Political Leadership and Underdevelopment in Nigeria: A Study of Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract
This research delves into the issue of poor leadership and underdevelopment in Nigeria, with a focus on the Igbo-Eze North local government area in Enugu State. The challenges associated with leadership and developments in Nigeria are well documented, especially in this age of globalization. While many tend to blame the North's industrialized western nations, the source of Nigeria's problems lies in the country's own leadership response to critical issues, including poverty, food security, political instability, and technological development. The study aims to determine the nature, effect, and remedy of leadership and development in the Igbo-Eze North local Government Area of Enugu state. The study utilized a multi-stage sampling method with a sample size of 360 respondents. Face and content validity and Cronbach alpha were employed to validate and evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire. Data was gathered from the respondents through questionnaire method, and descriptive statistics featuring simple percentage and mean were used to analyze the data. The results demonstrated that poor leadership and underdevelopment were prevalent in Igbo-Eze North, with embezzlement, favoritism, and bribery characterizing leadership in the region during the last two political dispensations. Additionally, leadership was discovered to have a significant influence on development in the area. The study also proposes potential solutions to leadership and underdevelopment problems, such as reframing leadership, overhauling the educational and healthcare systems, and constructing a healthy economy. The report proposes remedies, including rebuilding the educational and healthcare systems, and creating a thriving economy, to address leadership and underdevelopment in the specific area and throughout Nigeria.
Keywords: Political leadership, Development, Underdevelopment, Corruption, Igbo-Eze North.

Introduction
Underdevelopment is a state of poverty and deprivation in which a society's resources are not fully utilized, resulting in lower-than-expected local or regional development. This often manifests as a lack of control over resources and the inability to process natural endowments, causing the society to be both regressive and oppressed. Underdeveloped nations are often characterized by a wide gap between rich and poor populations and trade imbalances, and this unstable situation is often attributed to poor leadership and inadequate representation of the populace. This has led to economic sabotage and social issues such as prostitution.

According to Rodney (1992) and Okoli and Onah (2002), development involves forward progress towards a superior state, encompassing material and non-material aspects of life, including the

enhancement of human resources and behavior. Akpakpan (1987) and Wilson (2002) view development as a qualitative process that enhances the general welfare of a society, resulting in positive changes in various areas of life. There is no universally accepted definition of development, but social science literature has explored its various meanings. Without discussing underdevelopment, conceptualizing development in a nation's context would be difficult if not impossible. Development goes beyond economic and social indicators to include positive changes in a society's overall welfare.

According to Frank's (1966, 1976) perspective, the concepts of development and underdevelopment only apply to nations operating within the capitalist world-economy. It is evident that underdevelopment does not imply a complete lack of progress since all people have advanced in some way or another, to varying degrees. Rather, underdevelopment is valuable as a tool for comparing levels of development. Frank visualizes the world-economy as consisting of two major components: metropolis and satellite, which are conceptually similar to Wallerstein's (1974) core and periphery models. The flow of financial surplus in the global economy is from the satellite or periphery to the core or metropolis, an arrangement that systematically facilitates this transaction.

The reason underdeveloped nations become and remain underdeveloped is that they are economically dominated by developed capitalist nations that consistently extract wealth from them, a phenomenon that Frank terms the development of underdeveloped. Nigeria's case is an instance of this. Nigeria's economy primarily produces raw materials for export to developed countries. Nigeria has put continuous effort into hastening development and restructuring its economy. Unfortunately, the outcomes of such endeavors have largely been uninspiring (Kayode, 2004). A swift evaluation of the Nigerian economy reveals that its core features have not evolved significantly from the situation in the 1960s, and the situation is arguably deteriorating rather than improving.

United Nations experts define an underdeveloped country as having a low per capita real income compared to developed regions like the United States, Canada, Australia, and Western Europe. Underdevelopment is characterized by inadequate economic development and low productivity levels. The term can also refer to a country that has not yet reached full economic maturity. Underutilization of resources can cause a lack of job opportunities, healthcare, and basic necessities. Different scholars have their own definitions of underdevelopment. Nigeria is an underdeveloped economy that relies on external factors for finished goods. The per capita income in 1998 was $258 (World Bank, 1998) and $300 in 2003 (Todaro and Smith, 2003). According to TEGMM, the per capita income will reach $2400 and $2500 by 2022 and 2023. Manufacturing accounts for less than 10% of the GDP, while crude oil accounts for over 90% of export earnings. Widespread poverty is a visible problem that has worsened since independence in 1960 (Okowa, 1994). According to Englebert (2002), weak and arbitrary colonial rule is the root cause of

underdevelopment in Nigeria. There is evidence linking a country's past colonial experience to its current level of economic development.

