



THE PLACE OF PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN REALIZING NIGERIA'S VISION 20: 2020

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines how infrastructure will play a vital role in the realization of Nigeria's Vision 20: 2020. The objective is to assess the adequacy of Nigerian infrastructural base as a pre-requisite to the realization of the laudable Vision 20:2020. It is expected that Nigerian government will use the result of this study to evaluate Nigeria's infrastructure so that appropriate steps can be taken to address the palpable deficit in infrastructure. The study used data from secondary source of published materials from credible internet web sites to analyze the current Nigerian situation. The results of the study reveal that though the project of Vision 20:2020 is grandiose, there seems to be a lack of corresponding will to achieve the ideals of the Vision as evident in the deficit in our transport infrastructure, electricity power generation and technological impetus as shown by the standards of Nigerian tertiary education (universities and others). The study therefore recommends amongst others that: there should be sufficient fiscal discipline, transparency, good governance and accountability to ensure that there is adequate commitment to the Vision: the transport infrastructure should be expanded and upgraded, with provision made for their maintenance; Nigeria should take concerted steps to address the problem of power generation and distribution, and Nigerian tertiary education should be restructured.

Keywords: Vision 20: 2020, Infrastructure, Nigerian universities, Electricity power generation, Road network.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Over the years Nigeria had, before the administration of General Babangida adopted perspective plans in which long term development planning articulated to chart a course of national development in terms of both infrastructure and the general economy. Nigeria's Vision 20:2020 marks a return to such long-term development plan, the only difference is that Vision 20:2020 is a more quantifiable action plan with well articulated end result. The thrust of

Nigeria's Vision 20:2020 is economic reposition so that the economy will assume its proper pride of place.

The Group of 20 industrialized and emerging nations (G-20) is an emerging club of nations whose membership is defined almost exclusively in terms of economic indices. The group is made up of such member nations as Argentina, Australia, Brazil Canada China, European Union, France, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Republic of South Korea, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States – listed alphabetically (www.g20.org. about what is g20.aspx, 2011). It is to this group that Nigeria seeks to belong by displacing at least one of its members. To achieve this feat the Nigerian gross domestic product (GDP) needs to grow from its \$193,669 billion, with about 7.0% annual growth rate to a desired GDP of \$900 billion in the year 2020 which required a growth rate of at least 13% according to the forecast of Goldman Sachs (Oyebode, 2008). In proper context, Goldman Sachs actually envisaged Nigeria being one of the 20 largest economies of the world in 2025, but the Federal Government, under President Olusegun Obasanjo, felt the realization of the dream could be fast-tracked to 2020. The basis of such wishful thinking has not really been comprehended by many Nigerians. We accepted the Vision all the same, may be for the beauty of the name – Vision 20:2020. This vision has often been referred to by the Federal Government as an economic strategy for transformation that will make Nigeria a modern country to be respected among the comity of nations. However, the realities on ground appear to differ. As noted by Onolemen (2012) in an annual conference on contract administration and project management for national transformation organized by Potomac Consulting International, the large population and high growth rate required high demand for infrastructural facilities like road, airports railways', power, water, schools, hospitals, housing but the current reality is that Nigeria is faced with serious infrastructural deficit in all the sectors. It is this deficit in infrastructural facilities that threatens the very foundation and substance of Vision 20:2020.

The pessimism in the realization of Vision 20:2020 is against the backdrop of the huge investment that is said to be required for investment in Nigeria to address the deficit. It is almost clear that the government is not seriously addressing the deficit. The Senate President, David Mark is quoted as saying, investments would be directed towards power, roads, etc which, means that for infrastructural investment we need a minimum of ₦100 trillion annually in these areas for the next 10 years to reach the targeted Vision (Nigerian Best Forum, 2010). Nigeria needs these infrastructures so as to develop her economic capacity.

