

## **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

**APEH, ELAIGWU ISAAC (Ph.D)**

Chief Lecturer  
Department of Public Administration  
Benue State Polytechnic, Ugbokolo  
Benue State, Nigeria  
Email: isaacapeh2@gmail.com

### **ABSTRACT**

*Contemporary Nigeria is plagued with the problems of widespread poverty, large-scale unemployment, technological backwardness, low capacity utilization, inadequate and decayed social and physical infrastructure, high incidence of diseases, high crime rate, among others. These disturbing socio-economic indicators in Nigeria are among the worst in the world. Ironically, these unpleasant indicators exist side-by-side the country's great national wealth and potentials, with an enviable stock of human resources who possess knowledge, expertise and skills especially in the public service. Unfortunately, it appears these knowledgeable public servants are unable to serve as catalysts in the development of the nation. This situation makes the Nigerian case paradoxical. The objective of this study therefore is to identify the challenges preventing Nigerian public administration from playing its catalyzing role in the development of the country as well as to proffer possible solutions. Data for the study were collected from secondary sources (documents) such as textbooks, journals, bulletins, magazines, government publications and internet materials, while analysis was done qualitatively. One of the findings is that bribery and corruption are a bane of Nigerian public administration. In fact, they constitute a serious impediment to national development. The paper recommends, inter alia, the empowering of the anti-corruption institutions and introduction of information and communication technology in public governance.*

**Keywords:** Public Administration, Government, National Development.

### **INTRODUCTION**

More than 20 centuries ago, a renowned philosopher Aristotle (384BC – 322BC) remarked that the State (public governance) is the conclusion of human development (teleologism). He viewed the polis, or city state, as the highest form of human social and political development, allowing its citizens to find and live the good life. For him, the family and the village existed for the sake of life and the polis (state) for the good life (Mazi-Mbah, 2006). That is to say that governing or administering an organization, society, nation or a community of nations is basically because there is the common need to evolve, execute and maintain or improve on the policies that would ensure that people in that group or nation have a common goal. The plan, execution and controls aimed at achieving and upholding those goals constitute what administration is all about (Ichima, 1998). One of such goals could be national development which Nigeria imperatively desires.

National development and transformation, according to Achimugu and his associates (2013), are the most compelling challenges confronting Nigeria – a country with a population of about 195 million people ([www.worldometers.info](http://www.worldometers.info)), a land mass of nearly one million square kilometers which hold great potentials for all forms of agriculture, the world's 7<sup>th</sup> largest producer of crude oil, the 5<sup>th</sup> largest country with natural gas reserves and many other solid minerals (Achimugu, et al, 2013). With these and other resources, Nigeria stands the chance of being one of the world's most prosperous nations.

However, about 70% of Nigerians today live on less than US\$1 per day as against 15% in 1960 (Ani, 2017). Besides, of all Nigeria's power generation potentials, only 40% of its citizenry have access to electric power supply, which is often very epileptic. Ironically, these and other poor conditions of living prevail in Nigeria in spite of the hundreds of billions of US dollars that the country has earned in the last four decades from crude oil alone. Little wonder, the San Francisco Chronicle (2007) painted a picture of Nigeria as a paradox, when it remarked that "Nigeria is a rich nation floating on oil wealth but almost none of it flows to the people."

The situation at hand is so complex that attempts to reverse it must be both systematic and strategic; hence the need for Nigerian public administration, with which national development is intricately interrelated, to be re-invigorated and repositioned for better performance, because a strong bureaucratic/administrative machinery can enhance genuine efforts at national development, and vice versa. The media (both print and electronic) are replete with cases of bureaucratic/administrative fragility, corruption, inefficiency and unethical behaviour which often render policy implementation difficult and sometimes impossible. For example, for the issuance of national identity cards in Nigeria, US\$214 million went down the drains with nobody to account for it (Daily Sun, June 14, 2010). Another instance concerns an Inspector General of Police (the highest position in the Nigerian Police Force) who was convicted and sacked for corrupt enrichment (Adegbe et al, 2013). These and similar deficiencies which are widespread and systemic permeate public institutions in Nigeria. In the words of Achimugu et al (2013), any attempt at meaningful sustainable national development must begin with reforming, repositioning and developing the internal capacity of public administration to support and drive the process of national development.

