

Interrogating the Leadership Conundrum in Nigeria and the Question of a Failed State

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Abstract

The core discourse in this paper rests on the perspective of a philosopher and the question of the failure of the Nigerian state and the leadership conundrum. The motivation for this very condensed study stem from the fact that several scholars have argued that the Nigerian state has failed considering the current status of the economy and this argument is for the most part, justifiably, as a state is considered to have "failed" when it is no longer able to consistently and legitimately enforce its laws or provide its citizens with basic goods and services. The paper examines the factors that contributes to failure of a state (insurgency, high crime rates, ineffective and impenetrable bureaucracy, non-funding of education, corruption, judicial incompetence, and military interference in politics). The paper establishes the link between leadership and followership as two sides of the same coin and that both the leadership and the followership class constitute the problem of a failed state. To fulfill this requirement, the paper is divided into two main sections: the first section accounts for the emergence of Nigeria as an independent state and the drifting of the nation state into a failed or dysfunctional state. The second section accounts for the philosopher's perspective to the problem as well as an attempt on the solution to the problem. In the final third, the paper argues that beyond firming institution, there is need for strong men, who understand the critical importance of effective leadership and are prepared and positioned to respond to the challenges and opportunities created within the institution.

Keywords: Conundrum, Failed State, Followership, Leadership, Strong men,

Introduction

One thing we forget to know is that failed states once had civil, constitutional laws that were put in place, when these laws don't work for all that's when dictatorship arises and injustices hugs the land, and prosperities becomes the luxury of the few, not the masses. ? Henry Johnson Jr.

In fact, there are several debates concerning the present situation of the Nigerian state as a failed state considering the current status of the economy and other aspects. Shola argues that, "given its huge resource endowment- human and material, the country has not only failed to actualize its potentials, but also appears to have effectively squandered its opportunities for greatness, ignominiously seated at the very nadir of development" (2). In corroboration, Peter Lewis argued that "there is no question, however, that Nigerian has failed profoundly as a state, a nation, and an economy" (83).

Sequel to Nigerian's independence in 1960, the task and of efficient leadership towards building a nation cannot be ascertained. Over six decades later, the country cannot be said to have developed in consonance with the predictions of bookmakers. This is because, Nigeria as a country still grapples with the most part of, and still falls below the development indices. Consequently, several attempts have been made to diagnose and locate the problem while at the same preferring solutions to the same. For Chinua Achebe (1983:1) whose diagnosis has been the most celebrated, "the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or the inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership" (2). This paper requires a discourse on the perspective of a philosopher and the question of the failure of the Nigerian state and the leadership conundrum. To fulfill this requirement, the paper is divided into two main sections: the first section accounts for the hopes that greeted the emergence of Nigeria as an independent state, the lost hopes and the drifting of the nation state into a failed or dysfunctional state. It also attempts to account for the postulations regarding the causes of this failure. The second section accounts for the philosopher's perspective to the problem as well as a discourse on the solution to the problem under review. In the final third, the paper advocates complementary attitudinal change towards the leadership- followership disorder.

Nigeria and the Question of Dysfunctional State

Whereas many debates concur with Achebe's contention that the issue lies entirely with the leadership, others have suggested that Nigeria's inability to develop effectively is due to the lack of effective institutions. In truth, entrenched corruption, bribery, and tax evasion, among other things, have all been put out as explanations for why Nigeria and the Third World's economic development and advancement have fallen into a downward spiral. In contrast to other nations of the world, Nigeria and most of the third world have experienced development and progress primarily without the aid of high-quality institutions.

How institutions like the legislature and the judiciary have deteriorated in Nigeria is a statement of fact that is consistent with the current situation. These institutions can be found operating in Nigeria contrary to their statutory obligations and the intent behind their establishment. To identify how a nation should operate, Acemoglu and Robinson affirms that,

Political and economic institutions, which are ultimately the choice of society, can be inclusive and encourage economic growth or they can be extractive and become impediments to economic growth. Nations fail when they have extractive economic institutions that impede and even block economic growth. But this means that the choice of institutions—that is the politics of institutions is central to our quest for understanding the reasons for the success and failure of nations (83).