According to Thomas (1982), Nigeria's problem with underdevelopment is due to relying too much on external factors and not developing independent socio-economic plans. Frank (1990) argues that the global capitalist system, established through colonialism, perpetuates underdevelopment and can only be overcome by freeing oneself from capitalist exploitation. Bennis (1989) believes that leadership involves inspiring others towards a shared vision and goals, rather than micromanaging their actions. Kesting et al. (2016) define leadership as a process of motivating and influencing others to achieve organizational goals, while Keans (2005) describes it as a purposeful and transformative relationship between participants who use their individual skills to advocate change.

Leadership in Nigeria has been unsuccessful in effectively utilizing the creativity and resources of its people to promote the country's development. This indicates that Nigeria's main problem is a deficient leadership. Many political leaders have lost or lacked the ability to effectively govern, which has resulted in the misuse of state resources for their personal interests. According to Onodugo (2016), the absence of vision and the presence of corruption among Nigeria's past and present leaders have hindered attempts to govern effectively. It is widely recognized that a country's development is limited by the standard of its leadership. Therefore, Nigeria requires resolute and principled leaders who can effectively manage human and natural resources and promote sustainable national development. Leadership is a necessary aspect of politics and involves an individual's capacity to inspire confidence and guide followers in order to realize common goals (Okaneme, 2017). Ogunmilade, Nwoko & Akhigbe (2017) define leadership as a process that is characterized by one person exerting more influence than others to achieve group objectives.

Despite being established in 1991 alongside other local government areas in Nigeria, Igbo-Eze North local government area is still underdeveloped due to poor representation at both the state and national levels. In particular, lack of strong representatives in the State Houses of Assembly has prevented the implementation of necessary amenities for socio-economic, political, educational, and technological development in the community. This has resulted in inadequate provision of basic needs like access to wealth distribution, pipe borne water, health facilities, roads, schools, and cottage industries, resulting in poverty. Empirical studies have shown that there is little to no overall development in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area in Enugu State. The lack of provisions for these basic amenities is a key factor in local government underdevelopment, and the leadership of Igbo-Eze North has failed to represent the community in effectively advocating for these needs. While similar studies have taken place in other local government areas, none has been conducted in Igbo-Eze North. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of leadership on the underdevelopment of Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area in Enugu State.

Method

The research conducted in Igbo Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria used the study survey research design. This design was chosen as it allowed the researchers to obtain the total views, opinions, attitudes, and interests of all respondents on a specific research issue at a particular period. The study centered on both youths and adults of both sexes, with the ages of respondents ranging from 18-65 years. This range was chosen to ensure that the ability to respond to questions is maintained.

The study population comprised 10,117,809 villagers present at Igbo Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State at the time of the study, projected to 2022. From this population, 360 villagers were selected using the Taro Yamane formula to determine an appropriate sample size for a finite (known) population, using a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error.

Multi-stage sampling techniques were utilized to select the 360 respondents for the study, as it involved numerous communities. Simple random sampling was used to select respondents from each household, with one respondent chosen from each family to ensure equal representation. The required sample size was reached through this method. Close-ended questionnaires were distributed to the selected households, with the researcher monitoring respondents in both the morning and evening to ensure the required number of correctly filled questionnaires were obtained. The data collection period spanned July 2021 to August 2021. Questionnaire instruments were validated through face and content validity, while reliability was determined using Cronbach's alpha. Verbal and written consents were obtained from participants, who were informed they could withdraw from the study at any point if they were no longer comfortable. Participants voluntarily participated in the study and their confidentiality was maintained in accordance with ethical standards. Data obtained from the questionnaires was presented, analyzed, and interpreted using descriptive statistics, simple percentage, and mean. The hypothesis was tested using the chi-square ($\times2$) at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

The results of the survey conducted in Ozzi, Itodo, and Essodo indicated that the majority of the respondents across the three locations were male, with 56.5% in Ozzi, 51.5% in Itodo, and 52.6% in Essodo. However, the overall percentage of male respondents was slightly lower at 53.5%. Conversely, female respondents accounted for 43.5% in Ozzi, 48.5% in Itodo, and 47.5% in Essodo, as well as 46.5% of all respondents.