Therefore, the objective of this paper is to examine the place and role of public administration in national development in Nigeria. Attempts are made to clarify the concepts of public administration and national development and examine challenges of Nigerian Public Administration. The paper also proffers solutions for improving public administration for national development in Nigeria as well as concluding remarks.

## **CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS**

### **(a) Public Administration**

Public Administration, like every other academic term, has been conceptualized from diverse perspectives. That is why Kautilya (1999) observes that the concept has been seen as featuring hetero-doxy rather than orthodoxy. Despite the plethora of conceptualizations, the fact remains that public administration is an aspect of the generic term "administration" whose essence is "determined action taken in pursuit of group-earmarked objectives." It is concerned with co-operative human efforts geared towards pre-determined goals (Apeh, 2014).

Public administration may be considered both a field of action and a field of study (Anifowose and Enemu, 1999). As a field of action, public administration refers to the mechanics and structures through which government policies are implemented. It means the institution of public bureaucracy in a State (i.e. the organizational structure which forms the basis of public decision-making and implementation). At the heart of public administration in modern State is the civil service but it also includes all of the bodies at the national, state and local levels (in a federal system of government) or central and regional levels (in a unitary system). Public administration denotes the arrangements by which public goods or services are delivered. As a field of study, it refers to the academic discipline which studies the mechanics or structures through which government plans and implements its programmes. The main thrust of public administration as an academic discipline is the development of a public sector organization theory different from the intellectual leaning of private sector organization theory and market principle (McLean and McMillan, 2003).

Public administration is a field with two parents, namely, political science and management. More appropriately, it can be said that public administration has a parent and a foster parent (Bello, 2005). While the mother discipline is political science, management is the foster parent. However, public administration is a discipline of many forces, the influence of the parent and foster parent notwithstanding.

Public administration as a concept is used in both broader and narrower senses. In the broader sense, it embraces the activities of the three branches of government, to wit: executive, legislature and judiciary. It is in this sense that the term is used in this paper. Conversely, in the narrower sense, public administration is concerned with only the executive branch of government.

The concept is often used interchangeably with other terms, such as public sector administration, government and administration. Public administration is concerned with purposes of a society as a whole as opposed to groups within it. It is therefore concerned with the purposes of the State. Administration is carried out in an organization. In this regard, the entire society could be regarded as an organization which is called a State (Ujoh, 2001). As every State has a government which is responsible for implementation of its policies, public administration is often called government administration.

Administration as a process can take place in a variety of settings (public or private) for defined goals. It exists in the church, Army, university, prison, courts of justice, rehabilitation centres, remand homes, industrial/business centres or at the local government, state government, national government and even at the international level. Public administration is the aspect of administration found in a political setting and which is primarily concerned with the implementation of public policies as opposed to administration in the private sector.

In a nutshell, public administration denotes the application and the study of the principles of administration in a political setting. It is the harnessing and utilization of human, financial and material resources to implement government policies and programmes aimed at achieving specified objectives, such as national development.

#### **(b) National Development**

The concepts of development and indeed national development are quite nebulous due to the diverse views and perspectives from which they are seen. For example, some people regard development as change while others take it to mean advancement, improvement and progress. Many scholars contend that when there is an upward movement from one position to another, especially if the movement is a positive one, then development has taken place. Some scholars see it in the ethnocentric context as modernization or Westernization. Though others erroneously equate development with growth, as it will be seen here, it goes beyond growth. Many other writers argue that “development” should be related to specific sectors of life for it to be properly understood, such as social, economic, political, industrial, rural, technological developments etc.

It is apposite to state here that, in its simplest form, there are two broad perspectives of conceptualizing development – the liberal perspective and the Marxist perspective (Nnadozie, 2004). The traditional or liberal perspective sees development as the capacity of a national economy, whose initial economic condition has been more or less static for a long time, to generate and sustain an annual increase in its Gross National Product (GNP) at rates of, perhaps, 5% to 7% or more (Obi, 2005; Todaro and Smith, 2004). Development in this perspective has economic undertones and index which principally entail growth in income per capital or per capita Gross National Product. It is generally believed that growth in income per capita or Gross National Product will trickle down in terms of benefits to all segments of the society. This view of development is equated with Westernization. This means that any country that is desirous of development must struggle to be like the Western capitalist countries (Offiong, 1980).

