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A Pyramidal Framework for Addressing Nigeria's Multidimensional Development Challenges

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Abstract. Nigeria faces multifaceted challenges, including economic instability, national insecurity, political corruption, technological stagnation, and scientific underdevelopment. The study applied Critical-Historical-Comparative Policy Analysis (CHC-PA) anchored in a Multi-referential Pyramidal Framework (MPF) using qualitative textual analysis method. Since 1945, various national and strategic development plans up to 2025 have sought to address these issues, but their multidimensional nature requires a holistic strategy that concurrently strengthens governance, fosters scientific and technological advancements, enhances national security and economic growth to achieve sustainable progress. Effective solutions demand the interplay of universal scientific truths with context-specific, ideologically grounded political truths. Constructive order and internalization of these principles by both the populace and leadership are essential for meaningful progress. This paper, therefore, presents an MPF designed to address Nigeria's multidimensional development challenges by integrating five interrelated superstructures: Comprehensive National Power (CNP), scientific truth, technological innovations, political truth, national security, and economic growth. Ultimately, the paper provides a synergistic pathway for transforming Nigeria's traditional, primitive-artisan economy into a modern, innovation-driven and developed economy. Policy implications, implementation strategies, and recommendations for adaptive management, including the establishment of National Development Council (NDC), are discussed.

Keywords: Multi-referential Pyramidal Framework; Critical-Historical-Comparative Policy Analysis; Comprehensive National Power; Leadership; Governance; Political Truth; Scientific Truth; National Development Council.

1. Introduction

Nigeria, over the years, has shown deliberate interest and aspirations at achieving development with efforts geared toward moving away from the down-the-ladder position of the 'developing nations' cadre to the enviable status of a developed nation. To achieve this singular goal, there have been conscious efforts by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) at carving out National Development Plans (NDPs) and strategies for development for the nation, efforts which predates the independence. The development plans have often failed to yield the expected results, sometimes even taking the nation back from its yearnings due to reasons associated with, but not limited to, the understanding and finding of a unified identity or philosophy for the aspirations of multicultural people. Such circumstances easily punctuate Nigeria's NDPs, sometimes not too phenomenal events, resurfacing or even deepening the challenges of underdevelopment which such plans were meant to address.

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11 Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

Development plans for Nigeria may be built on a robust and multi-referential foundation, able to adapt to or accommodate the changing needs of the people yet with a unified philosophy, well-articulated by the generality of the people, and mastered by the policymakers and implementers. Therefore, the objective of the paper is to examine the multidimensional challenges facing Nigeria's development and attempts to proffer a workable approach to solving them. The remaining paper is sectionalized as follows: Section two examines 'Development' in its broad term by contextualizing its meaning. The third section expresses the methodological approach employed for the paper, while section four examines Nigeria's development plans and strategies for development from pre-independence to the first five-year medium-term NDP (MTNDP) 2021-2025 of the Nigeria Agenda 2050 (NA 2050) [1] and sought to understand their causes of failure. The fifth section explores the multi-referential pyramidal approach to development, while section six mirrored a peculiar Nigerian context with multi-referential pyramidal approach. The seventh section sought to consider a unified, workable and enduring approach for developing Nigeria's multicultural identity, with a strategy for implementing a Multi-referential Pyramidal Framework (MPF) for development.

2. 'Development' in Its Broad Term

The definition of 'Development' can be unstable, controversial, complex, ambiguous and relative. Gore [2] notes that development practice in the 1950s and 1960s was more people-focused, which has now shifted to the liberalization of economies [3]. Gore [2] further posits that "the shift to ahistorical performance assessment can be interpreted as a form of the post modernization of development policy analysis. The goal of structural transformations replaced with the goal of spatial integration (globalization)… …the dynamics of long-term transformations of economies and societies [has] slipped from view and attention was placed on short-term growth and re-establishing financial balances" [2]. Thomas [4] recognizes the ambiguity and complexity of the term 'Development,' the latter author emphasizes the shifting in its meaning to the efforts of the development donor agencies, which is related to the achievements of poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Cobbinah et al. [3] summarized the evolution of the term, from the 1950s – 1960s economic growth-based focus, 1970s social basic needs, 1980s structural adjustments (social and economic growth), 1990s general human wellbeing (social, human and economic growth), to 2000s MDGs, which is multidimensional to include social, environment, economic, political, human, freedom and gender issues.

The Brundtland Commission, according to World Commission on Environment and Development [5], defined sustainable development as "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs," informing why sustainability fits its roots in the concept of the environment. The linearity of focus of the definitions of 'Development' from the 50s to 70s, which dualized in the 80s, gave way to a multiple definition in the 90s that evolved into multidimensional definition in 2000s. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda [6] entrenches the multidimensional characteristics of 'Development,' demonstrated in 17 different SDGs. Hickey and Mohan [7] had shown us that 'Development' transcends the reduction of material poverty as its root gets deeper into intellectualism, knowledge, and awareness of 'spiritual and cultural assets.' Indeed, to further the scopes of the SDGs, studies including O'Donnell [8] urges for the embracement of spiritual meanings and traditions, integrating cultural landscapes to uplift global sustainability through the lenses of the SDG Agenda.

It may therefore be affirmed that 'Development' is dynamic, relative and multi-referential, and it is a metric for measuring modernity; its design and implementation plans could be made robust with parameters that can accommodate the challenging and changing needs, which also take into consideration both the cultural assets of the people, short-term and long-term growth aspirations of the developing nations in context vis-à-vis the developed nations.

3. Methodology

This paper employs a Critical-Historical-Comparative Policy Analysis (CHC-PA) using qualitative textual analysis to uncover systemic patterns or gaps and underlying themes in Nigeria's development plans from

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11 Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

1945 to 2025. By anchoring the CHC-PA in an MPF, the study proposes a unified development philosophy intended to position Nigeria for achieving its overarching goal of becoming a developed nation.

4. Nigeria's Development Plans and Strategies for Development

Nigeria's First Development Plan (FDP), 1945-68: The first development plan in Nigeria, formulated in 1945, fell into the country's independence, and about 42% of the resources needed to finance the FDP were to come from the British government.

> *...the British government programme for the promotion of economic and social advancement of the colonies stemming from the 1940 Colonial Development and Welfare Act. The plan made provision for the capital expenditure of a total of €55 million of which the British government was to provide €23 million* [9].

Iwuagwu [10] posited that the FDP focused on building infrastructure and made provisions for limited range of crops including groundnut, palm produce, timber, cocoa and cotton, with little provision made for industrial development. By 1951, the regions of West, East, North, and Southern Cameroon introduced independent five-year development plans during 1951–1956 and 1956–1962, which laid the foundation for Nigeria's first post-independence NDP (1962–1968).

First National Development Plan (FNDP), 1962-68: In Ekundare [9],

> *The basic object of planning in Nigeria is not merely to accelerate the rate of economic growth and the rate at which the level of the population can be raised; it is also to give her an increasing measure of control over her own destiny.*

But two years of independence was not sufficient time to study and fashion out an appropriate NDP that could allow the country to have a good measure of control over its destiny. The foreigners' involvement in the planning would breed mistrust of the FNDP's intended benefits. Moreover, according to Ogwumike [11], this Plan failed because 50% of the resources needed to finance were to come from external sources, where only 14% of the external finance was received. Furthermore, the commencement of the civil [Biafran] war further disrupted the FNDP [13].

Second National Development Plan (SNDP), 1970-1974: Ekundare [9] reveals that the SNDP:

> *...recognizes the possibility of using planning as a deliberate weapon of social change by explicitly correcting defects in existing social relations in various spheres of production, distribution and exchange.*

Ogwumike [11] asserts that the plan priorities were in agriculture, industry, transport, manpower, defence, electricity, communication and water supply and provision of social services. Buba et al. [12] opine that the SNDP did not achieve its intended goals because it did not have multisectoral strategies that could foster a holistic evaluation of its intended impacts.

