

Nigeria and the Culture of Recycling Old Leaders, Its effect on Her Economic Advancement and nation building in the 21st Century; A Critical Examination

Akoye Enyioma Joseph, PhD

Dept. of Political Science

Alex Ekwueme Federal University,

Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State Nigeria

Email; joe.akoye@funai.edu.ng & joeakoye@gmail.com

Chukuemeka Emmanuel Ibeh PhD

Dept. of Political Science

Alex Ekwueme Federal University,

Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State Nigeria

Email: Chukuemeka.emmanuel@funai.edu.ng

Uchchuku Anthony Nwobi PhD

Dept. of Public Administration

Alex Ekwueme Federal University,

Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State Nigeria

Email: Uche.nwobi@funai.edu.ng

Nnaeto Japhet Olusadum PhD

Dept. of Public Administration

Fed. University, Otuoke, Bayelsa state Nigeria

Email: nnaeto@fuotuoke.edu.ng

Obike Hilary Nwokoma

Dept. of Political Science

Abla state University, Uturu Nigeria

Email: hilaryobike@yahoo.com

Onele, Sunday

Dept. of Public Administration

Alex Ekwueme Federal University,

Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State. Nigeria

Email; onelesunday76@yahoo.com

Sampon Obum Amulu

Dept. of Political Science

Alex Ekwueme Federal University,

Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State Nigeria

Email: amponamulu@gmail.com

Abstract

Recycling old leaders in Nigeria politics has been a problem to the Nigeria people in recent time as the country has the habit of recycling old leaders who are between 87 years and 90 years who has nothing good again to offer the country, while the youths are there without any hope. This paper explores Nigeria political system and the culture of recycling old leaders, and its effects on her economic advancement/development and Nation building in the 21st Century. The theory used to analyze the paper was Modernization Theory, while the methodology for data collection was secondary sources like; books, newspapers, journal articles, and internet source materials, among others. The research findings on the subject matter implicated ethnic politics, sit tight syndrome and greed, among others. These manifested in economic backwardness/stagnation, relegating citizens' backward, disunity, killing of initiatives and discouragement of ideas on nation building and economic advancement, as well as ethnic politics, encourages corruption and nepotism. Based on the findings, the paper suggests constitution review, age limit for the political office seeker, power rotation, youth active participation in politics by joining a political party, overhauling the system and condition of service for every political office seeker.

Journal of Policy and Development Studies (JPDS)

Vol. 15. Issue 1 (2024)

ISSN(p) 0189-5958

ISSN (e) 2814-1091

Home page

<https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jpds>

ARTICLE INFO:

Keyword:

Recycling, Leaders, development, Economy, constitution,

Article History

Received 9th January 2024

Accepted: 6th February 2024

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jpds.v15i1.1>

1. Introduction

In Nigeria recycling old politicians is seen as a culture, and the practice is too worrying some to the general populace. Sincerely, it is a complex phenomenon. It seems the old politicians have inherited the Nigeria state while the citizens are used as instrument to perfect their evil and achieve their mission in the political game play in recent time, (Akonye, 2020). To this end, democracy is seen as a suicide practice in Nigeria state and the citizen in general (Ademola. 2021)). In recent time a major problem obstructing and confronting the Nigeria state and its political economy is leadership. Nigerians have the culture of recycling old leaders in her contemporary political system, for that reason, it is not abnormal to see someone who must have served as a military Head of state or a civilian government coming out to contest for a position he had held before. In this

context, a leader's primary responsibility is to link the work of various groups in the country and seeks to discover what actions and practice is required to achieve a targeted goals. For the building of virile nation-state and economic advancement, leadership should concern itself with internal harmony of various groups. A leader to a large extent should be the symbol of the nation and should act as an ideologist; hence, leadership role varies with situations. In most cases, the behavior of a leader depends on the types of group he or she is leading. A leader may be autocratic, diplomatic, democratic or bureaucratic. On the other hand, leadership may be effective in one set of circumstances, and ineffective in another. It is on this ground Michael Howard opined that successful leaders do advice people to endure hardships more often than not. In this regard, leadership has an anchor in inspiration and motivation. Nigeria, as case may be has the culture of recycling their old leaders who have what it takes to grab the leadership power or position even when they know that they cannot do well; thus, the Nigeria state is confuse today. Leadership should start within us. One should make up his or her mind, and be convinced of what he or she wants to do and equally have faith in God and in his ability that he must achieve the desired goal. Owolabi (2018) observed that:

It is due to balance and inequality in our system that there are several ethnic agitations across the country demanding for restructuring while other's reason is that we are a country that manufactures answers and forgetting the questions. This is why it has taken us more than decades to have a nation.

In this regard, reasonable people will sit down and think about the way forward for a country that got her independence over 60 years ago, but still doing trial and error. Hence, restructuring is a disaster that has come because of our mode of attitude and operation. Those agitations came up because we don't seem to have equal rights in the system. Though, we may have it in the constitution, but we don't obey it. If we have equal right, we can decide that whosoever has the merit out of us can go ahead and do the desired good for the society. It is at this back drop, this paper aims to investigate reasons why Nigeria recycle old leaders in her contemporary political system and its effect on her economic advancement and nation building in this 21st century. This brings us to the statement of the problem of this paper.