The liberal perspective of development was criticized as being too myopic, cosmetic, ethnocentric and projecting ideas that are untenable. As Obi (2005) acknowledges, the disappointing performance of most countries that pursued development from the traditional or liberal approach led to a new thinking of the concept of development. The liberal approach succeeded in making a few people rich, while a mass of people is left to wallow in poverty. Following the above discovery, there was a re-conceptualization of development to make it people-oriented. This is the Marxist perspective. For example, Goulet (1971) argues that the concept of development embraces economic and social transformation within a country with core values of life sustenance (provision of basic needs), self esteem (feeling of respect and independence) and freedom

(from the three evils of want, ignorance and squalor) so that people are more able to determine their own destiny. Thus, development was redefined to mean the process by which people will create and recreate themselves and their life circumstances to realize higher levels of civilization in accordance with their own choices and values (Ake, 1981). Development means the ability and capacity of man to adequately interact with his physical environment and other individuals to constantly improve himself and humanity (Nnadozie, 2004). According to Seers (1969), development should be geared towards reduction or alleviation of poverty, unemployment and inequality. As he (Seers) asserts, where these variables decline from high levels, there is development in the country concerned. Conversely, if the variables rise to high levels (even if only one of them does), it is wrong to call the situation development, even if the per capita income doubles. According to Apeh (2013), this is a paradigm shift from economic progress to alleviation of poverty, unemployment and inequality, though still maintaining economic growth.

National development refers to a state of change in conditions or situations within a particular nation to better ones (Adoyi, 2006). It denotes positive changes or improvements in some or all aspects of the national life of a country. National development comprises the holistic array of policies, programmes and actions detailed in confrontation of national challenges, with the intention of improving the internal workings of government, the private sector and the entire citizenry (Achimugu et al, 2013).

The desire for national development in Nigeria can be situated in the agitation for self rule by Nigerian Nationalist leaders during the colonial days. The agitation, many years after independence, has not subsided; hence the numerous and insatiable demands for the country to be compartmentalized into smaller units (States and local governments), the demand for resource control and also for restructuring of the country. Other agitators include the Niger Delta militants and Boko Haram insurgents who tend to make the country ungovernable. How prepared then is Nigerian public administration to sustain current efforts or make new strides in the development of the nation? What are the current challenges and how can they be tackled? These and other questions will find answers in the subsequent paragraphs of this paper.

## **CHALLENGES OF NIGERIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

A number of problems has been hindering Nigerian public administration over the years from playing its role as an instrument of national development. Such challenges include the following factors:

### **Bribery and Corruption**

The Nigerian public service is so grievously plagued by bribery and corruption that the country now ranks very high on corruption ranking (Transparency International, 2017). This problem ranges from public servants accepting bribes, grafts and gratifications for carrying out their lawful duties to inflation of contract awards so as to collect kick-backs from contractors in return. It also ranges from embezzlement and misappropriation of public funds to direct looting of the treasury (Achimugu, et al, 2013; Igbuzor, 2015; Arthur, 2016). For example, the sum of five billion Naira (₦5b) was allocated to non-existent agencies in the 2010 national budget (Nigerian Tribune, May 20, 2010). Furthermore, crude swaps due to subsidy and domestic crude allocation from 2005 to 2012 indicated that 11.63 billion US dollars were paid to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), but there was no evidence of the money being remitted to the federation account (Wikipedia, 2015).

In fact, the problem of corruption in Nigeria is not peculiar to the public service; it permeates the private sector too. For example, some bank officials are reported to have defrauded their employers or customers, while some firms falsify records in order to evade tax and other payments. According to Vanguard News (February 3, 2015), about 68.1 percent of the total revenue Africa loses annually through illegal transfer of revenue abroad comes from Nigeria. The funds are stolen through corruption, tax evasion and illegal transfer of profits by Multinational Companies (MNCs). There are many other shocking cases of corruption in the country.

The government of Nigeria has tried to contain this monstrous malaise through the establishment of anti-corruption agencies, enactment of laws and the enforcement of integrity systems, but success has been slow in coming. Rather than waning, corruption continues to wax stronger in the country. Nigeria's latest ranking in corruption, as perceived by Transparency International, is depicted in the table below.

