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## Strategies for Achieving Sustainable Development in Nigeria: Conceptual and Empirical Approach

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A SPECIAL ISSUE CONFERENCE PROCEEDING PAPER

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# Strategies for Achieving Sustainable Development in Nigeria: Conceptual and Empirical Approach

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**Abstract:** National economic sustainability is currently a developmental policy that is being pursued by various governments of developing economies World over, the Nigerian economy inclusive. The main objective of this study is to determine the strategies for achieving sustainable development in Nigeria. A sample of one hundred and fifty respondents from five chosen institutions in the South East geopolitical region of Nigeria were chosen for the study. A well-structured questionnaire on the subject matter was distributed to the respondents for data collection, with each institution receiving thirty questionnaires. The reliability of the instrument was assessed using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The study applied the mean, standard deviation, and the bivariate correlation analysis to determine the effectiveness of the strategies namely agriculture; entrepreneurial development in SMEs; green growth economy; and effective leadership, in achieving sustainable development in Nigeria. The findings of the study indicated that each of these strategies influenced sustainable development to a great extent. The result further revealed that all the explanatory variables exerted positive significant effect on Nigeria sustainable development. The study concluded that attainment of sustainable development of the Nigerian economy relies heavily on the economy's readiness to give adequate attention to these developmental strategies that have direct impact on it. The study recommended among others, the adoption of best and environmental sustainable practices, in our bid to enhance productivity for better living, as we pursue NV 20@: 2020; also, attention should be given to our infant industries in different spheres of productive activities through special subventions as support, to boost their productivity.

**Key words:** Sustainable Development, Effective Strategies, Nigeria Economy.

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## INTRODUCTION

The development of any economy anchors greatly on the sustainability of its social, political and/or economic policies and programs that are result oriented. Policy reviews and reforms are eminent to addressing emerging social, political or economic needs of nations in response to changing societal, political and economic needs. The sustainability of the economy remains paramount to political leaders, economists, leaders of thought in the society, stakeholders, etc. as it makes for a stable, virile society; ensuring continuous growth and development. Ndubuisi-Okolo, Anekwe and Attah (2016) opined that

sustainable development requires meeting the pressing needs of all people and extending opportunity to satisfy their aspirations for a better life. It ensures a developed world with secured and healthy environment for all; human beings, animals and plants alike.

To Ogbo *et al.*, (2017), a sustainable economy is not only that which is profitable at a given point in time, but also an economy that can sustain all its good from one generation to the other. Sustainability, according to Kuhlman and Farrington (2010), in Ogbo *et al.*, (2017) entails meeting our own present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to respond to their own needs. Achieving sustainability in Nigeria is to establish an economy that is viable, environmentally sound, investment friendly and socially responsible.

Sustainable developmental goals that have dominated discussion among policy makers, economic analysts, etc., include, poverty alleviation, youth empowerment, entrepreneurship development, self-reliance and effective leadership, which are perceived as key strategies for actualizing the four key components of sustainable development (environment, economic, social and political) in Nigeria (Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anekwe, 2018).

It should be recalled that in the year 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted by 189 member countries of the United Nations including Nigeria. This was with a view to fast track key developmental issues in Nigeria which include increasing the availability of basic life sustaining goods, raising the standard of people's living as well as expanding the range of economic and social choices (Akintoye and Opeyemi, 2014).

Pursuant to the MDGs, the Nigerian government rolled out programmes and initiatives with the aim of eradicating poverty and attaining sustainable development of the Nigerian economy. These programmes of the Nigerian government include: National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEPE) which was introduced in 2002 owing to the failure of previous programmes of the Nigerian government in solving the perennial problems of poverty alleviation and unemployment. Okoye and Onyeukwu (2007) contained that the programme involved all stakeholders in Nigerian economy that can be involved in eradicating poverty and improving job creation through provision of access to loans/credits to encourage entrepreneurial development to Small and Medium Scale Enterprises. Also, The national Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) which was introduced in 2004 to uphold some of the goals of the MDGs; prominent among these goals were wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction and value re-orientation.

Beside the NAPED and NEEDS programmes by successive governments, previous administrations in the country have well-articulated programmes that were targeted to ameliorating the scourging effects of poverty and unemployment in the country. It is on these premises that this study was necessitated to examine the strategies for achieving sustainable development in Nigeria.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The attainment of sustainable development remains paramount for any government that desires stable, virile, prosperous and progressive economy. The pursuit of sustainable economy will not be attainable without alleviating poverty drastically, empowering the Nigerian youth in various endeavours and careers; encouraging entrepreneurship development for SMEs; and addressing other social, economic, environmental and political issues in the economy. It is believed that the attainment of these goals will set the Nigerian economy on the pedestrian of growth and development. But a new report by the World Poverty Clock shows that Nigeria has overtaken India as the country with the most extreme poor people in the world. Nigeria now has the largest

extreme poverty population of 86.9 million people in extreme poverty, representing 50% of its estimated above 180 million population. Besides, her unemployment rate has been on the increase over the year (Yomi, 2018).

