

**Interrogating Ethical Political Leadership and Democratic Paradigm in Kogi State,  
Nigeria, 2003-2015**

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***Abstract***

*This study titled interrogating ethical Political leadership and democratic Paradigm in Kogi State, Nigeria, 2003-2015 is written to examine the strategies adopted by political leaders in Kogi State as how such has been effective. The study also evaluates the challenges encountered by political leaders how its effect on good governance in Kogi state from 2003 through 2015. The study adopted qualitative research which is seen as the systematic subjective approach applied to describe life experiences and give meaning to such experiences. Thus, fifteen respondents were interviewed. The study also explored two theoretical postulations that is, structural functionalism and trait theories. The study revealed that political leadership has not been effective in Kogi state and such has been the bane of socio-economic development in Kogi state. The study also showed that Kogi state has been characterized with several political challenges which have slowed down development in the state. The study recommends that the three organs of government (Executive, Legislature and Judiciary) should be properly institutionalized with the view to creating a virile avenue for proper checks and balances. Through this measure, those at the helm of affairs will be able to perform their functions without any form of recklessness or violation of extant laws. Also, other regulatory bodies particularly the anti-graft agencies should be adequately empowered to scrutinize and carry out the duties freely while mass media is given easy access to verify the score cards of political leaders, as through this the leaders will carry out their duties conscientiously.*

***Keywords:*** Political, Leadership, Democracy, Kogi State, Socio-economic Development

**Introduction**

Over the years, particularly Nigeria's Fourth Republic, political leadership has been proved to have direct influence on economic development of the nation and citizens (Orluwene, 2014 & Dora, 2015). Leadership across the globe also play critical role on the socio-economic of the citizens. However, the way and manner leaders emerge and how efficient and effective they are when voted into office leaves much to be desired. The political leadership in Kogi State seems not to have been able to enhance the economic development of the citizens. The basic tenets of political leadership involve creating policies and programmes that are characterized by the provision of basic infrastructure, service delivery, accountability, good governance, provision of physical and economic infrastructure in terms of delivering healthcare services and provision of good road network for the citizens of Kogi State.

Kogi State is located in North-Central Nigeria and is endowed with human and natural resources which if properly harnessed by the political leadership will reduce poverty, boost job

creation, increase food security through agricultural policies and make the state a commercial hub that would generate massive employment for the teeming youths of the State. Most of the communities in Kogi State are characterized by poverty, bad roads, high unemployment rate, dilapidated health infrastructure and poor services, insecurity and crises of economic development, hence, the question of competence of political leadership and economic development of Kogi State (Itodo, 2017). In light of the above, this research is set to examine why the political leadership in Kogi State from 2003 to 2015 has not been able to transform the socio-economic fortunes of the people for the better.

Economic development in Kogi State before 2003 proved to be better as compared to period after spanning to 2015. For example, the National Bureau of Statistics report indicated a favourable economic profile of Kogi in 2002 and 2003 with income stabilization and GDP of about 11.2% as compared with period after showing decline figures (NBS, 2003). Though, the government of Kogi State put several efforts in place to address the declining economic profile of the state such as a technical committee to identify the areas of challenges as well as improvement in the state infrastructure to improve the citizens' wellbeing.

However, despite the effort taken by the citizens of Kogi State to elect credible leaders who will be accountable and transparent by integrating the ideals of political leadership towards enshrining proper accountability in governance, much seems not to have been achieved (Omachi, 2019). In addition, from all indications, it seems provision of social infrastructure and services particularly agriculture and healthcare delivery by leadership of the state that would have helped to enhance the economic development of the state has not met expectation of the people. This scenario is also worrisome considering the fortunes of the state in terms of mineral endowment such as tin, coal, iron-ore, tantalite, granite and available land for agriculture. Thus, having huge potential for economic prosperity if properly harnessed. Again, Kogi State is located at the central part of Nigeria linking all state in the North including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), South-West and South-South coupled with the location of the gigantic Iron and Steel Complex, Obajana Cement Company, West African Ceramic Company and Baron Nitrite (BN) Ceramic Company gives the state huge advantage for generation of internal generated revenue. Regrettably, despite these fortunes, much seems to not to have been yielded in transforming these resources into economic benefit of its citizens. Therefore, the political leadership seems not to possess the foresight, vision, charisma and political will to pursue economic well-being of the citizens of Kogi State with vigour. The thrust of this research therefore is to unravel the peculiar challenges of political leadership in Kogi State and how such affect economic development in Kogi State.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Conceptual Framework**

Leadership is seen as a process of influencing, directing and coordinating the activities of organized groups (like political system) towards goal setting, goal achievement and problem solving that necessarily involves taking initiative.

