

Political Leadership and Economic Development in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to examine the impact of political leadership on economic development in Akwa Ibom State (AKS). The study was anchored on the theoretical expositions of human capital and transformational leadership theories. The study adopted the survey research method, using a sample of 379, drawn from a population of 15,210 public officials from selected MDAs in Uyo. Simple random and stratified random sampling techniques were used to administer a 7-item questionnaire to the respondents. Simple percentages and tables were used to present and analyze the data, while the PPMCC was used to test hypotheses. The study revealed that though political leadership had a significant direct impact on economic development in the improvement of economic indicators in health, education and standard of living of the citizens, it was undermined by leadership corruption, which contributed to high rate of poverty, unemployment, hunger, inequality, political exclusion, instability and crime in Akwa Ibom State. The study recommended the diversification of the economy from oil to agriculture and the provision of infrastructure to engender greater development of the state.

Keywords: Akwa Ibom State, Development, Economic Development, Political Leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership has become the most significant factor in the economic and socio-political development of states across the globe in the 21st century. While leadership is regarded as the art of motivating/inspiring a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal, the process of improving the citizens' economic, political, and social well-being is known as economic development. That is why Ogbeide (2012) cited in Ekpo (2023) opines that poor leadership and bureaucratic corruption contribute to bad governance in Nigeria.

Udoms & Atakpa (2021) examine the governance deficit disposition of Nigeria as exacerbated by poor

leadership of which Akwa Ibom State is an integral part, elucidating arguments on why such failure is rife in the face of global efforts at development by other former third-world countries like the Asian tigers. According to Yagboyaju & Akinola (2019), Nigeria, particularly Akwa Ibom, has missed the “state capacity train” where self-interest has replaced public interest as the guiding principle in state governance. It appears that the waves of insurgency, violence, insecurity, rising crime rate, and economic downturn, together with the collapse of law and order in most parts of Nigerian states, are attributed to leadership deficits and poor governance.

The problem of poor leadership performance in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria has raised questions and generated tensions which manifest in political, social and economic instability and the prevalence of ethnic, communal and religious crises. Although leaders are supposed to affect the institutions of governance, while the institution should, in turn, affect the peoples’ lives positively, what we have in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria are strong men as leaders who impose their will on the system, instead of strong institutions which could deliver the needed socio-economic transformation and development in the state.

Whereas nations that compete successfully in the global market today are those that invest in technology, innovation and human capital development, weak leadership is known to contribute to Akwa Ibom state’s high rates of poverty, illiteracy, inequality, and unemployment as well as the culture of corruption, graft, nepotism, embezzlement and general bad governance. As observed by Barack Obama in a Presidential summit (3rd August 2015) and Chinua Achebe (McMurchy, 2015), Africa is rich with both human and natural resources but lacks leadership with the political goodwill and vision to transform the enormous resources into wealth. Hence, our leaders will rather promise the citizens everything good during the campaign but when voted to power, they fail to fulfil these promises and toe the same corrupt ways of their predecessors.

The main objective of the study is to examine the impact of political leadership on the economic development in Akwa Ibom State concerning selected Ministries, Departments, and Agencies of government in Uyo. It is therefore hypothesized that political leadership has no significant effect on the economic development of Akwa Ibom State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership

Leadership is regarded as the art of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal (Ekpo, 2023), and not as a selfish purpose. In a similar vein, Northouse (2016) observe that leadership is “a process of getting things done through people”; it entails taking charge and having “passion for the purpose and the mission of the organisation” or society in which one leads. Leadership is how an individual persuades people to work towards a common goal and guides the organisation/state to become more structured and logically meaningful.

Drucker (2009) opines that leadership is concerned with lifting people’s vision to a high rationale, raising their performance to a higher standard, as well as building their capacity and personality to be more productive in society. Leadership connotes the capacity of a superior to set goals or objectives and inspire or influence the action of the subordinate towards the accomplishment of set goals.

According to a report by the World Bank Institute, effective political leadership must reflect the six indicators of good governance which include: transparency and accountability; political participation and stability of the economy; government effectiveness which involves quality and efficient service delivery in the civil service; provision of enabling environment for investment by the implementation of viable economic/market-friendly policies; strict adherence to the rule of law which deals with perception of crime,

effective judiciary and justice system; and lastly, combating corruption in both public and private sectors (World Bank, 2012). Based on the above provisions, there has been a serious desire among various people and governments for unity, justice, peace, progress and stability in the state and these are the core foundational issues in economic development of any state.

Economic Development

Development, according to Jhingan (2007) is growth in the economy plus change. It refers to qualitative changes in economic needs, wants, incentives, institutions, production, and knowledge, as well as the upward movement of the complete social system. According to this definition, social systemic growth and qualitative changes constitute development. This indicates that growth brings about positive changes that enhance people's lives (Jhingan, 2007). Increasing output and altering the institutional and technical framework through which commodities and services are created and dispersed are both implications of economic development. According to Kindleberger (1965), the fundamental components of this definition are sustainable technology, innovations and changes that enhance human welfare. Therefore, development is all about change and growth that impact positively to the improvement of human lives. Economic growth makes it desirable from a societal perspective to foster individuality and responsibility. To successfully deal with the rapid pace of change in today's world, the state needs a diverse set of talents, knowledge, interests, and innovativeness.