Third National Development Plan (TNDP), 1975-1980: The TNDP emphasized rural development and efforts to revamp the agricultural sector. TNDP aimed to harness oil wealth to boost the economy's productive potential and elevate living standards, consequently envisioned a twelvefold increase in yearly public expenditure over SNDP [13]. Lewis [14] shows that TNDP had a fivefold policy framework, such as, i. Equitable distribution of income and wealth, ii. Policy for agricultural development, iii. Regulatory framework for private sector, iv. Policy on indigenization of economic activity, and v. Investment on growth of output. Lawal and Oluwatoyin [15], however, submitted, "Nigeria's enormous oil wealth was not invested to build a viable industrial base for the country and for launching an agrarian revolution to liquidate mass poverty." Operation Feed the Nation, which was replaced with the Green Revolution programme, failed to produce enough food and so failed to ameliorate the suffering of the masses. Dode [16] stated that this programme failed to be like the previous policy in the country because it failed to carry the peasant farmers along in its implementation.

Fourth National Development Plan (4th NDP), 1981-1985: The 4th NDP essentially built on the TNDP, however, its specific objectives were: an increase in the real income of the average citizen, more even distribution of income among individuals and socio-economic groups, increased dependence on the country's material and human resources, a reduction in the level of unemployment and underemployment

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11 Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

[11]. The 4th NDP portends a first-time serious efforts were made at industrialization through frames on manufacturing and value-added export-oriented sector [13].

Notable strategies for development include the 1986 Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) led by General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, which was engineered in collaboration with Bretton Woods institutions. Building on the progress of Nigeria's transitional democratic phase (1999–2003), the 2003–2007 National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) under President Olusegun Aremu Obasanjo aimed to reduce poverty by reforming government institutions, expanding the private sector, fostering social change, and ensuring access to essential services such as power, potable water, food, housing, basic education, and primary healthcare [11, 17].

Subsequently, Vision 20:2020 sought to position Nigeria among the world's top 20 economies by targeting a minimum GDP of $900 billion and a per capita income of at least $4,000, with its initial implementation plan spanning 2010–2013 [18]. Complementing these broader strategies were targeted government agendas such as the 2007 Seven-Point Agenda of President Shehu Musa Yar'adua, the 2011–2015 Transformation Agenda of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, and the 2017–2020 Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) of General Muhammadu Buhari, which aimed to pull the country out of recession by targeting a 7 percent growth rate by 2020.

More recently, the N2.3 trillion Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP) was introduced to address the profound impact of the Covid-19 pandemic across all sectors, including agriculture, food security, job creation, internal security [18], and transportation [19, 20]. International development frameworks such as the MDGs and SDGs have further reinforced these efforts by targeting the evolving needs of Nigeria's population.

Mid-Term national development plan, 2021-2025, in National Agenda 2050: The first five-year medium-term NDP of NA 2050 is the most recent effort at strategically planning the country's future by the FGN, with the vision that "Nigeria will be a dynamic, industrialized and knowledge-based economy that generates inclusive and sustainable development." NA 2050's overarching aim is to take the country to upper middle-income country and subsequently to the status of high-income countries. NA 2050 was formulated against the backdrop of several subsisting development challenges that include low, fragile, and non-inclusive economic growth, high population growth rate, pervasive insecurity, limited diversification, macroeconomic and social instability, low productivity and high import dependence [1, 21].

MTNDP 2021-2025 builds on some of the recent development plans and strategies for development such as Vision 20:2020, ERGP and ESP. According to the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning [18], the lessons learned from the previous NDPs include the need to recognize the hierarchical relationships among the Plans, adhere to centralized Plan implementation coordination mechanism, develop commitment and political will to implement Plans effectively and efficiently, continuity, consistency and commitment to agreed policies, among others. Anchored on Chapter II of the 1999 constitution, the mission of MTNDP 2021-2025 was to guide the implementation of programmes and policies that promote rapid multi-sectoral growth and development of Nigeria's economy, and guided by four strategic objectives, such as i. Diversification of the economy, ii. Investment in digital, science, technology and innovation infrastructure, iii. Framework for enhanced security and good governance, and iv. Vibrant education and healthy population.

A retrospective analysis of Nigeria's development planning frameworks, spanning initiatives from 1945-1985 to the aspirational Vision 20:2020, reveals a recurring pattern of unmet targets and unrealized aspirations. Preliminary assessments of the current MTNDP 2021-2025 suggest limited progress toward its stated objectives, raising concerns about its capacity to address systemic challenges. The failure of Nigeria's development plans, especially the pre-independence (FDP), FNDP and SNDP, may be linked to the over-reliance on foreign aid and the subsequent failures by such external donors to meet up with their promise. Reliance on foreign aid exposes the country to conditional assistance, which may not augur well for the overall or expected benefits of the Plans. FNDP particularly showed the impact of the civil war on its disruption. Also, in a mono-cultural economy like Nigeria's, for instance, about 90% of foreign exchange is earned through the sale of exhaustible fossil fuels. Such revenue is heavily wasted through massive

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11 Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

corruption, a signature of all the different NDPs. Also, a very important factor, as reflected in the different Plans, is that there is not a stable and focused philosophy on which these plans are developed; each government comes in to change the total course of governance, each time starting from near point zero with almost no plans to build upon the efforts of the previous governments or develop emergency responses like the ERGP and ESP. Hence, Nigeria's development plans are developed not on any specific and enduring philosophy, which could consider the mono-cultural economy being run by Nigeria with the aim of diversifying it in a peculiar multicultural environment using the primary and foundational parameters for development. What are the outcomes so far? Not much success has been recorded over the years of development, such that the word 'Development' seems elusive to Nigeria.

5. Multi-Referential Pyramidal Approach to Development

> *Every civilization has a hidden code – a set of rules or principles that run through its activities like a repeated design* [22].

Drawing inspiration from Toffler's [22] forward-thinking ideas on societal transformation, Xue et al. [23] illustrate that China's move toward an ecological civilization is not just a policy change but a comprehensive rethinking of how development and governance can be structured around three ecological principles, namely: environmental management, ecological restoration, and green development. This systemic design evolved from political connotations to science, Xue et al. [23] argued, and represents an innovative response to both national challenges and global environmental concerns. Mastro [24] reveals that China's national strength arises from integrating a set of principles, comprehensive, from political leadership, military modernization, technological innovation, scientific research to robust economic growth, termed Comprehensive National Power (CNP), repeatedly into all its activities like a hidden code [22].

Thus, multi-referential pyramidal approach to development for Nigeria may mean a systemic design that may be built on a 'developmentalist philosophy that is inherently nationalistic,' based on the five self-mirroring parameters, politics, military, technology, science and economics, of the CNP that make a country powerful, with four base vertices and an apex vertex as displayed in the Egyptian Great Pyramid of Giza, demonstrated in Figure 1, refers to here as an African civilization. If considered, articulated, internalized and implemented religiously, this approach may set the country on the path of sustainable development, as the other multi-needs of the different development plans from 1945-1968 up till the present MTNDP, 2021-2025 [25], take their roots from these five superstructures.

Ideological framework for building a developed society: According to Clausewitz [26], all military problems (wars) are political, all political problems are economic, and all economic problems are scientific and technological. Ding and Dafoe [27] demonstrate that military innovations are primarily driven by General-Purpose Technologies (GPTs) like electricity and computers, termed General-purpose Military Transformation (GMT), rather than specialized advancements such as nuclear weapons, echoing Clausewitz's [26] insights on warfare evolution. Hickey [28] highlights the dual political-military implications of technological progress, linking it to economic and security domains. Similarly, Loza et al. [29] and Jorgenson et al. [30] emphasize the interconnectedness of military conflicts, political disputes, economic conditions, and technological capabilities, revealing a cyclical relationship where militarization both shapes and is shaped by economic growth and technological innovation. Thus, CNP underscores the interdependence of political, economic, science, technological and military factors.