One discovers an apparent deviation from the principles of powerful institutions. This is primarily due to the political class's success in undermining them and making them ineffectual so that they can pursue their own selfish goals without opposition. This circumstance has been a hindrance to the nation's growth and advancement and is primarily responsible for where we are now.

Inferring from the foregoing, one can contend that strong men and visionary leadership are essential alongside have functional institutions. By strong men, it is not meant to glorify those "strong men" who have used their positions of power and influence to undermine nearly every institution in their country for their own personal gain, nor is it meant to portray or defend the dictatorial and tyrannical temperament that has characterized some of the rulers in Africa and the third world. Instead, by strong men, I mean men who are kind, men of character, men of courage, and leaders who have the ability and the will to drive the development agenda for the many countries in which they currently hold the reins of power. In the search for purposive leadership in Nigeria, one can argue that the most part of the leaders that have held the reins of power since independence are small men. What we however need is a kind of leadership that has superior men on the saddle. To further buttress this point,

When Nigeria achieved independence from British colonial rule on October 1, 1960, the prospects appeared promising and expectations for the future of the country were high. Nigeria was the most populous country in Africa, and the potential for economic growth was great, buoyed largely by the discovery of commercial quantities of petroleum in the Niger delta region in 1958. Nigeria was dubbed the "Giant of Africa," and many people both inside and outside the country believed that Nigeria would soon rise to claim a leading position in African and world affairs. Nigeria also saw itself as a beacon of hope and progress for other colonized peoples emerging from the yoke of alien rule (Falola, T & Heaton, M., 158). The aforementioned assertion encapsulates the hopes and expectations that both citizens and bookmakers have for the nation of Nigeria. The first 20 years of Nigeria's independence were predicted by the bookmakers, but all of those forecasts don't seem to pan out in the long run. By 1970, however, a decade of political corruption, economic underdevelopment, and military coups had seriously harmed Nigeria's stability and reputation. The worst result of these issues was a two-and-a-half-year civil war from 1967 to 1970 that divided the nation along regional and ethnic lines, claimed between one and three million lives, and all but shattered the tenuous Federal links that kept the Nigerian state together (158).

Although Nigeria got her independence in 1960, the struggle for national development and political stability continued to be a mirage. This must not be unconnected with the stormy political and social condition in the country manifesting in poverty, corruption, poor planning and implementation and general indiscipline in the society. Despite being the most endowed state

in Africa in terms of human and material resources, it is similarly agreed that comparatively, Nigeria is among the least developed states in the continent and this paradoxical poverty of development in the midst of plenty and abundance has been attributed by Oluet'al primarily to institutional deficiencies, issues of corruption, ethnic and egoistic politics, military incursion amongst others (1-2).

For Peter Lewis, there is no question, however, that Nigeria has failed profoundly as a state, a nation, and an economy. Central authorities cannot provide stable governance, in the sense of effective legitimate rule and essential public goods. The country's boundaries may provisionally be settled, but the basis of political community, the idea of Nigeria is fiercely contested (83-84). He further argued that:

Economically, Nigeria has experienced a steady decline since the oil windfall peaked more than twenty years ago. Slow growth and a rapidly rising population have yielded dramatic increases in poverty. Confronted by these challenges, Nigerians have repeatedly attempted to overhaul the nation's politics, resulting in cycles of civilian and military government and perennial efforts at institutional change. The country's restiveness and economic deterioration are especially poignant when considered in light of its opportunities and assets (84).

In the same vein, Nigeria has been on a roller coaster economically 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 arise from several factors, including an unfavorable economic structure, detrimental policies, adverse political conditions, and negative external shocks. Nigeria's 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. The country then entered a heady period of volatile expansion during the decade long oil windfall of the 1970s. Postwar recovery coincided with a buildup 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 (86-87). This decline, which is not unconnected with the failure to diversify the country's economy from oil have continued and hence, left Nigeria in a state of an apparent economic crisis, stagnation and backwardness.