Regarding respondent age distribution, the survey found that 29.5% of those in Ozzi were aged 25-31, 22.6% were aged 39-44, 18.2% were aged 18-24, 14.7% were aged 45-51, 9% were aged 32-38, and 6% were aged 52-58, leading to a conclusion that most respondents in Ozzi were aged 25-31. Similarly, in Itodo, 30% were aged 25-31, 20.3% were aged 18-24, 19% were aged 39-44, 13.7% were aged 32-38, and 7.7% were aged 52-58, implying that most respondents in Itodo were aged 25-31. Lastly, in Essodo, 32.1% were aged 25-31, 20.5% were aged 18-24, 17.9% were aged 45-51, 14.1% were aged 39-44, 11.5% were aged 32-38, and 3.8% were aged 52-58, suggesting that most respondents in Essodo were aged 25-31.

The information regarding the marital status distribution of the participants shows that in Ozzi, 54.7% of the respondents claimed to be single, 24.3% claimed to be married, 13.9% claimed to be separated, and 6.9% claimed to be divorced. Thus, the majority of respondents in Ozzi reported being single. Similarly, in Itodo, 53.2% of respondents reported being single, 28.7% reported being married, 12.5% reported being separated, and 5.3% reported being divorced. Consequently, the majority of respondents in Itodo reported being single. Furthermore, in Essodo, 56.8% of respondents reported being single, 24.3% reported being married, 10.2% reported being separated, and 5.1% reported being divorced. Therefore, the majority of respondents in Essodo reported being single. Overall, the results indicate that the highest percentage (26.3%) of the total respondents reported being married.

Regarding the educational qualifications of the participants, the survey results indicate that in Ozzi, 35.6% of respondents obtained WAEC/GCE, 30.4% obtained a First School Leaving Certificate, 31.3% obtained a BSc in Arts/Science, and 2.6% reported having no education. Therefore, the majority of respondents in Ozzi had obtained WAEC/GCE. Similarly, in Itodo, 49% of respondents obtained WAEC/GCE, 28.7% obtained a First School Leaving Certificate, and 22.1% obtained a BSc in Arts/Science. Only 0.5% of respondents reported having no education. Therefore, the majority of respondents in Itodo had obtained WAEC/GCE. In Essodo, 41.0% of respondents obtained WAEC/GCE, 30.7% obtained a BSc in Arts/Science, 27% obtained a First School Leaving Certificate, and 1.2% reported having no education. Thus, the majority of respondents in Essodo had obtained WAEC/GCE. Overall, the results show that the majority of respondents (43.0%) were holders of WAEC/GCE.

In addition, according to the survey, in Ozzi, the group of participants consisted of 32.2% students, 28% traders, 26.2% civil servants, and 11.3% farmers, meaning that students made up the largest percentage. Likewise, in Itodo, 30.5% of respondents were students, 29.3% were traders, 26.9% were civil servants, and 13.1% were farmers, resulting in a majority of students. In Essodo, the survey shows that 29.4% were traders, 31.8% were students, 29.6% were civil servants, and 2.6% were farmers, indicating that the majority of respondents in Essodo were traders. The survey also found that the highest percentage of participants (31.3%) were students.

Substantive issues

Nature of development
Table 1: Percentage distribution of response of respondents on the nature of development in Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu state.

S/N	Nature of developmentStage	SA 5	A 4	N 3	D 2	SD 1	∑fx	⁻x	Result
1	Electricity	70 35	40 160	31 93	121 224	107 107	360 934	2.59	ACCEPT
2	Pipe Borne water	59 295	63 252	16 48	98 196	124 124	360 915	2.54	ACCEPT
3	Good road	49 245	60 240	13 39	105 210	133 133	360 867	2.40	REJECT
4	Health care	67 335	52 208	12 36	98 196	131 131	360 906	2.51	ACCEPT
	Grand total							2.51	ACCEPT

Source: Fieldwork,2022

According to the table 1, the average response of the surveyed individuals is 2.51, which implies that Igbo-Eze North local government area is lacking in development. The table further indicates that there are issues with access to adequate electricity, pipe-borne water, healthcare, and affordable, well-constructed roads.

What leadership in Igbo-Eze north looked like in the last two political dispensation

Table 2: The distribution of responses of the respondents on what Leadership in Igbo-Eze North looks like in the last two political dispensation.

