



## Conceptual analysis of the constraining factors impeding sustainable development efforts in Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

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Besides the well-known challenges hindering the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs), such as lack of finance, poverty, insufficient educational and health facilities, out-of-school children, inadequate social amenities, climate change, and environmental issues, this paper identified additional human-related constraints, stemming from moral, social/well-being impediments, along with other educational problems, which significantly reinforce existing obstacles. The paper presents high-impact interventions tailored to enhance the attainment of the SDGs, particularly within the Nigerian context. A notable strength of this work is its systematic prioritization of constraints into four distinct categories: moral, social, educational, and project management issues. These factors were further divided into priority subunits, with significant interventions identified according to the Pareto Principle's 80/20 rule. The paper highlights the interactions among these subunit constraints, demonstrating their synergistic effects. One major issue highlighted in this paper is the "poverty trap syndrome," a condition where a poor nation, due to development and other constraints, becomes trapped deeper into perpetual poverty and can no longer escape. We elucidated this and other concepts with graphical presentations in this paper. A holistic approach is essential for third-world nations to make meaningful progress toward the SDGs. Addressing factors that impede sustainable development and implementing effective interventions are critical. This paper's framework aims to mitigate barriers to achieving sustainable development goals, encapsulating the essence of this work. The authors advocate these approaches for macro-development studies and have emphasized that morality, as a co-factor, must be considered inevitable when interventions for developmental issues are undertaken.

**Contribution/Originality:** This research presents novel findings on the obstacles hindering the effective achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, investigating these factors at the unit and subunit levels, as well as their intra- and inter-level relationships, leading to negative synergy in this case. We also undertook a detailed exploration of priority causal challenges.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development, defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, is a critical goal for nations worldwide (World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), 1987). However, achieving sustainable development is particularly

challenging for developing countries, where numerous constraints impede progress. Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation and one of its largest economies, exemplifies the difficulties faced in pursuing sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Achieving success in meeting the sustainable development goals has been a significant challenge for third-world countries. Nigeria's record in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and currently the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has not been exemplary. The country has faced various challenges that have hindered substantial progress. Several constraining factors have been identified as barriers to sustainable development in Nigeria. These include political instability, economic mismanagement, corruption, inadequate infrastructure, violent conflicts, and environmental degradation. Political instability, characterized by frequent changes in government and policies, has created an unpredictable environment that hampers long-term planning and investment (Adeniyi & Egwu, 2017). Economic mismanagement, often resulting from poor governance and corruption, further exacerbates these issues by diverting resources away from essential services and development projects (Okeke-Uzodike & Chukwuemeka, 2019).

Inadequate infrastructure is another significant barrier. Nigeria's transportation, energy, and water supply systems are often insufficient to support sustained economic growth and social development. For instance, the country's power sector struggles with frequent outages, limiting industrial and commercial activities (Arowolo & Perez, 2020; Iwayemi, 2008). Additionally, environmental degradation, driven by factors such as deforestation, pollution, and poor waste management, threatens the health and livelihoods of many Nigerians, further complicating sustainable development efforts (UNEP, 2011).

Despite these challenges, there are opportunities for progress. Leveraging Nigeria's abundant natural resources, a young and dynamic population, and a growing digital economy can contribute to overcoming these barriers. Furthermore, international partnerships and adherence to global best practices in governance and environmental management can enhance Nigeria's sustainable development trajectory (Ebeku, 2013). Many will think that the only problem these nations face is funding to implement interventions that enable them to achieve sustainable development goals.

This paper will demonstrate that the challenges and impediments are numerous and manifest in various ways: educational, moral, social/well-being, and project management-related constraining factors.

These are also the reasons why many of these nations still wallow in abject poverty and lack reasonable progress.

It would be wrong to think that developed nations do not have their challenges. They may not face as many financial challenges as third-world countries. However, they encounter as many moral and social constraints as the third world. Similarly, the constraining factors vary from country to country and over time.

While micro-development studies refer to the intensive or detailed analysis of each development factor, each sustainable development goal, and the continuous improvement of interventions aimed at enhancing the well-being of humans and humanity living in harmony with the ecosystem, macro-development studies focus on holistic development systems. They examine how related development factors, sustainable development goals, and interventions interact and can produce better synergistic outcomes. This aspect of development studies seeks to understand how interventions can address multiple challenges related to more than one sustainable development goal or identify interventions with multiplier effects that impact several developmental issues, thereby achieving synergistic and significantly improved outcomes.

Several scholars have been working on macro-development studies without calling them a separate field (Ihebuzor, Lawrence, Tamunomiebi, Lawrence, & Lawrence, 2020; Lawrence, 2018; Lawrence, Ihebuzor, & Lawrence, 2020a, 2020b; Lawrence & Lawrence, 2019; Lawrence, Ogbanga, Lawrence, & Lawrence, 2023; Nilsson, Griggs, & Visbeck, 2016).

This paper explores these approaches to macro-development studies. It identifies the inevitability of morality as a co-factor that must be considered when interventions for developmental challenges are considered.

This paper will equally show the key developmental constraints a nation like Nigeria faces and will identify some significant interventions that can help reduce or ameliorate the impacts of these constraints or factors.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several scholars and organizations have written about the challenges facing the implementation of the SDGs, which can be divided into two groups: inherent challenges within the 17 SDGs that hinder their successful implementation and other extraneous factors that affect SDG implementation both within and between various nations and donor organizations.

This literature review examines some of these challenges as they affect the implementation of the SDGs.

### 2.1. General Concept of Constraining Factors

Lawrence (2018) identified that sustainable development challenges exist in every intervention situation, and some factors impede the rapid achievement of sustainable development goals in Nigeria. Interventions to address these challenges should consider all priority factors related to achieving the objectives.

Mangan (2024) identified data, political will, international cooperation, and innovative solutions as factors that can overcome poverty, inequality, conflicts, governance issues, and infrastructure development. The study concluded that evidence from data-driven solutions and statistics could help address challenges and constraints to accelerate progress.

Oliver (2023) identified three challenges to sustainable development, as outlined by Newman (2023): instability, implementation, and governance. He further noted that global instability, financial crises, political turmoil, and climate change are major factors causing insecurity. These factors disproportionately affect vulnerable developing countries, which are already suffering from hunger, poverty, community instability, and limited access to education and healthcare. Oliver (2023) also stated that beneficiaries, partners, and donor organizations will achieve more by recognizing and working to overcome instability, implementation issues, and poor governance.

Eyecity Solutions (2023) produced a detailed report on the challenges facing the implementation of SDGs in Africa. They stated that in 2020, African countries scored 53.82 percent, which was slightly higher than the score in 2019. They also highlighted some limitations impeding progress in Africa. Among the challenges identified are economic constraints and a corrupt governance system affecting many African nations, which hamper efficient tax administration and lead to financial mismanagement. They also pointed out that over-reliance on the export of primary commodities significantly impacts these countries, as they have not diversified their economies, innovated production systems, or added value to their exports before shipment. The export of raw produce makes them vulnerable to fluctuations in prices. The Eyecity Solutions (2023) also noted that political instability in implementing policies and programs causes political turmoil and the abandonment of ongoing projects, among other hindrances. Other interventions suggested as priorities by African governments include good governance and strengthening institutions. The report highlighted the roles of checks and balances and ensuring transparency by the judiciary, the press, civil society, and others. Eyecity Solutions (2023) identified several challenges affecting the implementation of sustainable development in Africa. Ecological challenges such as deforestation, desertification, and high carbon footprints were also noted.

Many scholars have reported on the challenges of implementing sustainable development interventions in Nigeria, and regardless of the brilliant policies, issues such as lack of implementation, mismanagement of funds, poverty, inadequate funding, insecurity, banditry, kidnapping, farmers/herders conflicts, and cattle rustling are significant constraints (Balogun, 2023).

## 2.2. Specific Constraining Factors

Sustainable development in Nigeria faces numerous challenges that hinder its progress. This literature review explores the key constraining factors impeding sustainable development efforts in Nigeria, drawing from various scholarly sources to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue. These factors can be categorized into economic, political, social and cultural, environmental, and infrastructural deficiencies.

### 2.2.1. Economic Constraints

#### 2.2.1.1. Oil Dependence

Nigeria's heavy reliance on oil has led to the "resource curse" (Opeyemi, 2012), where resource-rich countries experience less economic growth and worse development outcomes due to factors such as corruption and conflict. The term "resource curse" was first used in print by Auty (1993). Sala-i-Martin and Subramanian (2003) argued that oil dependency has stifled diversification and sustainable economic policies, creating a volatile economy susceptible to global oil price fluctuations. Similarly, Sachs and Warner (1995) found that countries with abundant natural resources often experience slower economic growth due to weakened institutional quality and governance issues. This corroborates Ross (2015), who argued that petroleum has at least three important effects: making authoritarian regimes more durable, heightening corruption, and intensifying violent conflicts.

#### 2.2.1.2. Poverty and Inequality

High levels of poverty and income inequality are significant barriers to sustainable development. According to the World Bank (2020), over 40% of Nigerians live below the poverty line. This economic disparity limits access to education, healthcare, and other essential services, perpetuating a cycle of underdevelopment. With recent developments, we can estimate that the above statistics, disparities, and margins have increased. Oyekale (2017) emphasized that poverty in Nigeria is exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure, lack of access to credit, and limited economic opportunities, particularly in rural areas. Ajjola, Omonona, and Awoyemi (2022) confirmed that access to facilities and an equitable share of resources should be paramount in rural areas to reduce the non-inclusiveness of growth. This supports (Mba, Nwosu, & Orji, 2021), who suggested that social safety nets should be designed to take care of not only the current poor households but also the non-poor households who are likely to be vulnerable in the future.

#### 2.2.1.3. Unemployment

This is an ever-growing concern, especially among the youth, and is a very critical issue. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2020) reported that Nigeria's unemployment rate reached 33.3% in Q4 2020. High unemployment rates contribute to social unrest and hinder economic stability and growth. Ajakaiye, Jerome, Nabena, and Alaba (2016) highlighted that high unemployment, particularly among the educated youth, is a significant constraint on Nigeria's economic development, leading to increased crime rates and social instability. This resonates with Ayoadé (2016), who explained a plethora of bottlenecks hinged on corruption, inconsistencies in government policies, and the lack of entrepreneurial skills among the majority of unemployed Nigerians. He further recommended that the government work hard to develop an entrepreneurial environment and provide necessary infrastructure. On the other hand, Walsh (2018) believes that the uncertainty created by disruptive technologies plays a major role in driving unemployment. Giancaspro and Manuti (2021) and Lawrence et al. (2023) explained that continuous learning is a required factor to reduce the impact of unemployment.

### 2.2.2. Political and Governance Challenges

#### 2.2.2.1. Corruption

Corruption is pervasive in Nigeria, affecting all levels of government and undermining development efforts. Transparency International (2021) ranks Nigeria 149th out of 180 countries on the Corruption Perception Index. Corruption diverts resources away from development projects and reduces public trust in government institutions. Akinola (2018) noted that corruption in Nigeria has led to the misallocation of resources, weakened institutions, and hindered economic development by deterring foreign investment and increasing the cost of doing business. Ihebuzor, Lawrence, and Lawrence (2021) expanded on this by stating that corruption is visible in weak institutions where oppressive leaders ensure that institutions depend on them for all resources, including finances. They further argued that these leaders are often appointed for personal favors rather than for their competence. Their findings indicated that Nigerian social media, the independent/private press, and non-governmental organizations are gaining ground towards transparency and can be used to build strong institutions due to technological advancements. To eradicate corruption in Nigeria, policies should be implemented to strengthen institutional and legal frameworks, increase political will and public participation, enhance transparency and accountability, and address poverty and inequality (Adamaagashi Izuchukwu, Onoh, Bello, Erezi, & Brown-Ofoeme, 2023).