Animalu [31] refers to the above assertion by Carl von Clausewitz as the "plan perspective cycle of a modern industrial society", and after several steps, it is transformed to an alternative 3-D mapping of the stars of the Chinese flag into a pyramid of five stars as in Figure 1, which is representative of the Egyptian pyramid and recognizable as a symbol of an ancient African civilization.

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11
Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

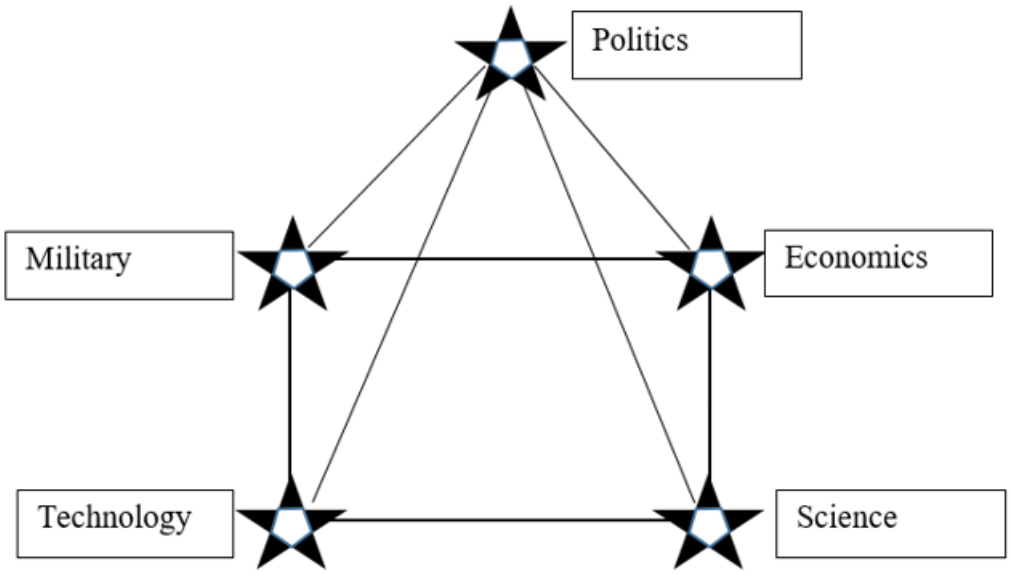

Figure 1. Animalu's [31] alternative representation of the plan perspective cycle of a modern industrial society model is a pyramid of five stars unifying an African symbol of civilization and Eastern symbol (National Flag of People's Republic of China).

Animalu [31] shows that these five interrelated elements of military, politics, economics, science and technology are placed on a cycle to form a pentagon/pentangle system. Pentagon is a multi-referential symbol, which is why the five-sided headquarters building of the United State Department of Defense in Washington is referred to as the Pentagon [32]. It could be likened to the western civilization's input to an industrial society, i.e., a multi-referential approach to finding solutions to developmental issues. On the other hand, the black-and-white pattern of the pentagon/pentangle system transcends the yin-and-yang dualism of the Asian world. The concepts of Yin and Yang and the Five Agents provided the intellectual framework of much of the Chinese scientific development [33, 34]. In ancient Chinese wisdom, the pentagon symbolizes creative order (of increasing complexity), while the pentangle symbolizes destructive order, of decreasing or more subtle state of matter or being [31]. This five-sidedness approach to making a country great or developed coded into Chinese development philosophy and reflects in their space efforts as summed up in Foust [35] by Kevin Pollpeter when he said:

> *China's surge in space activities can be summed up in three-word phrase: comprehensive national power, a concept first developed in China to win support for its human spaceflight program. CNP is a basket of everything that makes a country powerful: political, (diplomatic), economic, military, science and technology.*

CNP line of reasoning has expanded to encompass its entire space program [36]. "Politically, it has payoffs for China, internally and externally" [35]. The Chinese pattern of yin-and-yang dualism gives credence to the effect of order in society. A disordered society goes into war, which is destructive, whereas a creative society will enjoy prosperity and development.

Although recognized as the cradle of humanity and early civilization [37] and paradoxically known as an underdeveloped part of the world, Africa can still swell to development. The pyramid in its upright form represents a stable system, whereas the inverted pyramid that has characterized Nigeria's underdevelopment since attaining flag independence represents an inverted, unstable system.

The challenges to Africa, and more specifically to Nigeria, are operating under this phenomenon of an inverted pyramid and, therefore, plagued with its consequences, unstable, heavily destructive, as in Figure 2.

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11
Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

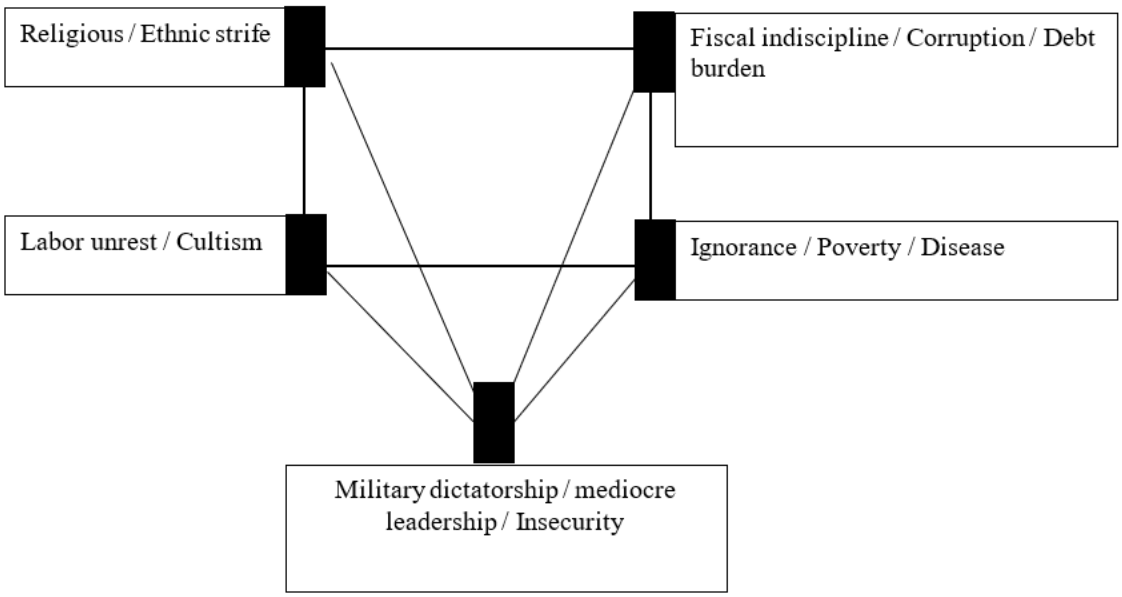

Figure 2. Inverted pyramid of five-dimensions of national problem.

The inverted pyramid phenomenon is the cause of national insecurity, religious and ethnic strife, fiscal indiscipline, corruption and debt burden, labour unrest and cultism, and poverty, ignorance and disease [31]. Stemming from wrong prioritization or destructive order of the pentagle.

Foundational basis for building a developed society: This paper assumes that Nigeria has wriggled its way past the inverted pyramid of five dimensions of national problems and an understanding of Animalu's [31] alternative model representation of the plan perspective cycle of modern industrial society. It, therefore, builds on this alternative concept based on the present reality and perspective, laying a solid foundation to take off on a strong stead for development, which transformed to Figure 3.

