



Personality, Foreign Policy and National Transformation: An Assessment of the Olusegun Obasanjo's Administration (1999-2007)

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Abstract: Since independence in 1960, Nigeria has played various significant roles in world affairs beginning with her immediate neighbors in the West African sub region and the world at large. Leadership and personality have been central in these dynamic roles. For instance, between 1999 and 2007, Nigeria's foreign relations and domestic policies were creative and eventful, which have been linked to the personality and leadership of Olusegun Obasanjo, the president of Nigeria at that time. Utilizing secondary data, the paper shows that Obasanjo's personality and leadership traits launched Nigeria from isolationism to diplomatic influence and relevance in world affairs. The paper further submits that Nigeria earned a positive international image, the removal of the pariah status as well as economic re-invigoration. It thus recommends amongst others, the need for both current and future leaders of Nigeria to exhibit outstanding personality and leadership in the face of festering socio-political as well as economic challenges. By such unusual display of effective leadership, Nigeria will regain its position in effectively contributing to global development and also record success in her national transformation agenda.

Keywords: Personality, Leadership, Foreign Policy, International Image, National Transformation

1. Introduction

The ability to conduct diplomacy is necessary for all kinds of interstate relations. Numerous actors are involved in the transnational

relations of states, making the understanding international relations a complex affair. The analyses of states' foreign policy have been at various levels basically three- the

individual, the state and the systemic levels of analysis. Although majority of scholars uphold the state level of analysis as the most important, it is essential to note that states are mere empty entities without individuals (Goldstein & Pevehouse, 2007:15). Nothing changes without someone driving the course of change. Global history has been changed, influenced or even rewritten by the exploits of leaders such as Napoleon Bonaparte, Martin Luther The Reformer, Martin Luther King Jnr., Vladimir Lenin, Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Mao Tse-Tung, Kim Il Sung and Nelson Mandela. History reveals that the personality of some acclaimed world leaders as mentioned above have been studied in the past, making their stance on global politics and issues easily understood. The aggregates of individual figures and their traits are pointers to understanding the attitudes of states. Likewise also, at the state level individual make up interest groups, political organizations and governmental organizations and bureaucracies. The whole essence of the above statements is that the place of the individual trait of leaders cannot be overlooked in the analysis of foreign policy and a country's national transformational agenda.

For decades of years, the giant of Africa has been the informal name and recognition given to Nigeria perhaps due to her population size which is the largest in Africa, leadership roles and her oil wealth

amongst other factors. She has given supports to African countries beginning from her immediate neighbours to the West Africa sub region and to other countries in the continent and then extending her tentacles of help to other places in the world. Nwanolue & Iwuoha (2012) observed that she has intervened positively in internal crisis, provided humanitarian services, contributed financial aids as charity, sent technical aid corps, formed and sent military supports. The distinct personalities of leaders Nigeria has had have in various ways influenced Nigeria's foreign policy making it tend towards continuity and changes at different times in the course of our history. For instance, the traits displayed by President Obasanjo improved Nigeria's international image, foreign policy and brought about national transformation.

The main thrust of this paper therefore is to show that there is a relationship between the personality of a leader, foreign policy and national transformation. Also, the current trends of events and challenges Nigeria faces national transformation whether now or in the future cannot be experienced without a critical look into leadership personalities and traits. The whole essence of these assessments is to be able to make recommendations on how learning to adopt peculiar leadership styles help can solve some of the challenges Nigeria faces today like security issues, leadership

incompetence, corruption, economic stagnation, ethnic crisis, religious division and fundamentalism, inter-communal violence in places like Jos, Kano, militancy, terrorism just to mention a few issues. In the light of the above, the fact that the democratic consolidation and national integration of the Nigerian state is at risk make this study most relevant.

