigeria were derived from fake data. The consequences are the failures associated with many developmental projects—programmes, and policies in the country. The government often relies on international and non-governmental institutions for data on vital socio-economic and political variables. The National Bureau for Statistics (NBS) and other government agencies mandated to develop and provide data that will be

¹⁵ Institute of Economics and Peace IEP, 'Global Terrorism Index 2022', 2021, <http://www.economicsandpeace.org>.

¹⁶ Jeffrey D. Sachs et al., 'From Crisis to Sustainable Development: The SDGs as a Roadmap to 2030 and Beyond', in *Sustainable Development Report 2022* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), <https://dashboards.sdindex.org/profiles/nigeria/policy-efforts/>.

used for vital developmental decisions have not been left to expectations due to logistic and other internal and external problems. Frequently, data produced or provided by some of these non-governmental and international agencies generate controversy between the government and the sources of such information if they are not favourable to the latter and are mostly countered without providing alternatives. The African Governance Report also indicates that the major source of data utilised in assessing the achievements of SDGs in African countries is from foreign agencies. The data, most times, might be biased and might not state the actual state of the situation in the continent. Also, even when the NGOs and other civil societies successfully provided data, their efforts were frustrated or met with stiff opposition by government officials and agencies.

2. Lack of expertise in some areas: Lack of expertise in some major areas in Nigeria could be adduced to the ineffective educational system in Nigeria and the neglect of science and technology in the country.
3. Inadequate knowledge and development of science and technology in Nigeria. Nigeria's efforts at achieving any meaningful industrialisation would be futile without prioritising the country's development of science and technology. The need to key into ICT, the driving force for an industrialised and knowledge-based economy, required adequate knowledge of science and technology. Unfortunately, Nigeria is still lagging. Contemporary countries when Nigeria attained independence in 1960 i.e. Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Singapore, among others have achieved much in developing their nations due to their giant stride in science and technology. Unfortunately, Nigeria is still lagging.
4. Neglect of Indigenous or Home Grown Science and Technology. Concerning the above is the neglect of home-grown technology. Government neglect of home-grown technology is reflected in their lackadaisical attitude to inventions by national nationals. This issue is also reflected in the lack of patronage of products produced in the country.
5. Lack of a viable economy that could sustain economic growth and development. O ginger expected that The Nigerian Economy is not viable and effective to sustain the development needed to transform the country. The Economy is a mono-economy and rent economy that depends on other nations for goods and services. The total collapse of the industrial sector could be adduced to the high importation of manufactured goods into the country. The country, having neglected the agricultural and industrial sectors, depends solely on the petroleum sector for survival. Statistics show that over 70% of the national income and export comes from the petroleum sector. The country only exported crude oil and was unable to refine the crude oil to meet the domestic need, so crude oil products like petrol, kerosene, and gas, among others. The country still exports over 70 % of the petroleum products

consumed in Nigeria. No nation can achieve any meaningful development if it is an import-dependent nation.

6. Lack of necessary infrastructure to sustain the achievement of the SDGs. Related to the above is the problem of infrastructure. Infrastructural deficit and decay are a major feature of the Nigerian Economy. The country lacks good functional transportation and communication system. The road, rail, airways and waterways modes of transportation are all sorry. The railway system is in a state of comatose, and many of the airports are not functional or are in a sorry state. Most of the roads in the country are not assessable because they are in a bad state. The waterways are not speared in terms of government total neglect. The power sector is not effectively functionally. Electricity supply is a major problem in Nigeria. Many industries have relocated out of Nigeria due to the high cost of production mainly associated with the high cost of power generation.
7. Lack of functional and viable educational system that could ginger and sustain development. The fact remains that the development of any nation is hinged on its quality of education system. The collapse of the educational system in Nigeria, mainly, University education, constitutes a major hindrance to any meaningful developmental efforts in Nigeria; a functional educational system is expected to produce and provide high-calibre manpower that will sustainably ginger development stride. The situation in Nigeria is a mismatch between what was learnt in school and the market requirement. The major reason for this is the educational curriculum that emphasises theory and cognitive thinking more than the practical application of knowledge. The result is that many graduates of Nigerian tertiary institutions are not employable in the real sectors of the Economy.
8. Neglect of Research innovation and its outcomes. Research and innovation constitute the bedrock for the meaningful development of any nation. The neglect and lack of interest in scientific research and innovation. Constitute a major problem in Nigeria.
9. Poor or Ineffective Implementation of Development Policies and Programmes. The fact remains that a major problem in Nigeria is not the initiation and formulation of policies; the problem lies with the implementation. Many good policies failed not because they were terrible in content and structure but because they were not effectively implemented. Due to poor implementation, many projects and programmes geared to achieve the SDGs might not achieve their aim. The major reasons for the poor implementation include a lack of political will on the part of the government to make the policy a success. Also, the high rate of corruption perpetuated by those in charge of implementing such a policy impedes its success of the policy.
10. Lack of policy continuity. Inconsistent and lack of policy continuity is a major problem affecting the country's strive to develop. Many policies and

programmes are abandoned or jettisoned based on political reasons. The economic cost of such policies is not put into consideration. Policy measures are seen as a political tool for the campaign or to get popularity within the state.