Contributing to the discourse on the failure of the Nigerian state, Haaga, argued that in the present-day world, security matter has progressively advanced a very important element for any form of development to take place in any country. This motivates and explains why nation-states currently attach excessive importance to issues of security. Accordingly, self-preservation and survival of state and citizens is expected guarantee of any nation-state before production, research and development, education, infrastructural development, politics and related socio-economic transformation is achieved (7). To this extent, the Social Contractarians, Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau stress the fundamental role of security and its centrality in the purpose of government. The consummation of the entire idea centres on the need to preserve lives, protect properties, meet basic needs of the citizens and bring about development in the society (Nweke, 101).

It is very obvious that insecurity threatens every realm of the Nigerian society: "With every attack, human lives are lost or permanently damaged and faith in democracy and the country is diminishing." when the present ruling government were elected in 2015, they promised to protect citizens from terrorists and criminals. Surprisingly, they have less than one year left from the two terms in office and the country is more unstable than it was in decades. At the moment, every part of Nigeria is ravaged by insecurity orchestrated by abysmal governance that favours impunity, nepotism, misappropriation, injustice as well as classified inequality. To argue further, Onifade, Imhonopi and Urim confirmed that Nigeria has been enmeshed in a firebox of insecurity leading to scores of deaths of innocent civilians, foreigners, some members of the nation's security personnel, elected officials and many government workers (53). Similarly, Udoh observed that "Insecurity apart from being the fear of every Nigerian has become the word on the lips of every Nigerian and a discussion topic where two or three Nigerians gather" (23). There is hardly a day that passes without people being killed as a result of insecurity in Nigeria, little wonder Nigeria was racked the third most terrorized country in the world. Many of the present security challenges today are generated within individual societies and spread across borders to their surrounding environment (Dokubo C.,

and Abiodun J., 554). This degree of insecurity in the country does not portray that Nigerians have a social contract in which terms the government ought to protect her citizens. Reasonably, from the social contract perspective, since the people willingly gave up their rights and freedom by voting to form government in Nigeria and this was basically to avoid what appeared to be an unending carnage that engulfed the Hobbesian state of nature. Yet, to go through experiences such as herders' homicide on farmers, insurgent attack, banditry, kidnappings and murder, ISWAP and other forms of carnage is mind-bugging. In the recent time, the state of the Nigerian security architecture has extremely deteriorated as the Nigerian state appears to have lost focus on the readiness of effectively secure the lives and properties of its citizens. The security of Nigerian people ideally ought to be the paramount responsibility of government in line with the principle of the social contract with the people, but at present, the reverse is the case. The Nigerian citizens at present are suffering a lot of insecurity challenges as a result of failure and unreadiness of the insensitive government (Haaga, 4). Indeed, the awe of insecurity in Nigeria has increased, compounded by the activities of insurgents and killer herders, bandits and kidnappers that have ravaged the length and breadth of the country. How fast the government recognizes that their stewardship is a result of a social contract which they must respect by providing security for the masses, the better (6).

From the preceding narrative above, it is evidently obvious that the huge budgetary funding on security and welfare of the people at the Federal to local levels has not significantly impacted in the lives of the people. There is no security of lives and properties, no evidence of effective democratic governance and the people are wallowing in the fantasy of democracy without anything to show for it. The people who should ordinarily demand for security from their government helplessly resort to using their hard-earned resources to pay for their own security. Yet, insecurity and poverty still persist in the land. The people appear to have been caught in the web of an albatross on helplessly failing to do the needful in order to realize their maximum benefits of security and welfare from the state they surrendered their rights to govern them. The people are made to live in the fantasy of new hopes as elections approach and thereafter these hopes are again dashed with successive corrupt state actors (8).

Another threat is the government negligence and nonchalant attitude to the educational system. As it is now, the educational system at all level is in a state of decay and failure because funding has become the fundamental problem. The percentage of the budget allocated to education annually is abysmally low. In 2018, only [7.04%](#) was allocated to education. This is far below UNESCO's recommended [15%-26%](#). Under President Mohammed Buhari's administration, the highest allocation to the education sector is 7.9 percent of the 2022 total budget of 16.39 trillion. The 1.29 trillion allocated to the sector still remains behind the 15 to 20 percent the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recommended for developing countries; it is even less than 10 percent after a 50 percent increase of the 2021 allocation (Makinde, 2).