Natasha (2019) asserts that as we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others. Taking a conscious approach to leadership will best meet the needs of both the stake holders and delivery engine- the people you employ. That means being focused on creating an environment that balances autonomy with support, pressure with balance, and which pays attention to people's fundamental human need to matter. And conscious leadership is based on being awake (through listening and being there for the people), resilient (becoming conscious of the way you work), together (connecting with the people and being available to offer support when people need

if), growing (by allowing them to build on their strength, hence, they become more committed) and finally more purposeful.

Leadership according to Bennis (1989), revolves around vision, ideas, direction, and has more to do with inspiring people as to the implementation of organizational goals. A leader must be able to leverage more than his own capabilities. He must be capable of inspiring other people to do things without actually sitting on top of them with a checklist. Western (2019) asserts that leadership is both a research area, and a practical skill encompassing the ability of an individual, group or organization to lead, influence or guide other individuals, teams or entire organization.

From the foregoing review, it is clear that leadership is the ability to evaluate and or forecast a long term plan/policy and influence towards achievement of the said strategy through proper implementation with sincerity of purpose for the good of the citizens of a society.

### **Concept of Political Leadership**

Political leadership is part of multi-causal economic process that brings about concrete political outcomes in form of provision of health care, roads, transportation and agriculture, commerce, and many others (Greenstein, 2004). Political leadership is one of the widely experienced and intuitively or tacitly understood phenomena like great power competition, Olympic rivalries, climate change, the right to develop, or central human rights controversies about trade-offs between security, civil and political rights. In contrast, the concept of political leadership is difficult to define essentially, because it is dependent on institutional, cultural and historical context (Nwambuko, 2021).

Razak (2012) defined Political leadership as the means, material and intangible techniques that the leaders use to attain their ends or their follower's goals and/or these are techniques which the leaders use to mobilize support on behalf of their agenda and also to maintain support and position. Again, Political leadership implies followership, as well as group tasks to be accomplished through innovation, adaptation in specific situation and institutional cultural context. (Qerimi, 2015). However, Ogunmilade et al (2017) explains that political leadership as the ruling class bears the responsibility of managing the affairs and resources of a political entity by setting and influencing policy priorities affecting the territory through different decision-making structures and institutions created for the orderly development of the territory. Further, Ojo and Ojo (2012) believes that political leadership is the governing elite that manage the affairs and resources of a community, nation or country by making and implementing policies that bring about development. This definition is a broad one, as it reveals that political leadership entails the ruling elite whether they are elected or not, inasmuch as they bear the responsibility of managing the affairs and resources of an independent political entity.

According to Lawal et al (2012) Political leaders are democratically elected representatives that rule within the framework of the constitution. This definition favours only political leaders who are elected, while excluding those appointed and leaders who must have emerged through coup, in the case of the military. This definition is narrow in as much as it confines political leadership to only elected representatives of the people.

### **Concept of Economic Development**

Economic development is a key concept central to any problem of change in the economic sphere. According to Lopes and Baguma (2021), economic development incorporates public concerns in developing social policy and economic initiatives. The ultimate objective of economic development is to bring about sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual, groups, family, community, and society at large. It involves sustained increase in the economic standard of living of a country's population, normally accomplished by increasing its stock of physical and human capital and thus improving its technology. In like manner, World Bruna (2019) argues that

development refers to movement from one position to other geared towards improving the living conditions of the people. The process of development is tied to the state of society as a whole in which the individual could make effective contribution. Thus, it is achieved by increasing the infrastructure that will be of benefit to the people by improving health care and good road network. Also, development is the process of harnessing the human resources in order to conquer the environment for the betterment of the people in line with its values, customs and traditions. Consequently, state-wide economic development has taken different forms and shapes (Enojo & Obi, 2016).