Findings revealed that noble initiatives and programmes of government to attain sustainable development of the Nigerian economy have been marred by corruption and ineffective economic policy (Gbosi, 2007), inappropriate and ineffective policies (Anyanwu, 2007), lack of integration of macro-economic plans and the absence of harmonization and coordination of government policies (Onuh, 2007); policy inconsistency, high level of corruption, wasteful spending, poor policy implementation and lack of feedback mechanism for implemented policies evident in Nigeria (Bakare-Aremi and Osobase, 2015); political instability, poor socio-economic development, teeming population of qualified unemployed youths, lack of entrepreneurial skills, bribery and corruption, etc. (Ndubuisi-Okoli and Anekwe, 2018). On these premise, one will infer that the attainment of sustainable development of the Nigerian nation in the nearest possible time remains a mirage, and therefore calls for urgent attention considering its consequences.

In spite of these, the findings of many studies on this subject area are scanty, whereas some failed to adopt appropriate statistical methodology in arriving at their findings and conclusions. Ndubuisi-Okoli and Anekwe (2018) adopted only conceptual review in their study. Their findings were based on the literatures reviewed without data collection and analysis to empirically substantiate their findings. Akintoye and Opeyemi (2014) studied on sustainable development with a review of the plan implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable development. Beyond the review, no statistical methodology was adopted and the effects of the developmental strategies were not tested on the economy. Ogbo, Eneh-Nnajiolor, Agbaeze, Chukwu and Isigola (2017) studied the strategies for achieving sustainable economy in Nigeria with emphasis only on the acceptable stakeholders. The study reviewed the modern state of the Nigerian economy and the failed strategies tried in the past. The study failed to bring to limelight effective sustainable strategies. It also failed to empirically substantiate the effects of these strategies in engendering the development of the Nigerian economy.

To this end, this study is necessitated; and it focuses on the strategies for achieving sustainable development in Nigeria, adopting both the conceptual reviews (the nexus) and statistical analysis - the bivariate correlation analysis to substantiate its findings.

### **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to determine the strategies for achieving sustainable development in Nigeria. Other Specific Objectives include:

1. To determine the extent Agriculture as an effective strategy influence sustainable development in Nigeria.
2. To determine the extent Entrepreneurial development as an effective strategy, affect sustainable development in Nigeria.
3. To find out the extent Green growth economy as an effective strategy influence sustainable development in Nigeria.
4. To determine the extent effective leadership as an effective strategy affect sustainable development in Nigeria.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The research questions are hereby stated and they will serve as a guide to the study.

1. To what extent does Agriculture as an effective strategy influence sustainable development in Nigeria?
2. How does Entrepreneurial development as an effective developmental strategy influence sustainable development in Nigeria?
3. What influence has Green growth economy as an effective developmental strategy on sustainable development in Nigeria?
4. To what extent does effective leadership as an effective strategy affect sustainable development in Nigeria?

### **1.4 Research Hypothesis**

In the test of hypotheses, we explore the correlation between the explanatory variables and the dependent variable. The hypotheses are stated in their null form.

1. There is no significant relationship between Agriculture as an effective strategy, and sustainable development in Nigeria.
2. There is no significant relationship between Entrepreneurial development as an effective strategy and sustainable development in Nigeria.
3. There is no significant relationship between Green Growth economy as an effective strategy and sustainable development in Nigeria.
4. There is no significant relationship between effective leadership as an effective strategy and sustainable development in Nigeria.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Conceptual Framework**

#### **2.1.1 Meaning of Sustainable Development**

Oyewo and Badejo (2014) defined sustainable development as the utilization of resources to meet the economic, social and environmental needs of human, such that the interest of the present and future generation is served. To Seers (1969), in Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anekwe (2018), sustainable development entails development that can be kept going or maintained. This, according to him, should entail the giving of attention to the transformation of productive forces and commensurate transformation in the social relations of production. To him, the ability to maintain this is what guarantees sustainable development. Sustainability can also be seen as an entity's ability to maintain a trend of quality, knowing full well that the peoples' bargain hunting would align perfectly with business practices that sustain a healthy and just world. Thus, powerful market forces are in the service of sustainability's goals (Yvon *et al.*, 2011). Lele (1991) describes sustainable development as a new way of life and approach to social and economic activities for all societies, rich and poor which is compatible with the preservation of the environment.

Erhun, (2015) contained that economic sustainability forms an essential component of sustainable development; it is the achievement of development by maintaining and sustaining the real high growth rate in a country's economy.

### **2.1.2 The Concept of Emerging Issues or Perspectives**

These are numerous ways in which the idea of “emerging issues” or “emerging perspectives” pertinent to policy makers and the sustainable development agenda could be conceptualized (UNEP, 2015). The broad scope of sustainable development suggests that virtually any social, economic or environmental process or challenge amenable to scientific understanding may potentially be relevant (UNEP, 2015). Emergence, meanwhile, could signify the novelty or intensification of some of those issues, fresh understanding of their causes or consequences, the development of new management options, or the identification of issues that have gone previously unrecognized. The inherently subjective process of identifying emerging perspectives or issues can however, be guided by criteria selected with a view to the particular field of interest. (GSDR, 2016)

### **2.1.3 Emerging Perspectives for Sustainable Development in Nigeria**

The strategies for achieving Sustainable Development in Nigeria as discussed in this study which form basis for the expanded Objectives and Research Questions include (but not limited to);

## **1. Agriculture and Sustainable Development in Nigeria**

Agriculture used to be the largest contributor to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Nigeria. Before the 1960 independence, the sector employed the largest number of labour; caused the country to earn foreign exchange, and also made the country renown in the international community (Ayande and Ogunsekan, 2012). This gold mine of the Nigerian economy suffered a setback and reckless abandonment in the 1970s as petroleum/oil was discovered. Oil and gas became the mainstay of the Nigerian economy causing attention to shift away from agriculture. Oyewo and Badejo (2014) defined sustainable development as the utilization of resources to meet the economic, social and environmental needs of human such that the interest of the present and future generation is served. Sustainable economic development seeks to meet the economic needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own economic needs. In agriculture, natural endowments are employed in the practice. Natural resources like water, soil, wind, etc. are common input in agriculture, employed to meet the needs of man. These resources therefore should be harnessed in such a manner that their future use to sustain the economy is not jeopardized. Consequently considering the growth and development which agriculture has brought to the country in the past, there is urgent call for a repositioning to set the sector on a progressive pedestrian towards the attainment of sustainable development of the Nigerian economy. This can be achieved through enhanced agricultural/farming education using the Extension Agents, Workshops and Seminars.