Secondary data obtained from relevant monograph, journals, textbooks, seminar papers, magazines, internet material were used for this research work. The paper is structured into eight parts. Part one serves as the introduction, part two serves as the section for the clarification of the concepts - personality, foreign policy and national transformation. Part three addresses the nexus between personality, foreign policy and national transformation, the fourth part discusses leadership personalities, foreign policy and effects on Nigeria's international Image, the fifth section tackles Olusegun Obasanjo's leadership traits and an assessment of his foreign policy. Part six, entails challenges of national transformations in Nigeria, part seven entails the recommendation while part eight serves as the conclusion.

2. Conceptual Clarifications

i. Personality:

The term personality means different things to different people. Even

psychologists do not have a generally acceptable opinion on it. Most of them nevertheless believe that the personality of a person is often expressed through behavioural position of people. However, specific definitions will be examined. Allport (1937) defines personality as a relatively stable system of determining tendencies within the individual, these tendencies are aroused by suitable stimuli which then shape the individuals reactions to events (Cited in Lahey, 2002). For Lahey (2002), personality refers to the sum total of all the ways a person act, thinks and feel that are typical for just that person and makes that person different from all other persons. Lahey's definition is closely related to that of Echono (2012) which states that personality is the collection of emotional and behavioural traits that characterize a person. The position of Wallace & Goldstein (1997) is that personality is a summation of or determined by both external events and internal traits which influences the behaviours of individuals. Hence, personality is the complex attributes that include behavioral, temperamental, emotional and mental traits that distinguish an individual. Numerous factors like upbringing, life experiences, observational or formal learning, cultural identity, individual beliefs and perceptions or interpretation of the world and societal or environmental events influence or shape the personality of a person.

The paper does not concern itself with the evolutionary theory of man that focuses on the origin rather than the content of human nature. It focuses on the trait theory that are concerned with explaining traits i.e. an enduring patterns of behaviours that are relatively consistent across situation which have been mentioned above. It acknowledges that the most significant traits of anyone are those ones that relate to the values they hold which are easily displayed by their actions.

ii. Foreign Policy:

Northedge (1968:9) defines foreign policy as “the use of political influence to induce other states to exercise their law-making power in a manner desired by the states concerned: it is an interaction between forces originating outside the country’s borders and those working within them”. According to Holsti (1977), it is the actions of a state towards the external environment and the conditions usually domestic under which these actions are formulated (cited in Asogwa, 2009:2). According to Rizwan (2009), it refers to the ways in which the central governments of sovereign states relate to each other and to the global system in order to achieve various goals or objectives. Thus, it represents a set of principles or course of action that government of states adopts that help to define their relationship with other parts of the world.

Foreign policy therefore is a product of internal environment and external circumstances. It is concerned with the conducts, actions as well as behaviours of a state towards other states and the goals and objectives of state. The environments within which foreign policy takes places are the domestic environment and the international or external environment. The external environment entails all the contingencies of the international system that affect and influence the goals and objectives of states. The domestic environment of foreign policy according to Otubanjo (1999:9) refers to the features, factors and forces peculiar to the state where foreign policy is being made or emanates from (Cited in Wanjohi, 2011). These features include the geographical location of the state, its peculiarity, natural and human resources, the nature of the political system, quality of leadership and the nature of the interaction among groups in the society. The paper agrees with Adegboyega & Ambe-Uva, (2007: 44-59) that the domestic environment determines the role a nation plays in the international system. This is because domestic structures of foreign policy determine the amount of social effects which can be devoted to foreign policy (Kissinger, 1969:501-526). Therefore, these imply that foreign policy connotes an interaction of the domestic and foreign elements that affects the

aspirations of the state whether positively or negatively.

iii. National Transformation:

Transformation is a fundamental shift in the deep orientation of a person, an organization or a society, such that the world is seen in new ways and new actions and results become possible that were impossible prior to the transformation (Nwolise, 2012). Furthermore, Nwolise (2012) maintained that:

It is a mandate for a radical structural and fundamental re-arrangement and re-ordering of the building blocks of the nation. It portends a fundamental reappraisal of the basic assumptions that underline reforms and developmental efforts that will and should alter the essence and substance of our national life.