Economic development is a form of development which itself is a multi-faceted concept. Mbaya et al (2006) explain economic development as progression or improvements, which among other things include accountability, freedom, societal inclusion and wellbeing. Social development is closely related to issues such as formal and informal power relations, human rights, equality, and many more (Mbaya et al, 2006). Similarly, Ijewere and Olaniyi (2014) viewed economic development as being synonymous with issues relating to individual expressions of freedom, creativity, complexity and the quest of accomplishments in various fields of endeavour. Economic development differs from social development in that it involves the improvement of the capacities of economic actors in a state, therefore, economic development can be defined as the improvement of the economic capacities of individuals, firms and industries which ultimately contribute to the overall development of a state. In the opinion of Dike (2000), economic development is signified by an upward numerical increase in the saving and investing capacity of a state. Jointly, the term economic development means that events of social significance within a state are not without economic implications (Chojnicki, 2010). Political events or actions taken by the state create resultant effects, which are subsumed under social development, which in turn have implications for the economy. As such, economic development in some cases is a resultant effect of social development. To avoid ambiguity however, economic development refers to an improvement in the lifestyles of citizens of a particular state due to the availability of: improved education, skill development, incomes and employment (Kapur, 2018). Its significance is aptly expressed by Sadiq et al (2016) states that the concept of development functions as both, a product of an optimistic vision and an articulation of social interests, and a tool of analysis (Raji, 2014).

Finally, the goal of economic development is the promotion of social welfare. It is committed to the goal of promoting people's economic well-being. Socio-economic welfare occurs when problems are satisfactorily managed, poverty is reduced, and opportunities are created. Economic development advocates believe that a commitment to achieve economic well-being for all can best be realized through a dynamic multifaceted development process that utilizes the resources found in that particular area, investments are made and using political power to promote economic growth of the people (Salgado, 2021).

### **Political Leadership and Its Influence on Economic Development**

A study undertaken by Dora (2015) titled 'the Effect of Political Leaders on Economic Growth through Institutional Change'; found out that political leadership are capable of swaying the direction of growth by re-planning or forming institutions. The study asserts that, strong political leadership is necessary for economic development but if the leadership does not have the political-will, then the society would not achieve meaningful development. The study adopted the Great Man Theory as its framework/guide to explain how a leader's personality change economic growth of Romania citing the role of Lenin, Roosevelt, Hitler, and Churchill in influencing the economic development of their respective countries through visionary leadership. While the study is relevant to this work in the areas of service delivery, it differs in the areas of visionary leadership which seems to be absent in Kogi state, hence, the resources available in the state remains untapped. Vande and Kussah (2016) in a

related study on 'Leadership and National Development in Nigeria: Situating the Missing Link, posits that there is a disconnection between the wealth of the Nigerian State and her level of development. Given the enormous endowment, there is a puzzle about the lack of social services, high rate of poverty and general underdevelopment in the country. The study also argued that lack of discipline, dynamic and focused leadership (especially political leadership) is central to understanding the development trends and strides of a country like Nigeria. It went further to recognize the urgent need for an ethical, disciplined and visionary leadership using transformational leadership as its theoretical framework of analysis. The study pointed out in its conclusion that the Nigerian state therefore stands in dire need of a strong-willed, enlightened, and visionary and focused leadership for rapid development to be possible (Attah et al, 2013, Vande & Kussah, 2016). In their own perspective, Ojo and Ojo (2012) in research titled 'Effective Leadership: Tool for Achieving Political Stability and National Development in Nigeria', examined leadership as a concept in Nigeria's government as well as, how effective leadership could be used as an instrument for propelling political stability in Nigeria. The study adopted content analysis and findings revealed that effective leadership enhances political leadership and national development. Though, this study on leadership and political instability is relevant to the current research, but the former is more concentrated on leadership which is considered too broad whereas the current study is concentrated on Kogi State, North –Central Nigeria. Again, the study was conducted in 2012 while the current research is being conducted in the era where new political and economic issues are emerging considering the new reality of political and socio –economic challenges posed by the corona virus pandemic and national insecurity. Thus, the current research justifies the gap to fill the salient areas not covered by the former study.