- II. II. Corruption by government officials. Corruption by government officials and their collaborators is a major impediment to national development in Nigeria. Major development projects and programmes have failed due to corrupt practices by those saddled with the implementation of such programmes and projects. Many scholars (Asaju et al., 2019, Adeporosi, 2020) have agreed that corruption is the bane of national development in Nigeria.

IV. A RECOMMENDATION TO NIGERIA: NOTES FOR STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS

Based on this research, the Nigerian government aims to achieve the SDGs by striving for the country's political, social, and economic challenges. It might look complex base on the gloomy nature of the Economy and other challenges and the end of the time frame for achieving the SDGs. The country has less than eight years to go, but the government can make it possible if it is sincere and ensure that all hands are on deck to make things happen. Thus, the paper made the following strategies.

1. The government must show purposeful leadership commitment and sincerity in mobilising all the required resources to effectively implement the various programmes and projects to achieve the SDGs. The resources provided must be adequate and timely. The implementation of these projects must be devoid of political, ethnic and religious sentiments.
2. Related to the above is the need for good governance. Those elected into positions of authority must exhibit good leadership qualities. They should be sincere, committed and live up to expectations in delivering the dividends of democracy. There is a need for attitudinal change on the part of the leaders who see political offices as an avenue to take their share of the national cake.
3. Confront the menace of insecurity across the country: The frequent attacks by bandits, terrorists and other criminals have affected productive activities and other economic in all parts of the country. Many farmers have abandoned their farms for fear of attack, and many industries and business ventures have closed shops or relocated outside the country. The government must show a high level of sincerity and commitment in the fight against these criminals. The security agencies must go after them in their hideouts. This strategy might restore the confidence of investors, especially foreign investors.
4. The public service is a vital stakeholder in achieving the SDG. There is a need to prepare them for the 21st-century challenges through capacity building, value re-orientation, and motivation. That will ginger them to put in their best in the nation's course. Merit should be the watchword in public servants' recruitment,

placement and promotion. Hard work and honesty should be adequately rewarded.

5. Corruption is no doubt the bane of achieving meaningful development in the country. All offenders must be put to justice and, if found wanting, must be adequately and timely punished. Government must show sincerity and commitment in stamping out the menace in every state sector.
6. The government should give an adequate investment in the education system special priority. Special attention should be given to science and vocational education. The curriculum should be adjusted, and emphasis should be on the practical application of knowledge. The university should be a rallying point in developing all sectors of the Economy. The teachers should be highly motivated through increments in their salary, consistent training and providing the enabling environment for teaching, learning, and research.
7. Also related to the above is the priority for research and innovation. Government should invest more in meaningful research that will bring about breakthroughs in science and technology. The outcome of such research should be taken seriously and effectively implemented. No country can achieve meaningful development today with the digitisation of all the sectors of the Economy. This step is made possible by the development of ICT. Thus, investment in science and development is exigent to achieve the SDG in Nigeria. Priority should be given to home-grown technology and encouraged by both the government and the private sector.
8. The infrastructure deficits remain a major hindrance to economic development in Nigeria. Modern infrastructure is key to achieving the SDGs. Government should invest more in building critical infrastructures like power, railway, road, waterways, housing, health and education. The PPA strategy in developing infrastructure is a welcome development. However, the government must be sincere in providing the necessary atmosphere conducive to their operations.
9. The government must tackle the problem of insecurity headlong. The fact remains that there is a symbiotic relationship between security and development. Insecurity in Nigeria has led to the destruction of economic activities and loss of life and property. It also retards investment and entrepreneurship. Many foreign investors have left the county due to the high risk involved in doing business there.
10. The government has not taken the issue of diversification of the Economy seriously. The government must stop paying lip service to the diversification of the Economy by engaging seriously in other vital sectors like industry, mining, agriculture, and transport in which the country has a comparative advantage. The country required a viable economy to achieve any meaningful development. Vigorous industrialisation and technological development are required to move the nation from being a renter consuming an import-dependent nation.

IV. CONCLUSION

Development administration relates to the overall achievement of national development's socio-economic, political, cultural, and administrative objectives. Many developing countries, including Nigeria, have over the years adopted various development plans to accelerate the country's development pace. Unfortunately, the plans have failed to achieve their desired objectives. The SDGs are another global plan to solve some fundamental problems confronting developing countries. The focus is to enhance the well-being of all citizens of the world by eliminating poverty, hunger, illiteracy, health challenges, unemployment, environmental challenges, insecurity, and gender issues, among others. The essence is to ensure that every country in the world is conducive to human existence, peace, and prosperity. Nigeria is a signatory to this global initiative. The government has put many efforts in place in terms of institution and legal framework, financial commitments, and collaborations with other stakeholders within and outside the country to achieve the SDGs. However, there is the need to overcome some inherent constraints and challenges that could jeopardise the whole efforts at achieving the SDGs in Nigeria before the stipulated deadline of the plan in 2030. Some of them include a lack of accurate data, political will on the part of the government, an unviable economy, infrastructure deficits, lack of viable and functional education system, ineffective professional human resources, and corruption, among others.

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