Statement of the problem

In the word of Akonye (2020) Nigerians do not recycle old leaders rather they put themselves there by paying the hungry youths who struggle and fight to rig elections for them so as to occupy the governmental seat, control the people, the state wealth and at the end neglect the masses at their own detriments and suffering. The annoying part of this is that, as smart as Nigerians are, they tend to leave everything for God to solve it for them. Look at the churches and mosques, you are likely to get about 90% of Nigerians gathered and worshiping but cannot organize themselves that way to fight and remove the bad government, this is too worrying some. In the same vain, the Nigeria education system do not even emphasize the importance of leadership in their curriculum and this is why Osazua Iruedo asked if really the Nigeria state need young politicians to run the affairs of the country? Osazua also noted that every Nigerian knows that leadership issue is a problem in this country; hence, we crave good leaders that can do things right. So whether young or old, what Nigerians need is a leader that knows what the masses want, Nigerians need leaders with integrity, sound mind, good vision and focus, who can keep to their promises, contemplate and deliberate over issues that affects Nigeria people, not a selfish and hopeless leaders who are self-centered and only after wealth acquisition for their generation unborn. What Nigerians need

are leaders that will truly care for the welfare of the people, leaders that will grow the country, and leaders who understand the meaning of service in public service. So if young politicians can do this, then they are good to go that is what Nigerians need. Today, youths are not carried along but if you study the American industrialized revolution you would notice that youths played a pivotal role in shaping the country's future and economy. In the word of Abraham Lincoln, former American President, "the best way to predict a future is by creating it". Now I think it is down to the youth of Nigeria and the general populace who think leadership is rocket science and only old bags that have been there before can do it better because, they have wealth and what it takes to be there, while the youth settle for prayers, night vigils, and rigging elections, leaving the country to abroad to obtain masters degrees that are not needed in the country instead of participating actively in politics (Amarachree, 2022). Amarachree (2022) further advised that Nigerians should rise up against recycling old leaders who have served this country for years and has been in politics for so long. Amarachree (2022) also noted that recycled leaders or politician lack the ideology that will take the country to a greater height which can give birth to a new nation. According to Amarachree these politicians will say one thing but do another thing, they will promise one thing but do another thing, in effect such attitude and practice always give birth to corruption, nepotism, fraud and disappearance of integrity; thus, a new Nigeria can only emerge once good leaders are on the seat and insecurity disappeared. This now bring us to the research questions of this paper

Research questions

Base on the statement of the problem of this paper, the following research questions surfaced; "why is Nigerians recycling her old leaders? And what are the effects of this practice on the nation building and economic advancement in this 21st century? This now brings us to the **objectives** of this paper which aims to investigate why Nigerian recycle her old leaders in her contemporary political system, and to examine its effects on her nation building and economic advancement in this 21st century. This gave birth to the research methodology used for this paper

Research Methodology

The Methodology used for this paper focuses on the methods of data collection, conceptual clarification, and theoretical framework, etc.

Methods of Data Collection

In this paper we adopted the documentary method of data collection which is qualitative in nature. Meanwhile, Legee and Francis (1974) observed that:

The quality of data is extricable tied to methods and techniques used for generating data. As a model used in social sciences and other related discipline, qualitative research method is very attractive in that it involves collecting information in depth but from a relatively small number of cases

Burnham et al (2004) in agreement with Legee and Francis noted that:

Analytic induction is often used by qualitative researchers in their efforts to generalize about social behavior. Here, concepts are developed intuitively from the data, and then defined, refined and their implications deduced from the data

On that note, data generated for this paper was collected from secondary sources which anchored on documentary method used to obtain in-depth information and concept clarification so as to facilitate instrument designed; hence, Nwabugwu, (2006) noted that documentary method is

adopted because it is useful when the task is to glean, illuminate, interpret and extract valuable information to draw inference from the available evidence so as to reach a conclusion; hence, it is well-suited for contextual analysis because it is able to gain access to institutional/organizational issues and structure and a way of resolving them; thus, it can lead to the discovery of the unexpected phenomenon. The adoption of this method of data collection then becomes imperative since the paper made use of data generated from secondary sources which is said to be a set of data gathered or authored by another person, usually data from the available data, achieves, either in the form of document or survey results and code books (Ikeagwu, 1998; Asika, 2006). Thus, the advantages of secondary sources of data include that of economy, etc. Again, the information of this sort is collected periodically, thereby making the establishment of trend over time possible. More importantly is the obvious fact that the gathering of information from such sources does not require the co-operation of the individual about whom information is being sought. In this regard, the paper utilize secondary sources of data such as textbooks, journal articles, magazines, conference/seminar papers and newspapers, internet material and other written works. Besides, the researcher has been a keen observer of the trends in the political activities in the country and the recycling culture of the Nigeria government and politics of the contemporary time; hence, his choice of this topic as a field to research

Conceptual clarification

Conceptually; Recycling is a situation something that has been used before is been process so that it can be used again. When you recycle something that has already been used, you are just processing such a thing so that it can be useful again. In this context, the recycling of old leaders in the political system of Nigeria, is a situation some group of people or individuals, who in one time or the other has been in government or held one political office or the other in the country, after a period of time such people or person will still come back to seek for the same office he had held before either as Head of State/President, Governor, Commissioner, a Minister, or a Senator, etc.

The concept Leadership

Leadership like happiness is not something that can be found simply by looking for it. It is a duty that has to do with the capacity to inspire, motivate and coordinate people towards achieving a desired goal. Its qualities include charisma, bravery, courage, agility, power of speech and persuasion to achieve a goal. A leader shall be well enlightened, literate, persuasive and submissive. Leadership is the act of coordinating and motivating individuals and groups in the society to achieve a desired goal. It is a process through which one individual influence the actions of others; hence, it has to do with one knowing the way, showing the way and going the way (Aja, 2006, Kindson and Fleener 2009) in a related observation, Sills noted that leadership has to do with the maintenance of integrity, viability, collective order and unity against internal and external threats, as well as minimizing dissensions, conflicts, and motivating members towards achieving a collective goals.