Looking at the membership of G-20, one will be quick to find out that none of them is dependent on the export of only primary products, as is the case of Nigeria that is dependent almost solely on crude oil export, without export in substantial amount of processed and semi-processed products which require some value added activities. The value added processes require substantial amount of support infrastructure. The deficit in infrastructural facilities in Nigeria means that the nation will have problems in producing and exporting value added products – this makes the Vision 20:2020 more like a myth than a reality.

It is against this backdrop that this paper seeks to highlight the place of infrastructure in the realization of Vision 20:2020. It is expected that the results of this study will further re-focus the Nigerian planning system on the fundamentals of realizing Vision 20: 2020 so that the Vision does not create disillusionment in Nigerians.

To attain the above objective, the remainder of the paper is organized as follows: following after this section, Section II systematically explores existing literature on Vision 20:2020 as envisaged by Nigeria, the state of infrastructure in Nigeria and the place of infrastructure in economic development; Section III specifies the methodology employed in collecting and treating data, Section IV deals with data analysis; while Section V presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Vision 20:2020 – What is it about?

Vision 20:2020 represents a national attempt at strategic planning for economic restructuring and growth whose ultimate aim is to achieve self-sufficiency (Anih, 2011). It is directed at harnessing the talents, resources and energies of the people for the purpose of achieving higher living standards. Thus the Vision represents a refocusing of national efforts in the direction of common good.

Otobo (2011) sees Vision 20:2020 as Nigeria's bold and ambitious plan for joining the group of the 20 largest economies in the world by 2020. The Vision envisages that the GDP size of \$900 billion from its current size of \$194 billion and the global ranking of the GDP is 45 out of 193 countries (using World Bank's 2010 data). The actualization of this Vision means that the Nigerian economy must grow at an annual rate of 13.8 percent over the time period – meanwhile the growth rates projected at the time of the Vision for the economy are as follows: 2009 (7%), 2010 (8.1%); 2011 (6.9%); and 2012 (6.7%) (Otobo, 2011).

The Vision represents a return to long-term strategic planning; it attempts to return to a kind of perspective long-term planning which culminates in comprehensive planning. The blueprint incorporates the requirements (as well as the associated challenges) that would leapfrog Nigeria into one of the largest 20 economies in the world by the year 2020 (Ekpo, 2011).

There is no doubt that what is intended by this document in concrete terms for Nigerians would be a better society, more prosperous economy, fairer distribution of the national wealth, more production from the agricultural and industrial sectors, a more diversified economy, and a general system that works, and improved quality of life. It paints the picture of the vehicle to transport Nigeria and Nigerians to the dream land of El Dorado. By Vision 20:2020 Nigeria projected to be one of the 20 largest economies in the world, capable of reasserting its leadership role in Africa and a formidable player in the global economic and political arena. By the attainment of the goals of Vision 20:2020 it is envisaged that Nigeria will have a voice on both global and regional issues just like other emerging nations such as China, India, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and South Korea.

2.2. Infrastructural Investment Requirements of Vision 20:2020

The attainment of Vision 20:2020, as laudable as it appears, depends on realities on ground – both economic and non- economic (Otobo, 2011). Such requirements include institutional and structural reorientation.

As noted by Olaseni and Alade (2011):

Infrastructure is the umbrella for many activities usually referred to as “social overhead capital” by development economists... The adequacy of infrastructure helps to determine a country’s success or failure in diversifying production, coping with population growth, reducing poverty, improving environmental conditions ... Indeed socio-economic development can be facilitated and accelerated by the presence of infrastructure. If these facilities and services are not in place, development will be very difficult.

The place of infrastructure in national development is well documented (Ogbuozobia, 1997) and this role is also well appreciated in Vision 20:2020. It was in realization of this that the former President Umar Musa Yar’Adua in his 7-point Agenda identified infrastructure as the driving force of Nigeria’s transformation. The document notes that:

The provision of critical infrastructure is vital to President Yar’Adua’s determination to make his tenure as the take-off phase of Nigeria Vision 20:2020. The sub-sectors of electricity, transportation, telecommunications, waterways and the national gas grid distribution are prioritized in the Seven-Point Agenda as a significance of their cross-cutting significance to the Nigerian economy (The Federal Government of Nigeria, 2008).