This kind of disposition towards education is the basic reason the Nigerian students in public universities are stuck between the conflict heralded by the two major determining powers of their academic voyage namely, the Federal Government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). ASUU started operation in 1978 as a body of intellectuals in Nigeria's federal and state universities to enable a smooth running of the university system. Ironically, the gross underfunding of the educational system is at the root of the unending crisis. No doubt, efficient running of the educational institutions has been jeopardised; no effective and functional academic calendar; there are low quality of graduates who can only regurgitate what they were taught than critically think, no students' loan scheme to assist indigent student. As an advocate, the Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU) grouse borders on poor learning facilities, poor remuneration, inappropriate tuition fees, implementation/renewal of past agreements, salary shortfalls, university autonomy, among others (Onyekakeyah, 4).

The university system in Nigeria is totally bastardised and by rational assessment, it is unfair for a government not to consider the value of education amongst its priority. In fact, how much is ASUU demanding in terms of funding education that the Federal Government cannot afford in a country where funds are stolen in billions by individuals? Why does government find it easy to allocate billions to frivolous projects but finds it difficult to do fund education? Regrettably, the constant neglect of funding education by the Nigerian government has led to poorer education

outcomes. perhaps some actors have suggested privatization as a possible option of funding; this not correct because it is likely to widen the gap between the rich and the poor, and it will deny many children affordable quality education, increase the rate of illiteracy and reduce academic performance at the tertiary level. As it were. if the government decides to privatise government-owned educational institutions, especially universities, as it is already the case with the proliferation of private universities with high fees, tertiary education will become the exclusive preserve of the rich upper class. And this, in a country where more than ninety percent (90%) of the population is currently living in abject poverty

At present, the research institutes in Nigeria are grossly under-funded as no serious attention is given to research. Often times, researchers work without sponsorship. The non-sponsorship and downgrading of Humanities and Social Sciences based research is unfortunate and problematic. Though, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund is practically the only source of funding for research, but through merits, it is ideally supposed to sponsor research projects, give grants for research and sponsor lecturers for academic conferences, among other things. But more often than not, its resources are said to be limited, highly selective and sponsorship sometimes politicised. Another bothering issue is that, even the concluded research are abandoned on library shelves because the government is not committed to research-oriented development; as such, researchers do not have the means to promote their work and research findings. Lastly, research output is mediocre and repetitive because there are no effective measures in place to track research output nationwide.

Corroborating the above, Ihonvbere stressed that “the culture of corruption, mismanagement, insensitivity to the plight of the poor, elite privatization of the state, and the subversion of traditional values and institutions culminated in new challenges to the state and its custodians” (1) and all these still characterize the Nigerian state several decades later. Within the context of deficit in governance, one can argue that good governance has been in short supply in Nigeria. Haaga corroborated the above while quoting Ebegbulem and argued that “Nigeria has not had the good fortune of being governed well since it gained its political independence in 1960, because good and strong leaders have not been on the saddle. Rather selfish, mediocre, tribal leaders and opportunistic small money-minded people masquerading as leaders have continued to regenerate over time (21). In this sense, Lewis argued that “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” (89).

While the first two decades of the country's independence witnessed renewed hopes of massive development and positioning, that was not to be. Hence, the summation of Julius Ihonvbere thus:

Within two decades of political independence therefore, the continent was littered with coups and counter-coups, civil and inter-state wars, ethnic violence, agitations for autonomy, alienation from the state and its custodians, and the withdrawal of support for public policies. Good governance was thrown over-board and leaders busied themselves with the construction of dubious ideologies, personality cults and looting their respective treasuries. As political decay, uncertainty, violence, and disillusionment replaced the euphoria of *Uhuru*, even fractions of the power elite began to construct parallel structures of power and opportunities. This was evidenced in the use of foreign schools for the wards, reliance on foreign hospitals for medical attention, use of foreign banks, airlines and advisers; the use of private security in place of public police, the reliance of private water bore-holes and private electricity generators in place of publicly provided alternatives, and investments abroad rather than in the local economy (3).

