



# **Political Culture And The Implications On Economic National Development In Nigeria**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study of politics in Nigeria has undergone significant change in recent years. From an initial fascination with the mechanisms of politics at the state level, emphasis has shifted to an attempt to identify those basic factors underlying patterns of social organization and behaviour. Political change, culture change and economic change go together in coherent and to some extent predictable pattern. Political pattern as reflected in cultural, socio – cultural and regimes types reflect changes in economic and political environment with emphasis to instrument rationality. The characteristics inherent in a political culture for economic development can be roughly predictable because, they can be interpreted from their perceived word view in triggering economic development that harnesses human and capital development. It is acknowledged that a peoples basic value and believe affect their political economic and behavioral pattern drawing on evidence in view of the political culture that make up their sphere. Programmatic issues include whether and how much political culture matter as to economic institutions. The role of political culture to economic development is demonstrated to cause significant differentials in decision-making and the management and evaluation of economic growth. Attention is given to micro-political analyses, and an effort is being made to relate political occurrences on the state level to local political culture, development and concerns. Methods include theoretical /empirical modeling of cultural (political) environment and micro/ macroeconomics.

**Keywords:** Politics, Culture, Economy, Institutions, Development

## **INTRODUCTION**

The understanding of political culture refers to the political attitude and behavioral pattern of the population when it is assumed that this culture largely determined the relation of citizen with the political system. Most study on politics claim that specific element of that culture have an impact on the way political institution function, although it has been noted that the reveres causal logic (Institution determine the political culture) has been argued on the bases of institutional perspective on politics. Political culture includes both the individual as a competent political actor and the perception about their role within the political system (Chilton, 1988).

Political Culture can be define as a people's predominant behalf, altitude, value, ideas, sentiments, evaluations and expectation about the political system of their country and this role of the self in that system. Understanding the prevailing culture of a particular nation will enable one to properly conceptualize the role of the political game of that nation. It will enable one to understand the different orientation of the people, i.e. their knowledge and, believe about the political system, their feelings about the political system and their commitment to political values and judgments (Almond and Verba, 1980).

In other words, how politics is perceived and played in a particular country is a function of that country's political culture which is been shaped and re – shaped by a variety of factors over time. Such factors include but not limited to political learning from historical experience, institutional change, political socialization, it include broad changes in economic and social structure, international

factors (including colonialism and cultural diffusion) and of course the functional and habitual practice of the political system itself (Daily Champion, 2002)

Different countries have different practical cultures which help to understand how and why their Government is organized in a certain way. Understanding our own political culture also provides clues to political relationships such as those that are shared with each other or our government.

### **Conceptual Clarification**

Political culture can be thought of as a nation's political personality. It encompasses the deep-rooted, well-established political traits that are characteristic of a society. Political culture takes into account the attitudes, values, and beliefs that people in a society have about the political system, including standard assumptions about the way that government works. It includes formal rules as well as customs and traditions, sometimes referred to as habits of the heart that are passed on generationally. People agree to abide by certain formal rules, such as the country's constitution and codified laws

### **Types of Political Culture**

Almond identified three distinct types of Political culture having studied some countries political process. They are;

**Parochial political culture**, Mexico citizens are mostly uninformed and unaware of their government and take little or no interest in the political process. A parochial political culture is locally based. Citizens don't recognize a distinct political sphere of life and there is little interest in politics. This type of political culture probably only exist today in relatively under developed countries where lives are lived in rural communities with little or no interaction with the countries central government. Nigeria's over 100 million people out of the estimated 180 million people live in such rural communities and are largely ungoverned. They are mostly uninformed hence politicians take undue advantage of them by returning after every four years to seek their votes with worthless inducements.

**Subject political culture** such as those found in Germany and Italy, citizens are somehow informed and aware of their government and occasionally participate in the political process. A subject political culture is one where citizens have knowledge of the political system but either don't participate in politics much or, are given little to no right of political dissents. This type of political culture is to be found in old monarchies of Europe or in authoritarian regimes where people are subject more than citizens.