The infrastructural requirement of Vision 20:2020 is so massive that it is said to require up to ₦30 Trillion to be realized (Taiwo, 2010). It is to this end that Vision 20:2020 envisaged an investment plan in science and technology-based infrastructure for the first four years as follows:

Table-1. Demand on National Resources

| Year | Investment plans |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| 2010 | ₦42768.72 million |
| 2011 | ₦68414.65 million |
| 2012 | ₦75590.00 million |
| 2013 | ₦81315.12 million |

Source: Nigeria Vision 20:2020 (2010)

The above represents a very huge demand on the national resources if only one infrastructure type would require this much.

In short the plan notes that “These (infrastructural facilities) have been identified as major challenges constraining economic growth and development in Nigeria” This situation is as a result of the desperate state of infrastructure in Nigeria. Sectorally, the power sector is said to require an injection of about ₦880,978.01 million from 2010 to 2013 in order to be able to upgrade power generation from its current 3500 mw to a tolerable level of 16000 mw. This is hoped will improve electricity access to 50 percent by 2013.

For transport infrastructure, the plan envisages that the nation will require approximately ₦2.216 trillion. This huge investment demand is again understandable considering the deplorable state of Nigerian roads, railway network, ports, air and inland water transport infrastructures. Al-Hassan (2011) notes that:

Towards the realization of this national objective (Vision 20:2020) an efficient road transport has a crucial role to play.... Good road network across the country would greatly make positive impact in our national life. It is apparent that building an efficient road network, which is vital tool towards the actualization of Vision 20:2020 been one of a major challenge to the Federal Government. The problem is further compounded by the lack of efficient railway and water transport systems.

So the place of transport infrastructure in the realization of Vision 20:2020 is so significant. It really calls for concerted efforts to tackle the problems of the sector.

The housing sector is said by the plan to be ready to gulp about ₦461.73 billion over the plan period. For agriculture and food infrastructure the plan believes that we need ₦745.24 billion, so that agriculture can make a meaningful contribution to the GDP. The oil and gas sector has also not fully realized its potentials yet in its contribution to the GDP. The plan believes that for the sector to perform fully, infrastructure in the sector should be upgraded by up to ₦571.163 billion. Though the sector is the major contributor to Nigeria GDP, its contribution is commonly argued could be enhanced if the gas sub-sector is developed, amongst others. For instance, the refineries could be turned around, increasing the local content of the Nigerian oil and gas, and the development of capacity to convert gas to power, liquids and fuel instead of flaring it.

The manufacturing sector is also allocated ₦111.82 billion by the plan over the plan period so as to enable the sector to have competitive advantages in this era of globalization. This will mean that there should be massive investment in technology infrastructure. In a similar manner, the plan allocated ₦4.701 billion to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) since this sector has been identified as an engine to drive local growth and employment generation. Solid minerals and steel development is said to require ₦20.112 billion while culture and tourism is said to require ₦27.91 billion. Interestingly, education is accorded its pride of place in the plan, it is said to require ₦611.568 billion. Given the state of decay in this sector, it is understandable. The health sector will similarly require ₦487.448 billion over the plan period.

The building of infrastructure to enhance labor, employment and productivity, the plan estimated that ₦47.853 billion will be spent. This is on the understanding that the quality of human resources is major determinant of productivity and competitiveness.

3. STATE OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN NIGERIA

To assess the readiness of Nigeria for the realization of Vision 20:2020, we would need to research into the state of Nigerian infrastructure. Infrastructure in Nigeria is generally adjudged to be in a deplorable and decaying state. To this the plan is in complete agreement. For power generation it notes that “only 40 per cent of Nigerians, mainly in urban centers have access to

electricity. The installed available generation capacity is currently 5200mw. In its epileptic performance, out of this 5200m only 3700mw are actually generated as at 2009, this has moved up to about 4000 mw with a per capita consumption of about 111 KWh (Olaseni and Alade, 2011).