Considering the foregoing, slight contextual changes were made to Animalu's [31] model to reflect the ambiguity of the challenges. As it is, Nigeria seems to have uncovered and imbibed the truth required to embrace civilian rule and democracy, albeit in a very hard way. Therefore, military takeover may have become a thing of the past [38, 39]. Reuters [40] reported a Nigerian court issued an arrest warrant for a British national and two Nigerians the police want to charge for treason for inciting the military to plan coup against the government. So, we may as well replace the military in Animalu's [31] model with national security, which is all-encompassing, transcending the military to include the general polity. Technology, though a buzz term in the discourse relating to development, is important in Africa, particularly Nigeria, to note that technological usage (consumption) is misplaced for technological advancement. Nigeria has one of the fastest-growing teledensity in the world – teledensity in Nigeria increased from 8.5% in 2004 [41] to 116.6% in December 2022, representing more than 222 million active telephone lines [42]. Despite exceeding the 100% teledensity plan, none of the hardware nor software employed in a simple communication system is made in Nigeria as all are imported technology for consumption only. Being just the beneficiary of these technological advances does not translate to development. It is, in fact, disincentive, which rather kills the initiative and the sense of purpose that the aspiration for development requires. Science without scientific culture and application is like knowledge without understanding. In this regard, scientific education and scientific and inquisitive minds could be systematically built into the culture of the Nigerian populace [43].

The place of politics in nation-building must be considered because, with disorganized and corrupt political leadership, society may not prosper. Nigeria's focus should be to build an organized polity, imbibe the rule of law and embrace cultural re-orientation, which will guarantee commutative and distributive

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11
Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

justice in the society [44]. Further, no nation grows or develops on a borrowing economy [45]; indeed, World Bank Group [46] states that developing nations spent 27% of government revenues on debt servicing in 2022, stifling growth-oriented spending, implying that loans could be antithetical to development.

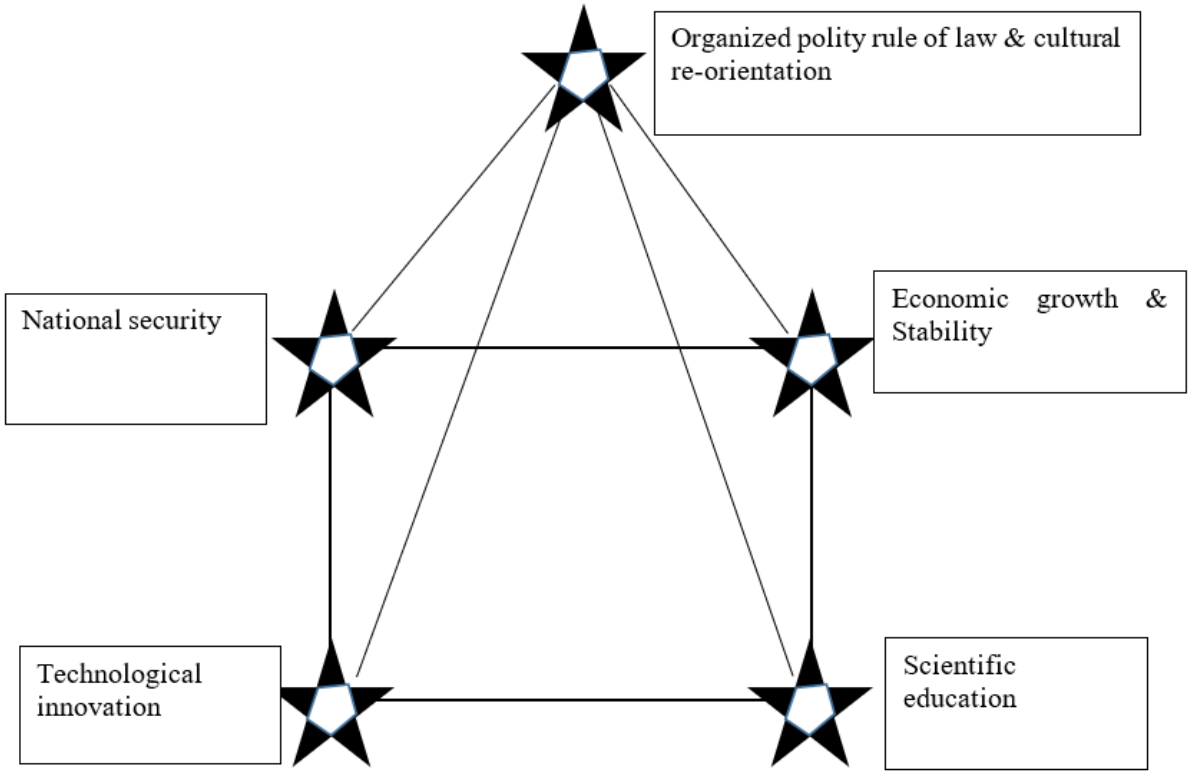

Figure 3. Specific foundational basis for building a developed society.

6. The Peculiar Nigerian Context

6.1. The Impact of Book Haram on National Security

The United States Department of State [47], under section 1(b) of Executive Order 13224, designated Boko Haram Commander Abubakar Shekau, Khalid al-Barnawi and Abubakar Adam Kambar as Global Terrorists. Following the July 8, 2012, attacks that led to the death of a serving Senator in a North-Central State, Plateau, Oritsejafor [48], serving as the National President of the Christian Association of Nigeria, made a passionate appeal to the United States government to go further to designate Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). Earlier, on 26 August 2011, Boko Haram conducted its first attack against a Western structure in Abuja, a vehicle-bomb attack on UN headquarters, killing many and injuring more [49], sparked the calls to designate the organization an FTO. In response to allegations by a U.S. lawmaker that USAID funds Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria [50], the U.S. Mission in Nigeria [51] issued an "emergency information for American citizens" on February 19, 2025. The statement condemned Boko Haram's blatant disregard for human life and reiterated that the U.S. Secretary of State designated Boko Haram as an FTO on November 14, 2013, a designation issued two years after the attack on UN headquarters that initially prompted calls for action. The influence of international intrigues cannot be overstated; they profoundly shape the political and economic dynamics within national spheres, driving strategic interactions and decisions that reverberate through domestic stability and global competitiveness. This awkward security challenge symbolizes the height of insecurity in Nigeria, recognized by the international community. The degree of insecurity due to the Boko Haram uprising in Nigeria has attained a record high; one may be tempted to say it is second only to the period of the civil (Biafran secession) war that contributed to the disruption and eventual failure of FNDP of 1962-68.

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11 Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

Inferring Roberts [44], this wave of national insecurity due to the Boko Haram insurgence is an extreme situation that threatens our nation's independence and collective existence. The spate of labour unrest, militancy, terrorism and even civil war in Nigeria in the past arose and conform to Roberts [44] that "in extreme situations there may be conflicts between what the self-preservation of society requires…" Unrest due to labour groups, ethnic militancy, religious terrorism and even civil war arose from conflicts that tended towards self-preservation. Unfulfilled demands from governments or employers of labour cause the labour groups' unrest. For instance, Nigeria's oil subsidy reforms since 2012 exemplify the challenges of balancing fiscal priorities with public welfare. While Jonathan's January 1, 2012, removal triggered nationwide unrest [52], Tinubu's 2023 oil subsidy policy reversal, despite his earlier critiques, signaled continuity in state-driven austerity, exacerbating critiques of elite indifference to mass impoverishment [53]. Ethnic militancy, especially from the Niger Delta region of the country, involved agitations geared toward resource control. In comparison, religious terrorism, as demonstrated by the Boko Haram sect, is largely due to a slip-off in power from the northern-majority-Muslims to the southern-minority-Christians of the South-South region.

Reuters Africa [54] asked, in the wake of Boko Haram, if majority Christian South could target northerners, the former Niger-Delta militia Mujahid Dokubo-Asari, who is also an Ijaw man like the then President Goodluck Jonathan, answered thus:

> *It is seconds away …Nigeria is on the precipice of a civil war. For Niger-Delta people to take up arms in just a minute away. It's just Goodluck that is holding us back; we have all reached the extreme. There is nothing anybody can do about it except we fight.*

Galtimari-led Presidential Committee on Security Challenges in the North-East zone traced the extremism's origin to private militias used as political thugs in the run-up to the 2003 general elections, of which Boko Haram is an offshoot. The Committee blamed poor intelligence, judiciary, poverty, poor FGN presence in the North-East geopolitical zone, and much more for the Boko Haram crisis. Boko Haram is an indoctrinated political militia built on Islamic fundamentalism yet seeking economic and power control [55]. Also, the Biafran war was fought to stop the secession of the eastern part of Nigeria. Self-preservation is a function of sharing the available resources towards enforcing equity or ensuring a lion share. As shown above, these resources are mostly economic or political power in Nigeria. More so, the collective existence of the country, due to insecurity, is heavily threatened.