S/NO	Nature of leadership	SA 5	A 4	N 3	D 2	SD 1	∑fx	‾x	Result
1	**Embezzlement**	149 745	127 508	07 21	28 56	49 49	360 1379	3.83	ACCEPT
2	**Favouritism**	142 710	130 520	03 9	32 64	53 53	360 1356	3.76	ACCEPT
3	**Bribery**	128 640	151 640	12 36	27 54	42 42	360 1376	3.84	ACCEPT
	Grand Total							3.81	ACCEPT

Source: Fieldwork,2022

Table 2 shows that every item had a mean rating that exceeded 2.5, and the overall mean rating was 3.80, surpassing the criterion mean of 2. Based on this, we can infer that in the last two political eras, the leadership in Igbo-Eze North local government area was characterized by embezzlement, favoritism, and bribery.

Effects of leadership on development

Table 8: Percentage distribution of response of respondents on the effect of leadership on development in Igbo-Eze North local government area.

S/NO	Effects of leadership on development	SA 5	A 4	N 3	D 2	SD 1	∑fx	‾x	Total
1	Highly negative	147 735	128 512	11 33	33 66	41 41	360 1387	3.85	ACCEPT
2	Negative	141 705	139 556	5 15	41 82	32 32	360 1390	3.86	ACCEPT
3	Positive	27 135	24 100	38 114	134 268	137 137	360 754	2.09	REJECT
4	Highly positive	29 145	27 108	32 96	144 288	128 128	360 765	2.13	REJECT
	Grand Total							2.98	ACCEPT

Source: Fieldwork,2022

According to Table 3, two items had a mean rating that surpassed 2.5, while two other items had a mean rating below 2.5. The overall mean rating was 2.98, which exceeds the criterion mean of

2. Consequently, we can infer that leadership has a significant impact on development in the Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu state.

Way Forward

Table 4: Percentage distribution of responses of respondents on how effects of leadership on development can be improved in Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu state.

S/NO	Possible solutions to the problem of leadership and Underdevelopment	SA 5	A 4	N 3	D 2	SD 1	∑fx	‾x	Result
1	Reframing leadership	146 730	130 520	11 33	39 78	35 35	360 1396	3.87	ACCEPT
2	Radical transformation of the educational system	139 695	132 540	25 75	27 54	37 37	360 1401	3.89	ACCEPT
3	Transforming the health care system	152 760	122 488	20 60	24 48	42 42	360 1398	3.88	ACCEPT
4	Building of healthy economy	162 810	147 588	15 45	21 42	15 15	360 1500	4.16	ACCEPT
	Grand Total							3.95	ACCEPT

Source: Fieldwork,2022

According to data in Table 4, all the items received an average rating greater than 2.5. Additionally, the overall average rating was 3.95, which exceeds the established criterion mean of 2. Based on this information, it can be inferred that potentially viable solutions to address leadership and under-development in Igbo-Eze North include reframing leadership, radical transformation of the educational system, transforming the healthcare system and building a healthier economy.

Relationship between leadership and underdevelopment in Igbo-Eze north.

Testing of hypothesis

One hypothesis was tested using empirical methods in this study. The goal was to confirm the proposition's validity and determine the correlation between the variables being studied.

Consequently, the research hypothesis was tested using chi-square, also known as χ^2. This involved using the formula $\chi^2 = \sum (O_i - E_i)^2/E_i$, where χ^2 is the calculated chi-square value, O_i is the observed value, E_i is the expected value, and $\sum$ represents the summation. The null hypothesis, Ho, stated that there is no significant connection between leadership and

underdevelopment in Igbo-Eze North local government of Enugu state. The alternative hypothesis, Hi, claimed that there is a significant relationship between leadership and underdevelopment in Igbo-Eze North Local Government area of Enugu state.

To test the hypothesis, the responses considered were Highly Satisfied, Satisfied, Disagreed, and Highly Disagreed.

ALTERNATIVE RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Highly Satisfied	220	61.1
Satisfied	100	27.8
Disagreed	35	9.4
Highly Disagreed	5	1.4
Total	360	99.7

A significance level of 0.05 (or 5%) was utilized in the hypothesis testing process. The degree of freedom (D.F.) was calculated using the formula k-1, where k is the number of columns. In this case, k was 4, so D.F. was equal to 3. A chi-square ($\chi2$) test table was used to obtain the table value for D.F. = 3 and level of significance = 0.05, resulting in a value of 7.815. To calculate the expected frequency, the formula Total frequency/Alternative response was used, with Total frequency being 360 and Alternative response being 4, thus resulting in 90. The expected frequency was therefore 90. The table below was used to find the calculated value.

ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE	Oi	Ei	(Oi-Ei)	(Oi-Ei)2
Highly Satisfied	220	90	130	16,900
Satisfied	100	90	10	100
Disagreed	35	90	-55	3,025
Highly Disagreed	5	90	-85	7,225
Total	360	360		27,250

The formula used to derive the $\chi2$ value is $\sum(Oi – Ei)2/Ei$, which resulted in a value of 75.7 after dividing 27,250 by 360. Thus, the calculated value obtained is 75.7.

Decision Rule

To determine if there is a relationship between leadership and underdevelopment in the Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu state, we compare the calculated chi-square value with the

table value. When the calculated value is greater than the table value, we reject the null hypothesis (Ho) and accept the alternative hypothesis. Conversely, if the table value is greater than the calculated value, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis.

In this particular instance, the calculated value is 75.7, which is greater than the table value of 7.815. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis, indicating that there is indeed a relationship between leadership and underdevelopment in Igbo-Eze North local government area, Enugu state.

Discussion

The study revealed that there are multiple areas of underdevelopment in Igbo-Eze North local government area. Specifically, the respondents indicated that there is poor electricity, pipe-borne water, health care, and affordable good road. This study is in agreement with a study done to analyze the challenges impeding local government from rendering developmental services, Muhammad & Chikaji (2017).

Secondly, the study indicated that the nature of leadership in Igbo-Eze North local government area in the last two political dispensations has been characterized by embezzlement, favoritism, and bribery. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that all the listed items had mean ratings above 2.5, indicating that the participants rate these factors as frequently occurring. Additionally, the grand mean rating of 3.80 is considerably higher than the criteria mean of 2, further emphasizing the prevalence of these issues in the area's leadership. Overall, the research suggests that there is a significant problem with corrupt practices in the local government area's leadership and that intervention measures should be implemented to address these issues.

Moreover, the study also revealed that there are two items in the study that received high average ratings while two items received low average ratings. The study also identified that the overall grand mean rating for the study was 2.98, which is above the criteria mean of 2. Based on these findings, the researchers concluded that leadership has a very high impact on development in Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu state, Nigeria. The grand mean rating indicates the average of all the ratings across all the items in the study. Since the overall grand mean rating was above the criteria mean of 2, it implies that respondents generally held a positive perception of the impact of leadership on development in the local government area of Enugu state.

Finally, the study indicated that based on the respondents' mean ratings, the proposed solutions of reframing leadership, radical transformation of the educational system, transforming the healthcare system, and building a healthy economy are feasible solutions to address leadership and under-development in Igbo-Eze North. According to the research, all of the items had a mean rating above 2.5, indicating that respondents rated them as important. Moreover, the grand total mean rating of 3.95 suggests that the participants had a relatively high agreement level on these issues. The criterion mean of 2 indicates that the respondents rated the solutions highly, which is promising regarding their success in addressing the issues. Overall, the results indicate that the

proposed solutions have the potential to serve as effective strategies to enhance leadership and under-development in Igbo-Eze North.

Conclusion

The primary aim of this research was to investigate the correlation between leadership and Underdevelopment in Nigeria, with a particular emphasis on the Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu state. The study concluded that the key factor responsible for the country's Underdevelopment is the inadequacy of political leadership. The research findings indicate that the issue of Political leadership and Underdevelopment have pervaded Nigeria, rendering its development aspirations futile. In table 4 of the analysis, it was established that poor leadership in Nigeria has led to Underdevelopment at the federal, state, and local government levels, and especially in the Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu state, manifesting in insufficient basic amenities, infrastructure deficit, among others. To address this situation, the electorate must choose leaders based on their competence, while leaders must abandon their self-interests and concentrate on public interest.

Recommendation

1. Immediate intervention measures should be implemented to address the issues of corrupt practices in the leadership of Igbo-Eze North local government area. These measures should be aimed at reducing embezzlement, favoritism, and bribery in the area's leadership.

2. Reframing leadership, radical transformation of the educational system, transforming the healthcare system, and building a healthy economy should be pursued to address the problems of underdevelopment in the area. These solutions were rated highly by the respondents and have the potential to enhance the leadership and development of the local government area.

3. Focus should be placed on improving the provision of basic amenities such as electricity, pipe-borne water, healthcare, and good roads. These were identified as areas of underdevelopment and need urgent attention to improve the standard of living of the people in Igbo-Eze North local government area.

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