Transport infrastructure is equally as gloomy, if not gloomier. The total road network in Nigeria is 193200 Kilometers comprising 34123km Federal roads, 30,500 km state roads and 129577 km Local Government roads. Apart from being inadequate, these roads are in various stages of dilapidation due to lack of routine and emergency maintenance (Nigeria Vision 20:2020, 2010). To this end the plan believes that an estimated ₦300 billion will be required over the next 10 years to put Nigerian road in satisfactory usable condition. Nigerian rail network system is arguably the worst. It consists of only 3505 Km narrow gauge, single track lines, it accounts for less than 1 per cent of land transportation in Nigeria, as at 1999, only 19.6 per cent and 46 percent of available 115 locomotives and 2744 wagons respectively were functional .

As for inland water transport, Nigeria has 12 major navigable rivers of about 3800 km, and an extensive coastline of about 852 km. These waterways are characterized by inadequate river ports, poor navigational and communication facilities, high rates of sediment and poor maintenance. The story of air transport system in Nigeria is very much the same, many of the airports are said to be in need of major repair, with obsolete equipment (Nigeria Vision 20:2020, 2010).

To position Nigeria economy properly, the manufacturing sector must be prepared to contribute significantly to the national GDP. The calls for technological advances, this means that our educational systems particularly tertiary levels must be ready to assume world class roles. Presently, this is not so. Using the ranking of universities and other tertiary institutions by Webometrics in January 2012, the first Nigerian university (University of Benin) on the list comes 1637th position and 22nd in Africa just behind the Polytechnic of Namibia, a country outside the G-20 (Webometrics, 2012). If science and technology is the engine of innovations and growth, then Nigeria has some real problems. The statistics are troubling (Otobo, 2011).

Noting the importance of universities and tertiary education in general, Oyeboode (2008) asserts that “It should be sounded loud and clear that no society can rise above the level of its universities”. He further notes that the life and times of these our all-important universities have been somewhat chequered and they have been denied favoured treatment with regards to resource allocation which has led to a fall in standards.

Ahmed (2010) highlights the importance of transport infrastructure when he notes that “Transportation is probably the most essential infrastructure”. Yet the way the infrastructure in this sector has been ignored does not befit this recognition. With a population of over 140 million people. Nigeria has a total road network of about 193200 km; rail network 3505 km; airport, 56 (Ahmed, 2010). It is further disheartening to note that despite their inadequate state, these facilities are also in various stages of disrepair and disuse – they are in deplorable conditions. Most of Nigerian roads are death traps rather than passage ways. Our railway

system is in a state of near collapse while the airports and waterways can only be parade obsolete equipments and poor patronage.

4. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The study employed the survey method in organizing the study subjects. The study concentrated on the infrastructure sectors of the economy particularly: transport, power and education. These were used as proxies for the total population of infrastructure, because of the special link between these sub-sectors and economic activities and progress. Data collection for this study was done through the secondary source. The internet and other publications were used in this regard.

The simple percentage approach is used to analyze data in this study. The performance of Nigeria in the above sectors is carefully compared with other countries, particularly those in the G20, the group Nigeria seeks to join by Vision 20:2020. This is to assess the readiness of Nigeria to propel its economy from its current status to the desired state of being in the league.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 2 presents data on transport infrastructure in Nigeria, vis-à-vis other nations.