- Availability of improved seedlings, manures/fertilizers and provision of farming implements.
- Access to farming loans from Bank of Agriculture at a much reduced interest rates chargeable.
- Farm produces processing and preservation mechanism to make for all season availability of produce.

- Formulation of favourable policies and initiatives that will make the sector attractive and favourable.
- Creation of markets for farm produces both locally and internationally to boost productivity and its contribution to national development.
- Financial inclusion in the Agricultural Sector (Michael, 2016).
- Adoption of best farming practices that will not impact negatively on the land; thereby ensuring sustainability in yield and national development contribution both in the now, and in the future.

It is worthy to note that alleviation of Hunger and Poverty among the Citizenry which is topmost among MDGs, can be easily achieved through enhanced, encouraged farming/agricultural engagement by larger population of the Nigerian Economy and as such, serves as an effective tool for the attainment of sustainable development of the Nigerian Economy.

## **2. Entrepreneurial Development in SMES and Sustainable Development In Nigeria**

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a significant role in the economic development and poverty reduction of many nations; Nigeria inclusive. In 2016, Nigerian economy dipped into regression for the first time in more than two decades, attributed to a series of shocks, including the continued decline in oil prices, foreign exchange shortages, sharp reduction in oil production, power shortages, and insecurity in the north and Niger-Delta regions (African Economic Outlook, 2017).

As Nigerian economy continues to face serious macro-economic challenges, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) pursue a contracting monetary policy stance to enhance economic recovery. In response to the falling economy, the Nigerian government embarked on promoting entrepreneurship and diversification of its economy through the non-oil sector (Igwe *et al.*, 2018).

In the past few years, Nigerian governments have initiated entrepreneurial funds to stimulate the creation of new businesses among her teaming youths and women population. Examples of such scheme include the “You Win Enterprise Initiative” of 2011 – 2014, and the social intervention programme of the current administration for which about half a trillion was allocated in the 2016 budget. Currently, the n-power programme of the federal government is on-going.

As posited by Scholars and researchers in Babandi (2017), small businesses contribute to the economic growth of Nigeria (Ademola and Michael, 2012). Small businesses make up 97% of the Nigerian economy and contribute 70% of the country’s job opportunities (Shehu *et al.*, 2013). They contend that small and medium enterprises employed 82.02% of the total workforce in Nigeria (Adebisi and Gbegi, 2013; SMEDAN, 2013). To a sector of such record of contribution to national development, any effort/attention to its growth and sustenance, will positively impact growth.

SME and entrepreneurship are often used interchangeably, but differ from each other in that entrepreneurship is a process that leads to the creation of SMEs and business endeavours, whereas SMEs are simply business ventures arising from entrepreneurial pursuits of individuals and is managed by individuals or owner-managers (Eseh, 2012; in Lawal *et al.*, 2016).

Sustainable entrepreneurship is a new concept that links sustainable development with business activities (Schaltegger and Wagner, 2008). Crals and Vereeck (2004) defined

sustainable entrepreneurship as the continuing commitment by businesses to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce, their families, the local and global community as well as future generations.

Entrepreneurial development in SMEs is perceived as being capable of making tremendous impact on the Nigerian economy and the quality of lives of her citizens.

Observably, there is increasing record of failure of small businesses in Nigeria with its effect on unemployment rate. Adisa, Abdulraheem and Mordi (2014) asserted that the failure of small business in Nigeria have made the segment the last resort of employment of citizens as people now engage in small businesses only if there is no other employment opportunity available to them.

Irrespective of the perceived failure ravaging entrepreneurship in SMEs and its contribution to national development currently; it is believed that intensified effort in inculcating entrepreneurial spirit in the lives of youths; enhanced/improved entrepreneurial education in SMEs and conducive operational environment, still remain one of the avenues to alleviating poverty raving the Nigerian populace and thereby solving the hunger question, as SMEs engagement is intensified. Therefore, entrepreneurship development in SMEs remains an effective strategy to sustainable development of the Nigerian economy as it enhances wealth generation, capacity building, reduction of poverty, alleviation from hunger, and uplifting of people's welfare by providing goods and services. Besides, entrepreneurship opens doors for creativity and innovation which are the hallmark of sustainability.

Entrepreneurial education has also been found as an avenue to shaping the mindset of young people, and also providing them with the requisite knowledge necessary for self-development in entrepreneurial endeavours. Entrepreneurial education for the development in SMEs provides the Nigerian teeming youths with motivation, knowledge and skill-know how, required for launching a successful business venture (Cho, 1998). By orientation of the youths in entrepreneurial development in SMEs, the objective of youth empowerment and self-reliance is achieved which are panacea to sustainable development of the Nigerian economy.