#### 2.2.2.2. Policy Inconsistency and Poor Governance

Policies serve as management tools that organizations employ to ensure their stakeholders understand their guiding principles (Ihebuzor et al., 2021). Frequent changes in policies and poor governance practices disrupt long-term development plans. Inconsistent policies deter investment and impede the implementation of sustainable development initiatives. Agba, Ocheni, and Nkpoyen (2014) argued that policy inconsistency, coupled with weak institutional frameworks, has resulted in poor project implementation and ineffective public service delivery in Nigeria. Furthermore, Atelhe and Akande (2018) found that inconsistent policy implementation results from the lukewarm attitudes of bureaucratic institutions responsible for implementing these policies. Confirming this, N. Ihebuzor et al. (2021) opined that policy inconsistency often occurs when policies relating to common issues are put out by different authorities or when these authorities are not mutually supporting each other. To enable policy consistency and good governance, policies should be formulated in relation to the developmental needs and realities of the target population (Atelhe & Akande, 2018).

#### 2.2.2.3. Political Instability and Insecurity

Political instability and insecurity, particularly in regions affected by terrorism and armed conflicts (e.g., Boko Haram in the North-East, herders' attacks in the North-East and North-Central parts of Nigeria), pose significant challenges. Insecurity disrupts economic activities and discourages foreign and local investment. Maiangwa, Uzodike, Whetho, and Onapajo (2012) described how Boko Haram's insurgency has devastated the North-East region, leading to loss of lives, displacement of people, and destruction of infrastructure, severely impacting sustainable development efforts. This corroborates (George, Adelaja, & Weatherspoon, 2020), who explained that conflict impacts food security conditions—further stating that an increase in conflict intensity, measured by the number of fatalities, increases the number of days households have to rely on less preferred foods, limited variety of food eaten, and smaller portion sizes of meals.

### 2.2.3. Social and Cultural Factors

#### 2.2.3.1. Education and Literacy Rates

Low literacy rates and inadequate educational infrastructure hinder human capital development. UNESCO (2019) reported that Nigeria has one of the highest numbers of out-of-school children globally. Poor educational outcomes limit the workforce's skill set and impede economic growth. Okebukola (2015) highlighted that the Nigerian

education system suffers from underfunding, poor infrastructure, and a lack of qualified teachers, resulting in low literacy rates and poor educational outcomes. Similarly, [Lawrence \(2020\)](#) identified poor funding, low school enrollment, and inadequate school infrastructure as factors hindering quality education in Nigeria, which in turn has reduced the literacy rate. Conversely, [Jacob and Stephen \(2021\)](#) identified corruption as the primary factor contributing to poor education in Nigeria, suggesting that the government and other authorities should establish anti-corruption units within education ministries and agencies to help curb such practices and ensure regular audits. However, with the increasing prevalence of artificial intelligence among youths in Nigeria and globally, the rate of education and literacy might further decline due to the convenience of generating desired documents. Similarly, [Okagbue et al. \(2023\)](#) observed that the Nigerian education system was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The closure of schools during the pandemic and the inability of most schools in Nigeria to engage learners revealed the poor state of the education system. Post-COVID, it is recommended that schools and their staff embrace online learning and digital competence to maintain and improve the quality of education.

#### *2.2.3.2. Healthcare System*

An underfunded and inefficient healthcare system contributes to poor health outcomes, which affect productivity and economic development. The [World Health Organization \(WHO\) \(2020\)](#) highlights that Nigeria's healthcare expenditure is among the lowest globally, leading to high mortality rates and poor health indicators. [Adeyemi \(2017\)](#) pointed out that the lack of adequate healthcare facilities, shortage of medical personnel, and poor health infrastructure are major challenges to achieving sustainable development in Nigeria. The centralization of healthcare in Nigeria has made it difficult for most patients to get timely care ([Eboreime et al., 2017](#)). Additionally, the inability to manage data in most healthcare facilities has caused severe data loss in patient record management and tracking ([Nwankwo & Sambo, 2018](#)), affecting the promptness of healthcare service delivery. Poor healthcare storage and delivery infrastructures needed for transporting delicate drugs or body organs interstate and intrastate to various hospitals also pose challenges ([Chukwu & Nnogo, 2021](#)).

#### *2.2.3.3. Cultural Practices and Gender Inequality*

Cultural practices and gender inequality impede development. Gender disparities in education, employment, and political representation limit the potential of half the population. The [World Economic Forum \(2020\)](#) ranks Nigeria 128th out of 153 countries, highlighting significant gender inequalities. [Oyekanmi \(2016\)](#) emphasized that cultural norms and practices often marginalize women and girls, restricting their access to education and economic opportunities, thereby limiting their contribution to sustainable development. This is ironic because women are major stakeholders in the development projects of any society ([Okafor & Akokuwebe, 2015](#)). They opine that for there to be greater participation of women in all spheres of society, the Nigerian government and other stakeholders should engage in programs and policies that would empower women politically, socially, and economically. [Bako and Syed \(2018\)](#) argue that a reasonable approach towards women's development should include the local adaptation of international norms and a focus on domestic reforms in laws and culture.

#### *2.2.4. Environmental Challenges*

##### *2.2.4.1. Environmental Degradation*

Environmental degradation, particularly in the Niger Delta, caused by oil spills, gas flaring, and deforestation, severely impacts local communities and ecosystems. [Nriagu, Udofia, Ekong, and Ebuk \(2016\)](#) described how environmental pollution in the Niger Delta has led to loss of biodiversity, contamination of water sources, and adverse health effects on the local population. The environmental damage has long-term implications for sustainable development as it affects livelihoods and disrupts economic activities. Similarly, [Ejiba, Onya, and Adams \(2016\)](#) claim that the Niger Delta records an average of about 700 spills and countless gas flaring incidents annually, making it

the heart of environmental degradation. They mostly blame international oil companies (IOCs) and aging infrastructure for these phenomena, which have continued to negatively impact the people of the region, causing environmental destruction and significant damage to the livelihoods of farming and fishing communities. Correspondingly, [Abayomi, Olayemi, and Ogungbade \(2021\)](#) revealed that mismanaged pipelines and environmentally unsustainable practices like gas flaring should be attributed to the companies in charge, as it is their major responsibility. They also added that illegal refining and pipeline vandalism perpetrated by militant groups have resulted in increased pollution. All stakeholders involved in activities related to environmental degradation should accept responsibility for protecting the environment through the application of sustainable filters and enhancers, also known as true sustainability methodologies, as expounded by [Lawrence \(2018\)](#).

#### *2.2.4.2. Climate Change*

Climate change poses a significant threat to Nigeria's sustainable development. The increased frequency of extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts, disrupts agriculture, water supply, and livelihoods. [Niang \(2014\)](#) argued that climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities in Nigeria, particularly in agriculture-dependent communities, and emphasized the need for effective adaptation and mitigation strategies to address these challenges. [Echendu \(2020\)](#) called for collaborative action by all concerned stakeholders to address the flooding problem, seeking national-scale actions to combat flooding in Nigeria. Similarly, [Okon et al. \(2021\)](#) claim that one of the basic requirements to ensure such strategies is the development of a database of national climate change (CC) research. This will aid in the assessment of past and present scientific publications from which directions for future studies can be mapped. They also suggest advancing CC research in Nigeria beyond perceptive approaches to more quantitative ones, which is particularly important for highly vulnerable animals, crops, locations, and for better planning of adaptation strategies.

#### *2.2.4.3. Waste Management*

Poor waste management practices, including inadequate waste disposal systems and a lack of recycling, contribute to environmental pollution and public health issues. [Ezeah and Roberts \(2012\)](#) highlighted that the lack of proper waste management infrastructure and practices leads to environmental degradation and health hazards, particularly in urban areas. [Babanyara, Ibrahim, Garba, Bogoro, and Abubakar \(2014\)](#) found that financial problems, lack of awareness of risks involved, lack of appropriate legislation, and lack of specialized staff were reasons for poor waste management in developing countries' health sectors. The increase in solid waste generated per capita in Africa has not been accompanied by a commensurate growth in capacity and funding to manage it. It is reported that 70% of urban waste in developing countries is not disposed of properly ([Yang, Ma, Thompson, & Flower, 2018](#); [Ziraba, Haregu, & Mberu, 2016](#)). Effective waste management is essential for achieving reasonable success in the pursuit of sustainable development advancement.

#### *2.2.5. Infrastructure Deficiencies*

##### *2.2.5.1. Energy Supply*

Nigeria's energy infrastructure is inadequate, with frequent power outages affecting economic activities. The lack of reliable electricity supply limits industrial growth and hinders development. [Aliyu, Ramli, and Saleh \(2013\)](#) discussed the challenges in Nigeria's energy sector, including outdated infrastructure, inadequate investment, and inefficient management, which contribute to persistent power shortages. [Henson \(2018\)](#) recommended policy attention toward revitalizing Nigeria's electricity sector for enhanced supply, which in turn will make SMEs more industrious and drive the Nigerian economy. Correspondingly, [Adanlawo and Vezi-Magigaba \(2021\)](#) suggest that alternative electricity generation should be further explored by federal and state governments to create more job

opportunities and sustain energy solutions. Additionally, energy regulatory bodies should design strategies to enhance electricity generation at a lower cost for the masses.

#### 2.2.5.2. *Transportation and Communication Networks*

The transport infrastructure sector is a critical force for sustainable development that is interconnected with many other sectors (Kaiser & Barstow, 2022). Rural transportation is an underlying driver of many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a crucial contributor to numerous socioeconomic benefits for rural populations worldwide (Hussain, Ahonen, Karasu, & Leviäkangas, 2023). Underdeveloped transportation and communication networks impede trade and access to markets. Improving infrastructure, including roads, railways, and digital connectivity, is necessary to support economic growth and development. Odeleye (2000) argued that poor transportation infrastructure limits market accessibility, increases the cost of goods and services, and reduces economic efficiency.

#### 2.2.5.3. *Water and Sanitation*

Access to clean water and sanitation is limited in many parts of Nigeria. Improving water and sanitation infrastructure is essential for public health and economic productivity. Ademiluyi and Odugbesan (2008) emphasized that inadequate water supply and poor sanitation facilities contribute to high disease prevalence and mortality rates, undermining sustainable development efforts.

Nigeria's sustainable development efforts are constrained by a complex interplay of economic, political, social, environmental, and infrastructural challenges. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive and coordinated policy interventions, investments in human and physical capital, and robust governance frameworks to create an enabling environment for sustainable development.

This research aims to synthesize numerous challenges into manageable groups, identify priorities, and highlight key issues that have been neglected in past research, such as moral and social aspects.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

We first identified four significant factors that impact sustainable development efforts. Out of many, we chose the four most impactful factors to enable us to have a good understanding of the topic for analysis, working in line with the theory expounded by Lawrence and Lawrence (2019), who developed a three-factor drill-down analysis that enables researchers to examine complex issues using the most critical few manageable factors towards achieving optimal impact: the Pareto Principle of the 80/20 rule. A vital few among many factors account for the most impact. *Hence, 80% of consequences come from 20% of causes, for many outcomes* (Abyad, 2020).

This approach is effective in analyzing situations to identify the most appropriate sustainable development interventions, starting with the priority factors and then drilling down by further identifying the key sub-factors determining the preceding factors, and so forth. By implication, the theory states that 20% of the factors in a social phenomenon account for 80% of the outcomes. That is, 20% of the significant contributing factors account for the success or failure of a problem.

We then used a similar approach to identify six or more interventions that would help reduce the impact or eliminate constraints, thereby achieving a higher degree of success.

The choice of the factors or sub-units analyzed was based on prioritization, while the number of factors considered was limited for the convenience of application. We also used the social scenario of Nigeria as our case analysis.

Below are the four identified constraining factors and their possible interventions.

#### 4. CONTRAINING FACTORS AND THEIR POSSIBLE INTERVENTIONS

##### 4.1. The Factors and Identified Interventions

The authors restricted the analysis to four key factors that constrain or impede the successful implementation of sustainable development interventions, as explained in the methodology: education-related constraints, moral issues, social constraints, and project management constraints.

The 1-4 Tables further subdivided these factors into some component key sub-units, and we also suggested some possible interventions that can help reduce the impacts of these constraining factors.