Table-2. Transport Infrastructure

| Country | Roads (KM) | Rails(KM) | Airports | Population |
|-------------|------------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Brazil | 1751868 | 28857 | 4000 | 196655014 |
| India | 3316425 | 63327 | 349 | 1241491960 |
| Netherlands | 135470 | 2811 | 27 | 16696000 |
| Turkey | 426951 | 8697 | 102 | 73639596 |
| Nigeria | 193200 | 3505 | 56 | 162470737 |

Source: Ahmed (2010) & The World Bank Group (2012)

Table 2 shows that Nigeria has 193,200 km roads (840.95 persons per km) compared to 1,751,868 km (11.23 persons per km) for Brazil; 3,316,425 km (374.35 persons per km) for India; 135,470 km (123.24 persons per km) for the Netherlands; and 426,951 km (172.48 persons per km) for Turkey. The results show that the Nigerian traffic density is 7,475.11% of that of Brazil; 224.6% of that of India; 682.4% of that of the Netherlands; and 487.6% of that of Turkey.

Nigeria is equally backwards in terms of rail transport. Nigeria has a total of 3505 km of rail net work (i.e. a density ratio of 46354: 1km) as against 28,857 km (i.e., 6,815:1km density) for Brazil; 63,327 km (i.e., 19,604:1km density) for India; 2,811 km (i.e., 5,940:1km density) for the Netherlands; and 8,697 km (i.e., 8,467:1km density) for Turkey. For air transport system, Nigeria is probably worse off. It has only 53 airports (i.e., one airport to 2,901,263 persons) as against 4,000 airports (i.e., one airport to 49,164 persons) for Brazil; 349 airports (i.e.; one airport to 3,557,284 persons) for India; 27 airports (i.e., one airport to 618,370 persons) for the Netherlands; and 102 airports (i.e., one airport to 36820 persons) for Turkey.

Table 3 presents data of power generation in relation in relation to population.

Table-3. Power generation (January 2011)

| Country | Electricity Production (Billion KWh) | Population (Billion) | Population Per Billion KWh | World Ranking |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Brazil | 438.8 | 196655014 | 448,1652 | 9 |
| India | 723.8 | 1241491960 | 1715,242 | 5 |
| Netherlands | 108.2 | 16696000 | 154,306 | 30 |
| Turkey | 198.4 | 73639556 | 371,167 | 19 |
| Indonesia | 129 | 242325638 | 1878493 | 26 |
| Nigeria | 21.92 | 162470737 | 7411,986 | 68 |
| South Africa | 240.3 | 50586757 | 210,778 | 15 |
| Poland | 149.1 | 38216000 | 256,311 | 22 |
| Egypt | 118.4 | 82536770 | 697,101 | 29 |

Source: CIA World Factbook (2011) & The World Bank Group (2012)

Table 3 shows a woeful performance in the power sector by Nigeria. In January 2011, it came a distant 68th position out of 213 ranked nations. The position is not as troubling as the absolute statistics. The table shows that Nigeria generated 21.92 billion KWh of electricity (representing 7,411,986 persons to a billion KWh); this is a paltry 6% of Brazil's 448,165 persons per billion KWh. Even India with a larger population of over a billion people, Nigeria per capita electricity generation is only 23.14% of Indian's per capita generation. Against the Netherlands, Nigeria's generation is only 2.1% of the per capital electricity generated. Compared to Indonesia and Poland that Nigeria seeks to displace as the world largest 20 economies, Nigeria generates only 25.3% and 3.5% respectively of their per capita power generation. Looking at Africa, comparing Nigeria's production with those of South Africa and Egypt, Nigeria's per capita production is only 2.8% and 9.4% respectively of their per capita electricity generation.

Table 4 presents the global and Africa rankings of the best ranked Nigerian Universities. This ranking is done by Webometrics. It correlates the quality of education and academic prestige of universities. It measures quality of education, size internationalization, research output, impact and prestige.