Roberts [44] further asserts that public safety (national security) is the highest law in a situation where self-preservation is the cause of unrest, militancy and terrorism and even in an extreme war situation, which is supported by Ojo and Ayo [56], who asserted that "self-preservation remains the prime law of nature." According to Roberts [44], the only requirements in these periods of extreme situations are commutative and distributive justice. How do we achieve or administer commutative and distributive justice or public safety in a chaotic, uncertain and insecure situation, especially when the demand of the group is geared towards enforcing a lion's share take of resources in a society that is meant to be egalitarian? This question directly leads us to the need for economic stability for building a developed society.

6.2. Forced Economic Reservations and the Implications of a Borrowing Economy

The South Commission [57] stated that there is a clear need in most countries of the South to realign national budgets so that the bulk of public expenditure is devoted to economic and social activities without being wasted on military and security services. This statement sounds contradictory in that the South Commission sees expenditures on military and security matters as "waste;" meanwhile, no society blossoms or thrives in an insecure environment. The South Commission, a group of Third World Countries from the Global South, should therefore know better that expenditure on military and security cannot be underestimated. In a society that operates organized polity, a robust rule of law, and embraces cultural re-orientation, the level of national insecurity in Nigeria would likely not emerge. This implies that allocating the majority of the national budget to the military is wasteful, as the "disease" of national insecurity could be minimal or even absent. Animalu [31] opined that this advice against "waste" of resources on military and security services should also apply to most "unproductive" commercial activities of the civil societies of the Global South, such as reckless and flamboyant consumption of imported goods which divert resources from development.

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11 Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

A caveat to this assertion is, however, in a situation where a country is faced with external threats, living within the borders of hostile neighbours or seeking a regional superpower, otherwise, spending the bulk of the national budget on the military is indeed wasteful when all the other developmental parameters are in constructive order, and resources both human and materials are apportioned appropriately.

Ogbimi [58] stated that there are two different types of resources or assets: depreciating assets (DAs), of which the values decrease or deplete as they are used and as they age, and the second category is appreciating assets (AAs), which are the learning men and women. AAs are assets that appreciate in value with use. According to Ogbimi [58], examples of DAs are all structures, including infrastructure like road and telecommunications networks, industrial plants, real estate, educational institutions, automobiles, aeroplanes, clothes, and others. Faiyetole [59] corroborates Ogbimi [51] that mineral resources such as fossil fuel, of which the bulk that Nigeria's mono-cultural economy is built are exhaustible, which could constitute externalities such as emissions that lead to climate change with its negative impacts more felt in Africa [60, 61], and are exhaustive, a depreciating asset.

Staley [62] and Ogbimi [63] opine that growth-promoting factors must thrive to achieve sustainable economic growth and development. A country must have a growing growth potential (Vt) and be able to translate its growth potential into real growth. These statements can be represented graphically as in Figure 4 and expressed as follows:

$\frac{dV_t}{dt}$ = +ve (growing relationship) = CD (1)

$\frac{dV_t}{dt}$ = -ve (decaying relationship) = AB (2)

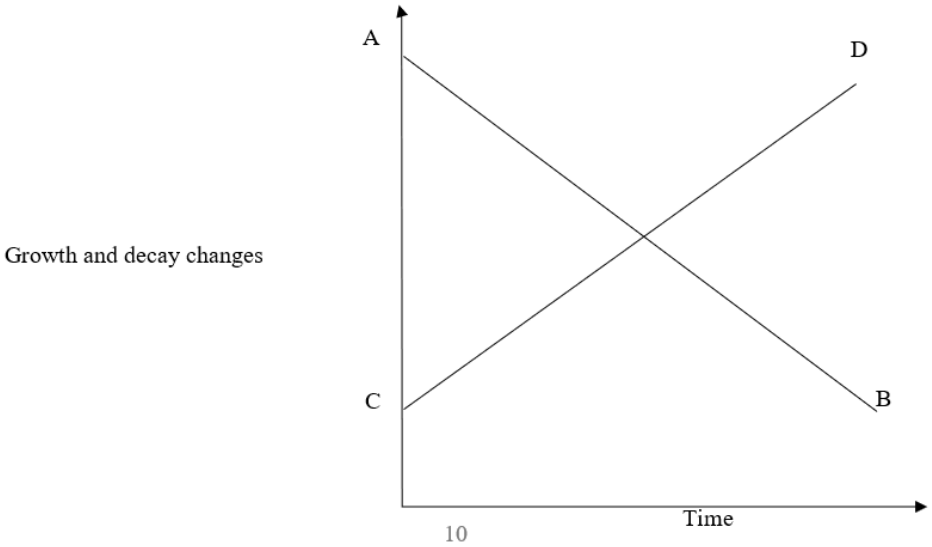

Figure 4. Growth and decay changes versus time.

Only an increasing growth potential (CD) can produce economic growth and stability. Economic growth potentials, V_t, are a function of initial potential, V_0, and annual depreciation constant, K.

$V_t = V_0 - Kt$ (3)

In essence, expenditures on infrastructure, which are depreciating assets without optimum utilization or underutilization of such infrastructure for productivity, do not promote economic growth and stability. It is even more crucial in appreciating assets like learning men or women. Educated human capital is the most important of all resources [31]. When such is not used or underused, a whole opportunity for creativity, innovation, growth and development may be lost for such nations. Animalu [31] noted, "the generality of

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11 Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

the Third World people and the Nigerian people, belong to the dangerously embittered brains that have been forced to move to economic "reservations" by the powers-that-be."

The implication of a borrowing economy: Ogbimi [63], through his ontologically represented graph, shows that for capital-borrowing capitalists, repayment of principal and interest to the World Bank/IMF and Western money clubs is a difficult obligation to meet. It imposes an accessibility constraint, leading to decaying cycles of accumulation-depreciation, accumulation-depreciation phenomenon, which is bad for developments.

Nigeria and its elites have perfected the culture of flamboyant living, typified in the consumption of exotic foreign goods and services, and formalized by the Federal Government policy quest for mostly Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and aid, with lower emphasis placed on indigenous capacity and brain gain. Consistent with Ekundare [9] who opined that over-reliance on foreign aid was a major contribution to the failure to achieve the objectives FNDP, especially the inability to have a measure of control over its destiny. Nigeria's policymakers risk entrenching the nation in a cycle of unsustainable borrowing from international lenders, disregarding the long-term economic consequences of such fiscal practices. The following can be deduced from Perkin [45]: that developing countries are being persuaded to take on more debts than they can repay. For example, the MTNDP is heavily burdened with foreign debts owed to multilateral organizations, i.e., World Bank, IMF, AfDB; bilateral loans to countries like China, France, Japan, and of course commercial loans, such as Eurobonds and Diaspora bonds. KPMG [64] revealed that the 2023 FGN budget had N11.34 trillion deficit, financed through both external and domestic borrowings.

Economic growth and stability were only attained in developed nations like the United States of America when they put their human resources to reasonable use. Until this period, they moved forward at a rate that sparked development [62]. For a country like China, Johnson [65] noted that despite its shift towards a liberal FDI policy, the Chinese state has been able to shift towards a 'developmentalist ideology that is inherently nationalistic.' Nigeria, like the US and China, has abundant human resources considering its population as a sovereign nation. Every sixth African is a Nigeria, is a popular saying. Why don't they put this huge resource to profitable use and build from the inside out to make sustainable development and progress possible for future generations? A review of Nigeria's polity and the culture of the people could be informative.