**Table 1.** Shows the key education-related constraints that can impede sustainable development efforts and their possible interventional trusts.

| SN    | Key education related constraints                                                                                                          | Identified possible interventions                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.1.1 | Lack of an adequate number of schools and teachers.                                                                                        | Carry out a needs assessment to understand the cost implications of the problem.                                                                                                    |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Make a plan and implement the recovery in a phased manner, ensuring that adequate budget is allocated for establishing schools and employing competent teachers.                    |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Establish at least one public boarding school in each local government area to reduce the transportation difficulties faced by students accessing schools daily.                    |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Introduce incentives to attract competent teachers, including providing free accommodations and paying them a rural posting allowance for those posted to rural areas.              |
| 4.1.2 | Lack of competent teachers                                                                                                                 | Make it compulsory that all teachers must acquire teaching competences                                                                                                              |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Every teacher in primary school should have at least a national certificate of education, while a first degree is required for secondary school teachers.                           |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Ensure that external supervisors visit schools regularly and punish erring teachers and supervisors.                                                                                |
| 4.1.3 | Menace of 'out-of-school children'                                                                                                         | Provide opportunities for part-time higher education for teachers                                                                                                                   |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Enact a law prohibiting street trading by children and punish the guidance and parents of apprehended children.                                                                     |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Provide one balanced diet meal to every primary and junior secondary school child each school day as an incentive to keep them in school.                                           |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Make school fees free at the primary and junior secondary school levels, but provide funds to run the schools through school management.                                            |
| 4.1.4 | Lack of adequate skills and manpower.                                                                                                      | Attitudinal reorientation through mass/social media, religious bodies, and inclusion in school curriculum.                                                                          |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Governments and non-governmental organizations should provide free skill acquisition centers and distribute starter packs upon training completion.                                 |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Improve the curricula of schools and universities to make them more relevant to the current situation in the nation.                                                                |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Provide revolving credit facilities with minimal interest rates and capacity-building programs for entrepreneurs.                                                                   |
| 4.1.5 | Massive illiteracy                                                                                                                         | Provide skill retraining programs for graduates                                                                                                                                     |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Government and non-governmental organizations provide free adult education centers.                                                                                                 |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Provide incentives for illiterate individuals who want to attend adult education.                                                                                                   |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Provide skill acquisition programs for adults                                                                                                                                       |
| 4.1.6 | Excessive emigration (loss of competent manpower)                                                                                          | Attitudinal reorientation through mass/social media, religious bodies, and inclusion in school curriculum.                                                                          |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Promote the payment of living wages to retain and attract workers in the public sector.                                                                                             |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Employ persons to occupy all vacant positions in the civil and public services                                                                                                      |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Establish industries, including facilities for backward integration.                                                                                                                |
| 4.1.7 | Lack of adequate knowledge and awareness of sustainable development goals and processes, with consequences of environmental mismanagement. | Give workers the opportunity to enjoy housing and other loan facilities at low interest rates.                                                                                      |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Carry out extensive campaigns and awareness talks on environmental protection and the importance of sustainable development, promoting better practices and lifestyles.             |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Deepen awareness and knowledge of SDGs and their targets through facilitative syndicate-type workshops, as proposed by <a href="#">Lawrence et al. (2023)</a> .                     |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Apply sustainable land use and agroforestry systems.                                                                                                                                |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Adopt renewable energy options and related technologies.                                                                                                                            |
|       |                                                                                                                                            | Carry out extensive reforestation programs and significantly increase the planting of economic trees, such as fruit trees, to generate income and provide employment opportunities. |

The analysis using four groups of critical factors began with education-related constraints. There is a biblical saying that my people perish for lack of knowledge. People who are not properly educated often resort to using myths

that are baseless in explaining whatever they need help understanding. Until there is a scientific explanation for mysteries, these myths thrive. Unexplained deaths, rainbows, and any event not fully understood have superstitiously accepted explanations. They believe in superstition, which forms the basis for ritualistic tendencies. These tendencies enable fraudsters to extort money from innocent members of their societies in the name of sorcery.

Some religious organizations are reluctant to accept new findings, especially if they contradict their beliefs. Other ultra-conservative individuals will resist change even to the point of inflicting harm by acting violently against agents of change. The worst situation occurs when they attempt to change others who do not accept their ways of living, making it taboo to suggest changes to well-established traditions and customs. Penalties can be as severe as death. They discourage people from attending schools and violently kill or kidnap students to prevent learning. While they discourage schooling, they employ products of scientific and technological advancements to improve their living standards. They use cars, fly in airplanes, and conduct wars with advanced technological weapons, all products of research and learning. These contradictory standards are hypocritical.

Regarding prioritization, we listed the lack of adequate schools and teachers as a critical factor that impedes knowledge transfer to the younger generation. We must carry out a needs analysis and also provide an adequate budget for increasing the number of schools and teachers in primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions. Boarding schools can reduce the daily exposure of students traveling long distances to schools, and there is a need to give incentives to competent teachers who are willing to be posted to rural areas.

The second set of sub-unit factors involves recruiting competent teachers to teach the students. Every teacher must have acquired teaching qualifications, and external supervisors should regularly visit to ensure the teachers are performing well. Equally, every teacher should have opportunities to attend self-improvement part-time schooling.

A significant obstacle to improving educational access among people is the menace of 'out-of-school children.' Some adults exploit children as street beggars or street hawkers. The government must protect children who are exploited in this way and punish adults who exploit children. Government and other non-governmental organizations should introduce one meal daily for children attending primary and junior secondary schools, as this has the dual effect of attracting children to school and providing them with at least one balanced meal a day. When children eat a balanced diet, they grow more healthily. The government should provide free schooling for primary and junior secondary students and carry out mass awareness campaigns on the benefits of free schooling programs for children. However, the government must fund these schools adequately to operate effectively, including maintaining a clean school environment, securing school assets, providing electricity and water, and supplying writing and other materials for teachers.

The lack of adequate skills among the workforce has been a visible impediment to rapid and sustainable development. People can be more effectively and gainfully employed if they possess the requisite skills, and where that is lacking, expatriates would be used to operate established industries or to implement high-end projects. Government and non-governmental organizations are required to establish skill acquisition centers and provide scholarships to gifted children to pursue tertiary education. Other vital interventions include redeveloping the school curricula to become more relevant to current realities. We should provide guided starter grants and credit facilities to people to start their enterprises after skill acquisition.

Another key sub-unit is endemic illiteracy. Many people cannot read or write because they have not attended formal school or are dropouts. Such people are too handicapped to manage their businesses since they cannot follow up on business progress or challenges effectively. Promoting functional adult education centers and massive sensitization campaigns encouraging people to utilize such facilities are critical in reducing endemic illiteracy.

Although moderate emigration benefits any nation, it helps influx foreign exchange and facilitates technology transfer over time. Massive emigration strips a nation of all human resources and leaves it without a relevant and competent workforce to drive its economy. Nations must give incentives to specific skilled workforces to stay back and work. Such incentives can also encourage those who have left to consider returning. Every government must

provide employment to as many graduates as possible by supporting private partners to set up industries that can employ the indigenes.

Lack of adequate knowledge and awareness of sustainable development goals and processes, with consequences of mismanagement of the environment and climate change issues, among others, were adequately highlighted as critical constraints.

Lawrence et al. (2023) demonstrated the gaps between what many people think are the various sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the actual conceptions of the goals (especially at the target levels). Based on these obvious gaps, they proposed nine recommendations that can deepen the knowledge and practice of SDGs, some of which include establishing sustainable development and climate change clubs in secondary schools, enhancing awareness, knowledge, and practices of SDGs and their targets through facilitative workshops, expanding the sustainability pillars to six by including performance as the sixth pillar and subdividing them into three functional groups.

They also suggested elaborating on how interrelated and interconnected the SDGs are to promote a holistic approach and to focus equally on the priority SDG needs of each locality. Other proposals include enacting enabling laws, enhancing the SDG Week concept, and intensifying stakeholder education. The evidence shows that every living human is already experiencing the devastating impacts of climate change, such as heavy rains, hurricanes, flooding, excessive heat, and rising temperatures, among others. Interventions like reforestation, green technologies, and sustainable lifestyles must become more popular to control these adverse consequences and reverse the negative impacts.

Our moral dispositions as individuals or groups involved in leadership roles can affect people's progress regarding sustainable growth and development. There will not be adequate continuous improvement in developmental standards if the leaders or groups in charge of governance have dispositions of greed and selfishness. Equally, nepotistic, biased, unjust, and unfair leadership styles, embellished with bad cultural values, are counterproductive to sustainable growth and development.

The six priority sub-unit factors identified under the morally impeding factors are greed/selfishness, nepotism/discrimination, injustice, corruption/crimes, covetousness/usurpation, and harmful cultural values. Each of these sub-unit factors has a significant debilitating impact on sustainable development. People can become demoralized, undertake mass actions or protests, or resort to violent conflicts. They might initiate rebellious movements and file litigations that could hinder governance and development. Corruption and crimes can severely affect sustainable development, as can harmful and primitive cultural practices and values.

In terms of interventions, many of the proposed measures in the moral-related sub-unit factors are similar. Effective law enforcement and strong judicial institutions prevent these tendencies and ensure the rule of law, as mentioned in most sub-unit factors.

Many people will not commit crimes if they know they will eventually be caught and punished. If people understand the policy guidelines, the provisions, and the content of the constitution, and if they recognize the importance of whistleblowing, most crimes can be curtailed.

Proper utilization of mass and social media to promote transparency, along with consequences for improper behavior, will significantly improve society and our value system. Finally, people must understand and adopt attitudinal reorientation through mass and social media, religious bodies, and schools, including the use of school curricula, to address these issues effectively.

**Table 2.** Shows the key moral-related constraints that can impede sustainable development efforts and possible interventional trusts.

| SN    | Key moral-related issues  | Identified possible interventions                                                                                                                |
|-------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.2.1 | Greed/Selfishness         | Promote effective law enforcement                                                                                                                |
|       |                           | Develop and implement policy guidelines/Constitution                                                                                             |
|       |                           | Effective implementation of monitoring/Transparent operations                                                                                    |
|       |                           | Reorientation through training and communications                                                                                                |
| 4.2.2 | Nepotism / Discrimination | Promote effective law enforcement                                                                                                                |
|       |                           | Develop and implement policy guidelines/Constitution                                                                                             |
|       |                           | Effective implementation of monitoring/Transparent operations                                                                                    |
|       |                           | Affirmative actions through enforcement of zoning offices and rotation of leadership positions/Implementation of the federal character principle |
| 4.2.3 | Injustice                 | Promote effective law enforcement                                                                                                                |
|       |                           | Promote independent and strong judicial and legislative systems                                                                                  |
|       |                           | Promote whistle blowing and effective exposure of injustice through mass and social media actions                                                |
|       |                           | Promote effective resistance to injustice through trade unions and other civil societies.                                                        |
| 4.2.4 | Corruption/Crimes         | Promote effective law enforcement                                                                                                                |
|       |                           | Promote independent and strong judicial and legislative systems                                                                                  |
|       |                           | Promote whistle blowing and effective exposure of corruption through mass and social media actions                                               |
|       |                           | Effective implementation of monitoring/Transparent operations                                                                                    |
| 4.2.5 | Covetousness/Usurpation   | Promote effective law enforcement                                                                                                                |
|       |                           | Promote independent and strong judicial and legislative systems                                                                                  |
|       |                           | Promote whistle blowing and effective exposure through mass and social media actions                                                             |
|       |                           | Escalation of issues to superior bodies (local, national, and international) for mediation                                                       |
| 4.2.6 | Bad cultural values       | Build capacities through training and communications                                                                                             |
|       |                           | Attitudinal reorientation through mass media, social media, religious bodies, and inclusion in school curricula                                  |
|       |                           | Promulgate appropriate laws to deter undesirable cultural behaviors                                                                              |
|       |                           | Promote whistle blowing and effective exposure through mass and social media actions                                                             |

**Table 3** explains the importance of social/well-being factors as a constraint to sustainable development. The set of sub-unit factors treated comprises of poor political leadership, insecurity/insurgency/violent conflict, superstition, unemployment, endemic hard-drug addition, lack of infrastructure and other social amenities, gradual but continuous loss of good cultural values, the growing ubiquity of social vices, endemic poverty, lack of recognition of the women folks and the negative exploitation of our ethno-religious and cultural differences by bad leaders. The social and well-being factors are society-related issues that may not directly relate to any specific SDG but generally affect all the SDGs, either directly or indirectly.