### **Challenges of Political Leadership in Kogi State, Nigeria**

Various states in Nigeria including Kogi are experiencing difficulties in the delivery of development to its citizens, despite the abundance of natural resources. These challenges are mainly attributable to failure of political leadership. There are of course failures in other dimensions, but all these are traceable to inadequacies in political leadership. Nwambuko (2021); Anekwe, (2020); Ameh and Aluko (2019); identified some of the challenges as follow:

- i. **Lack of Ideology:** In Nigeria, the political leaders constitute a largely non-productive class who rely on the control of state structures to access economic rewards. The over-politicization of the Nigerian state is also understood in the context of the unmediated struggle for power, influence and patronage. The nature of political contest ensures the emergence of a local governing class without ideological commitment. Rather than pursue political contests within ideological frameworks, politics became a contested terrain for shallow, self-centered political gains. Political leadership is parochial rather than national; and corruptly converts national resources into its project of primitive accumulation. Ethnic diversity is manipulated to stay afloat to the detriment of national cohesion. Thus, due to lack of ideology, political leaders do not have well-articulated development blueprint. Where such exist, there may be no implementation strategy for its realization. In Kogi state for instance, the various administration has not successfully implemented any significant development policy that have positively impacted on the lives of the people (Salifu, 2010). Worthy of note is the reality that this situation is not synonymous with Kogi alone but is largely obtainable in most states in Nigeria.
- ii. **Lack of Rule of Law:** The rule of law is a principle or system where a society or nation is governed by a set of legislation instead of by an individual making the whole decision. Rule

of law makes it impossible for one person to have the unrestrained exercise of power over a society or nation. It applies and puts a limit or check to the behavior of everyone including government officials. The level of poverty and illiteracy attributable to ineffectual political leadership in Nigeria is also a limitation to the rule of law. A hallmark of effective political leadership is the capacity to develop and implement policies, programmes and interventions that seek to reduce poverty and illiteracy among the citizenry. In Nigeria, the opposite seems to be the case. Political leaders weaponise poverty and illiteracy as instrument to perpetuate non-adherence to rule of law. This study submits that there can be no meaningful development in a state/society where there is no rule of law.

- iii. **Poor Accountability and Transparency in Governance:** Lack of openness and accountability remain a frightening legacy of the Nigerian political leadership since 1960 to date (Attah et al, 2014). The importance of accountability and transparency among political leaders in enhancing development cannot be overemphasized. When resources are allocated for developmental purposes, its utilization is often shredded in mystery which on its part create room for such resources to be misappropriated by political leaders. An accountable government is one that is responsive to the demands of the citizen. Accountability is best enforced through the instrument an independent judiciary and the of rule of law.
- iv. **Corruption Challenges:** Although corruption is a global problem, Nigeria appears to suffer greatly from this menace. Political leaders at the Federal and States government levels have entrenched corruption. It is so rampant that no aspect of the Nigerian society is free from it. Within the context of political leadership, corruption has been introduced to the recruitment processes for political leaders. for instance, during election, candidates brazenly buy votes from electorates. Corruption has eaten deeply into the Nigerian economy. It's very rare to see a government official who isn't facing one corruption charge or the other nowadays. Currently, Nigeria ranks very high in the league of corrupt nations. Bemoaning the challenge of corruption and its effect on development, Iyoha, (2015) notes that as soon as political leaders accused of corruption move from their party to the party in power, corruption charges against them are often dropped or they are awarded lenient sentence by the judiciary. Okaneme (2017) describes corruption as a social problem which hampers development and robs people of the chances for any significant economic as well as social advancement. Corruption slows down economic growth and investment. Economic growth and development in Nigeria over the years has been soiled with misappropriation and embezzlement of funds even with the return of democracy, turning the country's economy into an underdeveloped nation with least position in international ratings (Abullahi 2009).
- v. **Flawed Electoral Processes:** This problem has become a popular phenomenon in Nigerian politics. Indeed, election rigging has become the norm in the nation's electoral process. However, electoral malpractice is not a recent phenomenon; it has existed since independence and has continued to exist till today. For instance, in the first republic, the leadership of various political parties were accused and alleged of election rigging. The same happened in the second republic. And fourth republic was also not different. Political leaders scheme electoral fraud to get into elected offices. It is important to note that a faulty electoral process can never produce capable leaders. Therefore, if the process of selecting leaders is not free, fair, and credible, good governance and development will remain elusive. Similarly, some political leaders perpetuate electoral fraud by instigating pre and post-election violence in order to thwart the popular wish of the people. Where such acts succeed, the political

leaders that emerge may not be the peoples' preferred choice and such leaders hardly work assiduously for the development of their people.