The decline of governance, social stability, and economic performance in Nigeria throughout the 1990s led many observers, Nigerians included, to view the country as a failing state (Lewis, 108). Yagboyaju and Akinola seems to be thinking in the above line when they argue that without doubt, the Nigerian state stands between “exhibiting attributes of state collapse and state failure... it has degenerated to the point where it is unable to provide minimal social security for its vulnerable population” (2). They further argued that, the “petroleum-rich” Nigerian state, confronted by socio-political instability, high degree of corruption, mass hostility and poor microeconomic management continues to display the attributes of a state in crisis (Yagboyaju and Akinola, 1). Quoting the World

Bank, Yagboyaju and Akinola stressed that “successive governments in Nigeria, like in many Africa states, lacks the political will to initiate or sustain policy or structural transformation, or to embark on sound economic reforms to reposition the state for greatness... with the weakness of the Nigerian state and its ineffectiveness, it has become challenging to eradicate improvidence, engage in infrastructural development” (1).

Contributing to the discourse on the Nigerian situation, Haaga, stressed the fact that infrastructural decay and the absence of basic amenities is common place. To quote him;

It is rather unfortunate that in the most part of the country Nigeria, there is infrastructural decay; the roads are in very bad and unbearable condition that travelling on them becomes both tiring and regrettable. Despite the huge amount of money expended, electricity and power supply are still epileptic even in such mega cities as Abuja, Lagos, Kaduna and Port Harcourt, to the point that it has been said that if one wants steady power supply in Nigeria, one has to install his personal source of power. Portable pipe borne water supply has eluded Nigerians in even the cities where major rivers and their tributaries pass through. The unemployment rate is unimaginable as the choicest and available jobs are reserved for the sons and daughters of highly placed Nigerians (19).

In the same vein, with reference to the health sectors, one finds primary health care centers that are in the state of disrepair, the hospitals are lacking in state-of-the-art equipment and people die of common ailments that could have been taken care of in the presence of functional primary health care centers and hospital. While this goes, the privileged few who for the most part are the political class careless and travel abroad should they need medical attention while paying lip service to their responsibility of providing the same. Regarding insecurity as already stated, no many days passes in the North East, the North-Western states and the central states of the middle belt without news flying around of the killing of dozens of people by bandits, insurgents, herdsmen and so-called unknown gunmen. The South-South and South Eastern states are also experiencing one form of insecurity or the other. In the face of all these, hardly does three months roll on before one hears of one industrial action or the other, resulting from the non-payment of salaries and wages or refusal of the government to honour its agreement with labour unions (19).

It is consequent upon the above that Nigeria has been referred to as a failed and dysfunctional state. By definition and character, a failed state is said to be one that is unable to effectively maintain all or some of the essential characteristics of the state, namely, to protect life and properties of citizens, to provide an enabling atmosphere for utmost self-actualization and so on. It could also be referred to as “collapsed” or “disintegrated” state, but in effect, the political structure of such state would have been crippled by significant variables. It is germane to note that state failure causes a wide range of humanitarian, legal, and security problems that is predominantly in Africa today.

A critical look at the discourse that have ensued revealed that there is also crisis of development, it also reveals that Nigeria is a country of paradox considering the fact that it is the most blessed and still lies in underdevelopment, that in the midst of plenty, there is a debilitating poverty. Several scholars have thus, attempted to locate the problem in order to advance solutions to the same. Chinua Achebe has contributed in this regard by advancing the fact that the problem with Nigeria, is basically and squarely a leadership problem. This thesis of his argument is that should leaders be able to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which is the hallmarks of true leadership, Nigeria will return to the path of development. While it is true that “no other region of the world has been as poorly led and governed by so many leaders for a long time” (Uzodike, 2), very many scholars have accepted Achebe's position as it were. However, this paper advances a philosophers' perspective to the problem and hence, engages philosophy and reason in the bid to answer the question of Nigeria as a failed.