The concept Economy

The term economy has to do with the scientific study of the reciprocal influence of economics, politics, and the political element of the superstructure, which has to do with production, iniquities, and imbalances in the national and global distributions of economic and political power; thus, Political economy expresses a reality on the economic basis of the political behavior of states and peoples, (Obasi, 2005)

The concept Constitution

Constitution is said to be a body of fundamental principles, rules and regulation that govern a state, country, society and the general populace. It is also said to be an established precedents that constitute the legal basis that determine how an entity is to be governed.

The concept Government

Government refers to a group of people or individual that governs a state, country or a community. Government by extension consists of legislature, executive and judiciary. It is also refers to a group of people that has the authority to govern a country or state. In this regard, a government of a country is that group of people who are in control of the people, economy and every activity that goes in that state, country or community.

Theoretical framework of analysis

Modernization Theory was employed as a theoretical frame work of analysis for this paper; thus, this theory explains a process by which a Gemeinschaft society is transformed into a Gesellsechaft society. Modernization Theorists advised third world countries like Nigeria to emulate the citizens of developed societies like United States of America and others in terms of their general orientation, mindset and attitude to work in order to embrace all round development. This can be in politics, economic, socio-cultural and other wise. Modernization Theory has its root in the work of a German sociologist, Marx Weber, (1864-1920). But the theory was later credited to David McClelland. (Andersen and Taylor, 2005). Modernization Theory advocated for the need for achievement which is defined as a desire to excel or to succeed in competitive situations. Stoner (1978) observed that individuals with high need for achievement thrive in work situations that are challenging and competitive than those that are routine and repetitive. While individuals with low need for achievement like the recycle old leaders in Nigeria enjoy work situation that are routine and repetitive which are characterized by low output. McClelland in analyzing this theory identified people with high need for achievement such like; taking responsibility for solving problem, setting goals for themselves, taking risk as well as placing feedback on how well they are doing. From these we deduce that people with high need achievement are daring, venturesome and thrive in an atmosphere of competition and constructive criticism. While low need achievement people like the recycled old leaders in Nigeria, in contrast, shy away from tasking and taxing endeavors and dread criticism, constructive or otherwise. This difference is drive between the two categories of people impinges on their relative output in work situations. While high need-achievement people are characterize by high output. The reverse is the case for their low need-achievement counter parts. McClelland, (1961) also observed that

The major hypothesis of the need-achievement theory is that a nation with generally high levels of need-achievement- will produce more energetic entrepreneurs, who in turn produce rapid economic and political development of their country than those countries that believe and depend on recycling old politicians like Nigeria.

The kernel of Modernization Theory is that a society, a state or a country, that is develop or under develop depends on the orientation of the people in that country, as well as the nature and type of government in power, coupled with their attitude to work. Modernization Theory states that, if people are visionary, creative, persevering, enterprising, and imaginative, their society, state or country, will be developed. Hence, every society is a reflection of the people's general orientation and attitude to work. On the other hand, the reverse is the case for a society, or a country whose

people are lazy, uncreative, indolent, and traditional, who believe and depend in recycling old leaders who has nothing good again to offer to their country. Anderson and Taylor (2005) noted that:

Modernization Theory holds that, economic development of a country or a society is a process by which traditionalism and the concomitant fatalism become eliminated in the society in which individual and group roles becomes more complex and differentiated. And in which apriori reasoning and pre-Newtonian attitude to things of the world become jettisoned in preference to modernism.

For a nation building and economic development to take place and be sustained, Modernization Theorists advocate that, members of that society must slough off traditional belief and value, which reflect on the recycling of their old leaders into their political system. In this regard, a Nigeria state should embrace modern values that eulogize thrift, savings, hard work, efficiency and rationalism. This will enable her political economy to survive and grow. For instance, they hold that fatalism (the thinking that human circumstances are God made), is control by God. Hence, human beings are incapable of changing their conditions on earth. This is a condition that fosters underdevelopment and economic backwardness. Thus, a country like Nigeria must change from her old orientation and embrace modernization practice, eliminate fatalism to enable economic, political and socio-cultural development to take root and blossom. The message of Modernization Theory at this point is that a country like Nigeria will develop depending on the orientation of the Nigeria people towards leadership practice and the nature and type of government in power, and their attitude towards work. Modernization Theory, observed that, if a country like Nigeria has a vision, creative, persevering, enterprising, and imaginative leadership, definitely, it will surely develop. In order words, every society is a reflection of the people's general orientation and attitude towards work. Meanwhile, Modernization Theory states that, a country like Nigeria, who believed and depends on recycling their old leaders are bound to be lazy, uncreative, indolent, traditional, etc. This kind of leadership, at long run will have nothing good again to offer for the development, growth and welfare of the people. While such a country will remain perpetually under develop. For nation building and economic development to emerge and be sustained in such a country that depend and believe in recycling old leaders, Modernization Theorists advocate that members of such a country must slough off traditional belief and value. This reflects on the recycling of old leaders into a political system, which amount to operating a system of a square peg in a round hole, a practice of putting old wine in a new keg. Nigeria state, as advocated by Modernization Theory should embrace modern values that encourage, thrift, savings, hard work, efficiency and rationalism that will enable her political and economic activities to survive, sustain, and grow; thus, Modernization Theory is suitable for this paper as it has helped us to analyse the behaviour and practice of Nigeria state in recycling old leaders in her political system which poses a big threat to her political economy, economic advancement and nation building, among others.