- vi. **Weak Institutions:** The personalize nature of political leadership in states within Nigeria is an impediment to development in the country. Political leaders deliberately underfund or weaken governmental institutions that have capacity to rein in their excesses/abuse of power. This is a common phenomenon within states in Nigeria. State institutions and agencies become loyal to political leaders instead of the nation. This scenario provides room for abuse of power, whereby political leaders use the instrumentality/apparatus of the state to pursue personal interest. State institutions that ought to put a check on their activities as well as facilitate development are pocketed by leaders. In Nigeria, political power became concentrated in one leader. For instance, at the federal level, the office of the President wields enormous power and influence. Within the states, Governors hold sway and determines who gets what in their state. Thus, the country grows powerful men/women (political leaders) and weak institutions.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Structural Functionalism**

Structural Functional theory it's an offshoot of systems theory by David Easton. Systems theory sees policy as an output of the political system. The output itself is conceived as a result of various environmental variables acted upon by the political system (Yamma, 2011). Originating in biology, systems theory was developed in the 1950s against the backdrop of a need to have a set of systemic theoretical constructs to discuss the empirical world (Boulding, 1956; Bertalanffy, 1951). Another origin of structural functionalism is traced through the systems theory which came from cybernetic systems theory in mechanical engineering (Ashby, 1953).

Early theorists of Structural functionalism include Emile Durkeim, Talcott Parsons, August Comte, Herbert Spencer, David Easton, and Gabriel Almond among many others that tried to bring in variations to the theory (Osita et al, 2003). The major proponents of this theory all agree that, society is a structure with interrelated parts designed to meet the biological and social needs of individuals in the society. The central premise of this study is that for any society to maintain stability and achieve sustainable development, three institutions of government must have a synergy existing between and among them so as to deliver on good governance which is of the Citizens (Unaman, 2020).

Structuralism and functionalism postulate that sociologists should focus on two main aspects of the social system. First, they should attempt to uncover the social laws that structure the social world (this is the 'structural' bit). He saw social laws as being very similar to natural laws, such as gravity: just as gravity causes objects to fall to the ground, so social laws cause people to act in certain ways. However, Durkheim was interested in not only the causal relations involved in social laws, but also how the results of these causal relationships impact upon the social world. In other words, he saw the task of sociology as identifying the role played by the various social institutions such as the family, or the system, which are the result of social laws in maintaining the overall social system, the 'functionalism' bit (Porter, 1998).

Durkheim's ideas were further developed by the American sociologist Talcott Parsons (1902-79), his view of structural functionalism is that, the values that are learnt, accepted and internalized lead to a stable social system, characterized by equilibrium between the various parts of society. For a society to survive, the institutions of which it is composed have to function in a way that will promote its survival. The functional needs of societies are twofold: there must be internal cohesion

within the system and there must be a successful relationship between the system and its external environment. Thus, for example, the institution of the family has an integrative function in society; promoting social cohesion, while economic institutions function to convert natural resources into goods (Porter, 1998).

This postulation used the input- output model to illustrate how demand and supply from the environment are screened by the gate-keepers, so that the conversion process (government) will not collapse, and how the conversion process comes out with policy and decision as output. The people's reaction is then communicated back to the authority through a feedback mechanism. The gate-keeper reduces the demand and support stresses so that the system will not collapse. Almond also believes that political institutions perform the following functions which include political recruitment, interest articulation, interest aggregation, political socialization, political communication, rulemaking, rule application, and rule adjudication.

From the foregoing therefore, it is of the view that majority of the scholars agree that, the society is a system with interdependent parts that work together for the stability of the whole, which means that all parts must work together for proper functioning of the whole. Structural functionalism is relevant to this study, because structural functional analysis will help provide answers and illustrate how important the political leadership is in the structural hierarchy of the political system in Kogi State, in terms of how they articulate, aggregate and implement these policies. It will also tell us how the people in the environment react to these policies and decisions in terms of economic development in the health and road transport sectors respectively. The reactions through the feedback mechanism may either be in a negative or positive manner.

Thus, in the context of this research, the role that the political leadership plays in determining the level of social development in Kogi State is key to the stability of political system. For Kogi State as an entity to be seen to be working, entails that the agricultural, educational, health and other sectors are functional. The functionality of these sectors will also demand proper functioning of the political leadership which forms part of the executive, legislature and the judiciary as institutions of government for betterment of all the people of Kogi state. Kogi state can be said to be progressive/ developed only when all the sectors are equipped to work well for the benefit of the masses. It means therefore, the political leadership is good only when the organs of government play their respective roles to achieve better living standards for the Citizens through provision of good structures such as affordable health care services, mass literacy and affordable, employment opportunities and many more. Since Structural functionalism prescribes that in any system, there are structures that are saddled with responsibility of performing certain functions.