Several proposed interventions are common to most of the listed priority constraints. These include enforcing and continuously improving the provisions of the laws of the land, promoting personal, community, state, and national security measures to prevent the growth of cult and militant gangs and other crimes, bridging capacity gaps among people based on their needs (skills and ignorance), addressing criminal tendencies, and providing opportunities for the establishment of industries and job creation, among many other interventions.

**Table 3.** Shows the key Social/Well-being constraints that can impede sustainable development efforts and their possible interventional trusts.

| SN     | Key social/Well-being factors                                         | Identified possible interventions                                                                                                                 |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.3.1  | Bad political leaders                                                 | Promote democratic principles                                                                                                                     |
|        |                                                                       | Build capacities through training and communications                                                                                              |
|        |                                                                       | Educate people and enforce the content of constitution through mass actions, and also using the mass and social media                             |
|        |                                                                       | Promote independent and strong judicial and legislative systems                                                                                   |
| 4.3.2  | Insecurity/<br>Insurgency/<br>Violent<br>conflicts                    | Enforce and continuously improve the provisions of the laws of the land                                                                           |
|        |                                                                       | Use the most modern technologies as a countermeasure.                                                                                             |
|        |                                                                       | Build the capacities of the law enforcement, intelligence and military personnel                                                                  |
|        |                                                                       | Promote personal, community, state, and national security measures to prevent the festering of cults, militant gangs, and other crimes.           |
| 4.3.3  | Endemic hard drug addiction                                           | Carry out mass sensitization programs on consequences of hard drug addiction                                                                      |
|        |                                                                       | Enforce and continuously improve the provisions of the laws of the land                                                                           |
|        |                                                                       | Develop modern and effective rehabilitation centers                                                                                               |
|        |                                                                       | Develop effective ways to identify and apprehend hard drug users and give highly deterrent punitive measures for the sellers of hard drugs        |
| 4.3.4  | Destitution                                                           | Provide appropriate employment opportunities for the people                                                                                       |
|        |                                                                       | Build the capacities of people to acquire skills and start entrepreneurship.                                                                      |
|        |                                                                       | Provide holding centers to rehabilitate and support destitute                                                                                     |
|        |                                                                       | Provide revolving credit facilities with minimal interest rates and capacity building                                                             |
| 4.3.5  | Unemployment/<br>Overpopulation                                       | Carry out mass sensitization programs on the consequences of overpopulation                                                                       |
|        |                                                                       | Government will facilitate the establishment of industries and large-scale farms by entrepreneurs                                                 |
|        |                                                                       | Provide revolving credit facilities with minimum interest rates and capacity building programs                                                    |
|        |                                                                       | Provide family planning centers with free health related advises and free contraceptives                                                          |
| 4.3.6  | Lack of infrastructure and other social amenities                     | Improve constant and stable supply of electricity in the nation.                                                                                  |
|        |                                                                       | Provide prepaid meters as the sole means of accessing electricity from the national grid.                                                         |
|        |                                                                       | Provide sustainable roads and other transportation systems, e.g., rail systems.                                                                   |
|        |                                                                       | Provide access to mobile and internet networks in every part of the nations                                                                       |
|        |                                                                       | Provide sustainable portable water and health facilities, agricultural, and agro-based economic systems                                           |
|        |                                                                       | Provide all other social amenities necessary to improve quality of lives for the people                                                           |
| 4.3.7  | Cultural barbarism, Ritualism, caste systems and superstition         | Attitudinal reorientation through mass/social media, religious bodies, and inclusion in school curriculum                                         |
|        |                                                                       | Enforce and continuously improve the provisions of the laws of the land                                                                           |
|        |                                                                       | Name, shame and adequately punish apprehended culprits                                                                                            |
|        |                                                                       | Build the capacities of the local traditional rulers, youth leaders, women groups, and also law enforcement, intelligence and military personnel  |
| 4.3.8  | Acute poverty                                                         | Give strict laws to punish ritualism and all other primitive practices                                                                            |
|        |                                                                       | Encourage the establishment of large farms, with agro-related industries to take up the farm produce                                              |
|        |                                                                       | Encourage the establishment of large fish cage fish growing facilities in the riverine areas                                                      |
|        |                                                                       | Encourage revolving loan schemes with minimal interest rates that provide incentives to loan repayment beneficiaries                              |
| 4.3.9  | Women are not adequately recognized                                   | Encourage the establishment of small and medium sized businesses                                                                                  |
|        |                                                                       | Ensure affirmative actions by including females in every sphere of national life                                                                  |
|        |                                                                       | Give none elective positions to women in the Senate, House of Representatives and in the various state houses of assembly                         |
|        |                                                                       | Women should hold at least one-third of the positions in every executive councils and government boards                                           |
| 4.3.10 | Negative exploitation of our ethno-religious and cultural differences | No community or any general meeting can be considered to have been well constituted unless at least one quarter of the people present are women   |
|        |                                                                       | Teach the younger generation the benefits of tolerance, peaceful coexistence, no prejudice against others who do not look like you, and no hatred |
|        |                                                                       | Encourage inter-marriages                                                                                                                         |
|        |                                                                       | Encourage federal character principles in organizational set up while not frustrating meritocracy                                                 |
|        |                                                                       | Encourage national and regional cultural festivals                                                                                                |

A major subunit issue here is the problem of bad leaders, who may embezzle the commonwealth, transform into dictators, promote injustice, among many other issues. All citizens must ensure the development of strong institutions to counter such bad political leaders who may resort to the use of coercive instruments of power to intimidate, manipulate, and terrorize the populace. Another important factor is the empowerment of women. Among the radical proposals made in this paper is ensuring that no legitimate community or general meeting should have the power to make generally applicable decisions in Nigeria without women constituting 25% of the attendees and that some non-elective positions be reserved for women in the Senate, Houses of Representatives, State Assemblies, and local government.

Nigeria's ethnic, religious, and cultural differences hold substantial potential for driving rapid societal advancement, provided they are effectively harnessed.

A cursory examination reveals that our ethnic diversity has provided us with a broad range of genetic endowments, talents, and abilities, which, when combined, can produce synergistic outcomes that benefit the nation.

Moreover, our religious differences can serve as a catalyst for combating corruption and establishing development partnerships with numerous countries globally.

Additionally, the cultural diversity has created a wealth of cultural heritage that, when properly leveraged, can boost tourism and enhance our value system.

This snapshot inference highlights the potential for progress, which can be realized because of our differences within the same nation. However, we have allowed some bad leaders to exploit and divide us for their selfish purposes, utilizing these same differences. We no longer trust or tolerate each other. We are prejudiced and hate one another and would go to any length at the slightest opportunity. We discriminate against and victimize anyone unlike us. The voting patterns in our national assembly reveal our hidden ethnic biases.

As a result, we have failed to achieve progress, remaining stagnant since independence.

Table 4 addressed some significant factors that are manifestations of poor project planning: poor management skills of operators, poor funding, poor feasibility studies, and poor political leadership among others.

The lack of amenities, poor maintenance culture, the preponderance of white elephant projects, lack of finance, incompetence of managers, poor management of resources, and poor collaborative knowledge with other partners, among many others. Bad politics also play a role in this group of factors.

Enforcement and continuous improvement of the laws of the land, sensitization of the citizenry to take ownership of projects, and ensuring supervision of development project implementation, as well as capacity building of all stakeholders involved in development implementation, are some of the necessary interventions to improve the situation.

**Table 4.** Shows the key project management-related constraints that can impede sustainable development efforts and their possible interventional trusts.

| SN    | Key project management-related constraints | Identified possible interventions                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.4.1 | Lack of social amenities                   | Carry out integrated needs assessment and development plans for the communities, LGAs, states, and the whole nation in a participatory manner                                                                   |
|       |                                            | Agree on the phasing of implementation based on fund availability, reducing corruption, and encouraging communities, groups, and individuals to carry out self-help projects and maintain implemented projects. |
|       |                                            | Secure productive and effective public-private partnerships to share risks and profits. Allow co-sponsoring private technical experts to run commercial projects.                                               |
|       |                                            | Train staff on sources of project funding and optimal use of available funding without wastage.                                                                                                                 |
| 4.4.2 | Lack of maintenance culture                | Envisage at the conceptual phase the need to carry out a durable project and the provision of regular maintenance costs in line with the project design.                                                        |

| SN    | Key project management-related constraints                      | Identified possible interventions                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|       |                                                                 | Build sources of income into the project that can be used to maintain the project when necessary. Include a collection of tolls if it is a road, for example.                                                                                               |
|       |                                                                 | Train staff on project maintenance as part of running costs and on continuous monitoring and evaluation of projects.                                                                                                                                        |
|       |                                                                 | Enforce and continuously improve the provisions of the laws of the land                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 4.4.3 | Many white elephant projects                                    | Understand the needs of the people and the acceptance of the project before commencement. Carry out mass sensitization of the project beneficiaries to help them understand the rationale and benefits of the project, as well as how it will be protected. |
|       |                                                                 | Understand the availability of project implementation funds throughout the construction phase.                                                                                                                                                              |
|       |                                                                 | Carry out environmental studies, feasibility studies, and assessment of running costs before constructing the embankment.                                                                                                                                   |
|       |                                                                 | Locate facilities close to source of raw materials and other major inputs to reduce costs                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 4.4.4 | Competence to secure project finances and effective contracting | Recruit competent planners to design, plan, contract and implement project                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|       |                                                                 | Ensure that there is an effective management system, including an effective procurement process.                                                                                                                                                            |
|       |                                                                 | Secure productive and effective Public Private Partnerships                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|       |                                                                 | Train staff on contracting and procurement management, as well as on monitoring and evaluation of projects.                                                                                                                                                 |
| 4.4.5 | Inadequate income generating projects                           | Facilitate the establishment of income-generating projects such as toll roads, agro-post-harvest industries, mechanized farms, refineries, and other industries.                                                                                            |
|       |                                                                 | Identify valuable and highly commercial regional products for concentration by each zone, which have a comparative advantage over other zones.                                                                                                              |
|       |                                                                 | Promote a regulated market economy with restrictive importation of such non-essential goods to conserve foreign exchange, in a way that smuggled goods are prohibitively costly.                                                                            |
|       |                                                                 | Promote research on continuous process, product, and marketing improvement                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 4.4.6 | Politics of project locations                                   | Leadership must ensure that there is no political interference in the citing of projects. Projects should be located close to raw materials and away from areas of high insecurity.                                                                         |
|       |                                                                 | Ensure that there is transparency, no nepotism, and integrity in the affairs of politicians.                                                                                                                                                                |
|       |                                                                 | Carry out mass sensitization of the project beneficiaries to understand the rationale and benefits of the project if it is supported and will be protected.                                                                                                 |
|       |                                                                 | Enforce and continuously improve the provisions of the laws of the land.                                                                                                                                                                                    |

#### 4.2. Implications of Framework

In this section, we discussed the four major groups of educational, moral, social/well-being, and project management impediments and proposed some priority interventions.

The next issue is how development interventionists will use this framework in development planning in communities, local government areas, states, nations, and other larger entities.