6.3. Organized Polity and Cultural Re-Orientation: First Steps to Coming to Terms with Political Truths

Babangida [66] recounted the intrigues that unfolded within the military, highlighting dissent from high-ranking officers against the processes of civilianization. These internal conflicts culminated in the abrupt truncation of the June 12, 2013, election results announcement and the subsequent annulment, delivered in a "terse, poorly worded statement on a scrap of paper" by a press secretary to the former Vice President of Nigeria. Babangida [66] described that ignoble action as "undeniably the most challenging moment of my life and, in many respects, one of the most painful." For emphasis, it took two harrowing military regimes, which institutionalized corruption and perverted the electoral process. Babangida *(1985-1993)* for annulling the election that was adjudged by *all* to be the freest and fairest ever, and Abacha *(1993-1998)* for coercing the five political parties, five leprous fingers, to choose him as their "only" presidential candidate, for Nigerians to arrive at a moment of political truth that has forced them to hold on to civilian rule and democracy despite its teething problems, and completely abhor the return of the - men in khaki - military [38, 40].

Bronowski [67] harps on the habit of truth as a way of life in our present scientific age; meaning, by scientific truth, objective, factual, quantitative, and technologically reducible truths insulated from personal desires, which characterized the machine age paradigm produced by Newton and his compatriots, like Dudley. By human values, meant political truth, which is an elusive, qualitative, and consensus truth focused on human desires. Animalu [31] asserts that the interaction between scientific and political truths was largely responsible for the industrial revolution in England.

Political truth must interact with scientific truth to achieve development, as has been asserted by Bronowski [67] and consistent with Brahms [68]. Scientific truth is factual, the same everywhere in the world. Brahms [68] opines, however, that scientific truth is not a product of the objective facts alone, it is

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11 Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

guided by political ideologies and motives. But political truth differs by culture and ethnicity and by people's orientation. This differential in political truth makes it extremely difficult to attain corrupt-free and organized polity in a primitive economy. When asked why people could discover atomic power but not the means to control it, Albert Einstein answered, "that is simple my friend: because politics is more difficult than physics." It means that as esoteric as some scientific (physical) truths are, political (people) truths are even more difficult to understand. Let us check how much it costs to unravel a scientific truth. How much does it cost to find a Higgs Boson? Knapp [69] in this regard shows:

> *It took about a decade to construct the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) for about $4.75 billion. Several experiments are going on at the LHC, including the CMS and ATLAS Detectors that discovered Higgs Boson. CERN contributes about 20% of those experiments' costs, about $5.5 billion annually. The remaining funding for those experiments is provided by international collaborators. Computing power is also a significant part of the cost of running CERN – about $286 million annually. Electricity costs alone for the LHC run about $23.5 million per year. The total operating budget of the LHC runs to about $1 billion per year. Considering all those costs, the total cost of finding the Higgs Boson was about $13.25 billion.*

Scientific truths like those uncovered by the LHC were embarked upon using the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) taxpayers' money. It could not be possible if the European polity were disorganized, uncommitted, and the public officials corrupt, selfish, and untruthful. Therefore, political truth must meet scientific truth before Africa; specifically, Nigeria can leap towards development. The attainment of Higgs Boson's discovery was made possible by the existence of political truth, made to interact with the scientific truth. The type of which is missing in Nigeria.

Fukuyama [70] argues that when leadership lacks the necessary qualities, political decay sets in, undermining the development needed for modern transformation [71]. Unfortunately, in Nigeria, as recognized by Ogbimi [58], in the political arena, many mediocre people wear leadership regalia only because they possess money. Mediocre leadership is threatened by the appearance of truth and puts up the front for self-preservation. Mediocre leadership lacks the depth, courage, charisma, vision, resourcefulness, and intellectual capacity to discover and culturize the size of political truth that is needed to spark and interact with scientific truth to achieve development for a primitive-artisan economy like Nigeria's.

All the developed nations at some point in their history are stared in the face with their respective political truth and had taken their destiny into their own hands to kick-start development [62]. When political truths are unravelled in a society that mediocre leaders govern, they will put up enough resistance to the truth because such truths can upturn the *status quo*. As experienced by Karl Marx in old Germany, the leadership wanted his writings banned from Europe. According to Smelser [72], the Ministry of Culture in Bonn prevented Karl Marx from becoming a faculty member at the University of Bonn. The Bonn authority exiled Karl Marx. Medieval Europe had to accept the political truth before moving forward.

Political truths can only be dug for, mined, and appreciated by educated minds, the AAs, learning men and women [63]. Hence, this next section directly deals with the weight of education and relevant education in promoting national development.

6.4. Scientific but People-Oriented Education in Unravelling Political Truths and a Panacea to Mediocre Leadership

The South Commission [57] stated that science and technology are the key determinants of economic progress [73]. Nigeria's leadership, however, tries to solve Nigeria's many challenges, including economic, political and security problems, among others. Nevertheless, it seems to lack the intellectual capacity to tackle these hydra-headed challenges head-on. Developing the capacity to solve Nigeria's many problems could involve the leadership developing scientific minds that can unravel and come to terms with political truth, which need to interact with scientific truth to spark growth and development. Though universal, scientific truth must interact with regionalized people-based or ideologically formed political truth.

Fafunwa [74] stated that "the British Government, in its first policy paper issued in 1925, wanted African education adapted to local conditions by placing emphasis on local traditions, the vernacular

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11 Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

languages, and technical, vocational and religious education." The British Government did not implement the policy. However, for lack of originality in solving our problem, the black race imitates the other races. Slavery, colonialism, and neocolonialism do not constitute any valid explanation for the failure of the black man to find original solutions to his several problems [75, 76, 77]. By implication, the current educational systems in Africa, by extension Nigeria, were designed to emulate those nations that had internally or externally directly influenced her during the colonial era [43].

Azikiwe [78] revealed that unless African scientists could invent a fourth form of nature unknown in pure science, all the conclusions they had built up in fields like medicine must fall flat… [because] African medicine is demonstrable. Animalu [31] added that an African scientist must invent in the medical field and all other branches of science and technology. Faiyetole [43] stated that every nation, both developed and developing, needs to maintain or develop a scientifically biased culture and a people-oriented education to sustain or develop [36]. Further, governments of developing nations may have to develop and encourage scientific culture amongst their people and people-oriented education for all, which Faiyetole [48] captures as Scientific but People-Oriented Education (SPOE). With SPOE, political truth is conditioned to interact properly with scientific truth. That may be a catalyst for sustainable development.

This synergy of vision and praxis, advocated by early Nigerian leaders and scholars like Faiyetole [43], highlights how science-centric governance can catalyze breakthroughs, as seen in the unraveling the mysteries of the universe and pushing the frontiers of knowledge. Precisely on July 4, 2012, the scientists at the world-renowned particle physics research laboratory announced that they got a clue for the first time in decades into Higgs Boson, a particle, for its importance is understanding the universe and all its matters, nicknamed God Particle [79]. African scientists will do more than invent a fourth form of nature to be on the stage. African scientists must at least stand should-to-shoulder with the western scientists in the understanding and application of similar or more "God Particles," if not discover the particles that make God the mysterious God. As the developed world works rigorously to push the frontier of knowledge, Africa must equally work, if not harder, to break through the frontier on all fronts.