**Participant political culture** like the United Kingdom and the United States, citizens are informed and participate in the political process. A Participant political culture is one where citizen are not only aware of the political system, but, are active participants in politics. Modern western democracies such as the United Kingdom and Great Britain are examples. The Elites in Nigeria who are in the minority tend to belong to this class of political culture. They are fully aware and actively involved in the political process. Such Nigerian are found in Cities, Businesses, Institutions and so on.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical frame work is that of comparative politics by Gabriel Almond (1963) which features toward explaining the purpose of government. His three – part analytical frame work examine systems, process and policy. These political theories have become incorporated into a political culture with a central belief of egalitarianism and individualism. This is not only because of the perspective in which they viewed the concept as part of a general culture which has to do with the political orientation of the people, but also in the utility or perception of non-static and transformational process from one typology to the other. This shows that nation states are dynamic political entities which could either grow or degenerate from one stage to the other.

Other theories of political culture address how political culture takes root and is transferred from generation to generation through political socialization and includes Seymour Martin Lips etc. (1960) formative event theory which describes the long lasting effect of key events that took place when a country was founded. Harts (1990) fragment theory explain the long lasting effects of European colonization on countries and societies, and Ronald Ingle Harts (1997) post materialism theory which explain the long lasting effect of childhood economic and social conditions.

### **The Political Culture Imperative**

The importance of cultural variables cannot be ignored. Some scholars, among them Bell and Geertz (1976) suggest that cultural factors are as important in shaping national development. They argue that it is often culture that conditions the form, pace and style of economic development.

In the view, what Marx called the super structure (culture, idea, belief, system traditional way of doing things) influence the sub structure (economic and class relation). Political factors or government policies and administrative practice have great impact on economic development. Political factor emanating from a particular political culture influences economic development by positively or negatively influencing the process of development. Therefore, how and the implicit the Political culture identified will have a dramatic impact on the economic development within a country.

The Government enforces policies and administration norms known as political factors that can influence economic development which is the process that increases standard of living by moving away from traditional to industrialized society. In general political factors influence economic development by supporting or disrupting the process of development. Political factors tend to have an important impact on economic development irrespective of regime type.

The regime type influences the policies that affect personal and public economic development, whether a country is democratic, authoritarian, communist or others which impact how business operate and determines growth that would increase economic development.

Political Stability which has to do with reliability and stability of government structure is equated to business risk, in that the more stable a country the less risk a business operating in that country faces. However countries (in the case of Nigeria) where there is high risk of terrorism or internal conflict are less stable which opening and operating a business is expensive and risking ultimately harming the quality of the exchange rate translating to a decrease in economic development.

Political management will relate here on how well a government monitors and enforce national and international policies or failure of which increase the risk of operating business for economic development in the country.

Level of corruption besides bribing of politician in the case of Nigeria is attended to with dishonest, unethical, and illegal practices that are imposed on people and business operating in the country. Corruption here also includes bribing local companies for material or paying to prevent competition from entering the market. This further prevents economic development and can cause a monopoly which makes services overly expensive.

Trade laws in view of local and international policies that impact the importation or exportation of goods are a political factor for economic development because government and politician develop the policies regarding trade. Such policies as include trade tariff or fees and taxes imposed on certain import and export. Unfortunately, trade deals that can reduce tariff that often occur between two developed nations and underdeveloped or developing economics of which Nigeria as third world country is categorized faces high taxes that can prevent them from participating in international trade

### **Political Culture and State Development**

Prominent Scholars like Dye (1996), Oshom (1980), Treadway (1985), Larger (1987) see economic development as a prominent issue for state government having identified two approaches to the issue via maintenance/attraction strategy and the creation strategy.

Political culture becomes an important factor in predicting which approach a state chooses with traditionalistic state favoring the maintained/attraction strategy and moralistic state favoring the creation alternative. The interaction of these variables with political culture becomes relevant in shaping state policies.

According to Appedoral (1968). The state exists for the purpose of enabling the mass of men to realize social goods on the largest possible scale. This assertion validates state as an institution to provide framework for economic development.

Any political system is confronted with four main type of challenge. First is the challenge of state building that relates to how political elites create new structure to penetrate the society in order to regulate behavior in it and draw a large volume of resources from it. Secondly the challenges of state building relates to the loyalty and the commitment from smaller tribes and ethnic to the central political system. Third is the challenges of participation which again relates to the challenges of pressure groups in the society in taking part in the decision making of the political system and finally

is the challenges of distribution with pressure from segment of the system to employ the coercive power of the political system to redistribute income, wealth, honor and opportunity (Almond And Powell 1996).

Sequel to this is the challenge of economic development. Political development and the possibility of political action emphasize adequate understanding of the state and its relation to political culture and economic development.