Hence, national transformation means national change and reengineering towards the desired development goals. *A significant focus of this discussion* connotes changes in the domestic elements of foreign policy already mentioned above to the right order. It is important to stress that the effective exercise of leadership function in the form of setting a vision, developing an agenda and mobilizing resources is at the heart of transformation management (Busari & Akinola,

2012; Kolawole, 2012; Awolaja, 2012).

3. Personality, Foreign Policy and National Transformation: The Nexus

According to Smith (2012), the impact of personality on decision-making in the realm of foreign policy analysis is controversial. There is likewise the submission that the use of personality as a yardstick for analyzing and understanding of foreign policy behaviour leads to fallacy. On the contrary, Hogan and Kaiser (2005:169-180) and Echono, (2012) put forward the argument that personality would influence leadership decision making quality and effectiveness which will in turn bring about development. They reported that the traits of good leaders include good decision making ability, vision, charisma and competence. Closely related to this stance is that of DeCremer & Knippenberg (2002:858-866) which stated that leadership charisma has a positive impact on cooperation which can bring about development. Byman and Pollack (2001) added that the goals, abilities and foibles of individuals are vital to the intentions, capabilities as well as strategies of the state (cited in Rourke, 2008:74). According to Jensen (1982:14-15), personality will only impact foreign policy decisions, if the leader display a high level of interest in foreign affairs and possesses high decisional latitude.

The position of this paper is that effective foreign and domestic policy

aimed at all round transformation can be influenced by the personality make up and decision making style of the leader. It argues first that personality influences leadership style, quality and effectiveness which have positive implications for national transformation. It is essential to emphasize that the state without the authority and structure of political decision makers remains a geographical expression that cannot make laws by/for itself except by the individuals or groups at the helm of affairs at various levels. Secondly, effective foreign policy has a huge relativity with personality. The personalities of key individual actors play crucial roles in the determination of a country's foreign policy. An understanding of their traits makes the analysis of the rationale behind their goals and drives easier to comprehend. Therefore, to understand the attitude and decisions of the state, the psychology or personal idiosyncrasy of decision makers must be studied or evaluated. Thirdly, the domestic environment provides the backbone for the pursuit of foreign policy in the international system. Through their foreign policy, countries endeavor to persuade others in accordance with their own needs and ends which is a reflection of their domestic policies and plans. Persuasions, negotiations and strategies are primarily in proportion to its national power born from the domestic elements like its peculiarity, natural and human

resources, the nature of the political system, quality of leadership and the nature of the interaction among groups in the society. These elements can be enhanced via national transformation agendas of leaders and the leadership styles invariable backed by their personality.

It is noticeable that domestic experiences also determine its attitude towards the outside world and foreign policy. Internal contingencies also determine the respect she earns in the international system and internal problems could also strangle foreign policy. Thus, the formulation and implementation of the country's foreign policy must be situated in its domestic political and socio economic environment on the one hand and the external milieu on the other hand. They constitute the main dynamics and determinants of foreign policy formulation and output (Gambari, 2004:3-31). For instance, from the present day predicaments of the Nigerian state, it is clear that Nigeria is under the siege of backwardness and developmental stagnation that hold her hostage. Until they are addressed the objectives of her foreign policy cannot be fully realized. Just as the Nigerian Civil War frustrated Nigeria's efforts to achieve a more prominent regional leadership role failed, so also do issues like environmental challenges, insecurity, leadership ineptitude, poverty, infrastructural decadences, religious and ethnic crisis, weak state institutions and injustice frustrate

obtaining a prominent regional leadership role, frustrate her foreign policy as well as her international image today. This is because, these domestic issues left unattended are making her dedication to the peace and stability of other countries questionable and as well as crippling her potency.

