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## Developmental Concepts: Qualitative Overview of Nigeria's Experience

### *Konsep Pembangunan: Tinjauan Kualitatif Pengalaman Nigeria*

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### Abstract

The incidence of best brains and hands migrating from Nigeria to settle for a new life in the developed world has persistently increased. Similarly, organizations are relocating from Nigeria due to the rising cost of operations. Practically, all sectors in the Nigerian economy have continued to face shortages of skilful personnel. However, the health sector seemed to be the most affected. The concern about the current situation of low economic development leading to an exodus of energetic Nigerians seeking greener pastures elsewhere necessitates this study titled "Developmental Concepts: Qualitative Overview of Nigeria Experience". This is a qualitative study; the paper explores secondary sources to offer well-articulated conceptual clarification on different development concepts. The articulated concepts were logically analyzed. The findings from the analysis indicated that Nigeria has resources, both natural and human. In the past, the resources did not seem to be put to proper use. It is therefore concluded that the problem of Nigeria is not a lack of resources; instead, it is improper development of the resources and judicious usage of them to make life comfortable for all citizens. Therefore, this paper recommends that there should be judicious usage of available resources to benefit all Nigerians.

**Keywords:** Concepts, Development, Experience

### Abstrak

Gejala migrasi tenaga ahli dan tenaga terampil Nigeria untuk menetap di negara maju terus meningkat. Demikian pula, banyak organisasi keluar dari Nigeria karena meningkatnya biaya operasi. Secara praktis, Nigeria terus menghadapi kekurangan tenaga terampil di semua sektor ekonomi. Sektor kesehatan merupakan sektor yang paling terpengaruh. Kekhawatiran tentang rendahnya pembangunan ekonomi saat ini mengarah pada eksodus warga Nigeria untuk mencari kehidupan yang lebih baik di tempat lain, melandasi pentingnya penelitian "Konsep Pembangunan: Tinjauan Kualitatif Pengalaman Nigeria".

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*Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif yang mengeksplorasi sumber-sumber sekunder mengklarifikasi konseptual tentang konsep-konsep pembangunan yang berbeda yang dianalisis secara logis. Penelitian menghasilkan temuan bahwa Nigeria memiliki sumber daya, baik sumber daya alam maupun sumber daya manusia. Di masa lalu, sumber daya tersebut belum dimanfaatkan dengan baik. Oleh karena itu, disimpulkan bahwa masalah Nigeria bukanlah kekurangan sumber daya, melainkan pengembangan sumber daya yang tidak tepat dan penggunaannya yang kurang bijaksana untuk membuat kehidupan lebih nyaman bagi semua warga negara. Oleh karena itu, seluruh sumber daya yang dimiliki Nigeria hendaknya dapat digunakan secara bijaksana untuk memberi manfaat bagi semua warga Nigeria.*

**Kata kunci:** *Konsep, Pengembangan, Pengalaman*

**Kode JEL:** *M10; M12; M19*

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## **1. Introduction**

Existing Nigerian writers have declared agitations, indicating that developmental attempts in Nigeria have continued to fail. Anaeto and Ewepu (2024), citing the report of the International Monetary Fund, lament that there is no evidence that Nigerian President Tinubu's reforms have been working. These authors argue that food sector stakeholders score government policies low. More so, they contend that the federal government's economic reforms have struggled to achieve a positive impact practically two years into administration. Similarly, Nigeria Economic Outlook (NEO) offers insights; Nigeria Economic Outlook (2025) reports that since 2022, rising inflation, weak improvement in agriculture, unstable exchange rate, and sagging GDP have characterized the Nigerian economy; consequently, 2025 has no economic magic to offer, and trend of economic endurance persists. Other authors who offered insights include World Bank Group (2023), Onyema (2025), and Onyeiwu (2025).