Furthermore, political leadership in Kogi State, is required to initiate bills on policies and programmes as input into the System, in the areas of Health (primary health care, drug/vaccine revolving scheme, employment, training and remunerations of medical professionals/personnel) and construction/renovation of all infrastructure, upgrading/procurement of state of the art equipment, improved service scheme for teachers etc.); and send these bills to the State house of Assembly. The Kogi State House of Assembly are the legislators, and are responsible for making laws would amend the policies where necessary and pass them as bills. The judiciary as part of the conversion process, interpret the laws for fairness, justice and equity. Checks and balance in the polity help to bring about stability and equilibrium in the system to avoid overload, in terms of demand and support, which normally leads to system collapse.

Structural functionalism is often criticized on grounds that it is teleological in the sense that, the term "function" most times is seen from the perspective of individualism and not collectivism there by suggesting that it is subjective. Secondly, the theory is concerned with status quo maintenance and that the possibilities of social change are virtually ruled out. And thirdly, structural



functionalism tends to produce an impression that everything which exists in a society at a given time is easily assumed to be there because of its "function".

### **Trait Theory of Leadership**

Several scholars give different categorization of leadership theories but for the purpose of this research, the Trait Theory of Leadership shall be used to explain political leadership and economic development in Kogi State from 2003 to 2015.

According to Carlyle, history is shaped by extraordinary leaders. This ability to lead is something that people are simply born with, Carlyle believes and not something that could be developed. Carlyle's ideas inspired early research on leadership, which almost entirely focused on inheritable traits (Spector, 2016). Carlyle's theory of leadership was based on the rationale which are certain traits produce certain patterns of behavior, patterns are consistent across different situations and people are "born" with leadership traits.

From the 1940s to the 1970s, psychologist Suberu (1998) suggested that leadership is the result of the interaction between the individual and the social situation and not merely the result of a predefined set of traits (Oakleaf, 2016). In addition, soon after in the 1980s (Oakleaf, 2016). posited that credibility was a key indicator of leadership skills, characterized by such traits as honesty, forward-looking, inspiring, and competence (Oakleaf, 2016).

Oakleaf (2016), identify six traits that distinguish a leader from non-leader: (a) drive, (b) desire to lead, (c) honesty and integrity, (d) self-confidence, (e) cognitive ability, and (f) knowledge. Trait theory is relevant to this study because the political leadership and economic development in Kogi State from 2003 to 2015 were voted into power to provide economic and political development for the people, not because they were from the royal family, but on the campaign mantra of coming from the private sector, to collaborate and change the fortunes of the state for the better. Whereas, former Governor Ibrahim Idris came from the hospitality business sector, Capt. Idris Wada was from the airlines sector, where efficiency, effectiveness and productivity are the watchwords. Again, they are both from Kogi East and equally of the same tribal region, hence, the need to study their contributions to political leadership and economic development in Kogi State from 2003 – 2015.

### **Critique surrounding Trait Theory**

The Trait Theory is not devoid of criticism, hence, the following critique: -

Early studies on leadership focused on the differences between leaders and followers with the assumption that people in leadership positions would display more leadership traits than those in subordinate positions.

A leader could be good communicator but may not have leadership skill except he has good followers. For example, leaders tend to be great communicators. Leaders also tend to be higher in traits such as extroversion, self-confidence, and height, but these differences tended to be small (Kukah, 2008)

Critiques also suggest that certain traits are characteristic of strong leaders, those who possess the traits don't always become leaders due to, situational variables in which leadership skills only emerge when an opportunity for leadership arises, such as in war, during a political crisis, or in the absence of leadership (Kukah, 2008).

Meanwhile, others have taken a contingency approach to leadership in which certain traits can be more effective in some situations and less so in others. Opinions vary on what those traits are and to what degree they can predict success, if at all.

More controversial yet is the contention that some people don't have the traits to become leaders. Such a belief inherently overlooks social and economic inequities that limit, if not entirely erase, a person's potential to lead, but this could be achieved over time through interaction with

individuals and groups. With current high level of information and communication Technology, and as outlets for leadership continue to change (such as with social media and e-commerce), the traits needed to succeed are different simply because there are fewer intermediaries. Within this realm, the ability to influence is arguably more important than the ability to lead.