4. Leadership personalities, foreign policy and effects on Nigeria's international Image

The Nigerian state has had since her independence in 1960 foreign affairs machinery which has remained under the exclusive control of the ruling central authority. Nigeria made Africa the centerpiece of her foreign policy and has played key leadership roles in African politics since then. Alhaji Tafawa Balewa being the first prime minister enunciated the fundamental principles that underpin Nigeria's external relations (Fawole, 2003:38). Nigeria's foreign policy objectives are promoting and protecting Nigeria's national interest, promoting African integration and support African unity, promoting international cooperation for the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations and also eliminating discrimination of all sorts. It also added the respect for international law and treaties obligations, the pacific settlement of international disputes via negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication and also promote a just world economic order (Fawole, 2003:38).

The behavioral dispositions of the various heads of state Nigeria has had have robbed off on her foreign policy, and domestic politics as well as her international image. However, her foreign policy has experienced continuity more than changes. For instance, leaders like Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, General Yakubu Gowon, General Murtala Mohammed, General Olusegun Obasanjo, General Abdusalami, in the course of the pursuit of Nigeria's foreign policy have displayed attitudes like discipline, passion and patriotism, conservatism and firmness which have earned positive recommendations for her. Some of them implemented some anti western policies that would have reduced their popularity and acceptance among western states (Abegunrin, 2003). However, they were able to drive Nigeria towards progress, unity, national transformation and positive global image (Osuntokun, 2012; Kawu, 2011; Aluko, 1976). This is not to say that their administrations were void of weaknesses.

Leaders like General Muhammadu Buhari and Tunde Idiagbon were very strict in their rule. They were rigid, harsh and uncompromising in their drive towards national transformation. They were preoccupied with the agenda War Against Indiscipline (WAI) which was to put Nigeria back on the pedestal of moral decency and reawaken them to social norms after identifying indiscipline and

corruption as challenges Nigeria was encumbered with. They ensured nationalism, patriotism and loyalty to national symbols, involvement in environmental sanitation, and public demureness like queuing and better work ethics amongst citizens (The Library of Congress Country Studies & CIA World Fact book, 2004). Despite their passion and drive for change, the regime was characterized with excesses like the violation of human rights and rigidity in their approach to national transformation. Their draconian decrees did not augur well with Nigeria's international image.

Musa Yar Adua was an altruistic leader. He displayed firmness, commitment, sense of probity, sensitivity to the feelings of Nigerian masses and respect for their rights. His sense of integrity displayed when he declared his asset amongst other evidences. He was peace-loving in his approach to solving problems. For instance, he used dialogue to settle the militancy issues over resource control in the Niger delta (Ndagi, 2012; Alli, 2011). He was concerned about the domestic welfare of Nigeria's as he pursued his foreign policy agenda. There are various opinions to the personality of President Goodluck Jonathan. Some scores him low with respect to strong personality while others see him as dynamic and charismatic. For most Nigerians he is weak, without charisma to lead and even referred to as a kindergarten president (Tega, 2013). His actions do not address

cogent and eminent needs of the Nigeria state especially as regards the state of the domestic environment of her foreign policy (Echono, 2012). The increasing states of insecurity, corruption and religious fundamentalism have not received matching response from his administration.

Ambitious, self-centered and dictatorial leaders like General Ibrahim Babangida and General Sani Abacha soiled the positive image Nigeria had built in the past by their actions. They were dictator, ruthless and violated human rights. These attracted international criticism and sanctions, severed relationships and earned pariah state status (Okpokpo, 1999; Sesay & Ukeje, 1997: 25-48; Mahmud, 2001; Abegunrin, 2003). By 1999, Nigeria's public image had shattered and the task of rebuilding was hectic. Therefore, the choice of competent leaders to be rebuilt her image was therefore necessary.

5. Olusegun Obasanjo's Leadership Traits and an Assessment his Foreign Policy

Prior to his becoming a democratic leader of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo had carved for himself the niche of a reputable world class statesman, with towering image and international kudos. As president of Nigeria in the fourth republic, these qualities were uneasily beatable by ministers of foreign affairs. While giving his inaugural speech as the president, he outlined the massive tasks he needed to accomplish. The

task of the administration included restoring the nation's dignity, revitalizing the political institutions, reinvigorating the economy through foreign Direct Investment and economic integration, combating crime and corruption, debt reduction, cooperation with the Far East and strengthening the rule of law (Gusau, 2001:12).