If Africa does not develop scientific competence and imbibe scientific culture, it will be faced with the danger of what Serageldin [80] refers to as scientific apartheid:

> *There is a real danger that the benefits of proprietary science will serve to bring more and more to the privileged few rather than serve the needs of the billions of the marginalized poor and their children. That the developing countries will not be able to adjust fast enough to the needs of the competitive global economy of science-based production and knowledge-based income.*

It means that Africa, specifically Nigeria, must be more proactive about developing scientific competence to bring privileged benefits to its people. The developed world spends most of its Gross National Product (GNP) on scientific research and development [81]; they emphasize Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education, making such the building block for developing their technical manpower and innovators of the future [82]. The developed world, by boldly venturing into uncharted territories, such as uncovering the Higgs Boson and exploring outer space, reaps the first benefits of its breakthroughs, even if these discoveries are eventually shared. However, this advantage may widen global inequalities, creating divides that could persist for generations or indefinitely. SPOE emerges as a critical countermeasure to this asymmetry. By aligning scientific literacy with community-driven priorities, SPOE empowers developing nations to bridge the gap between accessing frontier innovations and contextualizing them for equitable societal benefit, directly addressing Ismail Serageldin's concerns about the ethical sharing of scientific progress.

6.5. Technological Innovations: A Logical Step from Scientific Education

Only when scientific truths are unrivalled and understood can technology be developed and technological innovations become a way of life. Wang et al. [83] highlights how scientific advances directly inspire new technological applications, underscoring the symbiotic relationship between science and technology, consistent with Brooks [84], who posited that science contributes in at least six ways to technology, prime is, new knowledge which serves as a direct source of ideas for new technological

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11
Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

possibilities. The full technological implications of the Higgs Boson discovery remain uncertain. However, history demonstrates that breakthroughs in basic sciences, physics, chemistry, biology, and mathematics spur transformative technologies that enhance modern life. Innovations like computing systems, automobiles, aviation, genetic engineering, digital finance, and spacecraft all originate from foundational scientific advances.

> *Industrialization is about manufacturing products by companies that empower people economically by offering them employment. Therefore, industrialization relates to how people in a society are organized for productive work which impacts on the society's quality of life. Technically speaking, industrialization is a product of manufacturing technology and industrial engineering. Consequently, industrialization demands an organization that gives the people the ability to acquire knowledge and, for a modern society, to be science oriented* [31].

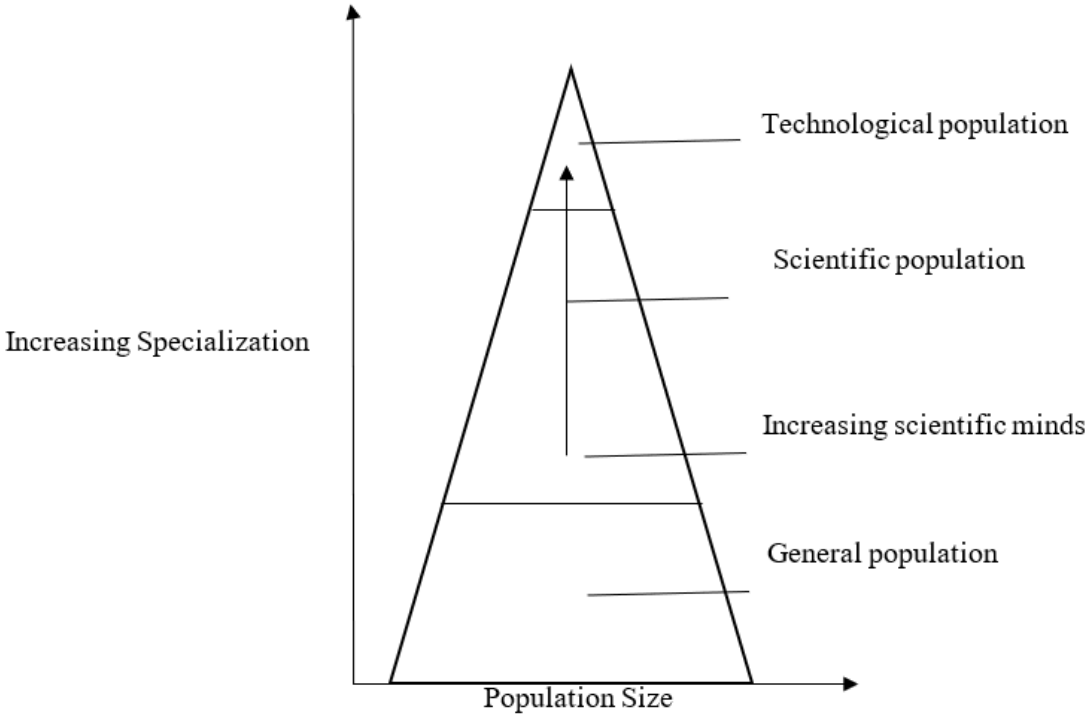

Figure 5. Increasing scientific minds versus technological Innovation.

Figure 5 shows the relationships between the general population, scientific population and technological expertise for innovation. For rapid technological innovation and development, most of the population in the general population base must be increasingly taken over by the population due to scientific minds.

Technology capacity index (TCI): is a model, reflected in Figure 6, used to measure the technological capacity of any society, adapted after Rand Corporation. For TCI, replacing human capital with scientific minds is central to technological innovation. The institutions and physical infrastructure occupy an equal place with the scientific minds on the TCI. However, only the scientific minds are AAs, while the others, institutions and physical infrastructure, are DAs, depending on the degree of optimum usage.

National institutional capacity: We have scientific and technological research and development here. Moreover, the budgetary investment (expenditures) made for the purpose should be a factor of the entire population. Learning progresses from the learner's position to the expert position [85]. Therefore, in a normal situation [86], scientific education must form the basis for the technological expertise needed to climb the technological ladder.

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11
Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

National physical infrastructure: These are infrastructural needs such as stable power supply, robust communication, effective and safe transportation and the degree of urbanization. The scientific minds: Are the learning men and women. The degree of producing the pool of such minds is a factor of national education infrastructure and expenditure, the number of scientists and engineers per million population, quality of science and technology journal articles, and the number of patents by scientists and engineers.