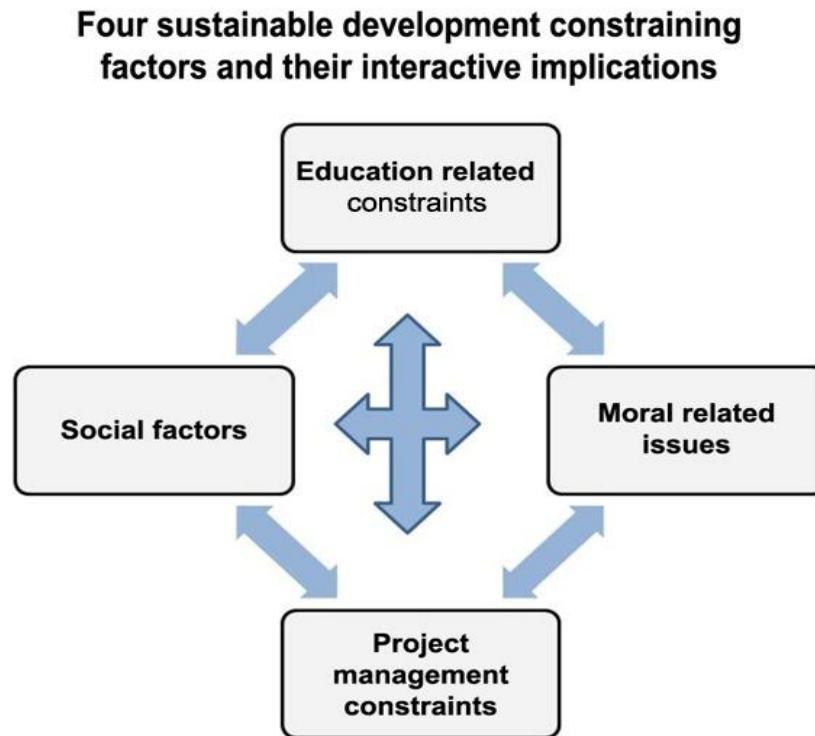
We need to facilitate the identification of development priorities in each of these interconnected and interrelated groups of impediments as listed above (education, morality, social/well-being factors, and project management constraints) and then probe further to understand the following:

1. What are the priority development challenges of the relevant area?
2. Who are the key stakeholders most affected by the challenges?
3. What interventions can best mitigate the identified challenges, in line with the work of [Lawrence and Lawrence \(2019\)](#) on sustainability filters and enhancers towards achieving true sustainability?

## 5. INTERACTIONS OF THE CONSTRAINING FACTORS

### 5.1. The Four Main Factors

Figure 1 shows the four significant sustainable development constraining factors and how the factors interact.



**Figure 1.** Shows the four broad based sustainable development constraining factors and how they interact.

The researchers listed four priority constraining factors and demonstrated how they interact with each other to produce higher synergistic outcomes. We detailed the sub-units of each constraining factor in a tabular form for better clarification in the preceding section of this paragraph.

The implication is that the dominant subunit factors in each constraining factor may differ from one circumstance to another, and it will also depend on the stakeholders involved.

A prominent outcome of this study is the identification of the significant roles that both moral and social/well-being-related constraining factors play in all sustainable development efforts.

Since these are constraining factors, synergy implies a worsening impact.

After a rigorous brainstorming session, we identified four broad priority areas of constraints that are impeding effective continuous improvement of sustainable development efforts:

1. Moral-related issues.
2. Social and well-being factors.
3. Education-related constraints.
4. Project management constraints.

(See [Figure 1](#))

Each of the factors had a number of component factors. The study involved identifying key interventions that can ameliorate the negative impacts of these impeding factors and their component sub-units. As can be deduced, the four main factors and their component sub-units collectively work to impede sustainable development.

These four factors recombined as human-related (moral, social/well-being and education related constraints) and project management-related constraints.

It follows that the success of any project implementation will not only be affected by constraints inherent in the implementation but also by constraints that generally impede it, originating from the nature of the humans who are either to implement or benefit from the intervention.

The constraining factors interact among themselves to cause more negative synergistic effects. For example, a political leader or an important implementer who is greedy or selfish (moral constraints) and working in an environment with a set of social/well-being-related constraints—such as a weak law enforcement system and judiciary, and in a society where people more or less encourage government officials to participate in corruption (so long as such dividends of the crime or corruption would in one way or another benefit them or their loved ones)—cannot make good progress toward achieving the sustainable development goals.

The implementation situation is further complicated by project management-related constraints such as a lack of competence to plan and implement the intervention, insufficient funding to execute the project, and inadequate supervision, among others.

It can be argued that the criticality or dominance of each constraining or impeding factor and their sub-unit component factors will depend on the society. Factors that are critical in a third-world nation like Nigeria may differ from those that are prominent in the United States of America or Canada, for example.

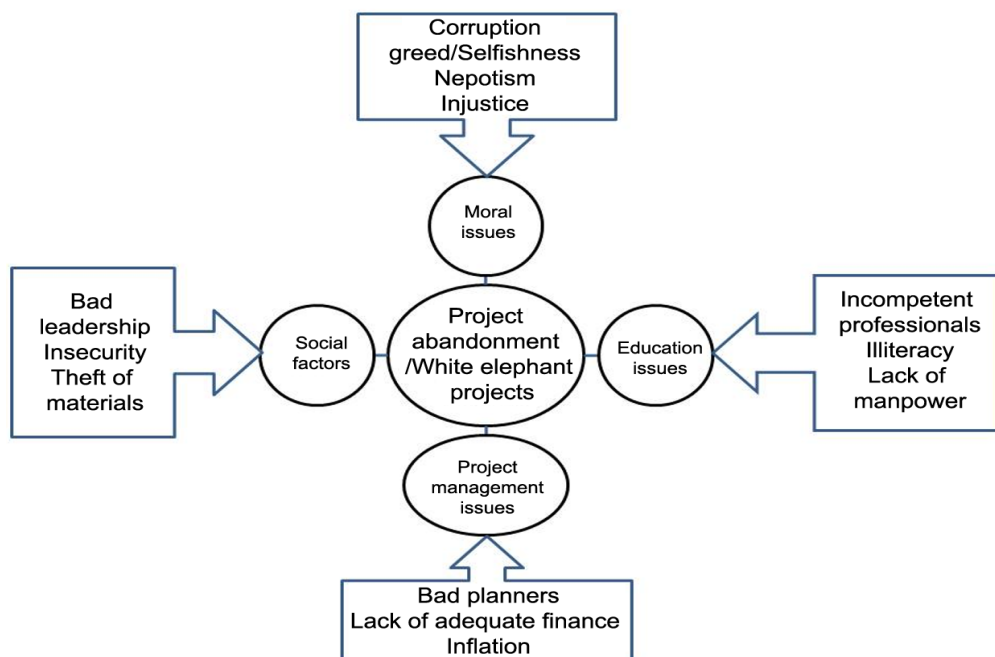
That means that these studies should be location specific.

## 5.2. Specific Examples of How These Factors Result in Sustainable Development Failures

Let us use some examples to illustrate how the factors individually and collectively work together to cause sustainable developmental failures:

### 5.2.1. Abandoned/White Elephant Projects

Many abandoned projects (white elephant projects) litter the landscape in many developing nations because of poor planning. Also, the next government may refuse to continue projects started by a previous government, feeling that the credit would not come to them. Such people could frustrate the continuation of the projects. This tendency is unfair to the people who lose the resources already committed to the implementation due to political pettiness.



**Figure 2.** Shows how the four broad based factors result in project failure or abandonment.

Source: Conceptualized by the researchers (2024).

Project management-related factors play a significant role in project failure or abandonment. Ayodele (2011) identified the following causes of project abandonment: inadequate project planning, insufficient funds, inflation, contractor bankruptcy, scope variation, political factors, the death of the client, an incompetent project manager, inaccurate estimates, inadequate cost control, faulty design, and delayed payments. All these factors, except political ones, are related to project management, while political factors are social in nature.

Mijkovic (2022) and Simplilearn (2023) identified poor communication, unrealistic deadlines, and choice of technology as other project-related subunit factors. They also included incompetent project managers, lack of monitoring (which we have identified as education-related factors), and lack of transparency (which we identified as moral-related factors) in the list of subunit factors that cause project abandonment.

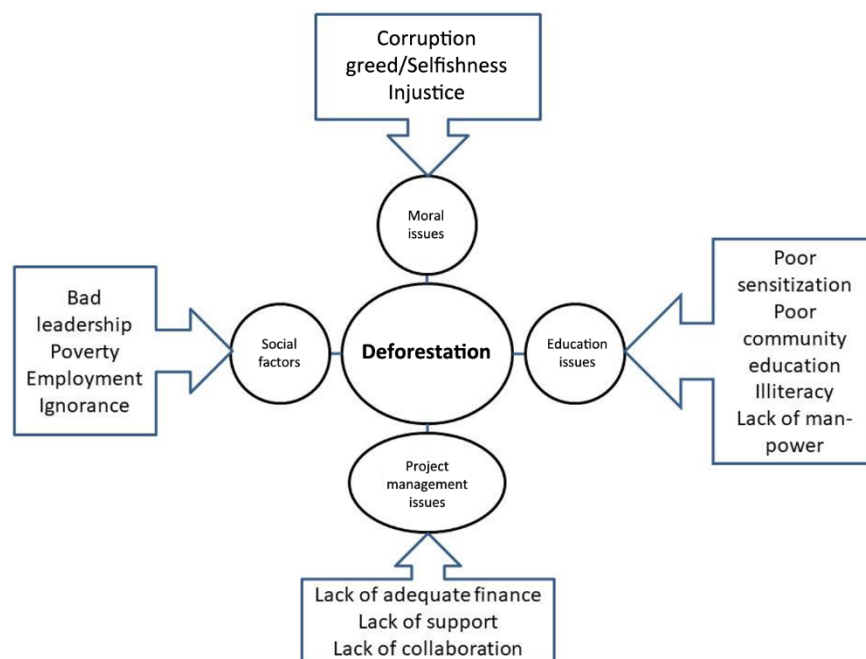
On moral constraints, specifically regarding corruption in Figure 2, Williams (2017) provided compelling evidence from his thesis that *corruption plays a significant role in project failure and abandonment*. He stated that *development projects such as schools and boreholes are popular with politicians in developing countries and are sometimes abandoned mid-construction*. Williams (2017) examined three plausible explanations for project failures: corruption, clientelism, and dynamically inconsistent collective choice. He estimated that about one-third of such projects are never completed, accounting for approximately one-fifth of all local government capital spending.

Equally, Moustafa (2013) stated: 'Countries suffering from corruption cannot implement sound redistribution policies and are thus expected to benefit from sustainable economic development despite embarking upon economic growth from time to time for some reasons.'

Corruption and greed are the most significant subunit factors among the moral factors that impede sustainable development and project failures.

Political leaders, due to greed and other negative emotions, often locate or choose to implement projects that will personally benefit them or their loved ones. How such projects improve the quality of lives of the general public is very secondary. Often, such projects that are not well-conceived tend to fail or get abandoned.

To further show how these projects generally cause developmental problems, we have used a similar approach to illustrate how these factors result in selected issues (deforestation, out-of-school children, and insurgency/insecurity. See Figures 3, 4, and 5.



**Figure 3.** Shows how the four broad based factors result in deforestation.

Source: Conceptualized by the researchers (2024).