For instance, it has been argued that up to 80% of the containers on the ships leaving Nigeria are empty (Nnodim, 2020). Not that there were no products to be exported, but the investigator identifies unpatriotic practices of government agencies as significant obstacles inhibiting the survival of business organizations and consequently limiting the nation's progress. Agencies like the Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), and Nigeria Industrial Standard (NIS) were among the agencies that attracted allegations (Okonkwo, 2021; Atakpa & Akpan, 2023). Existing reports indicated that they all play unpatriotic roles under the disguise of inspection. For instance, concerning agricultural exports, records show that an electronic scanner unquestionably does inspection once. These agencies ensure unpatriotic delays, leading to massive economic losses for exporters. It has been disclosed that, given a twenty-foot container, which accommodates about one thousand two hundred and forty (1,240) tubers,

customarily packed in a carton containing four (4) medium-sized tubers with each yam cleaned and wrapped individually in polypropylene bags (Okonkwo, Atakpa & Akpan, 2023). Often suffer subjection to at least seventy-five (75) days of waiting at the Nigerian Port. Unarguably, tubers usually don't do well in humid conditions, though it is appropriately packed. Conversely, in Ghana, it takes only 3 days for the processes to be completed for the ship to set sail to an overseas destination. The unnecessary delays at the Nigerian port add to spoilage and unacceptability of Nigerian products at the respective destination countries (Vanguard, 2019).

Accordingly, by the time Nigerian tubers get anywhere in the world, especially Europe and America, the exporter would have lost over 68% of the merchandise due to the bureaucracy that emerges through greediness, negligence and dispassion of the agencies disclosed above (Adeyemi, 2024). As an escape route, Nigerian exporters would sometimes first transport their tuber crops to Ghana, and from there export the same items to various overseas destinations. Reports proved that Nigeria ranks among the top producers of tuber crops globally; however, no sizable foreign earnings will show for it (Adeyemi, 2024). Records indicated that said agencies have continued to frustrate export businesses through unfriendly business dispositions and greediness under the disguise of bureaucratic inspection (Adeyemi, 2024).

Extant works have attempted to illuminate issues relating to developmental hiccups in Nigeria; however, strategic clarifications are missing. Hence, there are misconceptions relating to understanding the concepts of planning and socio-economic development (Mohammed, 2020). There are ambiguities concerning the reasons for embarking on development plans. Also, there is obscurity of the roles of national planning in the overall development process in Nigeria and how national planning influences socio-economic progress. More so, poor comprehension of the factors that could be attributed to the success or failure of development plans in Nigeria and how such factors impact the effectiveness of development plans (Yinusa, 2020). Likewise, there is an issue of improper outline of the distinctive features of Nigerian development plans, and how they differ from those of other countries. In addition, there is inadequate understanding of Nigeria's historical and cultural context and how such influences the approach to national development planning. Hence, this paper's emergence is necessary to close the identified gaps.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Development**

Development refers to a complex and multidimensional process that involves improvements in various aspects of a society, including economic, social, political, and environmental conditions (Barder, 2012). It encompasses the overall progress and well-

being of a nation and its people. Development goals often include reducing poverty, improving living standards, promoting social equity, enhancing infrastructure, and achieving sustainable economic growth. In the context of Nigeria, development involves efforts to address the country's unique challenges and opportunities to improve the quality of life for its citizens.

According to Deng, Wang, and Song (2023), development refers to the evenly distributed economic comfortability across different geopolitical locations. McGillivray (2023) posits that development is the economic gain that is deemed sustainable. According to Alfakoro (2021), the development of an economy occurs when efforts are channelled towards addressing issues and challenges that inhibit economic buoyancy. In the author's argument, development is not accidental; it comes from consistently articulated efforts. Drawing plans to confront foreseeable economic challenges is the process that produces national development (Deedam, Ikechukwu, & Emeto, 2019). Challenges notwithstanding, there must be a way forward towards realizing desired development, noting that it has to be gradual or incremental and not sudden. (Deedam, Ikechukwu, & Emeto, 2019). According to Akinbowale (2018), the national development plan is the forerunner of economic development, which is the outcome of human capital investment and economic growth. Onuegbua and Aniefiok (2016) opine that the indigenization of Nigeria's economy offers necessary appraisal plans and constitutes a template leading to national development. Development is an attainment that comes in phases and requires the application of appropriate strategy (Iheanacho, 2014). National development planning in Nigeria has remained worrisome due to the seemingly endless search for appropriate development strategy (Iheanacho, 2014).

## **2.2. Data Collection & Analysis**

The study is qualitative. Hence, it is not intended to involve any form of computation. The study explores secondary data via desk research. As such, extant scholarly publications were accessed in various libraries (online and offline). The concept of development was strategically analyzed. The steps include extracting data from secondary sources, ensuring both intext and end of work referencing are not skipped, and identifying agreement trends among various authors' work. More so, identifying consistency of submissions in authors' work for the past four to five years, identifying things that have not worked for past years and are still not yielding positive results. Then, such identified submissions constitute findings, and findings form the basis for conclusions and recommendations.