In office he was result oriented and productivity inclined, prompt in making decisions, creativity, sensitive, discerning, insightful and analytical mind. Being interested in reforms, He understood that a new approach had to be used so as to address the issues Nigeria faced and achieve the targeted goals.

He adopted a personalist-style towards foreign policy since he was already a statesman of global prestige and driven by achieving results (Fawole, 2004). Between 1999 and 2007 he performed the functions of the executive president, commander-in-chief of the armed forces of Nigeria simultaneously with the functions of the Ministers of Petroleum and Energy Resources and Foreign Affairs (Nuhu-Koko, 2008). Within the first three years as president, he had travelled to about 90 countries of the world on diplomatic assignments. Put differently, his legendary penchant for rebuilding Nigeria's image and improving her foreign policy made him actively involved in running of the country's foreign affairs which in the long run had had positive effects

on Nigeria's image in the international system (Ekpu, 2003; Olutomiwa, 2013).

Although he broke the protocol of operations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but it can be excusable if his passion for change, success and development is understood. This inclination empowered him to make decisions and tackle problems promptly. Between 1999 and 2007, he had rebuilt Nigeria's international image with strategies such as repackaging of the image, debt cancellation and relief, foreign direct investment as well as strengthening the domestic environment of her foreign policy (Odubanjo, 2001). Other strategies include the use of shuttle diplomacy, conflict management in Africa, the formation of New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), re-christened OAU to African Union (AU), hosted international events like Commonwealth and all African Games (Hassan, 2006:253). According to Kaplan (2006:169-180), he pursued a very extensive regional integration. Adebajo & Landsberg (2003:171-203) illuminated this with the explanation that he presented himself as a peacekeeper and had strong affection for economic integration and international institutions.

The fact that him himself represented his country as the foreign affairs minister instead of sending someone else gave a sense of seriousness to

the issues of national transformation, economic reinvigoration and international prestige that he was all out to address. Taking responsibility to do things himself rather than delegating them earned him speedy accomplishment as already mentioned. For instance, the energy sector is a major section of the Nigerian economy that needed to be controlled by a firm no nonsense person. Corruption was rampant and the infrastructural decadence in the sector was huge. It might be believed that these were the major reasons for not appointing a petroleum minister. President Obasanjo had to be in charge of the sector as a strategy of reviving it. This resulted in some policies reforms for national transformation.

Domestically, he also tried to address issues like corruption. He did this through the use of the anti corruption bill, Independent Corrupt Practice and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) created in 2002. National Agency for Food and Drug (NAFDAC) was also created to address and correct Nigeria's image of being a dumping ground of fake drugs (Aiyetan, 2005: 30-31). Some prominent individuals like Diepreye Alameiyeseigha, former Delta state governor and Professor Fabian Osuji, former Minister of Education, and others that fell short of the laws were apprehended.

In addition to these, he also put in place some modalities to encourage foreign direct investments and reintegrate Nigeria into the global economy. He invested in restoring infrastructures like roads, telecommunications, energy amongst others that would all work together to form an enabling environment for the proper running of the prospective investors. In the aspect of ensuring that Nigeria is safe for the investors to invest in, he took practical steps in ensuring that security of lives and property is enhanced. Adeniji (2005:37) added that policies of reviving bilateral joint commission with nations that were identified as exporters of capital, Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (IPPA) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agreement were signed.

According to Ajayi (2004), these actions were able to earn Nigeria a better image in the international system. As a result of the efforts geared towards national development and positive image building, sanctions imposed on Nigeria prior to the fourth republic were removed. She earned the position of the 6th most corrupt country in the world as against the former rating of 2nd. Paris club granted Nigeria debt relief in 2005 as a reward of the efforts at reducing corruption. Moreso, she attracted Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). MNCs like Chevron and Mobile Telecommunication Network (MTN) brought in capital to Nigeria.