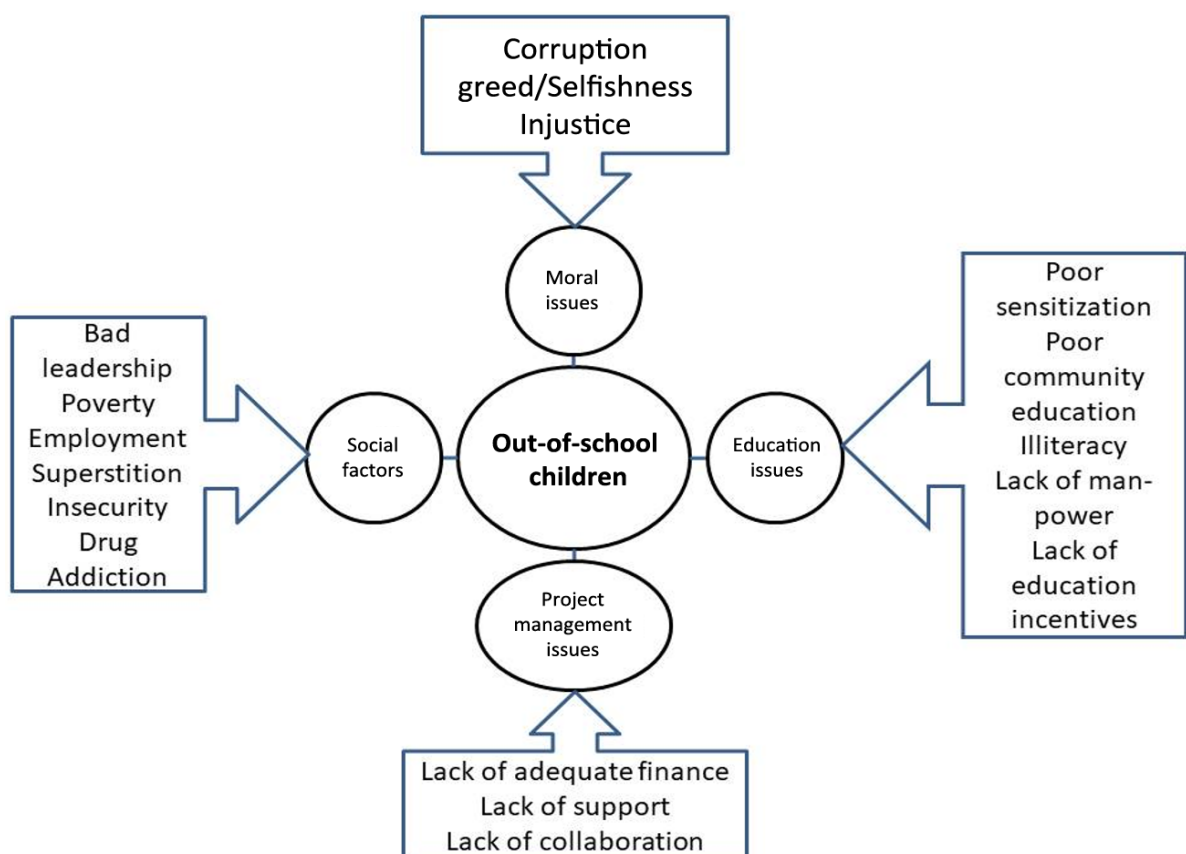
### 5.2.2. Deforestation

The four constraining factors play roles in deforestation (Figure 3), as was with abandoned projects. However, for this discussion, we shall concentrate on those priority and subunit factors, which we can justify with some information in the literature.

Global Forest Watch (2023) stated that: “Nigeria in 2019 had 10.6 Mha of natural forest, extending over 12% of its land area, and in 2023, it lost 81.2 kha of natural forest, equivalent to 54.6 Mt of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.” Nigeria now has one of the highest deforestation rates in the world. The DGB (2023) estimated that 3.7% of its forest is lost yearly. DGB (2023) equally stated that deforestation is a big issue as a result of rapid population growth along with high demand for timber, fuel-wood, and land for agriculture.

Deforestation causes the loss of forest-related and wildlife resources and a dangerous decline in the world's carbon sink capacities. However, with increasing population and poverty, it is difficult to stop people from clearing virgin forests for sustenance.

Our position on this matter can be summarized as follows: The more we engage in deforestation, the more we experience land erosion, significant nutrient losses through leaching, and other contributing consequences of climate change. The more we convert cultivated agricultural lands into agroforestry plantations, the more we replicate natural forest vegetation and preserve land productivity. The more we incorporate economically valuable fruit trees as part of our agroforestry systems, the more we enhance our economic resource base (Lawrence, 2022).



**Figure 4.** Shows how the four broad based factors result in out-of-school children.

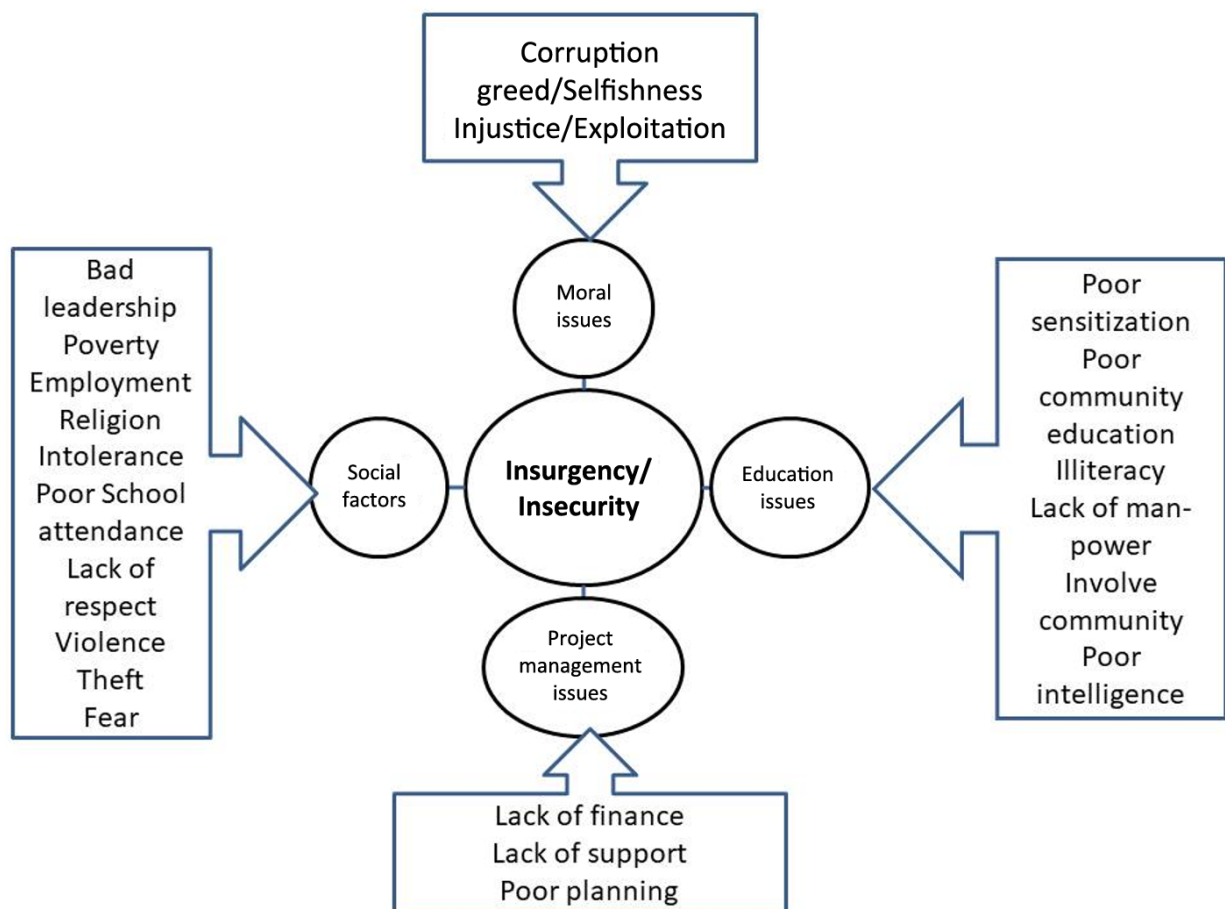
Source: Conceptualized by the researchers (2024).

### 5.2.3. Out-of-School Children

The priority factors of morality, social/well-being, education, and project management and their components aggravate the out-of-school or poor student enrollment problem in the figure above. Below, we have explained, using co-authored previous literature, how these factors impact this sustainable development issue.

Lawrence et al. (2020a) identified poor school enrolment/out-of-school children among other critical factors militating against achievement of SDG 4. They identified funding (a project management sub-unit factor) as an underlying factor hindering the achievement of many challenges. Without concerted efforts to increase the budget for education and ensure that allocated funds are not misappropriated (misappropriation of funds is a moral subunit factor), it will not be possible to achieve SDG 4. Social/well-being and educational factors, such as poor school enrollment/out-of-school children issues, will persist due to insecurity and Almajiri problems. However, providing one balanced meal each school day for every primary and junior secondary student will significantly address this. This intervention will attract many children to school, enable them to receive education, and ensure they are provided with at least one balanced diet daily for good health, growth, and development of the affected children.

In the 2023 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) index, Nigeria was ranked 146th out of 166 countries, with a score of 54.3. This indicates poor performance (Sustainable Development Report 2023).



**Figure 5.** Shows how the four broad based factors result in insurgency/Insecurity.

Source: Conceptualized by the researchers (2024).

#### 5.2.4. Insurgency/Insecurity

Insurgency and insecurity are good examples to illustrate how constraining factors affect sustainable development, and sometimes such factors lead to violent conflicts and related consequences.

Insurgency and insecurity affect sustainability in several ways: farmers cannot go to the farms, many people are fatal casualties, there is psychological trauma, schools are closed, epidemics and other health issues are prevalent, hunger and poverty are widespread.

Ihebuzor, Lawrence, Tamunomiebi, et al. (2020) stated that “unearthing the violence amounts to a positive step in finding solutions to end such conflicts whose consequences are the inhibition of sustainable development and the diversion of resources away from constructive purposes”. Using a problem tree analysis, they argued that the major

causes of violent conflicts and wars are unresolved and escalating disputes, discrimination and vindictiveness by leadership, and a lack of justice and endemic impunity. They further noted that unresolved and escalating conflicts are mainly caused by pride and arrogance on the part of the contenders and a lack of conflict management skills. A more detailed analysis identified usurpation tendencies by powerful and greedy individuals, and societies suffering from degenerating value systems.

This paper by [Ihebuzor, Lawrence, and Lawrence \(2020\)](#) was so detailed in terms of identifying several factors impeding peaceful coexistence and sustainable development efforts. They added that violent conflicts and wars do not only cause deaths; other casualties include the loss of historic and cultural heritage sites, destruction of critical developmental amenities and infrastructure, homes, etc. The opposing camps often attack significant assets for revenue generation or assets to which the people have political or religious attachments. Some of these developmental entities and critical assets destroyed overnight took the people several decades to build.

[Ihebuzor, Lawrence, and Lawrence \(2020\)](#) stated that any nation with marked injustice and weak institutions could not be peaceful and enjoy good progress.

Violent extremism and radicalism are significant social and well-being factors, including poverty, societal exclusion, and marginalization ([Cooney, 2019](#)).

On the other hand, [Khan and Ahmed \(2017\)](#) concluded that poverty and socioeconomic backwardness have significant implications for causing radicalism and inciting terrorism.

[Allswell \(2014\)](#) narrated the statement of Chief Justice Musdapher: *The problems of insurgency in Nigeria are a complex blend of social, political, ethnic, legal, and constitutional ramifications. The Chief Justice further said that favoritism, nepotism, and tribal sentiments have made it impossible to run a merit-driven system. Hard work, brilliance, honesty, and integrity are not recognized and rewarded. We celebrate mediocrity soaked in corruption.*

[Igbini \(2020\)](#) identified some causative factors of insurgency and crimes in Nigeria: *corruption, nepotism, ethnic consciousness, mediocrity, marginalization, extreme social deprivation, and religious extremism*. His study adopted the Frustration-Aggression and Relative Deprivation theories to examine the causative factors or reasons why people resort to insurgency, crimes, and other forms of unrest as alternative means to register their grievances against the government.

The paper by [Ikezue and Ezeah \(2015\)](#) noted that religious, political, ethnic, and economic factors, coupled with corruption and influences from established terrorist organizations, were the major factors responsible for the emergence of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. They then proposed that insurgency can be eradicated through military actions, reorienting the insurgents, and job creation.

Don't we acknowledge that militancy and violence are driven by the actions of certain parties, are aggravated in the pursuit of justice, and are catalyzed by poverty and sometimes a lack of knowledge?

Places that are peaceful today may become hotbeds of violent conflicts tomorrow. Sometimes we are aware of the actions that will eventually lead to violent conflicts, but due to greed, covetousness, pride, arrogance, etc., we refuse to listen to the complaints of people who feel deprived until they begin to react.