### **3. Green Growth Economy and Sustainable Development in Nigeria**

By origin, green growth is traced to Asia and Pacific regions at a conference held in Seoul in the year 2005 when it was decided that there is a need to move from the then present economic growth to a sustainable green growth path with its overall aim of reducing poverty level and environmental sustainability. As at the commencement in 2005, it was a regional based policy, but later received a global attention most especially among the developing nations with assistance from several international agencies like the World Bank, UNESCAP and OECD in 2012 (Omiliola, 2014).

To Fay (2012), green growth is the only vital strategy that can set developing countries on the path of sustainable development through poverty alleviation, and increased public awareness on environmental issues.

Although there exists no universal definition of green growth economy, but World Bank refers to green growth as an inclusive growth that is efficient in its use of natural resources as it minimizes pollution and environmental impacts; also resilient in that it accounts for natural hazard and the role of environmental management and natural capital in preventing physical disaster (World Bank, 2012). OECD (2011b) refers to green growth as a strategy of ensuring economic growth and development without a resultant impact on the ecosystem but a sustainable



effect on the social welfare.

The need to get the source of livelihood and still maintain a quality environment directly explains the relevance of the seventh goal target of the Millennium Development Goal which is to ensure environmental sustainability (Todaro and Smith, 2015). The continued utilization of unsustainable methods of production will have an unending damage to soil, water supply and forest with a slow rate of replenishment compared to the rate of harvest. As nations tends to industrialization with the adoption of high technological machines and equipment; there is increased accumulation of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, which is a great threat to the environment as it is tending to a level that inhibits the environment's maintenance of acceptable global temperature below 2°C over the pre-industrial level. In order to avoid the threat posed by the accumulation of CO<sub>2</sub> emission, (which include increasing temperature; Ozone layer depletion, high probabilities of coral bleaching, etc.) and still ensure inclusive economic growth in different countries of the world, there is a need for a paradigm shift towards renewable source of generating energy.

It is estimated that about 1:1 - 1:6 billion people in low-income countries lack access to electricity and about 2:6 - 2:9 billion people adopt the traditional biomass as a source of heating for cooking and thereby exposed to risks of lung diseases, burns and the possibility of even death (GTF, 2015; IEA, 2013; in Ibitoye *et al.*, 2017).

Africa is richly endowed with renewable energy resources which remain underutilized because only about 7% of her enormous hydro potentials excluding the small, mini and micro hydro opportunities are being harnessed. Kenya has only exploited about 60MW from the geothermal energy which stands at 9000MW (Karekezi *et al.*, (2003), in Ibitoye *et al.*, 2017). Nigeria has an average solar radiation level of about 5.5 whm – 2 days – 1 and a prevailing efficiency of commercial electric generators. If the solar modules are utilized in 1% of Nigeria's land area of 923,773km, 1850GWh by 103Gwh Solar electricity will be generated per year, while this will give 100 times the grid electricity consumption level in Nigeria (Sambo, 2009).

Irrespective of the difficulties in meeting the nation's electricity demand which include sabotage, crises in the oil producing regions of the countries, vandalization of installations, low supply of oil, etc., the demand for electric supply will continue on the increase in response to increasing population, urbanization, need for improved standard of living etc. Besides; the use of fuel woods as alternative source of energy is posing environmental threat of deforestation as no adequate measure is put in place for regeneration. Fuel woods may not serve this purpose in the near future if no intervening mechanism is established; hence the urgent need for green growth.

The environment has been subjected to serious environmental challenges ranging from environmental degradation, oil spillage, bad weather, shortage of food, water and energy; carbon emission and its attendant health related cases which occurs as a result of over dependence on mono natural resource product and its exploitation being witnessed across the resource-based areas of the Southern part of the country. As posited by some scholars, the countries quantitative economic progress has remained in daunting stage despite the endowed national resources leaving 30% of her population in severe poverty and 62% below poverty line, having only 48% of her citizens access to electricity; 64% to water source and the resource areas (Niger Delta) with high Benzo (a)Pyrene concentration in the water, only 28% have access to improved sanitation; CO<sub>2</sub> emission of about 0.5 per capital metric tons, unemployment moving from 6.6% in 2014 to 10.4% in 2015 and annual deforestation on the average of 3% yearly (World Bank, 2015).

Green growth supporters are of the view that the current economic growth being witnessed in many nations are no longer sustainable because of the global recession, waste of resources, low budgeting component to environmental conservation, but spending a huge amount to curb various hazards that occur after exploitation as a result of poor management of natural resources. The adoption and transition to green growth remains cardinal in the agenda of many nations, even though the move is believed to be characterized with mixed feelings like job losses, dwindling labour market and immobility of workers which might come as a result of tight environmental policies and regulations which may either cause the total closure or relocation of industries, resulting into trade conflicts (Bowen, 2012 in Ibitoye *et al.*, 2017).

As part of its contribution to sustainable development in developing nations, poverty reduction, improved well-being, resource scarcity control and climate changes are found as the path to inclusive green growth.

#### **4. Effective Leadership and Sustainable Development in Nigeria**

Mckeown (2002) held that the central tenet of sustainable development unveils three diverse components via environment, social and economy that are interrelated and not separated. This implies that for the actualization of sustainable development, a more balanced relationship among the environment, society and economy in pursuit of the perceived development and improved quality of life must be established. This means, making the environment conducive and safe for its inhabitants; catering for the needs of the society via effective and efficient provision of goods and services aimed satisfying human wants, thereby making the economy a worthwhile for healthy living and mutual co-existence.