Significance of the study

The primary goal of election is to find a lasting solution to the ways and means of choosing a credible leadership for good governance, people's welfare, and development of the society in every democratic practicing country. However, most writers on election and democracy focus on faulting the leadership without understanding laws, rules and principles guiding democracy and election.

Meanwhile, the significance of this paper is anchored in two interactive domains: Practical and theoretical.

The theoretical relevance of this paper equally derives from its attempt to draw new knowledge on democracy role in choosing a credible candidate for good governance through a free, fair and acceptable election to enable the citizenry do away with the old leaders, but the challenges and issues associated with peaceful conduct of election have remained insurmountable despite proven and diverse efforts of the INEC and its officials in conducting a free, and fair election to avoid recycling old leaders. In the main, the idea generated in this paper will add to the existing theoretical knowledge in the problems associated with the conduct of a free and fair election and in recycling old leaders in the Nigeria political system.

At the practical level, the study through its major findings will provide valuable data that will serve as a policy guide to INEC chairman in its bid to provide lasting solution to the lingering crisis and disputes between and among party members and their leaders over election rigging and electoral fraud that give birth to the emergence of old leaders in governance. By extension, the Nigeria judiciary and its members will find this paper useful as it will enable them know all the various sidedness of the conflict to apply as appropriate in future related issues and challenges in the conduct of elections. In addition, the idea generated from this paper will add to the existing theoretical knowledge in the problems associated with the Nigeria culture of recycling old leader in her contemporary political system. Finally, students researching in this field of study will gain immensely from this academic harvest

A Critical Examination of the reasons behind the Nigerians recycling old Leaders in her contemporary political system?

Discussion of the findings

In the contemporary Nigeria political dispensation, the youthful political soundness is just a rare commodity, reason because the youths are yet to brace up to the idea of knowing that they are the cream of the nation. The issue is that Nigeria society and their government is too distracted by economic instability to think of how to induct the youth into the corridors of power. A research carried out on why Nigerians seems to be recycling their old leaders came up with some reasons behind such practice include;

- Very high cost of entry and registration cost for new entrants, is seen as one of the reasons for recycling old leaders in the Nigeria contemporary political system. Here one need more than the total of the time earning of a typical worker to finance an election for the president, governor, federal or state House seat; thus, politicians are known and said to band or belong to one tight knitted clique or society which are difficult for the younger politicians to break into
- Old politicians are recycled because youths are not involved in politics as much as they should and not in right way most times (Nweje 2022). Meanwhile, the political arena is a battle field and is only the rich, the famous and the powerful can fight in it and is only few youths that possess that.
- The principle of cronyism means that most politicians are sponsored by the so called rich men for a gain (godfathers). This Nigerians godfather politics has made it difficult for the youth to find such link to excel in Nigeria politics, by extension, there is lack of support for youth, as Nigeria youth don't vote for their fellow youth. Even women don't vote for

their fellow women candidate. All these makes it so difficult for the young politicians to scale through, in effect the field is still open for the old politicians who have all it takes to occupy the seats

- **Greed**

Sheer greed is another factor behind recycling old leaders in the Nigeria contemporary political system. Here, these old leaders are seen to be greedy, selfish and lack vision. Tell me what they did not get in their first time in the office that can make them to come back again if not greed? They are only looking for an opportunity to loot the nation's wealth so that they can live a flamboyant life. The only vision they have for the country is to loot the nation's wealth, to appropriate the state resources, and to carry out vendetta against perceived enemies and for their selfish interest and to die in power so that they can be given a state burial. This practice always breeds Corruption among the old politician and it has destroyed the Nigerian democracy, produces the loser as the winner, and it ensures that the worthy candidates are suppressed and finally corruption entices voters to sell their conscience to these old brigades.

- **The Nigeria constitution**

The Nigeria constitution to the best of my knowledge should be hold responsible for creating room for all these recycling old leaders into the political system of this country. If the constitution did not create room for these old leaders to come back and contest, I don't think they will have any reason to come back to contest. But for the fact that the constitution created opening for free entry and free exit, I believe, that is why these old retired leaders who don't have conscience, decides to come back. Thus, they see politics as their constitutional right to come back to hold power. On that ground they should not be blame for coming back rather our constitution should be hold responsible for this mess, (Akonye, 2020)

- **Recycling old leaders on the ground of experience**

The recycled old leaders said experience is the best teacher; hence, they claimed that since they have experience of leadership that they are in a position to do it better than the young politician. This is their major reason for not retiring from the Nigeria politics. Here, majority of them if not all, have served this country in the past either as a military Head of state or elected President, governor, federal or state house candidate. Having tested power before, and haven retired from service, they feel that they still have all it takes to be there again. They will always say they have done it before, and can equally do it again even more better. Examples of such leaders are General Ibrahim Babangida, General Atiku Mohammed, General Olusegun Obasanjo, General Mohammad Buhari, and Asiaju Ahmed Tinubu of yesterday etc., who have served as a Military Head of State in the past, (between 1976 and 1985). For instance, Olusegun Obasanjo served as a military Head of state between 1976 and 1979, later he came back to serve as a civilian President of the same country, (Nigeria), (between 1999 and 2007. President Mohammad Buhari, served as a Military Head of State between 1983 and 1985, and later came back to serve as a civilian President of the same country (Nigeria) from 2015 to 2023. In the word of General Ibrahim Babangida;