Leadership Conundrum in Nigeria and the Question as a Failed State: A Philosophers' Perspective

The Nigerian state is state of paradoxes: the state is blessed with abundant natural and human resources and yet, her citizens are wallowing in abject poverty. This is both contradictory and paradoxical. As argued in the preceding section, attempt has been made to advance the cause of the pathological backwardness and downward spiral of the Nigerian state. Among the celebrated

attempt is that as advanced by Chinua Achebe who argued that the problem is basically and squarely a leadership problem. This position may sound very plausible and perhaps looks like a narrative that has been bought by the simple. That notwithstanding, this paper considers this diagnosis as lopsided, too simplistic and reductionists. This is because of the fact that one cannot engage in any serious and enduring discourse on leadership without the mention of followership because leadership and followership are two sides of the same coin. To this end, one cannot talk about leadership without followership and vice versa. In fact, there can be no leadership without a class of people that follow, just as there are no followers without a leader.

It is on the basis of the above that it is argued that Achebe's position is flawed and does not stand to logic and practical reason. From the above, it is clear that followership is part of the problems that have metamorphosed into the crisis of a failed state that is now experienced. While Nigeria has been plagued with the phenomenon of selfish and self-centered leaders who can be said to be insensitive to the plights of the people at all levels, the followership is no better- in Nigeria, one also finds out that the most part of the followership class are passive, negligent, apathetic and disinterested. In Nigeria, one finds a culture of followership that is instigated by and built on financial standing, ethnicity and religious affiliations. In the above scenario, followership is determined by who has the money to spend and who is related to the group on the basis of tribe or religion. This type of followership culture is both flawed and anti-development. (Haaga, 21-22)

Most worrisome is the apathy that have characterized the followership class in Nigeria who are disinterested in the political process and should they be interested; they are carried away by the crumbs that greedy and corrupt politicians throw around and allow their voting behaviour to be determined by what they politicians are able to offer them during electioneering campaigns. While this attempt does not exhaustively discuss the disinterested followership condition of Nigeria, it is only logical to infer from the preceding paragraphs that leadership alone cannot be argued to be the problem of Nigeria, rather, leadership and followership constitutes the fundamental problem of Nigeria as a failed state (24).

Having established the fact that leadership and followership are the two sides of the same coin and that no part of the whole can be exonerated from the problem, the philosopher's perspective on the crisis of development and the reason for the nation's downward and backward spiral within the context of development is that the problem of Nigeria is more psychological than social, physical and political. In this sense, this perspective argues that the problem is in the mind. The problem starts from the mind and ends in the mind. Be it among the leadership or the followership class, the disoriented views and behaviours that have hindered our collective progress starts from the mind. It is in the mind that the idea of looting the state resources dry for personal gains and amassing properties and wealth that one can perhaps, not be able to use in one's lifetime to the fourth generation is conceived. It is in the mind that the irresponsibility of individual leaders starts. It is in the mind that the refusal to rise up to the challenge of personal example which Achebe describes as the hallmark of true leadership is conceived by the followership class. The mind is the breeding ground for, and is the determining factor as to whether the individual will tow the path of honour and leave a legacy for posterity within the context of leadership.

On the flip side, it is also in the mind that the idea of following for financial gains and following on the basis of ethnic and religious affiliation is conceived. It is in the mind that the idea of rewarding corrupt politicians with awards, chieftaincy titles and honorary doctoral degrees is conceived. The disavowal with the political process and the display of apathy and disinterestedness by the followership class begins in the mind. In fact, the mind is central to all human existential behaviours and activity, it is the mind that manifest itself in terms of the perception we have about leadership and followership, it is the mind that determines our emotions and desire, be them ordinate or inordinate.

Following from the above, it is crystal clear that the problem of Nigeria, beyond the leadership and followership argument is psychological and entirely linked to the mind. How then do we resolve this problem that is apparently disturbing? The philosopher's perspective to this question is that for having located the problem in the mind, the solution to the same is propaedeutical and pedagogical. And this lies in the retraining and re-education of the human mind. This has to do with unlearning those processes and practices that have been known to have impinged negatively on our national life but are elevated to be supreme in terms of our lived experiences and re-learning those things that have been known to be beneficial to the public and meant for the common good.