The attainment of this, to a great extent rests on the leadership and leadership style in adoption. Governance and acts of leadership in the country has been characterized by poor and ineffective leadership with its resultant effect on the nation's growth and development. The leadership situation in Nigeria is quite disheartening and demands urgent attention from both the leaders, stake-holders and the led. There can never be sustainability in an atmosphere of rancor, ethnic differences, political instability etc. Sustainable development hinges on effective leadership. It takes effective leadership to translate ideas into actions that are results-oriented. It is believed that democratic and transformational leadership styles are most appropriate for any nation that desires economic development. Ebrahim, (2018) opined that leadership is one of the key determinants associated with the success and failure of any organization or society. To him, leadership style is the manner in which people are directed and motivated by the leader to achieve set goals. Harris *et al.*, (2007) postulated that leadership style can be defined as the kind of relationship that is used by an individual so as to make people work together for a common goal or objective.

From this, it becomes obvious that the unity of the country; the effective and efficient utilization of her resources, the sustainability of her environment by environmental friendly practices, the attainment of its objectives of development; and the sustainability of the nation's development hinges on the country leadership. Effective leadership will result to sustainable development of the country because without effective leadership, sustainable development initiatives cannot come to limelight.

As held by Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anekwe (2018), on the attainment of sustainable development through effective leadership, they maintained that the federal, state and local government must also ensure that funds allotted to them are equitably and judiciously disbursed

to the targeted sectors and groups. This commitment, according to them, will ensure adequate provision of social services that are beneficial to the poor masses, fostering efficient macro-economic and the provision of an enabling environment to boost businesses in different dimensions.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.2.1 Theory of Sustainable Development**

Sustainability as a policy concept has its origin in the Brundtland Report of 1987. This theory was propounded by the former Prime Minister of Norway, Gro Harlem Brundtland. The theory was concerned with the tension between the aspirations of mankind towards a better life on the one hand, and the limitations imposed by nature on the other hand. (Kuhlman and Farrington, 2010). In her consideration of environmental factors to national development, she posited that sustainable development entails meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to respond to their needs (Global Learning Programme, 2018). The import of this statement is that sustainable development in Nigeria ensures that future generations are at liberty to a better standard of living, prevent the crises in resources management and utilization; show the need for national quality and cohesion; and create the awareness of environmental, economic, and social needs of the people (Abbas, 2011).

### **2.3 Empirical Review**

Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anekwe (2018) studied strategies for Achieving Sustainable Development in Nigeria: The Nexus. The study adopted a conceptual approach in an attempt to x-ray the various strategies for achieving sustainable development in Nigeria. The strategies enumerated include but not limited to the following factors: Poverty alleviation, youth empowerment, entrepreneurship education and effective leadership. Materials for the study were gathered via internet, textbooks, and other documents relevant to the study. The findings based on the literature reviewed indicate that sustainable development is achievable only when social, economic, political and environmental sustainability elements in Nigeria are stable, viable and equitable. The study also recommended that the federal, state and local government should ensure that funds allotted to them are properly disbursed to the concerned groups.

Akintoye and Opeyemi (2014), studied the prospects for achieving Sustainable Development through the Millennium Development Goals in Nigeria. The study was carried out with a view to enhance the understanding about the analytical content of sustainable development as well as sensitizing the Nigerian economy to key into the current wave of sustaining the global economy. A review of the plan implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development was carried out by the study vis-à-vis the Nigerian economy. In the light of the findings of the study, considering some of the environmental as well as socio-economic challenges permeating the Nigerian economy, the study concluded that the Nigerian government should concentrate on key areas that can help boost and sustain its development objectives.

Ogbo, Eneh-Nnaji for, Agbaeze, Chukwu and Isigola (2017) studied the strategies for achieving sustainable economy in Nigeria taking into consideration the acceptable stakeholders. The work looks at the explosion of the Nigerian population from the year 2005 to date; the modern state of the Nigerian economy and the failed strategies tried in the past, with a look at the acceptable stakeholders, sustainable economy, and the strategic priorities to be considered in the Nigerian context. Theories of modernization (showing the five take off stages), sustainable development and human development (with the five key capitals) were used to analyze the

problem of achieving a sustainable economy in Nigeria. The triple-bottom-line strategy was seen to be a possible solution to the impending problem of unstable economy in Nigeria, intending to social responsibility, environmental protection, and economic priority.

David and Giles (1998) in Akintoye and Opeyemi (2014) focused on the concept of sustain development: An Evaluation of its usefulness ten years after Brundland. The study employed the augmented Solow model which deals with the widening of the concept of man-made capital to include the skills and knowledge embodied in human capital and natural capital. They also included social capital which addressed the issue of relationship between industrial and government/institutions. From the findings of their work, they stated that for the capital base of sustainable development, there will be need for a positive technological change; a positive population change and natural asset constancy. They concluded with the statement: Nevertheless to the extent that Scientific Community can offer evidence regarding what constitute natural assets, the key indicators for an economy will be twofold: are stock of critical natural assets declining? And are genuine saving rate persistently negative? To them, a positive answer to these questions should be an indication of unsustainability (David and Giles, 1998).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted both the conceptual approach in an attempt to X-ray the various strategies for achieving sustainable development in Nigeria and also a survey research design to empirically substantiate its findings (Creswell, 2014).