“Because we have seen signs that young Nigeria's are not capable of leading this country so we feel we should help them. May be they are not given the proper education, that is why”

- **Lack of leadership training among the Nigeria politicians**

This is one of the factors behind recycling old leaders in the contemporary Nigeria political system. According to Akonye (2020), if a leader is well educated and trained, he or she will know what to

do and what not to do. A well trained leader will know when to come out for a particular position and when not to come out. But due to lack of leadership training and proper education they believe that with their money they will excel and that was exactly what Alhmed Tinubu just did in the last 2023 Presidential election, he bought over the conscience of the INEC chairman with his money who then declared him winner of the said election. Nigeria government should as a matter of urgency institute a mandatory leadership training course in both elementary and secondary school curriculums to enable all these stack illiterate leaders to know what they should do and what they should not do. In effect this is a way of shutting out youth and their ideas from taking active part in the political process and activities of their country call Nigeria.

An examination of effects of recycling old leaders in the Nigeria political economy and nation building

Discussion of the findings

The idea of recycling old leaders in the Nigeria contemporary political system has been to the detriment and exclusion of the young politicians and youths from participating actively in the political process of this country rather, the old leaders prefer using them as their election riggers and ballot paper hijackers, kidnappers, assassinator, etc. Meanwhile, the problem created by this culture of recycling old leaders has given birth to series of protests by youths of this country who were demanding for better living condition, transparency and accountability from their leaders. Akoye (2020) opined that discouraging the youth from active participation in the electoral prose in their country do hindered them from expressing their feelings and anger and this has manifested itself through the employment of violence means to get their demands and points across as witnessed in the Niger Delta region in recent time. Meanwhile, the culture of recycling old leaders in Nigeria has prevented the youth from playing active role in the political process of their country, thereby leaving them ill prepared to take over from the old politician. Presently, the culture of recycling old leaders in Nigeria politics kills initiatives and young talents; thus, the country cannot continue in this path of ageism in politics. This is just a similar thing that led to a eleven years civil war in Sierra Leonia which led to loss of many lives and property. (Akinyele, 2010)

- **Recycling old leaders creates room for poverty in Nigeria**

The practice of recycling old leaders in the Nigeria contemporary political system, possess a big threat as well instituting poverty in the country which has affected everyone in the country today. Here, the so call Nigeria leaders, cannot provide good roads, good drinking water, funding the education of their children, and other amenities that can make life meaningful. The inability of these old leaders to make available the people's needs make the process of mobilization difficult.

- **Recycling old leaders encourages corruption in the Nigeria state**

This is another serious negative effect of recycling old leaders in the contemporary Nigeria political system. As this practice creates room for poverty it equally breeds corruption, nepotism, ethnocentrism, tribalism, insecurity and economic backwardness, which is inimical to nation building. Some of the so called leaders who want to break the cycle of poverty in their homes and among their families takes much of the money stolen from the public treasuries which would have been used in providing infrastructure and industries that could have provided jobs and other development-orientated activities for the masses. Here, the banditry and lawlessness which characterize life in every section of this country makes the process of recycling old leaders very dangerous to the Nigeria economy and nation building at large

- **Recycling old leaders in the contemporary Nigeria political system kills new idea and youths initiatives**

The practice of recycling old leaders in the contemporary Nigeria political system did not only affect the economy and nation building but the general populace of the country. The recycled leaders has nothing to offer any longer, they only depend largely on the developed countries of the west for machinery and technical expertise to process even the least of the country's natural resources. It is even the developed countries that determine the cost of the finished goods which they sell to our country. No new idea of development comes from them, no room for initiatives for economic advancement and general development of the country

- **Recycled old leaders have nothing to offer to the country**

It has been observed by Akonye (2020) and Amarachree (2022) that the recycled leaders have nothing good or meaningful to offer to the country and the citizens any longer. They are only interested to be in power so that when they die they can be given a state burial. While on seat, the resources that would have been used for meaningful developmental projects will be wasting by these old brigades in the bid to be living a luxury life and investing on unproductive projects as a way of compensating their political patronage. They will never invest on any project that will benefit the masses like, industries, good road, drinking water, electricity, good schools, health centers, hospital and creates job for the young school leavers, etc. in this country millions of people die of starvation and preventable diseases; hence, the slow pace of social, economic, and political development attributes to the failing of these leaders who are only interested in utilizing abundant material and human resources in other to create good life for the general populace only succeeded in exacerbating the already existing cleavages in the country, as a result the oppositions base on ethnic lines are now demanding autonomy, resource control, and at times trying to secede which possess a big threat to the existing fragile unity which affects nation building and peaceful co-existence of the country. In this regard, the problem with the recycling of old leaders in the contemporary Nigeria political system appears perennial, as most leaders lack dynamism, patience, diplomacy, charisma, transparency, honesty and political enlightenment which could have enabled them rule the country effectively. But with the look of thing, the old recycled leaders refused to break ethnic barriers, selfishness, corruption and incomprehensible ideologies. They are ill-equipped to carry out the onerous task of developing the economy and building a great nation state.