Other limitations are limitations of the Trait Theory are:-

- I. The theory is very complex because, the list of possible traits tends to be very long, as scholars have identified over a hundred different traits of successful leaders in various leadership positions. These descriptions are simply generalities.
- II. There is bound to be some subjective judgment in determining who is regarded as a 'good' or 'successful' leader in terms of provision of implementation of economic policies and programmes, infrastructural development, work ethics, ethnicity, religion and many more.
- III. The model attempts to relate physical traits such as, height and weight, to effective leadership. Most of these factors relate to situational factors. For example, a minimum weight and height might be necessary to perform the tasks efficiently in a political or military leadership position. In business organizations, these are not the requirements to be an effective leader.
- IV. There is also a disagreement over which traits are the most important for an effective leader

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This research adopted survey research design. This is because considering the nature of the research; the technique is most suitable, since the researcher needs to reach out to respondents directly or indirectly to elicit relevant data. Hence, the study adopted the descriptive research survey design which involves collecting data from respondents through the primary and secondary sources.

Specifically, a qualitative research which is seen as the systematic subjective approach applied to describe life experiences and give meaning to such experiences. Qualitative research is aimed at getting an insight; explore the depthless and richness into a phenomenon. To this end, qualitative research is seen as a soft science with a broad focus. Again, the basic paradigm covers three fundamental areas such as positivism (quantitative), interpretivism (qualitative) and critical science. Thus, interviewee was used to describe in words their experiences and perception about a particular phenomenon. The qualitative data was analyzed using the interpretive technique where interviewees were engaged and such were reported in a summarized form.

**Table 1 Showing categories of respondents.**

S/No	Proposed list of Interviewees and specific number in each category (at least one from each LGA)
1	Top State Government Executives/Aides/ Political Appointees ---- (2)
2	Members of the State House of Assembly ---- (2)
3	Members of Senior Mgt, Staff of Departments, Agencies and Boards ---- (2)
4	Executive members of Community Based Associations (CBA) ---- (2)
5	Traditional Rulers and Religious Leaders. ---- (2)
6	Staff of Agriculture and transport Institutions---- (2)
7	Other categories include transporters, rural dwellers, artisan, unemployed, farmers etc.---- (6)

**Source: Field Research, 2023**

### **Method of Data Analysis**

The study conducted interviews which was conducted with key informants, particularly senior civil servants, politicians and political appointees, Local Government Chairmen and Councilors

government aides / Heads of ministries, departments and parastatals (past and present), Traditional Rulers and religious leaders, EXCO members of women Associations, religious leaders, rural dwellers, traders, artisans, unemployed and farmers as stated earlier. The researcher will had a face-to-face interaction with the respondents. The researchers asked the interviewee questions that are pertinent to the problems in the research questions and proposition. Again, this was purposive, based on those who have fore knowledge of the area of study.

### Data Analysis and Results

The researchers reached fifteen (15) persons who were interviewed; two from each of the six (6) Local Government Areas of the Kogi State except Lokoja Local Government Area that had five persons interviewed because, it is the State capital and host to most of the political leaders/policy makers and government officials.

**Table 2:** Has the reason that prompted the demand for the creation of Kogi State been achieved?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	0	0
No	13	86.67
Undecided	2	13.33
Total	15	100

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

Table 2 shows that thirteen (13) representing 86.67%, respondents interviewed said Kogi State has not achieved the objectives for which it was established. Reasons advanced by the interviewees are that, visionlessness, lack of democratic tenet; political interference and bad leadership linked with failure to implement policies as prescribed by law by the political leadership are responsible for the failure of Kogi State in achieving its objective.

**Table 3:** The impact of government reform by the Political leadership in Kogi State and service delivery is poor.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	14	93.33
No	1	6.67
Undecided	0	0
Total	15	100

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

Table 3 shows that fourteen (14) representing 93.33% affirmed that they haven't felt the impact of strategy introduced by political leadership towards economic development. Reasons advanced by the interviewees for the ineffectiveness include, lack of rural infrastructure such as poor road network from rural communities for easy transportation of goods and service, especially agricultural produce, lack of transparency and corruption amongst the staff of agencies saddled with the responsibility of collecting taxes from the citizens.