In the survey research design using a Cluster Sampling Technique; well-structured questionnaire was used as data collection instrument. According to Osuala (2015), well-structured questionnaires are used to collect responses from respondents.

This instrument was administered to five (5) lecturers each drawn from Six (6) departments, in five (5) selected Nigerian Tertiary Institutions, located in the South East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria namely Abia State University Uturu, Abia State; Imo State University Owerri, Imo State; Anambra State University, Uli, Anambra State, Enugu State University, Enugu, Enugu State and Ebonyi State University, Ebonyi State.

These questionnaires were distributed to six different departments in each of the institutions to sample varying opinions and to drastically reduce the error of irrelativeness/similarities in respondents' responses.

The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section was personal responses from the respondents, while the other section used five Clusters. Out of these five, four Clusters were for the explanatory variables whereas one Cluster was for the dependent variable, to collect responses from the respondents concerning the variables of the study.

The questionnaire used five points Likert scale and the respondents were guided to select each item of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Neutral (N), Strongly Disagreed (SD), Disagreed (D).

SA = 5, A = 4, N = 3, SD = 2 and D = 1.

Thirty (30) fully completed questionnaires were returned from each of the five (5) chosen institutions; giving a total of 150 respondents and returned completed questionnaires.

The study might not be exhaustive of all emerging issues and effective strategies for sustaining Nigeria Economic Development. Besides, the scope might not be covering the whole

of Nigeria with six geopolitical zones; but it is believed that express opinion and suggestions of one geo-political zone to national development, to a large extent, might be traceable and suggestive of others in unity of purpose. Therefore, limiting the research to the South East was to operate within the scope of the study as envisioned by the researchers (Babandi, 2017).

**Validation of the Instrument**

The Instrument for the study was validated and subjected to a thorough scrutiny and evaluation by experts in the field of research and academics. The experts went through the items to observe the clarity of language, instrument appropriateness and adequacy of item in answering and addressing the problem of the study. The experts’ corrections and advices were implemented while adjusting, harmonizing, and modifying the draft of the instrument.

**Questionnaire:**

1. To what extent does Agriculture as an effective developmental strategy, influence the sustainability of Nigeria economic development.

S/N	Cluster A: Agriculture has a strong positive correlation with sustainable development of the Nigeria Economy.	SA	A	N	SD	D
1.	Government investment in agricultural development to enhance the sectors contribution, and attention to the sector by stakeholders will help achieve economic diversification, leading to sustainable development in Nigeria.					
2.	Government partnership with farmers and the encouragement of greater populace (mostly the teeming unemployed youths), to go into commercial agriculture is a panacea to unemployment.					
3.	Sustainable increase in agricultural production in the country, with well-developed farm produce processing and preservative mechanism, to achieve the food for all national goal; is a cure to hunger and poverty ravaging the country.					
4.	The adoption of modern farming practices via the use of improved seedlings, farming mechanization, etc. is a road map to increased productivity, resulting in sustainable national development.					

Key: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Neutral (N), Strongly Disagreed (SD) and Disagreed (D).

**Reliability of the Instrument**

The degree of consistency of the item in the questionnaire was determined by carrying out trial

test within an interval of one week, using 25 lecturers in Abia State Polytechnic, Aba, Abia State; who were not part of the study population but possess similar features with the target of the study.

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha <sup>a</sup>	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items <sup>a</sup>	N of Items
.753	.614	6

Source: SPSS Output, 2019

The data obtained after the trial testing was analyzed using Cronbach’s Alpha method to calculate the internal consistency of the instrument. The overall reliability coefficient of 0.753, which is approximately 0.75 was obtained, indicating that the instrument was reliable and considered appropriate for use.

**Method of Data Collection**

This study collected information from primary sources which include information generated from questionnaire and from selected respondents from Five (5) selected institutions in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. In view of the population of the respondents for the study, the researchers made use of four research assistants. The research assistants were recruited from among lecturers in the study areas (Lecturers from the chosen institutions of study). The researchers briefed the research assistants on the objectives of the study. This enable them explain certain terms on the questionnaire to the respondents for clarity, and to ensure higher percentage return and correctly filled questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered by direct contact and collected a day after. This method ensured correct completion and high percentage return of completed questionnaire. All questionnaire issued at the various institutions (30 each), were completely returned by the respondents totaling 150 completed returned respondents questionnaires.

**Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected for the study was presented in a tabular form. The data was analyzed using the mean, standard deviation and the correlation coefficient as statistical tools. While the mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions, the correlation coefficient was used to test the hypothesis to find out if the variables of the study have positive significant correlation at 0.05 significant levels.

The research questions were answered using the following boundary limits for interpreting value of items in order to answer the research questions.

- Strongly Agreed (SA) = 5 4.5 5.00 Very High Extent
- Agreed (A) = 4 3.5 4.49 High Extent
- Neutral (N) = 3 2.5 3.49 Moderate Extent
- Disagreed (D) = 2 1.5 2.49 Low Extent

Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 1 0.5 1.49  $\Rightarrow$  Low Extent

$$\text{Mean} = \bar{X} = \frac{\sum fx}{N} \quad (\text{For Research Questions})$$

Where:  $\bar{X}$  = Grand/Overall Mean

= Summation

F = Number of Respondents

X = Value of each response category

N = Total Number of respondents.

$$\text{Five point response scale} = \frac{5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1}{5} = \frac{15}{5} = 3.0$$

**Decision Rule:** Base on five points Likert Scale which was used to analyze the data, any item that has a mean of 3.0 and above is accepted while any item less than 3.0 is rejected.