### **Nigeria Political Culture and Economic Development**

In Nigeria long standing and deep-rooted political and social challenges have shape the nation economic development. Political culture set in two different countries can affect their respective economic development in different way. The question is what can account for these inconsistency and distinct result. Roderick (2007) is of the view that economic institution (such as property right, regulating institutions, institution for macroeconomic stabilization, institution for social insurance, institution for conflict management e.t.c) are the major source of economic growth and development across countries.

Among other things, economic institutions can have decisive influence on investment in physical and human capital technology and industrial production for economic growth It is well understood that in addition to having a critical role in economic growth, economic institution are important for resources distribution. Consequently, groups or individual will be able to gain more benefit than other given the set of pre – existing economic condition and resources allocation. In other words, economic institutions are endogenous (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006) and thus reflect a continuous conflict of interest among various groups and individual over the choice of economic institution and distribution of resources for economic development.

Political culture is extremely important for economic development in low income countries like Nigeria in view of identifying the obstacles of a parochial political culture for economic growth and development.

### **Empirical Evidence**

In a study of political culture associated with five democratic countries Germany, Italy, Mexico, the United Kingdom and the United States identified three basic types of political culture that can be used to explain why people do or do not participate in political process.

The importance of political culture on economic development and economic performance regardless of any pre-condition or stages of economic development is centered on political institution on economic growth. Pereira and Teles(2009) developed an econometric model (a system GMM estimator with an auto regressive distributed lags) using yearly data's in a large sample of 109 countries covering a maximum time span from 1975 to 2004. The key dependent variable is GDP per capital. Several political institutions were taking into account as explanatory variable such as electoral rules (plurality rules vs. proportional representation – open and closed list – and district magnitude); form of government (parliamentary vs presidential system); Political regime (dictatorship vs democracy measures in terms of years under democracy); government fractionalization; size of the executive political party or coalition in congress (number of seat held by the executive parties or coalition); federalism and robustness of federal structure (degrees to which state/provinces have authority over taxing and spending or regulating); and years that the elite group is in the office or government durability.

The result suggests that a political institution within a political culture fundamentally matters only for a regime package.

### **Contemporary Issues**

Politics is a function of the environment in which it is practiced consequently politics is the same anywhere in the world. However the political terrain is different due to social, political, economic and cultural dimensions and the difference in environmental variables makes the practice of politics different from country to country. The Nigeria's environment is not different and its political culture is probably the most difficult to generalize not only because of its cultural and linguistic diversity of the Nigerian people also because of other factors such as religion, ethnicity, regional. There is no denying that a country with so much cultural and linguistic diversity, will present analytical problem of political and cultural dimension. Many authors and scholars in recent years have tried to overcome this problem by advancing several approaches and perspectives, which include ethnicity, ethnic

pluralism, and ethno politics, institutional, structural, political economy approach with emphasis on materialism, probendalism, class and underdevelopments, clientelistic patronage politics.

A change in government usually results in policy change and new formation, with the capacity of destroying an old political cultural formation. This regime change at the federal, state and local levels, have also been attended by massive structural, institutional and policy change. Government ministries, departments, agencies, parastatals and other institutions were in an almost permanent state of restructuring with their executive heads constantly changed. These changes were necessary to affect discontinuity with previous dispensation as part of its legitimating process. Particularly notable in this regard were frequent changes in the revenue allocation system, taxation, monetary and financial regulation announced in the annual budget (Observer, 2016).

Another important aspect of the Nigerian political culture to economic development is the government role of in the distribution channel that is counterproductive. This perception has seriously hindered the development of the necessary social and political correlates of public finance. These conceptions and perceptions make the reciprocity between the citizen's rights and duties which, are necessary for sound governance problematic, and detract from the entrepreneurial ethos required for transforming the state from a renter state to a truly productive capitalist one. Osaghae (1988) argues that the state is unable to change the perceptions and attitudes of the society because the state are themselves guided by the same codes and therefore reap huge benefit of political legitimacy from them. Consequently, there were attempts made to entrench a moral code for public service through agencies like the Code of Conduct Bureau, which was provided for by the 1979 Constitution.

## CONCLUSION

Political culture and economic development is centered on political institution variable that demonstrate substitute for determining economic growth and development. Giving the political cultural variable regimes can have a satisfactory economic performance as long as some political rights are granted to society generating economic growth. It is imperative to determine which political culture is considered within the analysis controlling for its respective specific political institution as suggested by Acemoglu (2009) to understand how different political culture affect economic decisions for economic development.

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## RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that efforts should be made at strengthening nation identity and cohesion for economic recovery, self-reliance and social justice.

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