There have been mixed feelings about Obasanjo's personality and foreign policy style. Contrary to the positive opinions about his leadership, there are also negative opinions. For example, the personalistic tendencies have been linked to authoritarian tendencies (Abati, 2006: 56). Authoritarian tendencies of the military were noticeable characteristics of his rule having been in the force for some time. The syndrome manifested as oppressive behaviours which are anti democratic and against the ethics of the rule of law. He had several face offs with the National Assembly when his excesses on domestic and foreign policies could not be checkmated by the Assembly. He rarely listened to the advice of experts even on military issues. Adinoyi-Ojo (1997) described Obasanjo as a man full of contradictions. He states that:

He is at times thoughtful and methodical but can also be stubbornly unconcerned with the finer points of legality and propriety of virtue. He is earthy and humble but acutely sensitive about slights. He says he is intolerant of "thoughtlessness and uninformed criticisms" but General Obasanjo has often responded aggressively to attacks on his actions. This sort of attitude leaves people with the impression that Obasanjo is an infallible leader. He has been known to hang up the

telephone on a caller, or to dismiss rudely or physically chase away those with whom he disagrees. He has a soldier's brusqueness, sternness and dictatorial impulse... One of the most amazing things about Obasanjo, is the ease with which he swings from one extreme to the other. He could exude a rare warmth and kindness in one brief moment only to display shortly after an appalling meanness and ruthlessness especially if he thinks he is being taken for a fool (cited in Ekpu, 2003).

Despite his weaknesses, his personality as displayed in his foreign policy pursuit should be applauded and the dynamism of his leadership style emulated. He was able to facilitate investment drive to Africa and mentored attainment towards social progress, poverty alleviation, the anti-corruption crusade, reforms and transformation, development and growth, democracy as well as democratic governance, agriculture and food security. He was nominated by the Commonwealth as a co-chairman of the Eminent Persons Group, EPG (Ekpu, 2003) and Special Envoy on Great Lakes region to assist the Governments of the sub region to address the challenges to peace and security. President Olusegun Obasanjo remains an enigma in international affairs that can be learnt from.

Challenges of National Transformations in Nigeria

The domestic context of a country's foreign policy portrays a lot about the country and how it will be respected in the international system. Taking a look at the various administrations in Nigeria, it has been observed that not too much effort have been directed at the domestic environment while so much have been invested in improving her international image. As it was when Obasanjo stepped down, Nigeria is still buffeted by myriad of challenges like corruption, environmental issues, insecurity, militancy, leadership ineptitude, sabotage, poverty, poor health facilities, poor education, infrastructural decadence, lingering ethnic crisis, poor level of research and development (Fawole, 2004). Other challenges include violent power struggles, injustice, election rigging, group agitation, unemployment, capital flight, food scarcity, poverty, infant mortality and maternal deaths, disease, bombing, arson, and repeated failures of state projects like census, national identity card and privatization, the weakness of state security forces like the police, religious fundamentalism by groups like Boko Haram and Ansaru and other forms of insurrection (Nwosu, 2012). These challenges confronting Nigeria are diverse and interwoven. A number of them will be discussed.

a. Corruption: Corruption is a national menace and a bane of development. Fawole (2004)

observed that public officials are corrupt and corruption is also official. Corruption takes different forms in Nigeria like looting or siphoning of state fund into personal pockets, inflation of budgets and contract, wrecking of state owned enterprises, awards of contract to incompetent people in the name of ethnicity and other forms of ties. The Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of the Transparency International shows that Nigeria is still one of the most corrupt countries in the world. In 2011, it ranked her as number 143 most corrupt country of 183 countries, in 2012 she earned 35th most corrupt country and in 2013, the 8th most corrupt country in the world (Yishau, 2011; Olaleye, Akosile, Abonyi, et al 2012). From the reports it is clear that corruption is on the increase in Nigeria. It still remains an obstacle to achieving national progress and a problem which the governments have to respond.