#### 4.1 Questionnaire Reliability

Reliability of the data was assessed using the Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) which is one of the most frequently used measures of internal consistency of instruments. The majority of authors consider that Cronbach’s Alpha should not drop below 0.7 and that an alpha value of 0.7 or more signifies reliable measures (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

### Reliability Statistics

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha <sup>a</sup>	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items <sup>a</sup>	N of Items
.814	.715	6

**Source:** SPSS Output 2019.

The value of Cronbach’s Alpha derived from the analysis is 0.814. Therefore, the instrument developed for evaluating effective strategies for achieving sustainable development in Nigeria was considered to be reliable.

#### 4.2 Research Questions

##### Research Question One

To what extent does Agriculture as an effective developmental strategy influence sustainable development in Nigeria?

Respondents' mean rating on the extent Agriculture as an effective strategy influence sustainable development in Nigeria N = 150.

S/No	Cluster A: Agriculture as an effective developmental strategy has a strong positive effect on sustainable development of the Nigerian Economy	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1.	Government investment in agricultural development to enhance the sectors contribution, and attention to the sector by stakeholders will help achieve economic diversification, leading to sustainable development in Nigeria.	4.65	1.068	SA
2.	Government partnership with farmers and the encouragement of greater populace (mostly the teeming unemployed youths) to go into commercial agriculture is a panacea to unemployment.	4.96	0.101	SA
3.	Sustainable increase in agricultural production in the country, with well-developed farm produce processing and preservation mechanism, to achieve the "food for all" national goal, is a cure to hunger and poverty ravaging the country.	3.44	0.968	N
4.	The adoption of modern farming practices via the use of improved seedlings, farming mechanization, etc is a road map to increased productivity resulting in sustainable national development.	4.03	0.226	A
	Overall Mean	4.27	0.591	A

**Source: Field Survey 2019.**

**Decision**

The result presented in the table above revealed that item 1 falls within the decision rule SA; item 2 falls within the decision rule SA, item 3 falls within the decision rule N, while item 4 falls with the decision rule A. The overall mean of all the four items was 4.27 indicating A, which is a high extent. The study therefore indicated that agriculture as an effective developmental strategy influence sustainable development in Nigeria to a high extent.



**Research Question Two**

How does Entrepreneurial Development as an effective developmental strategy influence sustainable development in Nigeria?

Respondents’ mean rating on the extent entrepreneurial development as an effective developmental strategy influence sustainable development in Nigeria. N = 150

S/No.	Cluster B: Entrepreneurial development, as an effective developmental strategy has a strong positive influence on sustainable development of the Nigerian Economy.	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
5.	Entrepreneurial development in SMEs is capable of making tremendous impact on the country through youth empowerment and job creation.	4.76	0.150	SA
6.	The creation of favourable export market and the removal of export barriers for SMEs product will increase Nigeria’s foreign exchange which is a precursor for national development.	3.28	1.17	N
7.	The extension of credits through developmental banks at low interest rates will encourage SMEs financing, thereby increasing their productivity for sustainable national development.	4.35	0.68	A
8.	Improved entrepreneurial education in SMEs and the provision of conducive operational environment remains one of the major avenues to alleviating poverty, and unemployment, for the attainment of national development.	4.11	1.03	A
	Overall Mean	4.13	0.76	A

**Source: Field Survey, 2019.**

**Decision**

The result presented in the table above revealed that item 5 falls within the decision rule SA; item 6 falls with the decision rule N; items 7 and 8 fall within the decision rule A. The overall mean of all the four items was 4.13, indicating “A” which is a high extent. The study therefore indicated that entrepreneurial development as an effective developmental strategy influence

sustainable development in Nigeria to a high extent.

**Research Question Three**

What influence has Green Growth Economy as an effective developmental strategy on sustainable development in Nigeria?

Respondents’ mean rating on the extent green growth economy as an effective developmental strategy influence sustainable development in Nigeria. N = 150.

S/No	Cluster C: Green Growth Economy, as an effective developmental strategy has a strong positive influence on sustainable development of the Nigerian Economy.	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
9.	As nations tends to industrialization with the adoption of high technological machines and equipment, there is increased accumulation of CO <sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere which is a great threat to the environment.	4.53	0.62	SA
10.	The need to get the source of livelihood and still maintain a quality environment directly explains the essence of environmental sustainability – reduced pollution, and gas emission, no oil spillages, no water pollution, etc.	4.02	0.22	A
11.	The continued utilization and practice of unsustainable methods of production will have an unending damage to soil, water supply, forest, etc, with a slow rate of replenishment.	3.42	1.12	N
12.	Alternative and renewable source of generating energy is key to sustainable environment as it addresses the problem of power outages and epileptic supplies that have marred productive activities in the country, and also ensure no environmental threat.	4.85	0.12	SA
	Overall Mean	4.21	0.52	A

**Source: Field Survey, 2019.**

**Decision Rule**

The result presented in the table above revealed that item 9 falls within the decision rule SA;

item 10 falls within the decision rule a, item 11 falls within the decision rule N, whereas item 12 falls within the decision rule SA. The overall mean of all the four items was 4.21, indicating decision rule A which is a high extent. The study therefore indicated that green growth economy as an effective developmental strategy influence sustainable development in Nigeria to a high extent.