### 3. Result

#### 3.1. Logical Historical Analysis

In 2021, the migration rate in Nigeria stood at -0.29 per 1,000 population (figure 1). This means that the number of people leaving Nigeria is slightly higher than that of those entering the country. Between 2000 and 2021, the migration balance stayed negative.

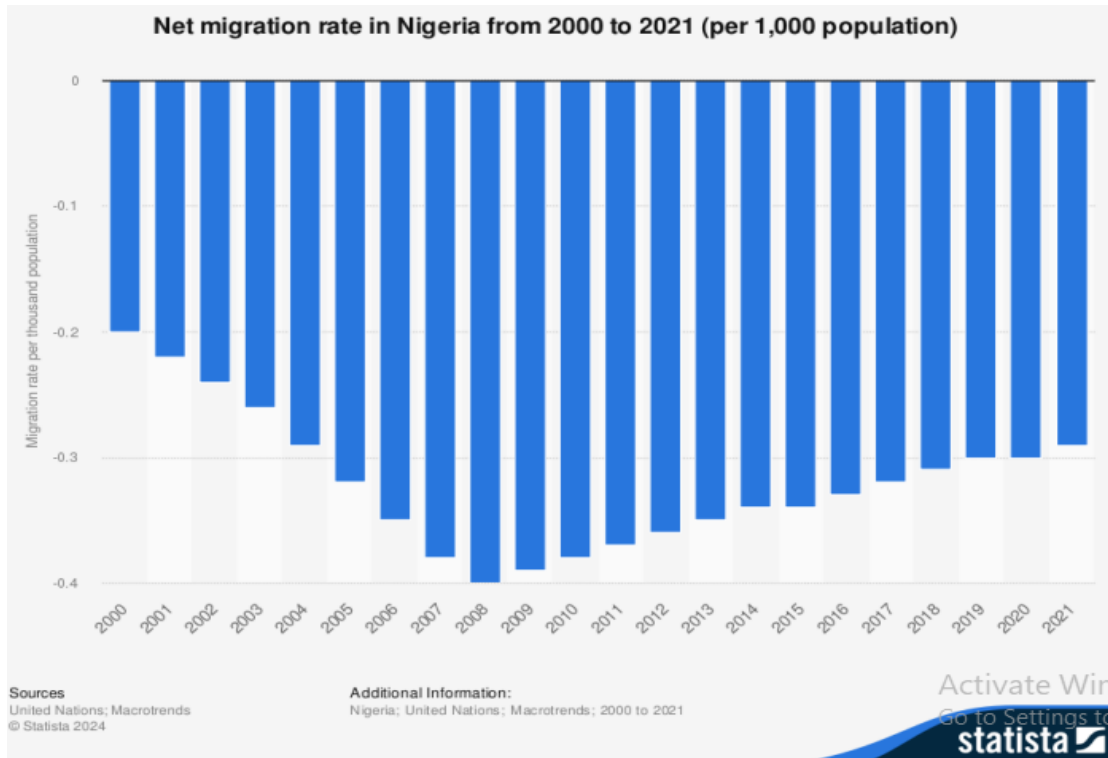


Figure 1: Net migration rate in Nigeria from 2000 to 2021



Figure 2: Exodus of Multinationals from the Nigerian Economy 2020 to 2024

Evidence in Figure 2 indicated that in 2020, not less than ten (10) multinational organizations left Nigeria. In 2021, not less than 20 multinationals had left Nigeria. Furthermore, fifteen (15), ten (10), and five (5) multinationals left Nigeria in 2022, 2023 and 2024 respectively.

### **3.2. Findings**

Findings indicate unstable developmental statistics; for instance, Nnodim (2020), Atakpa and Akpan (2023), Adeyemi (2024), Onyeiwu (2025), and Nigeria Economic Outlook (2025) similarly agreed that economic-related growth in Nigeria decelerated from 3.3% in 2022 to 2.9% in 2023 due to escalated inflation, and slothful growth in worldwide economy, which deteriorated from 3.5% in 2022 to 3.2% in 2023. Inflation deteriorates from 18.8% in 2022 to 24.5% in 2023 due to rising costs of products derived from crude oil, coupled with consistent depreciation of naira. Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) prices rose by 612.5%, from ₦160 per litre in May 2023 to ₦980 per litre in December 2024.