Well-armed community and state/regional policing will help. The use of easily deployable drones equipped with high-precision weapons, visual scanning from a distance, and night vision capabilities, backed by best practice intelligence, will greatly change the narrative. Many developed and developing nations use them, and why can't we procure and use them too? Let us monitor all our forests with satellite tracking systems and also utilize mechanized farming with agroforestry for sustainable, continuous farming, especially in the large forested areas in the northern parts of the nation.

A national emergency should be declared in Nigeria to end the insurgency due to the worsening insecurity situation, which has led to loss of lives, property, trauma, economic deterioration, and other severe consequences on a daily basis.

We need to change the strategy if the current methods are ineffective. If we lack the resources and technology to effectively combat this type of conflict, we should consider engaging competent security contractors from developed nations. These contractors should operate under well-defined contractual terms specifying the duration required to clear our forests and neighboring or boundary nations of insurgents. This approach necessitates collaboration with our neighbors. Additionally, the contractors must agree to work with our trusted personnel who will take over the equipment and continue the efforts after the contractors have completed their assignments and departed. No former or reformed insurgents should be deployed to the frontlines; they can serve only as informants to our military, providing insights from their experiences, but not participating directly in combat.

To promote the greater good for Nigeria, among other measures, the federal government should immediately impose a nationwide ban on hunting wild animals in all Nigerian forests. Individuals found in possession of firearms within forests without requisite authorization should be apprehended, have their firearms confiscated, and face imprisonment.

Any threats posed by individuals resisting arrest in such situations should be promptly neutralized.

This policy will equally help the recovery of our natural wildlife, boosting tourism.

The true meaning of justice remains unaffected by ethnic or religious considerations. Unfortunately, many nations suffer from a significant justice deficit, including violence and attacks on victims by supposed herdsmen in places like Nigeria. It is absurd in these modern times for strangers to attack communities, kill people, sack the remaining residents, and then start residing in those villages as if it is their new home, with no repercussions from or for the government.

A comprehensive justice framework is essential, as any alternative approach or double standards will exacerbate the situation rather than rectify it.

The era of jungle justice and retaliatory attacks on many innocent people is barbaric.

No person should be subjected to jungle justice by another.

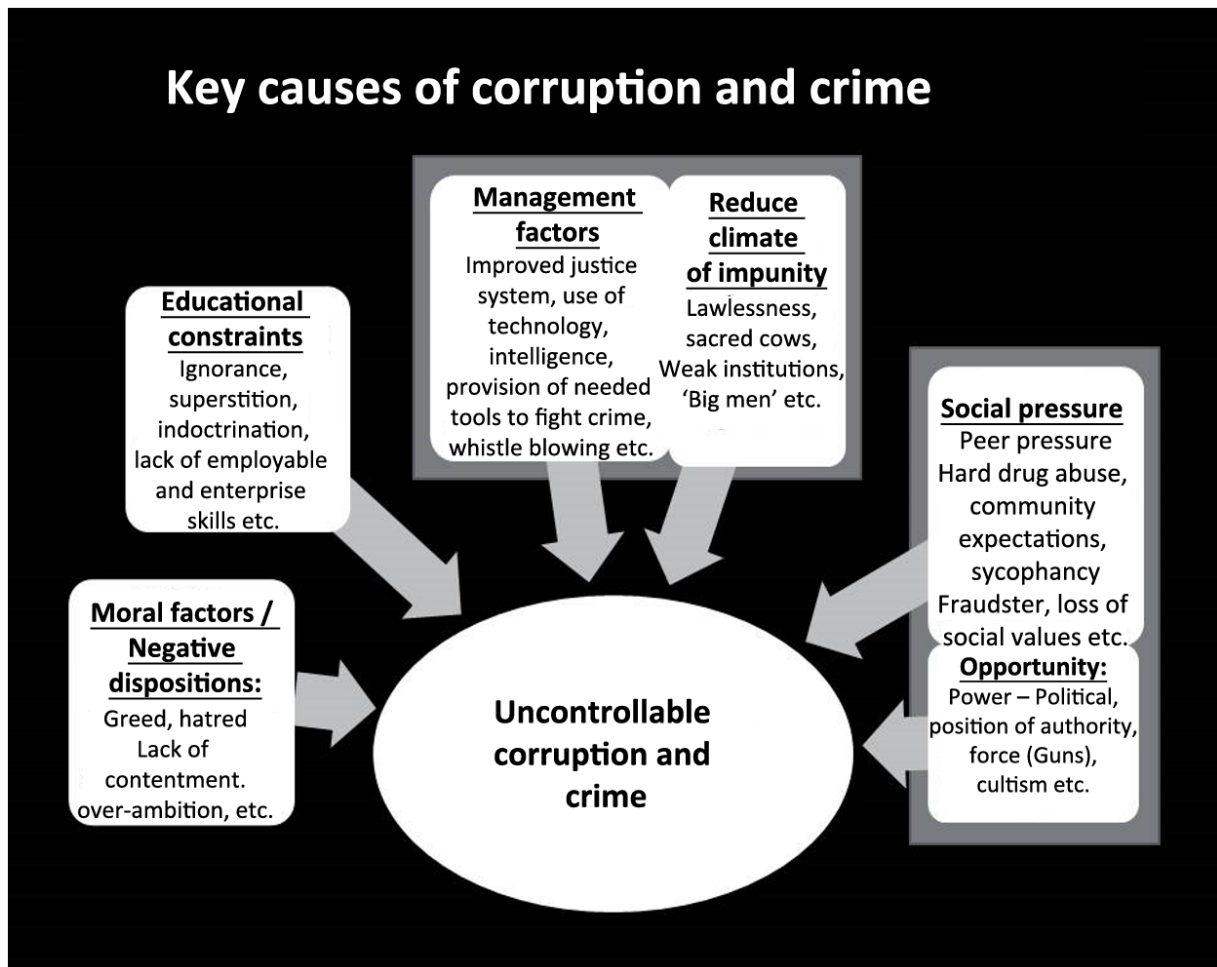
The above narrative shows that social/well-being factors are significant in causing insurgency and related problems. However, the roles of moral factors (corruption, injustice, greed/selfishness), education-related (ignorance, lack of capacity to manage insecurity, illiteracy), and project-related (funding, effective planning, technology to fight insecurity) are significant.

#### 5.2.5. The Problems of Corruption and Crime

From the various presentations in this paper, corruption and crime are common but generic subunit factors that impede all forms of sustainable development efforts (Transparency International, 2021; World Bank, 2000). The negative effects on the effectiveness, efficiency, and success rate of interventions range from planning to implementation and, ultimately, to project execution stages. Our ability to achieve the set goals and objectives of national, sub-national, and other organizations would be severely compromised if corruption and crime are allowed to thrive. These impediments may have moral origins but can also stem from various other factors, including social/well-being, educational, and project management issues. These problems manifest as educational obstacles, and bridging capacity gaps among operators can help reduce these vices. Project management interventions such as effective planning, monitoring, supervision, and law enforcement can mitigate corruption and crime. Good social and cultural values can also help reduce these issues. As Lawrence (2018) stated in his book, *“Despite the fact that Nigeria is resource-rich, we are currently rated as one of the poorest nations in the world. This is deeply rooted in the fact that corruption has become a way of life in certain areas of the economy”* (Page,127).

The diagram below shows how these four factors and their subunit components cause corruption and crime.

Figure 6 illustrates how the four broad-based factors (for Management and Social pressure – their priority subunits) result in uncontrollable corruption and crime.



**Figure 6.** Shows how the factors cause uncontrollable corruption and crime.

**Source:** Conceptualized by the researchers (2024).

Entities affected by pervasive corruption and crime, whether nations, subnational entities, communities, or organizations, are inherently unable to achieve their objectives effectively. This, in turn, hinders growth and development, including Sustainable Development Goals and Targets, and corruption perpetuates a culture of injustice. Moreover, corruption's corrosive influence on people's value systems is particularly problematic, as prolonged exposure can lead to cultural degradation that normalizes corrupt practices, even among those expected to uphold the highest standards, such as religious individuals. In the end, nations beset by endemic corruption will suffer the consequences of international isolation, characterized by backwardness, violence, and ignominy. Most countries with high emigration rates are impoverished due to prolonged corrupt leadership.

Fighting corruption can be viewed from three distinct perspectives: top-down, bottom-up, and horizontal approaches.

What are these approaches?

1. The top-down approach involves a superior authority identifying and addressing corruption within the system, with the power to discipline erring individuals.

This approach is often supported by the force of authority and enabling laws, making it effective. For instance, a nation's president has considerable powers to combat corruption if they have the will to do so, as most coercive forces are under their control. Similarly, leaders within organizations have constitutional or regulatory powers to discipline erring members.

However, these leaders can also abuse their powers to vindictively prosecute opponents or perceived enemies, while protecting cronies who have committed crimes from facing justice.

The top-down approach can be highly effective if the leader is genuinely committed to combating corruption, is righteous, and upholds justice. Conversely, a corrupt leader can exploit the outdated maxim 'the king can do no wrong' to become a menacing dictator.

2. On the other hand, the Bottom-up approach involves subordinates monitoring and checking the actions of their superiors.

This allows the masses to protest against the misconduct of political leaders, including those in the highest offices, such as the President. Junior officers within an organization can whistle-blow, report, petition, and challenge senior officers to management for wrongdoing. However, it is also possible that personal jealousy may motivate such actions.

Mass protests against poor governance exemplify a bottom-up approach in action. Well-organized protests are difficult to intimidate, especially when the issue at stake has significant and lasting impacts. However, a notable disadvantage of this approach is that authorities often wield considerable power and can use law enforcement agencies to victimize and harass protesters, potentially halting the movement. Consequently, achieving change through this method can be challenging, as leaders often employ divide-and-rule and blackmail strategies to weaken such efforts. In such cases, leaders may become vindictive if they eventually disperse the protests. The implication is that these efforts may ultimately backfire, resulting in adverse consequences for the protesters or the general public.

The third approach involves horizontal means. Institutions established to combat corruption perform their duties independently and resist being manipulated by the executive branch of government or other entities with financial or authoritative powers. These institutions include the legislature, judiciary, police, other law enforcement agencies, the press, social media, non-governmental organizations, religious bodies, traditional rulers, labor unions, pressure groups, and others. Some of these institutions, such as law enforcement officers, can only operate effectively if the constitution safeguards them from dismissal by the executive branch for disobeying illegal directives.

A method must be devised where disciplinary measures are clearly enshrined in the constitution for erring law enforcement officers and political leaders who abuse their positions and become involved in corruption or allow themselves to be unlawfully used by the executive arm of government.

These bodies are subject to the aforementioned corruption-fighting approaches but participate in horizontal mechanisms by regulating and disciplining their members and groups, regardless of status.

For heads of institutions to effectively fulfill their roles, they require constitutional authority and protection from intimidation and bullying by the executive arm. A clear procedure for appointing and dismissing these leaders must be established to prevent executive control and interference. Such leaders should not be hired or dismissed without the input of the legislative arm. We believe that the executive arm should only be restricted to recommending three persons for appointment as heads of law enforcement agencies and the Independent Electoral Commission. The national assembly should then select from the list of nominations whom to engage without additional input from the executive arm. Heads of such organizations can only be dismissed with the approval of two-thirds of the members of the national assembly. Moreover, institutions must address excesses within themselves and other groups.

The masses can help law enforcement officers to combat crimes by utilizing these same approaches discussed above.

Based on this analysis, combining all aforementioned approaches of top-down, bottom-up, and horizontal is the most effective way to combat corruption and prevalence of crimes.

A nation with clearly defined laws, implications for non-compliance, impartial enforcement of the rule of law, and minimized leadership impunity is likely to achieve significant progress and greater success toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

#### *5.2.6. Poverty Trap Syndrome*

The dimensions of poverty can be described using the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) model, which explains poverty in terms of a lack of resources, power and voice, opportunities and choices, and

human security. They describe a person living in multidimensional poverty as resource-poor or poor in one or several dimensions. However, this approach primarily examines poverty from an individual perspective. Applying the model at national or sub-national/regional levels requires the inclusion of additional factors, and SIDA's model does this by highlighting other factors or contexts, including:

- The economic and social contexts, which address macroeconomic variables, fiscal policies, exports, and the use of natural resources, among others.
- The political and institutional contexts, which address norms, the rule of law, etc.
- The peace and conflict contexts, which address justice, violence, and conflict resolution.
- The environmental context, which deals with climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, among other issues.