**Table 1: Nigeria's Corruption Ranking, 2008-2017**

YEAR	RANKING	PERCENTAGE (%)
2008	121	67
2009	130	72
2010	134	74
2011	143	79
2012	139	77
2013	144	80
2014	136	76
2015	136	76
2016	136	76
2017	148	82

**Source: Adapted from Transparency International, Corruption Perception Index, 2008-2017 Editions**

The data in table 1 above indicate a very high level of corruption in Nigeria. A country's rank shows its position relative to the other countries and territories in the index. Nigeria's level was lowest in 2008 when the country was ranked 121<sup>st</sup> least corrupt nation (i.e. 67%). The level continued to rise, but was stable between 2014 and 2016 with a ranking of 136 each year and 76 per cent. However, it went up to an alarming rank of 148<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries with a high percentage of 82 in 2017. This ugly situation undoubtedly retards national development.

#### **Paucity of Training and Development Opportunities**

Many public sector organizations in Nigeria do not realize the importance of staff training and development, hence they send few (if any). The fact however remains that an untrained employee is a liability to a dynamic organization, as he does not only apply the wrong skill but also imparts the wrong knowledge or ideas to his subordinates and subsequent employees. According to Nwachukwu (2008):

*no nation is known to have attained sustained high level of economic growth and development without an ample supply of qualified manpower. Of all the factors that unlock the force of economic growth and development, a country's human resource is the most vital, for without it, all the other factors will have to wait...*

Where the need is realized and staff trained or developed, they are often not properly utilized. It is trained administrators that can be effective in national development.

#### **Rigidity and Red Tape**

Bureaucracy in Nigeria is marked by excessive adherence to official routines, laws and procedures. In other words, it is characterized by gross inflexibility (Ezeani, 2005). Strict adherence to rules, policies and procedures produces timidity, conservatism and technicism in the public servants. Besides, formalism and ritualism prevail in societies or organizations in which members cling tenaciously to bureaucratic principles and practices. This is the case in Nigeria. In the words of Ezeani (2005), inflexibility not only stifles innovation; it also leads to waste of time and delay in the implementation of public policies. However, national development requires innovative behaviour and appreciable amount of flexibility and willingness to bend formal procedures, where necessary, to meet the task at hand.

### **Ineffective Leadership**

The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership (Achebe, 1983). What this legendary author implies is that the country does not often have effective leaders. It is the unwillingness or inability of Nigerian leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership.

In firmer and more concrete terms, Ukaegbu (2010) asserts:

*...Upon deeper reflection on the development policies of Nigerian governments, there is evidence that Nigerian leaders, past and present, exhibit a fatalistic orientation, have a high level of dependent mentality, and lack a sense of personal or group self-efficacy. Consequently, the type of leadership they provide continues to stall the country's development...*

It is clear from the foregoing discussion that one of the major challenges staring Nigeria in the face regarding national development is the lack of firm and purposeful leadership, that will be full of integrity, hard work and sound knowledge of what to do, where, when and how.

### **Poor Remuneration**

The salaries and wages paid to public servants in Nigeria are very low compared to the amount paid in the private sector in the country and other countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Besides the paucity, the meager income is often eroded by the persistent high rate of inflation. Therefore, to ameliorate the situation, a number of attempts has been made since independence in 1960 to increase public sector minimum wage in Nigeria (Okoli and Onah, 2002). These efforts include the Morgan Commission (1964); the Adebo Commission (1971); the Udoji Commission (1974); the Dotun Philips Commission (1988) and the Ayida Panel (1994). In addition, the Shagari-led administration (1979-1983); the Abdulsalami Abubakar military regime (1998-1999); the Obasanjo government (1999-2007); and the Yar'Adua/Goodluck Jonathan administration (2007-2015) did increase the minimum wage in 1981, 1998, 2000 and 2011 respectively, which brought it to the current amount of ₦18,000.00 per month or ₦216,000.00 per annum. According to Salisu (2001), effort at such wage increases could achieve little or nothing because they soon get eroded by very high inflation; worse still they were most times beyond the budget of state governments, who are more often than not unable to pay workers at the new minimum wage, resulting in conflict between Labour Unions and the state governors (Salisu, 2001).

Under poor remuneration, one can mention irregular payment of salaries to workers. When workers' emoluments are paid to them as at when due, they will feel sufficiently motivated to exhibit good behaviours that are capable of enhancing the accomplishment of stated goals. This cannot happen when workers go about their work on empty stomachs because their salary payment has been delayed or if they are owed a backlog of salary arrears which sometimes run into many months. This situation does not only demoralize the average Nigerian public servant; it also results in poor attitudes to work which retard national development.