Also, findings indicate unstable monetary policy; for instance, Okonkwo (2021), World Bank Group (2023), Anaeto and Ewepu (2024), and Nigeria Economic Outlook (2025) respectively signal concern following discoveries from their investigation. Some of their discoveries show that the exchange rate sagged by 95.6% in 2023 due to the floating of the naira in June 2023. More so, monetary policy was stiffened to check inflation. Consequently, the rate increased from 17.5% in January 2023 to 18.75% in December 2023. Similarly, fiscal deficit sagged from 5.4% of GDP in 2022 to 5.1%, though government revenues unsustainably moved from 6.7% of GDP in 2022 to 7.6% in 2023. As usual, the deficit was financed mainly by domestic borrowing, with the Central Bank of Nigeria acting as an interface between domestic lenders and the federal government. It could be assumed that public debt remained low at 40% of GDP in 2023; however, the federal government debt service to revenue ratio was high, as it was found standing at 111%; this was because revenues being made were not from the real sector, so the revenue was weak. In addition, findings from the report given by Nigeria Economic Outlook (2025) reveal that the poverty level is unimpressive and stays high, remarkably, as poverty was rated 63%.

Furthermore, the findings from Figure 1 provide some insightful revelations. Unimpressive economic reality has invariably necessitated the migration of youths from Nigeria to settle for greener pastures abroad. For instance, in 2021, statistics indicate that the migration rate in Nigeria was -0.29%; this shows an inverse relationship between the total number of people arriving to reside in Nigeria and those who exit Nigeria to settle for new life in other countries. Figure 1 indicates that for every 1,000 population, statistics reveal a disparity whereby those willing to stay and face harsh economic reality will be fewer than those choosing to vacate Nigeria. Figure 1 shows a scenario of unimpressive occurrence, as the migration statistics were inverse, or some would refer to it as unfavourable.

Findings from Figure 2 show that more than ten (10) international companies left Nigeria in 2020. Also, findings reveal that companies that left Nigeria in 2021 are not fewer than twenty (20). More so, findings show that not fewer than fifteen (15), not fewer than ten (10), and not fewer than five (5) international companies relocated from Nigeria in the year 2022, year 2023 and year 2024

#### **4. Discussion**

Nigeria is blessed with natural and human resources. Observably, a focus on economic exploitation and revenue generation for the British Empire characterized Nigeria's colonial development plans and welfare schemes from 1946 to 1956. While some initiatives aimed to address social issues and basic infrastructure needs, they were often implemented with limited consideration for the long-term development and self-determination of the Nigerian population. These plans significantly shaped Nigeria's economic and social landscape during the colonial period, laying the groundwork for future development challenges and opportunities after independence in 1960. Nigeria is already sixty-four (64) years old as a country, and no impressive economic impact has been made or sustained that could halt the migration of human beings and international companies from Nigeria. Findings from various authors cited in this paper constitute evidence of agreement that the government's economic policies have repeatedly failed to deliver positive dividends. The trend of migration of human beings and international companies (presented in Figure 1 and Figure 2) might increasingly persist until Nigeria reverses unimpressive economic realities.

#### **5. Conclusion and Recommendation**

In connection with the findings highlighted in this research, this paper concludes that Nigeria has been experiencing an unimpressive economic situation and was responsible for migrating human beings and international companies from Nigeria. Therefore, this paper recommends that there should be judicious usage of available resources to benefit all Nigerians in the future. Government agencies need reorientation, particularly regarding the extinction of unpatriotic practices which frustrate and discourage business activities among Nigerian investors, particularly foreign investors who embraced foreign direct investment in Nigeria. Still, they are now relocating due to toxic economic policies being implemented by the Nigerian government. A few of these include exorbitant fuel prices, high exchange rates, and high import duties.

##### ***Contribution to Knowledge***

This paper offers insight into issues relating to unpatriotic practices of certain government agencies in Nigeria. Also, it unveils the incidence of migration of human

beings and corporate international companies from Nigeria. Migration of human beings constitutes a problem because it is tantamount to brain drain. More so, the migration of international corporate businesses constitutes a problem because it is tantamount to job loss for agile Nigerians, capable of facilitating social threats, insecurity, and economic imbalance. Accordingly, this paper sensitizes the Nigerian government to revisit policy directions and implementation procedures in Nigeria. It is also essential to mention that other developing countries sharing a similar experience with the Nigerian situation benefit by adopting or adapting recommendations made in this research work. More importantly, this paper constitutes a source of citation and reference for potential authors in the near future.

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