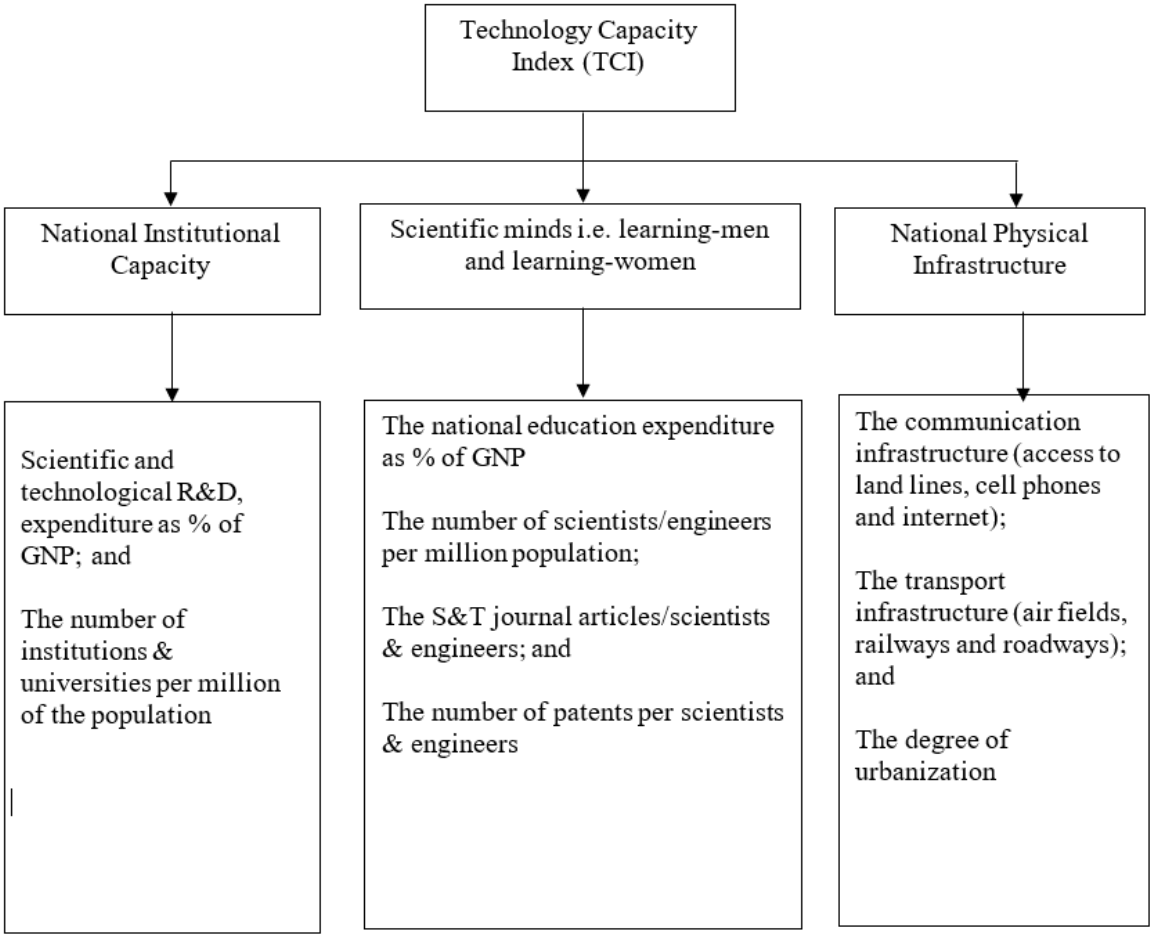

Figure 6. Technology Capacity Index (after Rand Corporation).

In Nigeria, efforts at technological innovation, albeit through its purchase to the tune of $13 million from the British company Surrey Satellite Technology Limited (SSTL), have been marred with criticism of mismanagement [87]. Unlike the adventure of Higgs Boson, the critical brains 'developed' as a result of this technology purchase and transfer agreement with SSTL were sacked just at their appearance of scientific truth, for what could be likened to the incapability, or lack of capacity of the management political truth to productively interact with the superior scientific truth embodied by the scientists and engineers. Hence, threatened by the appearance of this new and advanced set of scientific truth. Shrum *et al.* [88] stated that the new staff were "inexperienced and mediocre" without the British training of earlier engineers. This incapacity in an interaction caused by a threat to the level of the management's political truth has led to a 'brain drain' and forced 'economic reservations' of the most important resource for development.

7. A Strategy for Implementing MPF for Development

For the proposed MPF to address Nigeria's multidimensional development challenges, the following strategy could integrate the five multi-referential superstructures, CNP, scientific truth, technological

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11 Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

innovations, political truth, national security, and economic growth, into a coherent national development agenda, following five major strategies as shown in subsections 7.1 to 7.5.

7.1. Strategic Vision and Institutional Alignment

We propose a unified national blueprint that recognizes the intrinsic link between political truth, scientific truth, technological innovation, national security, and economic progress to build a CNP. Key actions could include the establishment of the National Development Council (NDC), an inter-ministerial body chaired by a President's Special Envoy with representatives from science, technology, defense, economic planning, and governance, tasked with overseeing the development and implementation of the blueprint. This document will clearly articulate the roles and interdependencies of the five pillars. Engage academia, industry leaders, civil society, and other stakeholders to ensure broad-based input.

7.2. Institutional Strengthening and Policy Reforms

Reform and strengthen national institutions to create an enabling environment for transformative change, ensuring that every foundational element is robustly supported. Key actions here could include governance and political truth: Implementation of transparency and accountability measures and fostering public trust in government by promoting policies that ensure political leadership is committed to integrity, inclusivity, and pursuit of a shared national truth or national philosophy. Scientific truth and technological innovation: Increase investment in Research and Development (R&D) through public funding and incentives for private sectors and modernize educational curricula and research institutions to emphasize scientific truth, critical thinking, and practical applications. National security: Reform the military and security sectors to balance defense readiness with respect for democratic norms, while integrating technological innovations into national security strategies. Economic growth and stability: Enact fiscal and industrial policies that support high-value sectors and leverage on scientific breakthroughs for economic diversification, while encouraging public-private partnerships to modernize infrastructure and create job opportunities.

7.3. Innovation Ecosystem and Synergy Creation

Leverage the synergistic pathways among scientific research, technological breakthroughs, and visionary leadership to drive sustainable economic growth to build CNP. Key actions could include establishment of innovation hubs and technology parks to include centers of excellence across Nigeria that serves as incubators for scientific and technological innovation. Link these hubs, parks, centers, incubators to universities, research institutions, and local industries to foster knowledge transfer and practical application. Promote and integrate indigenous and local knowledge systems into modern scientific practices, in what Faiyetole [43] calls scientific but people-oriented education, SPOE, enriching the nation's scientific truth and fostering culturally resonant innovations and technological breakthroughs. Ensure policies across the five superstructures are holistically linked through NDC, so that advancement in one area bolster progress in others. Also, forge strategic international collaborations and partnerships to tap into global scientific networks, attract investment, and benchmark against best practices in science and technology, governance, defense, and economic management.

7.4. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptive Management

Institute a robust framework for continuous monitoring and evaluation, ensuring that the implementation of the pyramidal framework remains dynamic, responsive, and accountable. Key actions could include developing metrics for each superstructure using Key Performance Indicators (KPI), such as R&D spending efficiency, scientific publication quality, innovation indices, governance transparency scores, national security effectiveness, and economic growth rates. Establish a central data repository through creation of a digital platform to collect, analyze, and publicly share data on the progress of development initiatives. This enhances transparency and facilitates real-time decision-making. Conduct annual and mid-term reviews involving all stakeholders to assess progress, identify bottlenecks, and

Doi: https://doi.org/10.63333/sh.v1n11 Vol. 1 No. 1 (2025)

recalibrate strategies as necessary. Also, implement risk assessment mechanisms to identify potential political, economic, or security challenges, and develop contingency plans to mitigate their impact.

7.5. Communication, Culture, and Consensus Building

Cultivate a national culture that values truth, both scientific and political, and encourages collaborative efforts across all sectors. Key actions could include launching educational initiatives to raise public understanding of the links between scientific discovery, technological innovation, political truth and national development. Celebration of milestones by recognizing and publicizing key achievements in science, technology, and governance to inspire further innovation and consolidate national pride. Collaborate with media outlets and academic institutions to disseminate success stories and critical insights from the implementation process, reinforcing the narrative that informed, visionary leadership drives progress. Ensure that all voices, especially from marginalized communities, are integrated into the national dialogue, promoting unity and collective ownership of the development agenda.

Conclusions

Nigeria's challenges are multi-dimensional, from poverty, corruption, imported technological innovation and poorly adapted education, mismanagement, and poor productivity. It is realized that for this magnitude of problems to be solved in a fast pace age, an 'MPF approach to development,' a systemic design built on a 'developmentalist philosophy that is inherently nationalistic,' if considered, articulated, internalized and implemented religiously, may set the country on the path of sustainable development, as the other multi-needs of the different development plans since pre-independence to date, up till MTNDP 2021-2025, take their root from the five primary parameter: four foundational and an apex parameters. The approach is designed to avoid the errors of past and the present NDP; made robust to allow for changing needs of the people. By simultaneously reinforcing the pillars of CNP, the framework provides a roadmap for transforming Nigeria's economy and societal superstructures. The success of this model hinges on robust institutional reforms, including the formation of NDC, sustained investments in science and technology, and a commitment to inclusive, transparent governance that bridges indigenous knowledge with modern innovation. While challenges remain, the MPF not only charts a course for rapid development but also reinforces Nigeria's ability to transform its multidimensional development challenges into opportunities for sustained progress and assert its destiny on the global stage. Continued collaboration among all stakeholders, sustained political will, commitment to both empirical truth and visionary leadership and adaptive management will be crucial in realizing these transformative goals and ensuring that the pursuit of scientific and political truth remains at the heart of Nigeria's developmental agenda.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares that there is no conflict of interests, financial or non-financial, of any sort regarding this research.

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