To this end, for Nigeria to get out of this quandary, Nigerians, be it the leadership or followership class must reposition their minds and change their behaviours and attitudes. This type of change is referred to as the complementary attitudinal change which is a “process through which the individuals and human societies, at large seeks to reposition their minds in a way that makes it possible for them to anchor always, their interest on the dictates of the common good within a universal complementary harmonious framework” (251-252). Granted that the problem is with and in the mind as we have argued, then a thoroughgoing rehabilitation and re-education of the Nigerian psyche is imperative in the bid to surmount the problem and get Nigeria out of the woods within the context of development. This attitudinal change must also be comprehensive and must extend to all the avenues and processes through which Nigerians organize themselves and their existential lives. This change will give an entirely new meaning to the understanding of leadership and followership by Nigerians and will make all the fraudulent understanding of the same to become unfashionable and detestable.

This change of attitude will alter the trajectory of the lives of all citizens and will plunge the state into a more purposive engagement on the development question. This change in attitude will push back the frontiers of the primitive accumulation of wealth by the political class and endemic/systemic corruption. This type of change will make the leadership class to realize the fact that leadership is about the people and the delivering of the goods of human flourishing to the people. This change will alter the understanding of the followership class and transform them from being passive followers to active followers who will rather elect superior men of noble character in the line of the Confucian *Junzi* rather than small men who are of low moral standing and benefits themselves at the expense of the masses (Haaga, 51) because such an one is from the same ethnic or religious persuasion or have money to dole out.

This complementary attitudinal change that comes with the rehabilitation of the collective Nigerian psyche or mind will spur the followership class into holding their leaderships accountable and also make the leadership class to cease to see politics and leadership as an opportunity to reaching a financial crescendo and hence, see leadership as something that is for the most part, selfless. This change of attitude and behaviour will also make the citizenry to conceive the nation as a project that must be realized and that collectively. This change of attitude will make the leadership class in Nigeria to rise up to responsibilities and understand the fact that leadership means service to all and not a selected few; with this change of attitude and mindset, the leadership class will come to terms with the fact that a leader is not celebrated by how much wealth he acquired for himself and his family by hook or crook but rather by how much services he/she rendered to the people he/she leads. It will also bring the leadership class to the awareness of the fact that the ethics of modern leadership is not how much one last on the saddle or holds on to power but how well one leads within the shortest possible time that one is privileged to hold the reins of power.

Sequel to the location of the problem, from the philosophers' point of view on the mind (psyche) of Nigerians, the consequent of the antecedent is that if the minds of Nigerians are not repositioned and rehabilitated, the downward and backward spiral within the context will continue unabated and in the same vein, should the call for the repositioning, rehabilitating the minds and a complementary attitudinal change that is here made be heeded, then the beginning of the end of the Nigerian developmental crisis is here. This is based on the fact that this change constitutes the entirety of all that Nigerians (leaders and followers alike) need to liberate themselves from all the mindset and constraints that makes it impossible for them to change the hounds of their existential conditions.

Conclusion

In this paper, attempts have made to account interrogate the leadership conundrum and Question of Nigeria as a failed state. It accounts for the hopes that greeted the emergence of Nigerian as an independent state in 1960 which was short-lived after barely two decades of its cooperative existence. That these hopes were dashed is a statement of fact that coheres to the actual state of affairs. This constitutes the question of Nigeria as a failed state. While this attempt does not disparage the diagnosis of Achebe as well as those of scholars who are sympathetic to his diagnosis of a squarely leadership problem, this paper appraises and judges Achebe's postulations to be lopsided and reductionist. This thinking is based on the fact that leadership and followership are two sides of the same coin and hence, one cannot engage meaningfully in any discourse of leadership without the

mention of the followership class.

The conclusion that is reached therefore is that, the philosophers' perspective to this problem locates the Nigerian problem in the human mind and argues that the problem is more psychological/mental than social or political. To come out of this quandary, this perspective postulates the retraining of the mind with the intent of reaching a complementary attitudinal change which will allow the human mind to elevated the dictate of the common good over and above the his/her personal interest.

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