SIDA concludes that all these dimensions and development contexts are interconnected, and it is more useful to analyze them together rather than in isolation, using both structural and flexible approaches (SIDA, 2019).

In line with the framework developed in this paper, we analyzed the poverty trap syndrome faced by most developing nations, particularly Nigeria. We used educational, moral, social/well-being, and management-constraining factors to explain the poverty trap syndrome. The poverty trap concept explains that a nation or an individual will be unable to escape poverty as long as these constraining factors persist.

Figure 7 illustrates how the four broad-based factors (for Management and Social pressure – their priority subunits) result in poverty trap syndrome.

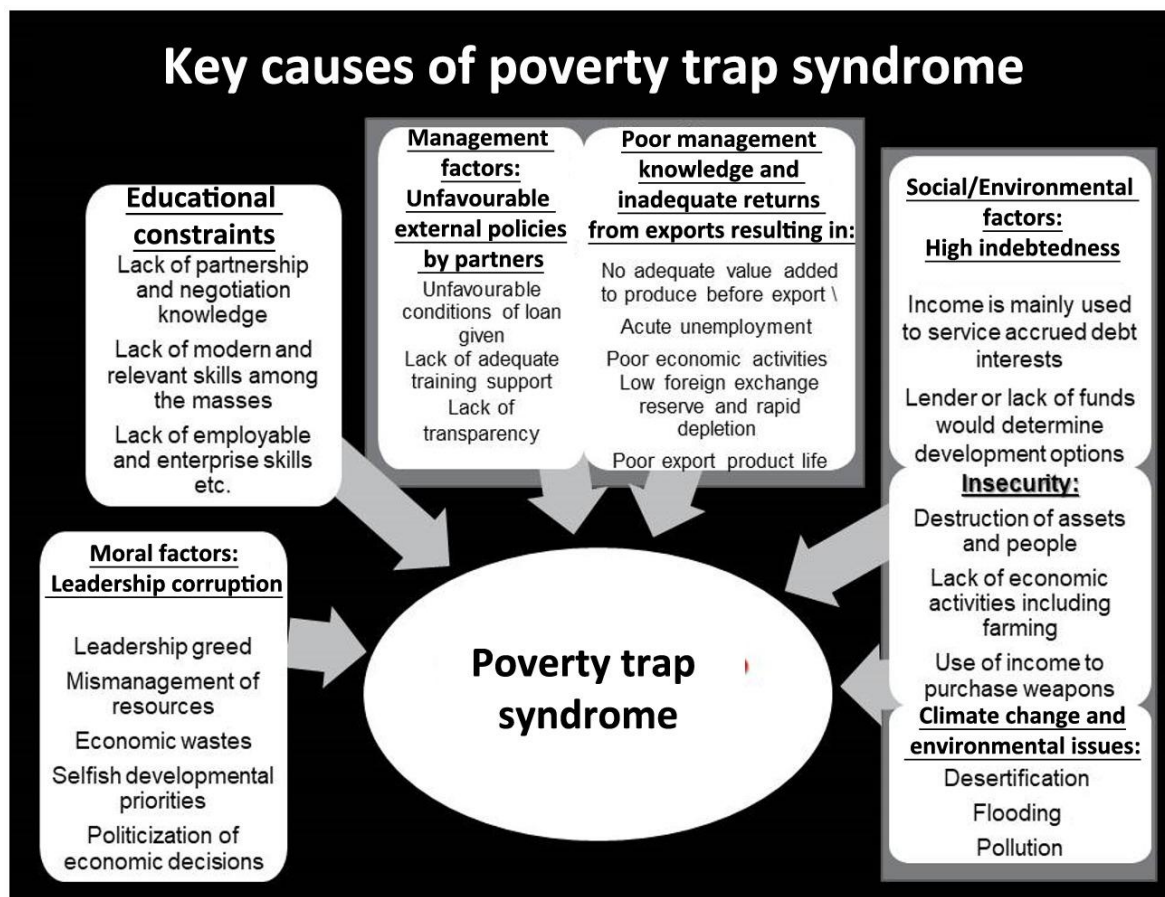


Figure 7. Shows how the factors cause poverty trap syndrome.

Source: Conceptualized by the researchers (2024).

The major groups in our framework include social/well-being factors, educational constraints, moral issues, and management factors. Below, we discuss how the priority factors can individually and interactively create poverty entrapment.

#### *5.2.6.1. Social/Well-Being Factors*

Among the social and well-being factors that can trap nations and individuals in a perpetual cycle of poverty or developmental stagnation is excessive spending, especially on non-productive and recurrent expenditures. Such spending, which exceeds the income-generating capacities of the entity, necessitates access to loan facilities for funding. Loans are not provided cheaply; lenders must be incentivized by the prospect of interest or profit. The inability to repay loans when they are due leads to compounded interest rates, causing the borrower to spend most of their income on debt repayment rather than on new and critical interventions. Another issue arises when lenders dictate how and on what interventions the funds should be used, as well as how many of their nationals should be involved in the project. This represents a lack of freedom of choice for the borrower. A nation that spends most of its generated income on settling previous debts cannot allocate enough resources for additional developmental interventions. A poor nation that cannot generate enough revenue to defray its indebtedness is trapped in an irreconcilable poverty trap (Easterly, 2002; Sachs, 2006).

The moral component of the problem arises when corrupt politicians acquire loan facilities and misuse or embezzle the funds, further complicating the nation's misery. The masses, which did not benefit from the facility, are not only deprived in the present but will also be forced to repay the loans in the future. A highly indebted nation is at the mercy of donor partners in the event of a disaster or critical expenditure, such as conducting elections or managing an epidemic, for which it has no resources.

#### *5.2.6.2. Related Social/Well-Being Factors*

Insecurity and wars are additional social and well-being factors that exacerbate poverty entrapment or worsen poor developmental situations. Violent conflicts have negative impacts on all aspects of society, including economic, health, cultural, institutional, political, and developmental sectors. Businesses, social amenities, and even agricultural production are often shut down, resulting in food shortages and hyperinflation. Historical heritage sites, which typically attract tourists, are often destroyed during conflicts (Collier, 2008; Lawrence, 2018).

This section also addresses environmental and social issues, as they produce related outcomes. Key environmental factors, which are often the result of human negligence, include climate change, desertification, flooding, large-scale forest fires, and massive crude oil pollution. Each of these incidents can set poor nations back several years in their development. Crude oil pollution has multiple negative effects, as it significantly impacts the asset base, income generation, livelihoods, and health of affected individuals.

#### *5.2.6.3. Education and Moral Related Competencies*

Education-related competencies also play a role in poverty entrapment. One critical area is the competence of national representatives in negotiating agreements for partnerships or loan facilities. Incompetence can lead to significant losses for the nation. At other times, moral issues come into play, as representatives deliberately enter into unfavourable agreements that negatively affect the nation but include terms that selfishly benefit the representatives. Other educational issues include the availability of a skilled workforce to drive development, the problem of emigration of highly qualified individuals, and illiteracy.

We have also identified the importance of morality in preventing poverty trap syndrome. Some of these aspects have already been mentioned in the previous sections. However, a major driver of poverty entrapment remains leadership corruption, including the deliberate mismanagement of the limited funds and resources available, the

politicization of developmental decisions that do not align with fostering the leaders' selfish interests, and the constant prioritization of inappropriate projects due to sentimental reasons, among others.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The factors previously explained all come into play in frustrating sustainable development efforts. Sustainable development is the improvement of well-being and living conditions and the reduction of unnecessary drudgery for an individual, group, or nation on a stable or continuous basis without regression after temporary improvement.

In addition to the well-known sustainable development goals (SDGs) challenges, such as lack of finance/poverty, educational and health facilities, and environmental management, among others (Ihebuzor, 2014; Lawrence, 2018). This paper identified other human-related constraints as significant factors.

Like Lawrence et al. (2020b), this paper also shows that political leadership, moral decay, social vices, and political insincerity are not isolated problems. They are collective challenges that hinder the progress of sustainable development interventions and the advancement of society (Lawrence & Lawrence, 2019). Coordinated collective efforts can help us overcome these hurdles. In that way, some significant interventions that can improve the impacts of the challenges identified include effective law enforcement, whistle-blowing to expose crimes, establishing independent judicial and legislative systems, and attitudinal reorientation (Nurhidayat & Kusumasari, 2018). Implementing these measures can pave the way for a more sustainable future.

This paper discussed not only the project-related constraints, which many scholars often concentrate on, but also paid adequate attention to other human constraining factors, as mentioned earlier.

Careful observation shows that for these human-related constraints, the subunit factors and their possible interventions seem relatively generic to a certain extent despite the sustainable development goal or the challenge we intend to address (Nilsson et al., 2016). For example, the moral impediments and their interventions resonate with a certain level around crime prevention, enforcement of the rule of law, strengthening and promoting independent judiciary and the legislative arms of government, bridging capacity gaps among stakeholders and project beneficiaries, improving the school educational curricula to groom better future citizens, etc. (Ihebuzor, Lawrence, & Lawrence, 2020). Social and well-being factors resonate around similar subunits and interventions; this is the same with education-related factors. Still, they have their areas of differences and uniqueness, as seen from the study. The other aspect is that the dominant or prominent factors depend on the challenge in question and the situation within which the challenge exists.

Factors that can impede sustainable development improvement and interventions that can address them are critical. The framework advanced in this paper can help reduce the non-achievement of sustainable development goals. That is the essence of this work.

One of the strengths of this work is the prioritization of constraints in line with the Pareto Principle of the 80/20 percent rule. The paper equally showed the interactions of the subunit factors resulting in synergistic effects, which is confirmed in Lawrence et al. (2020b).

One major issue highlighted in this paper is the 'poverty trap syndrome,' a condition where a poor nation, as a result of these constraints, is entrapped in perpetual poverty and can no longer escape from it. This concept, along with others, was deliberately elucidated with graphical presentations to justify the framework.

A holistic approach is required if most third-world nations are to make realistic progress toward achieving the SDGs. The impediments, as discussed in this paper, are not mere inconveniences. They are issues, such as crimes and other factors, that wreak havoc on the broader sustainable development framework. Their implications are far-reaching, causing significant damage to societal value systems and heritage. Imagine what a single war can do to all the previous sustainable development efforts. The current wars in Ukraine and Gaza are examples. The identification of constraints and managing them is critical. These issues must not be allowed to fester, as the more they do, the more people are drawn into committing vices that would further erode our societal fabric and existence.

While micro-development studies refer to the intensive or detailed analysis of each development factor, each sustainable development goal, and the continuous improvement of interventions aimed at enhancing the well-being of humans and humanity living in harmony with the ecosystem, macro-development studies focus on holistic development systems. They examine how related development factors, sustainable development goals, and interventions interact and can produce better synergistic outcomes. This aspect of development studies seeks to understand how interventions can address challenges related to multiple sustainable development goals simultaneously, thereby fostering synergistic effects.

This paper explores these approaches to macro-development studies. It identifies the inevitability of morality as a co-factor that must be considered when interventions for developmental factors are considered.

Finally, this paper offers a detailed set of recommendations and ideas intended to guide scholars, governments, development organizations, and other entities toward a path of rapid transformational development. This paper cannot be perfect; there is much room for improvement. Attaining progress is an evolutionary process without a fixed destination or endpoint, and sustained stakeholder contributions providing additional novel ideas, supplementary analysis, and research will progressively refine any concept, including the content of this paper, driving development from one phase to a more advanced one.

## 7. SUMMARY

From a snapshot perspective, we can say that this work justifies the position that, before implementing any sustainable development intervention, whether from the start or with the aim of addressing an existing challenge, you should ask the following: What are the priority moral, social/well-being, educational, and project management impediments to resolution, and what are the possible interventions to achieve optimal success?

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