**Table 4:** Does policy summersault by the political leadership affect the smooth running of Kogi State and service delivery, thereby impacting negatively on the economic development of the people of citizens?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	15	100
No	0	0
Undecided	0	0
Total	15	100

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

All the interviewees in table 4 constituting 100% agreed that policy summersault affect the smooth running of Kogi State and service delivery, hence, impacting negatively on the citizens. as reasons why policy summersault by the leadership in Kogi impact negatively on the people of Kogi State.

**Table 5:** Has the policies/reforms introduced by the political leadership led to rapid economic development of the citizens of Kogi

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	2	13.33
No	13	86.67
Undecided	0	0
Total	15	100

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025.

Table 5 shows that fourteen (13) representing 86.67% interviewees said that the objective of improving the standard of living of the people of Kogi State has not been met despite reforms in the Kogi State transport and agricultural sectors; reasons advanced for this include corruption and mismanagement (within the transport and agricultural sector), lack of political will by the political leadership to punish those responsible which has resulted to the high cost of goods and services.

**Table 6:** Do you agree that there should be rotational arrangement in the quest for leadership position in Kogi State?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	9	60.00
No	3	20.00
Undecided	3	20.00
Total	15	100

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

Table 6, shows that nine (9) respondents representing 60.00% interviewees said yes to the rotational arrangement in the quest for leadership position in Kogi State. Reasons advanced by most interviewees were that rotation of power between the three senatorial districts will go a long way in bringing about even development as political leaders will have no choice but to use the opportunity to improve on the development stride of the region where they come from.

**Table 7:** Do you think political leadership in Kogi state has been inefficient and ineffective in the quest to bring about quality service delivery and economic development?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	14	93.33
No	1	6.67
Undecided	0	0
Total	15	100

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

Table 7 shows that fourteen (14) respondents representing 93.33% of interviewees agreed that political leadership in Kogi State are inefficient and ineffective in the bid to attaining economic development for the people. Reasons advanced by most interviewees where that the political leadership in the State fail to see their election and appointment into public office as a call to serve

the people, thereby creating and implementing policies that are bogus and cannot be completed, resulting to abandonment of project and wastages of public funds.

**Table 8:** Do you think the problem of political leadership and economic development in Kogi State can be solved, to bring about economic development and better for the citizens?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	15	100
No	0	0
Undecided	0	0
Total	15	100

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

Table 8 clearly shows all interviewees accepted that the problem of political leadership in Kogi State can be solved, to bring about economic development and better for the citizens. Reasons advanced by interviewees were that the level of impunity will reduce and will curb executive to account for their stewardship.

**Table 9:** Should a new reform suggest power rotation in the Kogi State, what do you think needs to be done to fast track socio economic development in Kogi State?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	15	100
No	0	0
Undecided	0	0
Total	15	100

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

Table 9 clearly shows that fifteen (15) interviewees representing 100%, agreed that the political leadership should involve the private sector in the economic development of Kogi State. Reasons advanced by interviewees were that, the new policies should engage reputable private investors that would collaborate with Kogi State government, to bring about sustainable growth and economic development in Kogi State.

### **Conclusion**

This study the research concludes that political leadership has not been effective in Kogi state and that has been responsible for slow pace of economic development in the state The study also concludes that strategies put in place to govern the citizens has not been effectively utilized thus this has also led to weak implementation of policies and programmes targeted at both human and infrastructural development.

### **Recommendations**

The study recommends that the three organs of government (Executive, Legislature and Judiciary) should be properly institutionalized with the view to creating a virile avenue for proper checks and balances. Through this measure, those at the helm of affairs will be able to perform their functions without any form of recklessness or violation of extant laws. Also, other regulatory bodies particularly the anti-graft agencies should be adequately empowered to scrutinize and carry out the duties freely while mass media is given easy access to verify the score cards of political leaders, as through this the leaders will carry out their duties conscientiously.

The study recommends that citizens should henceforth be conscious of not only scrutinizing party manifestos before electioneering but ensure that citizens are also independently appraised in terms their personal qualities, past records with the view to ensuring that the best candidates are recruited for each position.

The study recommends that the political leadership in power should not rely on Federal Government monthly allocation but increase its revenue base through the establishment of a functional monitoring and evaluation unit that will expose activities of tax evaders and blockage of leakages, through corrupt practices, thereby enable Kogi State have access to more funds at its disposal to cater for the needs of the people.

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