b. Insecurity: Insecurity in the fourth republic has been rampant. This has been exacerbated by religious fundamentalism, insurrections and other acts of terrorism which are hindrances to national transformation. According to the 2011 Failed States Index of the United

States-based Fund for Peace, Nigeria was rated 14th position out of 177 countries. Nigeria led countries like Somalia and Sudan, Chad, democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Zimbabwe amongst others. It is essential to mention that the ranking is based on indicators like security, state legitimacy, factionalism and group grievances. Also, another report of Fund for Peace corroborated by World Bank reports published in 2006 and 2007 as well as the report by The American Bipartisan Centre on May 12, 2011 which shows that Nigeria is among the 15 fragile states in the world (Nwosu, 2011; Nwosu, 2012). These rankings therefore call attention to the insecure and unsafe national condition as well as the need to take immediate measures to address the situation.

c. Weakening of State Institutions: Happenings in Nigerian are pointing towards the weakening, deteriorating and malfunctioning state of state institutions in regards to their ability to properly discharge their functions (Nwabueze, 2013). Instances of this claim are evident in institutions like National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), the

Nigerian Prisons Service, the Nigerian Civil Defense Corps and Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). Also, security institutions like the police are finding it hard to fight crimes and terrorism. The Nigerian judicial system is not left out. Ensuring the rule of law and punishing offenders have remained a demanding task for the institution.

d. Power Struggle and Diminishing Confidence in the Democratic Process: Ascendance to political offices in Nigeria has remained a do or die affair. Power struggles and its corollaries have marred the confidence of the people in political institutions and the democratic process (International Crisis Group, 2007). For example, the struggle for power has necessitated the manipulation of elections at the various levels of government, triggered post election violence for instance in 2011, political gansterism and political assassinations of figures like Bola Ige, Anthony Olufunsho Williams, Ayodele Daramola, Harry Marshal, Odunayo Olagbaju, Barnabas Igwe and his wife Abigail, Dele Arojo, Dele Giwa, Alfred Rewane, Kudirat Abiola, Obi Wali and Amino Sari Dikibo (Shekarau, 2012). All of these

throw blows to Nigeria's international image.

- e. **Ethnicity:** Nigeria's national development is hunted and bedeviled by ethnic politics. According to Adebisi (n.d.), it is a visible trait of social relations and noticeable everywhere like church, market, mosques, associations, clubs and the academia. This point to the fact that social relations in Nigeria are becoming sour. It is worthy of mention that ethnicity feeds terrorism, ethnic conflict and political instability. Fayemi (2013) mentioned that at the root of ethnic politics is violence, unemployment, poverty, loss of the culture of compromise and accommodation as well as stereotypes. Ethnicity discourages national transformation in Nigeria. This is because the national good founded on merit, genuine qualification and competences have been traded for ethnic affiliations. The effects of ethnicity have negative effects on Nigeria's international image.
- f. **Economic Challenges:** There is no doubt that Nigeria is endowed with enormous human and natural resources which if harnessed will yield plenty wealth for her. Despite the resource blessings,

unemployment and poverty are predominant characteristics of the citizens which have breed immoral behaviour, negative norms and values amongst citizens. A good number of the labour force in Nigeria is unemployed and most of her citizens are poor. Their economic statuses make them vulnerable to picking up arms, engage in bunkering, being used as political thugs and terrorist attacks.

- g. **National Value Orientation:** National core values geared at all round advancement include self development, honesty, accountability, patriotism, respect and love for their fellow citizens. The behaviour of the leaders also contributed to the drives of positive change. Countries like Indonesia and Malaysia among others have transformed their countries with these principles. According to Agbaje (2012), the national value orientation of Nigerians have negative connotations for national transformation in that most of the leaders and followers are concerned with sharing the national cake that is the wealth of the country rather than baking it or working out modalities for the sustainable wealth generation. Frankly speaking, Nigerians have known too many developmental agendas and

strategies like SAP, National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), Jonathan's Vision 20:2020, Vision 2010 by Abacha, and Yar' Adua's 7-Point Agenda, but the administrations have had little results to show from their proposed policies. The limited results achieved can be attributed to lack skills, passion, visionary and effective leadership as well as effective followership.