**Research Question Four**

To what extent does effective leadership as an effective strategy affect sustainable development in Nigeria?

Respondents’ mean rating on the extent effective leadership as an effective developmental strategy affect sustainable development in Nigeria. N = 150.

S/No.	Cluster D: Effective leadership as a developmental strategy has a strong positive influence on sustainable development of the Nigerian Economy.	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
13.	Sustainable development of the Nigerian economy hinges on effective leadership. The essence to which a nation succeeds/progresses socially, economically, environmentally, etc; is leadership determined.	4.93	0.117	SA
14.	There can never be sustainability of Nigeria development in an atmosphere of rancor, acrimony, political instability, ethnic crises, etc; and it takes leadership to ensure mutual coexistence and investment friendly environment.	4.75	1.068	SA
15.	It takes effective leadership to translate ideas into actions that are result oriented for national growth and development. Also, effective resource management is a function of effective leadership.	4.53	0.337	SA
16.	The indivisibility of a political marriage, like in the case of Nigeria can only be sustained through inclusive government, which is a precursor for national development.	3.65	1.055	A
	Overall Mean	4.47	0.644	A

**Source: Field Survey 2019.**

**Decision**

The result presented in the table above revealed that items 13, 14 and 15 fall with the decision rule SA, whereas item 16 falls within the decision rule A. The overall mean of all the four items was 4.47 indicating A, which is a high extent. The study therefore indicated that Effective Leadership as a developmental strategy influences sustainable development in Nigeria to a high extent.

**4.3 Hypotheses Testing Using Pearson Correlation – Bivariate Analysis**

[DataSet2] C:\Users\PST\Documents\SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN BIVARIATE ANALYSIS.sav

**Hypothesis One**

**Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between Agriculture and Sustainable Development of Nigerian Economy.

Correlations

		SUSDEV	AGREFM
SUSDEV	Pearson Correlation	1	.235**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N	150	150
AGREFM	Pearson Correlation	.235**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	150	150

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Decision**

The result of the bivariate correlation analysis above, using the Pearson Correlation Test, indicated that there is a positive relationship between Agriculture and Sustainable Development in Nigeria. More also, the result shows that the correlation is significant @ 0.01 level. We therefore reject the null hypothesis, and accept the alternative and infer that there is a significant relationship between Agriculture and Sustainable Development in Nigeria.

**Hypothesis Two**

**Ho2:** There is no significant relationship between Entrepreneurial Development in SMEs and Sustainable Development in Nigeria.

**Correlations**

		SUSDEV	ENTSME
SUSDEV	Pearson Correlation	1	.325**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	150	150
ENTSME	Pearson Correlation	.325**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	150	150

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Decision**

The result of the bivariate correlation analysis above, using the Pearson Correlation Test, indicated that there is a positive relationship between Entrepreneurial Development in SMEs and Sustainable Development in Nigeria. More also, the result shows that the correlation is significant @ 0.01 level. We therefore reject the null hypothesis, and accept the alternative and infer that there is a significant relationship between Entrepreneurial Development in SMEs and Sustainable Development in Nigeria.

**Hypothesis Three**

**Ho3:** There is no significant relationship between Green Growth Economy and Sustainable Development in Nigeria.

**Correlations**

		SUSDEV	GREGEC
SUSDEV	Pearson Correlation	1	.257**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.007
	N	150	150
GREGEC	Pearson Correlation	.257**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	

N	150	150
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\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Decision**

The result of the bivariate correlation analysis above, using the Pearson Correlation Test, indicated that there is a positive relationship between Green Growth Economy and Sustainable Development in Nigeria. More also, the result shows that the correlation is significant @ 0.01 level. We therefore reject the null hypothesis, and accept the alternative and infer that there is a significant relationship between Green Growth Economy and Sustainable Development in Nigeria.

**Hypothesis Four**

**Ho4:** There is no significant relationship between Effective Leadership and Sustainable Development in Nigeria.

**Correlations**

		SUSDEV	EFFLDR
SUSDEV	Pearson Correlation	1	.322**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	150	150
EFFLDR	Pearson Correlation	.322**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	150	150

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Decision**

The result of the bivariate correlation analysis above, using the Pearson Correlation Test, indicated that there is a positive relationship between Effective Leadership and Sustainable Development in Nigeria. More also, the result shows that the correlation is significant @ 0.01 level. We therefore reject the null hypothesis, and accept the alternative and infer that there is a significant relationship between Effective Leadership and Sustainable Development in Nigeria.

**CONCLUSION**

From the findings of the study, we conclude that sustainable development of the Nigerian economy relies heavily on the economy’s readiness to give adequate attention to those developmental strategies that have direct impact on it, as x-rayed by this study. Thus, to achieve sustainable development in Nigeria, its social, economic, political and environmental

developmental and sustainable elements must be stable, viable, equitable and adequate in pursuit of Nigeria economic development.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

On the basis of the findings of this study, we made the following recommendations:

1. The study recommended the adoption of best and environmental sustainable practices, in our bid to enhance productivity, for better living, as we pursue NV20: 2020.
2. Policy formulation and implementation with great emphasis on poverty alleviation, youth empowerment through entrepreneurial education/development; making the agricultural industry/ practice very attractive, and inclusive governance for effective leadership, should form key basis for achieving sustainable development in our unstable economy.
3. Attention should be given to our infant industries in different spheres of productive activities, through special subventions as support, to boost their productivity.

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