- **Recycling old leaders results to embezzlement of public fund and lack of transparency**

Akonye (2020) noted that the amount of money embezzled by the so call recycled old leaders have contributed negatively to the economic and political development of this country. First, these leaders have been forced by the circumstances of their corruption and greed to accept policies dictated to them by other nations of the world which increase the poverty level in the country and this has tied the country permanently to the control of neo-colonial masters. For instance, between 1980 and 1985, the then Nigeria leadership (General Ibrahim Babangida) was forced to adopt Structural Adjustment Program, (SAP). This later brought untold hardship on Nigeria people. The introduction of SAP in Nigeria made the situation of the country to deteriorate. SAP goes with the cut back in social services, devaluation of a country's currency, a rise in the price of food, laying off workers and an increase in unemployment. This had resulted to workers unrest. It even makes the process of nation building more difficult.

- **Recycling old leaders leads to over-dependence on the foreign countries and their aids**

The effect of recycling old leaders in Nigeria political system showcases itself in 1990 when the act of sit-tight syndrome and recycling of old leaders attracted the attention of the neo-colonial

powers and their institutional agents in to the country. These agents force Nigeria government in particular and other African leaders to change their political and economic system as a prerequisite for future assistance. Reason was that these so call leaders have looted the country's wealth and dumped it in the foreign account. At this condition given by the neo-colonial powers, our leaders had no choice than to comply. This is the only way to safe guard their looted funds and to avoid been disgraced by these world leaders. At this point, these financial institutions and Multi-National Corporations, (MNCs), even went further to agree that, aid to Nigeria should be linked to the expansion of democratic freedoms and improve governance in all African countries. Such interference in the domestic policies leaves the country at the dictates of neo-colonial masters; thus, they use the presence of these corrupt old leaders in power to manipulate every activity that goes on in the country. an example of such old leaders are Asiwaju Ahmed Tinubu, Olusegun Obasanjo, Muhammadu Buhari, Alhaji Atiku Mohammad, among others

Instances/Examples of recycled old leaders

Nigeria has the culture of recycling old leaders in her present political dispensation, for instance, in the first elections in 1999 that came up after the last military rule in the country, which was organized by the last military administration Olusegun Obasanjo on the election and served for first four years which later gave him room to serve for another four years which is the second term. Here, the incumbent President, Oluegun Obaanjo and Muhammadu Buhari were the front runners. Meanwhile, Obasanjo has first ruled as a military Head of state between 1976 and 1979, while Muhammadu Buhari was one of the successions of military rulers in 1980s and 1990s with Chukwemeka Odimegu Ojukwu the leader of the Ibo secessionist movement that led to the 1967-1970 Biafra war. With these men in the field of politics, it then appears that Nigeria is recycling her old leaders, and my question now is, 'why must it be so? In the 2003 Presidential elections, six ex-military officers and former a secessionist Biafra leader now late, Chukwemeka Odimegwu Ojukwu, contested for the seat of the President of the country but at the end Olusegun Obasanjo, a retired Military Head of state won and became the Nigeria civilian government and ruled the country from May 29 1999 to 2007. Similarly, the 2007 Presidential election which ushered Alhaji Musa Yar A'dua in as the elected civilian President between 2007 and 2010 was no different. In the same vein, Chief Audu Ogbe serves as a Minister for thirty six good years in effect, this practice kills youth's initiatives and it discourages them from active participation in their country's political process. Jamace and Bobby (2014) equally observed that;

- Bamanga Turku was the governor of the defunct Gongola state, (new Adamawa and Taraba presently), in 1979, after 33 years he was made the chairman of the PDP.
- The PDP former chieftain, Dr. Bello Halliru was once a commissioner in the old Sokoto state, (presently Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara), after 33 years he was made the minister of defense.
- Major General David Mark (Rtd) was the military governor of Niger state in 1984, after 28 years Mark in 2015 to 2019 was made the senate President.
- Murtala Nyako was formerly the governor of Niger state in 1976, after 36 years he became the governor of Adamawa state
- Ogbonnaya Onu was the governor of Abia state in 1992, after 20 years he was made the National Chairman of ANPP.
- David Jonah Jang was the Governor of Benue state in 1985, after 27 years David Jang became the governor of Plateau state
- General Muhammadu Buhari was the military Head of state between 1983 and 1985, in 2015; Buhari became the civilian President of Nigeria at the age of 72 years. In 2019

President Buhari was re-elected for the second term. Obviously, does it mean that none of the Nigeria leaders cannot do what the American President George W. Bush Senior did by trusting and supported his son candidacy as a President of United State of America,

- Ibrahim Badamosu Babangida between 1985 and 1993 was the Military Head of state, after 27 years he came back to contest for the seat of President
- Olusegun Obasanjo was the Military Head of state between 1976 and 1979. Between 1999 and 2007 he was a civilian President.
- Late President Musa Yara 'dua was formerly a member of the 188 constituent assemblies; again, he was once a member of the party's National caucus and the SDP state secretary. In 1991 Yara 'Dua contested for the seat of the governorship of Katsina state. Between 2007 and 2010 he was elected the President of Nigeria.
- Martins Nwancho Elechi was 80 years when he became the governor of Ebonyi state. My question now is "Does it means that there were no younger ones to come up for such a seat?"
- . (Jamace, M. and Bobby, S. 2014)