In essence, personality and leadership style have had both positive and negative impacts on Nigeria's national transformation and foreign policy. However, the management of these challenges now is what is of utmost importance.

7. Way forward

National transformation is an enormous task that encompasses tackling issues (Nwaneri, 2013). Nigeria is currently entangled in a large and disturbing web of challenges like corruption, environmental issues, security crisis, militancy, leadership ineptitude, sabotage, poverty, infrastructural decadences, ethnic crisis, power struggles, weak state institutions, injustice, election rigging, and group agitation to mention just a few. However, these challenges or developmental agents could be managed to bring about national transformation, a boosted international image and more

effective foreign policy. The following are put forward as suggestions:

First, effective leadership is key to national transformation. The paper takes a stance that a Top down model of change can make national transformation happen in Nigeria. Seeing leadership as a responsibility and not a seat will empower the passion and drive for transformation. The leader should first believe in the vision and then communicate it to his followers who can help pursue it to bring about the desired change. Across the globe it has been said that countries that lack effective and visionary leaders lack the character for growth. A major deficit in Nigeria's developmental pursuit is not too farfetched from the nature of her leadership. As Obasanjo did, bold moves must be taken towards making Nigeria the epicenter of not only Africa and the world as the cases have always been but for the citizens at home too. If future leaders can emulate and build their capacity to possess positive leadership traits like those Obasanjo displayed that brought about credible changes to Nigeria's international image then positive transformation to the domestic terrain of her foreign policy can be achieved. Effective leadership is therefore a non-negotiable instrument for national transformation.

Second, leaders should be honest and possess the virtue of integrity (give instances). The wealth of the country

should be diverted towards national transformation. Opportunities to serve in leadership positions should not be taken as opportunities to get their own share of the national cake for themselves, their family and other acquaintances but for seeking the general welfare of the populace.

Third, the paper believes that because deviants and anti state forces will always remain, the leadership of the state remains the number one person that can bring an end to the national dilemma of dealing with unlawful actions. Until the mindset of leaders are changed from the 'do nothing and keep my slate clean' syndrome is done away with national transformation would remain a mirage. A trait of fearlessness and discipline should be imbibed. Offenders should be brought to book despite their social status and the law should be upheld.

Fourth, the paper proposes that there should be institutions in place where elected public officials are trained to know the ethics and ethos of statesmanship. It is necessary because some of them might not have held any leadership roles at various capacities before in their lives and might lack the capacity to lead people of various numbers. Also, apart from some persons that are born leaders, leaders are also made. The paper supports the argument of Echono (2012) that leadership is a skill, ability or competence that can be acquired. Therefore, leaders should be well

equipped with self management ability that brings about national development.

Finally, citizens should be taught via different agents of socialization the essence of voting and the criteria to be watched out for before they cast their vote. This is to ensure that blind voting based on biased ethnic, religious, social and political sentiments are avoided at the detriment of Nigeria's transformation towards positive changes and growth.

Conclusion

The paper established the synergy among personality, foreign policy and national development. It also dealt with the impacts of personality on foreign policy and national transformation in Nigeria with specific reference to the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo from 1999 to 2007. Quiet a number of administrations before 1999 were buffeted with abnormalities and on the other hand, goal oriented leadership have recorded some successes too. Though there are observable weaknesses in Obasanjo's personality yet there is behaviour that has brought about national transformation which could be emulated. The "do nothing approaches" will do Nigeria no good. Nigerian leaders should address issues than leave them unattended to for the sake of harnessing the gains of independence like political stability, peace and security,

infrastructural development, rule of law, protection of fundamental human rights, national unity and progress. Put differently, a passive leadership personality style will not lead Nigeria towards transformation

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- and its foreign policy will end up being deficient as a result of internal contradictions. Therefore, national transformation in the Nigerian state remains a demanding assignment for leaders.
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