### **Inadequate Provision of Energy Resources/Public Utilities**

Wood is still a major source of energy for cooking among the rural populace and a significant proportion of the urban dwellers in Nigeria. As Uzuegbunam (2005) and Apeh (2013) aptly observe, serious imbalances usually exist between the demand for wood and its supply in many parts of the country. This situation leads to a rapid destruction of forest resources and a greater rate of desertification and erosion. The irony of this problem is that it exists in a country that is the world's 7<sup>th</sup> largest producer of crude oil and the 5<sup>th</sup> largest proven natural gas reserves, in addition to other solid minerals. Besides, only about 40 percent of households in Nigeria have access to potable water supply. The available water for industrial and other uses is also inadequate. Moreover, electricity is in short supply to both residential and industrial houses, and the increasing demand outstrips the current rate of electricity generation in Nigeria (Ukwenya et al, 2016). These problems invariably constitute an albatross to national development.

### **Crimes and Insecurity**

Safety and security of lives and property are necessary for the development of a nation. However, Nigeria is currently bedeviled with the problems of crime and insecurity. The vices manifest in frequent cases of armed robbery, pen robbery, religious riots, inter-ethnic clashes, youth restiveness, political thuggery, rape of women, Boko Haram insurgency, ethnic militias, secret cult activities, herdsmen attacks, child trafficking, kidnappings and a host of others (Njoku, 2007; Adegbe et al, 2013; Ugwueze, 2014; Ani, 2017). These are serious issues of concern as they make lives and property unsafe and threaten to dampen the country's quest for national development.

### **National Cake Mentality**

Nigerians believe that since the resources of the country do not belong exclusively to anybody or any group of people but rather to the entire citizenry, they should scramble for them. Thus, some public servants are reported to have grabbed what they could afford from government and made them personal. This explains why government treasury is often looted. Other citizens demand for fragmentation of the country or the governmental structure. Thus, there are interminable requests for creation of additional states and local governments. This selfish strategy adopted by Nigerians only helps to negate the desire for national development.

### **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The following suggestions are capable of re-engineering this machinery of government to be able to cope with the arduous demands of national development.

#### **Empowering Anti-Corruption Institutions**

Empowerment involves equipping one with the ability to act or do something, control or exercise rights or authority in one's sphere of responsibility (Apeh, 2013). It is synonymous with capability or enablement. Anti-corruption institutions in Nigeria that require such empowerment include the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), the Public Complaints Commission (PCC), the Public Accounts Commission (PAC), to mention but a few. The existence of these institutions notwithstanding, corruption in Nigeria continues to increase, especially in the public sector. Little wonder, the Transparency International in her latest Corruption Perception Index (CPI) released on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2018, ranked Nigeria 148<sup>th</sup> out of 180 least corrupt nations of the world. Therefore, there is the need for the government to garner the necessary political will, finance and the training and re-training of staff needed to ginger the institutions into more acceptable performance.

#### **Human Capital Development**

Education is the catalyzing factor in both human and national development (Dike, 2002; Alhassan, 2007). Ghandi (1988) puts it this way:

*Good education is the key to development of our most valuable assets, and our human resources. It is through education that hard bound traditional age-old prejudices give way to reason and the scientific spirit. It is through good education that society is modernized.*

Good quality education involves educating for character change, good moral values and civic responsibility. It is this type of virtues that shapes the character of nations. However, problems currently facing the educational system in Nigeria include examination misconduct, giving of money and sex for marks, recycling of curriculums for several decades without substantial changes, lack of tools to produce qualified graduates

capable of managing national affairs efficiently and effectively, nonchalant attitudes to teaching and learning by teachers and students respectively, irregular payment of staff salaries and allowances – just to cite a few.

Moreover, many public sector organizations pay little attention to staff training and development. It is nevertheless noteworthy that only trained or developed staff can render efficient services that can contribute effectively to national development. The need therefore for Nigeria to, as a matter of urgency, invest heavily in education-driven human capital development cannot be over-emphasized.