Going by the analysis above, the issue now is, "how can we stop recycling old leaders? At this point Peter (2014) opined that those who rule Nigeria in the 1960s would still come back in the 1980s to rule the same country again. Those who ruled Nigeria in the 1980s would also come back in the 2000s to rule the country again and those who rule in 2010 would come back in 2020 and 2023 to rule the country again. How do we take back our country from these men of yesterday who have remained in our political landscape for decades with no end in sight? Now look at people like Peter Obi, Fashola, Ribadu, Oshomole, Rochas Okorochoa, among others can never contest the seat of President and win to rule this country, but why is it so? Why does the system favour these old brigades, is it because they have the money to influence everybody and bought their way? George W. Bush Senior cannot come back to rule America again, neither can his son come back again to rule America. Americans will never expect Barak Obama after 30 years to come back to rule America again. But here in Nigeria, you have 76 years old Buhari, 85 years old Tony Aninih and 76 years old Alhmed Tinubu still in power and controlling our political affairs. But why not Ahmed Tinubu retire and rest like, Shehu Shagari, Yakubu Gowon, Abdulsalami Abubaka, Ibrahim Babangida, Olusegun Obasanjo, among others. Atiku on his own side is always contesting for the Presidential seat and has been failing without getting tired because he has the resources to be doing that after he had served as a vice President of Nigeria between 1999 and 2007, in fact this culture of old leaders doesn't get tired in the Nigeria political system is worrisome and it posse a big threat to the country' economic advancement, good governance and nation building in this 21st century.

Break down of the administration of some old leaders in Nigeria government and politics

- Obasanjo ruled as a military Head of state between 1976 and 1979 and came back and ruled as civilian President, between 1999 and 2007
- Muhammadu Buhari ruled as a military Head of state between 1983 to 1985, and came back to rule as a civilian President between 2015 and 2023.
- David Mark ruled as a governor of Niger state, and later came back to serve as senate President between 2015 and 2019
- Goodluck Jonathan ruled as a deputy governor of Bayelsa state, he also ruled as a Vice President between 2007 and 2010, and finally ruled as a President between 2010 and 2015.

- Yemi Oshibanjo served as a vice President between 2015 and 2023 and came back and contested for the 2023 Presidential election and failed honorably and still hoping to come back again.
- Fashola served as a governor of Lagos state, and later came to serve as a Minister between 2015 and 2023, and still hoping to come back again.
- Rotimi Amaechi served as a governor of Rivers state, and he later came and serves as a Minister and still hoping to come back again.
- Ngige has served as a governor of Anambra state, and he later came to serve as a Minister still hoping to come back again.
- Rochas Okorocha served as a governor of Imo state for 8 years and later came to serve as a senator; and later came back to contest for presidential election in 2019 and 2023.

Base on the above analysis Nigeria needs a person like Jerry Rawlings as a solution to all these mess in this country, (Akonye, 2020). We need a way to side line and side track power from these old brigades so that the country can breathe in new ideas and move to a new level.

Conclusion/summary of the findings

Nigeria has the culture of recycling leaders who are motivated by passion to capture power by any means even when they cannot know what that power is meant for. This is why the country is confuse and in a mess today. Owolabi, (2018) noted that, it is due to in balance and inequality in the country today that there are several ethnic agitations all over the country; thus, everyone is demanding for restructuring. Meanwhile, the country is known as one manufacturing answers and forgetting the questions and this is why it has taken us centuries to have a nation. Nigeria would have been a number one among other African countries as it got her independence over 60 years ago and has been angering giant of Africa without a show of it but still in a place doing trial and error. Here, Restructuring is a disaster that has come because of our mode of attitude and operation and these agitations came up because we don't have equal rights in the system but in the constitution, but don't obey it; hence, we need to start a nation and make it justifiable. If we have equal right, we can decide that whosoever has the merit out of us can do the larger good to the society. The quality of leadership a country has determines how it develops and reproduces its policy, strategic consideration and aspirations. For countries like USA, France and Britain, among other, leadership is the lubricant of good governance, is the capacity to project power beyond national borders from a position of strength rather than potion of weakness. But for the weak states like Nigeria, leadership is the problem, evil, and a missing link. Thus, Nigeria needs leaders that will take the country to a greater height, leaders who understand the meaning of service in public service. Meanwhile, our findings revealed that the country's wealth has been bastardized, mismanaged and exploited by looters and fraudsters in the government and private organizations; as a result the country is left with huge amount of debt servicing and borrowing by the successive administrations who were guided with unstable and unprofitable policies. Thus, Dada (2022) noted that Nigeria needs leaders who can uphold the rule of law and ethnic diversities not recycled old leaders, not leaders like Ahmed Asiwaju Tinubu, mohammadu Buhari, Atiku mohammed, Ibrahim Babangida, Olusegun Obasanjo, among others. If Nigeria is to succeed as a nation state and get through with nation building, the country must have leaders that will be committed to the rule of law and establish their sense of equity, fair play and tolerance, leaders with a reflective sense of tomorrow, not leaders with a rich private bank account and material acquisition. In effect, by recycling old leader nothing new will come in, there will continue to be economic stagnation and the country will keep on witnessing stunted economic growth and political backwardness which will be a problem to the country in this 21st century