Table-4. Ranking of Nigerian universities on Webometrics (January 2012)

| University | Global Ranking | African Ranking | Ranking by scholar quality |
|----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| University of Benin | 1639 | 22 | 1691 |
| University Agric Abeokuta | 2266 | 35 | 1271 |
| University of Ibadan | 2515 | 38 | 1816 |
| University of Nigeria | 3228 | 47 | 1752 |
| Obafemi Awolowo University | 3626 | 49 | 1741 |
| University of Lagos | 3486 | 52 | 1841 |
| Ahmadu Bello University | 3512 | 55 | 1756 |
| University of Ilorin | 4302 | 63 | 2261 |
| University of Jos | 5681 | 88 | 2900 |
| Auchi Polytechnic | 6254 | 95 | 9576 |
| National Open University of Nig. | 6576 | 100 | 3528 |

Source: Webometrics (2012)

If universities are the engine of science and technology which are the hub of innovation and economic development, then Table 4 shows that Nigeria is nowhere near to becoming a member of the league of technologically developed and economically advanced nations of the world yet. The top ranked Nigerian university (University of Benin) comes only a distant 1639th position out of the 20300 Universities, colleges and open access initiatives globally and only 22nd on the African continent behind a Polytechnic (Polytechnic of Namibia).

South African and Egyptian Universities dominate the first eleven positions on the African continent. No Nigerian university could make it to the top 20 universities in Africa nor could there be any Nigerian university among the top 1000 universities of the world. This shows the fall in standard and decay in infrastructure in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis done above the following conclusions are drawn for this study. Nigeria's aspiration to join the league of 20 largest world economies as encoded in Vision 20:2020 represents a laudable plan articulated to kick-start the Nigerian economy along the path of concerted deliberate planning. However, it appears that there is not enough substance on ground to give impetus to the realization of the target set in Vision 20:2020. The infrastructure base of Nigeria is grossly inadequate. First, our road networks are both inadequate and in deplorable conditions. The density of Nigerian population per km is too high. Similarly, the Nigerian railway system which is needed for both heavy and long distance haulage is also insufficient and obsolete to sustain development as would be required by the target of Vision 20:2020. In the same vein both the air transport and water transport systems of Nigeria are inadequate. The facilities are too small to sustain the population demand of Nigeria and also importantly, the facilities are ageing, outdated and out-modeled.

As to the crucial issue of power generation, compared to other nations, Nigerian production and distribution of electricity cannot sufficiently sustain household demand not to talk of industrial requirements which obviously must be taken care of to realize Vision 20:2020. The current situation of individual power generation through generating sets is unacceptable because of the attendant huge overhead costs.

Lastly, Nigerian tertiary institutions have not been well positioned enough to meet the demand placed on them by Vision 20:2020. This is probably due to corruption and the sector not being favoured in resource allocation.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the conclusions drawn up above and the overall analysis done so far, the following recommendations are made. These will ensure that the Vision does not turn to a nightmare as would be the attendant frustration if Nigeria is unable to take its pride of place in the comity of nations against the backdrop of the plethora of resources, both human and natural.

- There should be greater commitment to the ideals of Vision 20:2020 so that even if the attainment of the target of being among the leading 20 economies is not realizable within the time frame of 2020, with little adjustment the overall goal can be met.
- Specifically, the implementation of Vision 20:2020 calls for fiscal discipline, due process in procurement, good governance, transparency, accountability in the conduct of government businesses and the utilization of competent Nigerian technocrats to drive the development process.
- Nigeria should take concerted steps to expand and upgrade its road networks, air transport systems and waterway transport system. Apart from upgrading these systems, a workable arrangement should be put in place to ensure sustained maintenance of the facilities, either through public private partnership, concessioning or outright privatization.
- Nigeria must address the problem of power generation and distribution if it is thinking seriously of development. There should be complete disbandment or privatization of the Power Holding Company of Nigeria. Also a regulatory framework should be established to monitor performance in this all-important sector.
- Nigeria should evolve a system that attaches adequate attention to tertiary education. This should be in terms of resources allocation, monitoring and the quality of scholarly work done in the institutions. Sufficient structure should exist to guarantee that allocated public funds are not diverted to unintended purposes.

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