### **Introduction of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

Introducing information and communication technology in public governance has become imperative in Nigeria to obviate the problem of over-bureaucratization, and thereby ameliorate government performance. Doing so will also reduce the existence of red tape and rigidity. The essence of this point lies in the fact that public administration in Nigeria is still characterized by traditional administrative principles and practices in a fast-moving world in which speed and accuracy are the order of the day. Because Nigerian public administration is unimaginably slow and lacks innovation and drive, it is weak in translating policies into reality (Achimugu et al, 2013). These are the impediments that ICT tools can be antidotes to (Ifinedo, 2008).

### **Effective Leadership**

The problem with Nigeria, as discussed above, is that of leadership failure. The country needs leaders who are knowledgeable, intelligent, honest, hardworking and ready to face and tackle challenges with an apparent sense of commitment. Therefore, for national development to take place, the government should ensure that men and women of sound pedigree are appointed to the helm of affairs. They should be outstanding Nigerians whose integrity and sense of dedication to duty are unquestionable and who, in the words of Stogdill (1974), are:

*characterized by a strong drive for responsibility and task completion, vigour and persistence in pursuit of goals, venturesomeness and originality in problem-solving, drive to exercise initiatives in social situations, self-confidence and a sense of personal identity, willingness to tolerate frustration and delay, ability to influence other persons' behaviour, and capacity to structure social interaction systems to the purpose at hand.*

### **Improved Remuneration Packages**

It is axiomatic that the most important input for achieving national development is the human resource. There is therefore the need to have such human capital sufficiently motivated especially in terms of improved remuneration because, according to Lethbridge (2004) and Apeh (2014), a vital element in the motivation of human capital is undoubtedly the quality of its remuneration packages. This view is quite true in the case of Nigerian public servants whose remuneration packages are currently low. The status quo should therefore be reviewed upwards in order to be able to mobilize Nigerian government employees towards national development. Government should also endeavour to ensure prompt and regular payment of staff emoluments, thereby motivating them to more productive efforts.

### **Adequate Provision of Energy Resources/Public Utilities**

Development is strongly linked to the availability of energy for heat, light and mechanical power (Sambo, 2010). The major energy sources in Nigeria include fuel, wood, kerosene, diesel and liquefied natural gas, fossil fuels and electricity (Ukwenya and Barki, 2016). Water is also very essential for both industrial and residential uses. The Nigerian government should therefore move quickly to revitalize the organizations and agencies that provide the various types of energy, such as the various electricity generation and distribution companies, oil companies and water boards and agencies, so that the supply of these amenities which have been epileptic will become regular at moderate prices. Such intervention can be through enhanced capacity building, greater funding, inter-organizational collaboration, proactive control measures and staff training and development programmes to improve effectiveness.



### Mitigation of Crimes and Insecurity

The factors responsible for the increasing volume of crimes and insecurity in Nigeria include population growth, poverty, high underemployment and unemployment. One can also mention injustice, greed, inequality, laziness and unpatriotism. For national development to be successful in Nigeria, the government should take steps urgently to reorientate Nigerians on the need to be patriotic, sincere, hardworking and committed to nation-building. These virtues can be taught as core values in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in form of civic education. It can also be taught to Nigerians generally through a national orientation programme. In addition, genuine and concerted efforts should be made by Nigerian leaders to unite the people of the various ethnic groups so that there will be unity in diversity. This action will allow mutual trust, peace, love and honesty to rein in the country. Moreover, what is most important, which should constitute security, is a multifaceted approach to addressing the degrading conditions in which Nigerians live. Addressing the material poverty of Nigerians is security (Onoja, 2013). Catering for Nigerians is the first step to safeguarding the State because when the government considers people first in terms of welfare, they will in turn safeguard the State.

### Conclusion

This study has revealed that there are many challenges obstructive of national development in Nigeria, which include bribery and corruption, inadequate education/training opportunities, rigidity and red tape, ineffective leadership, poor remuneration, inadequate sources of energy, increasing rates of crimes and insecurity and national cake mentality. These are the factors that stand in the way of Nigerian public administration in its bid to play its catalyzing role in national development. Possible solutions to these problems have also been proffered, and they include the revitalization of the organizations and agencies providing the various resources of energy and water, empowering the anti-corruption institutions, introduction of information and communication technology (ICT) in public governance, efforts to be made to have effective leadership and improved remuneration packages. The government should also endeavour to address the material poverty (needs) of Nigerians as a deliberate move to curb crimes and insecurity. These suggestions are capable of repositioning Nigerian public administration so as to play its role in a way that will effectively engender national development.

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