Recommendation

Recycling old leaders in the political system of Nigeria possess a big threat to nation building and economic development of the country; hence, the Nigeria's culture of recycling old leaders is conceived as a function of a larger picture and the prevailing value system in the country which has condones grafts as a means to an end. As a result, inferiority complex, collective ignorance and lack of common sense among the Nigerian elites and leaders have become a norm. To address the Nigeria culture of recycling old leaders the prevailing value system must be replace with a positive way of life that emphasizes on-; merit system and good citizenship. Above all, Nigeria leaders must rise above inferiority complex, mental slavery and start implementing the principle of charity begins at home by investing her resources in the country. The country's constitution should be reviewed to discourage old leaders from showcasing in politics all the time. Again, sit-tight syndrome mentality which has become a political ideology of the African leaders and a culture to Nigeria should be discouraged as well as those incentives, allowances, benefits, fat salaries, escorts, befitting burials etc which they use to receive should stop. There should be no room for wealth acquisition while in power. Our leaders, whether recycled, recycling or about to be recycled should be well educated to enable them have a sense of belonging and reasoning. Nigerians should rise up against recycling old leaders who have served this country before and has been in politics for so long. In the word of Amarachree (2022), recycled politicians always say one thing and do another thing, in effect such practice give birth to corruption, nepotism, fraud and disappearance of integrity, Amarachree (2022), further opined that a new Nigeria can only emerge once insecurity disappeared. Most importantly, our leaders should stare clear from destructive arrogance and fraudulent activities and create room to accommodate youths. I believe, leadership is a developmental process that requires training and qualities that creates vision, knowledge, understanding, problem solving, commitment, responsibility, patriotism, rule of law, obedience to law, assertiveness, consensus building, altruism, communication, ability to relate well with people and ethics. Teaching leadership qualities is bound to produce great leaders in this country. Great leaders constitute what leadership is all about. Nigeria is in daring need to have these types of leaders to enable it run the affairs of the country. Great leaders take responsibility for good governance. They provide moral guidance, sense of direction and inspire people to reach their leadership potential. Nigerian leaders should institute a mandatory leadership training courses in primary and secondary school curriculums. By extension; fresh ideas and approaches are the only way youths can beat the old brigade at the polls; they should register a political party, recruit real minded people, articulate their ideas and master the party politics and internal administration; thus, endeavor to win a local government and constituency

References

- Ademola, J. (2021), *why do Nigeria recycle politicians when they were not productive*. <http://www.quora.com>.
- Aja, A. A. (2006). *Leadership and Command: Leading Issues in Contemporary Strategic Studies. Bilding Society and Vision through the Strength of Cooperation*. Kenny and Brothers Ent. (Nig.) Enugu
- Akinyele, T. A. (2004). *The 2003 Nigeria Election that broke the Jinx*: West African Reviews Issue.5

- Akoye, E.J (2020). *The impact of bad leadership in the economic and political development of Nigeria*; a paper delivered at the national conference at Nnamdi Azikiwe Federal University Akwa in Anambra state; unpublished work
- Amarachree, D. (2022). *Stop recycling leaders who have nothing to offer*; A lecture delivered at the annual lecture titled; A new Nigeria with innovative ideology devoid of hypocritical leaders at Yaba College of Technology, Akoka Lagos, Vanguard newspaper
- Anderson and Taylor (2005). In Onwuka, J. O. (ed) (2014). *Third World in Social Science Perspective*, MB Authentic Press, Okigwe.
- Asika, N. (1991), *Research Methodology in the Behavioral Sciences*. Lagos: Longman Nigeria Plc.
- Burnham, P (2004), *Research Methods in Politics*. New York: Palgrave, Macmillan.
- Dada, O. B. (2022). A lecture delivered at the annual lecture titled; A new Nigeria with innovative ideology devoid of hypocritical leader, at Yaba College of Technology, Akoka Lagos, Vanguard newspaper
- Jamace, M. & Bobby, S. (2014). *Nigeria is the world capital for recycling leaders and politicians*, November
- Kerliger, F.N. (1977) *Foundations of Behavioral Research*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Kindson, H. R. and Fleener, R. C. (1978). *Organizational Behavior: A managerial approach*. Massachus sets in Nwabughuogu, A. I. (eds) (2009). *Problems of Nation Building in Africa*; Fasmen Communication, Okigwe.
- Legee, D.C. & Francis, W.I (1974), *Political Research: Design Measurement and Analysis*. New York: Basis Books Inc Publishers
- McClland, (1961). in Onwuka, J. O. (ed) (2014). *Third World in Social Science Perspective*; MB Authentic Press, Okigwe.
- Nweje, (2021). 'Why do Nigeria recycle politicians when they were not productive?' <http://www.quora.com>.
- Nwabughuogu, A. I. (2009). *Problems of Nation Building in Africa*; Fasmen Communication, Okigwe.
- Obasi, I. (2005). *Politics and Globe Dictionary*. New Edition. Eagle Publisher, Aba Abia state
- Okwoeze, O. J. (2001). *The Anti-Corruption Crusade: The Sage of Crippled Giants*. Snaap Press, Enugu

Onwuka, J. O. (2014). *Third World in Social Science Perspective*. MB Authentic Press, Okigwe.

Owolabi, M. (2018). Recycling Nigeria's Political Figures, Daily Times Feb., 22.
<http://www.nigeriacuriosity.com/2010/04/Nigerians>

See, R. F. (1970). *The Barrel of a Gun: Political Power in Africa and the Coup d'état*, in Sills, D. (1976), (ed) Encyclopedia of social Sciences, Vol. 9

Shemi, T. (2021) why do Nigeria recycle politicians when they were not productive?
<http://www.quora.com>.

Stoner, (1998). In Onwuka, J. O. (ed) (2014). *Third World in Social Science Perspective*. MB Authentic Press, Okigwe.

Umelo, C. (1985). "Leadership": The Nigeria Statesman, in Nwabughuogu, A. I. (eds) (2009), *Problems of Nation Building in Africa; Fasmen Communication*, Okigwe.