Adopting the growth perspective, Okun & Richardson (1962) cited in Ekpo (2023) define economic development as that improvement in material well-being which is both circular and sustained, and which may reflect in an increasing flow of goods and services. Rodney (2009) defines economic growth as the process through which citizens of a society collectively improve their ability to manage the environment. He claims that this ability to interact with the environment depends on how well people comprehend natural principles, how well they put that understanding into effect by creating tools (technology), and how well people organize their labour (Production).

Tom et al., (2021) see economic development as a consistent rise in prosperity and quality of life, employment rate, GDP, innovation, and the use of capabilities for the ethical production and distribution of products and services. They added that effective institutions based on transparency, risk tolerance, appreciation of variety, and faith in the realization of mutual gain for the public and private sectors are necessary for economic progress.

In the same vein, Lin (2017) defines economic development as a process of structural change accompanied by ongoing industrial upgrading and technological innovation that increases labour productivity. Additionally, economic development should be accompanied by advancements in infrastructure and institutions that lower transaction costs in the state, and in such a manner as to engender poverty reduction, reduction in the unemployment rate, the bridging of the inequality line and the fulfilment of all other indices of human development index (HDI) (see Udoms et al., 2017). However, the Human Development Index (HDI), the Human Poverty Index (HPI), and other composite indices are now commonly used to gauge development. Both HDI and HPI are used in this study to examine the economic growth and development in Akwa Ibom State. The indicators of economic development include Health care (life expectancy), education (Literacy rate), a higher standard of living/Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment, unemployment, and poverty rate (Tom et al, 2021).

Problems/Constraints to Political Leadership and Economic Development in Akwa Ibom State

1. **Political Problems:** Lack of leaders with vision, focus, political goodwill and service mindset to transform the state and improve the well-being of the citizens. In addition, the absence of political accountability, transparency and probity in the use of public resources is a major setback to political

leadership in the state (Essien & Edemekong, 2023).

2. **Social Problems:** These manifest in various ways including ethnicity whereby loyalty is paid more to ethnic interests at the expense of the state's interests; high rate of illiteracy and out-of-school children of about 3,129,620 between 1999 – 2022, despite the huge amount of money voted as subvention yearly for free and compulsory education in the state (see NBS, 2020); poor social justice system (Ekpo et al 2023). Also, corruption among public officeholders hurts socio-economic development, just as the diversion of public funds for unproductive ventures can cause economic decay, and may lead to an increase in crimes such as kidnapping, militancy, armed robbery, cultism, prostitution, human trafficking and other forms of social vices (Ibiok & Ibanga, 2014; Akpan et al., 2019; Atakpa, 2023).
3. **Administrative problems:** These emanate from poor policy-making and policy inconsistency on the part of political leaders. This often leads to the misappropriation of public funds; embezzlement and financial mismanagement; setting of unrealistic goals and waste of state resources. Hence, the incessant political instability in the state can be attributed to poor leadership which often leads to marginalization of some groups, inequalities and frustrations on the part of the masses. The collective frustration occurs as a result of the inability of the people in the state to meet their needs and satisfy their aspirations (Eminue, 2009; Essien & Edemekong, 2023).
4. **Economic problems:** Poverty and unemployment are the major economic challenges in Akwa Ibom State. Many scholars agree to the fact that unemployment in the state is one of the direct causes of poverty. Unemployment is a situation in which persons with skills for employment are unable to get jobs. Lack of employment in the state contributes to the high rate of poverty, hunger, brain drainage, and capital flight. Data reveal that Akwa Ibom State is faced with the problem of a high poverty rate which increased from 26.82% in (2021), to 71% out of the projected population of 5.451 million (NBS, 2022). The state was ranked 2nd in poverty ratio in South-South after Cross Rivers with 75.5% and Rivers State with 62.4%, whereas the unemployment rate was 37.7% in 2018, rose to 45.2% in 2020, to 67.69% in 2022, signifying that about 1.26 million people in Akwa Ibom State are unemployed. The state also has a high debt profile ranging from domestic debt of about ₦81bn and foreign debt of \$47.9bn. Data shows that debt growth between 2016 – 2020 was at 48.06%, while the state was ranked 5th out of 36 states in the country in the debt size position (BudgIT, 2021). The debt profile reduced in 2022 with debt growth of about 38.91%, domestic debt at about ₦214.61bn and foreign debt at \$46.03m, as the state moved downward from 5th to 7th position in debt ranking of 36 states in the country. Hence, the state's fiscal performance ranked 24th out of 36 states in Nigeria, while the recommended job creation for the state to curb unemployment was about 315,651 jobs (BudgIT Research, 2021, 2022; NBS, 2022; Okojie, 2023).

Empirical Review

Ibiok & Ibanga (2014) studied the effects of economic empowerment and human capital development on socioeconomic development in Akwa Ibom State. The study used a historical and descriptive approach and found that between 1999 and 2012, the government made a significant impact in the areas of training and retraining of employees in the public sector. However, the study revealed that the government failed to prioritize the requirement for training in crucial state industries of oil and gas, for indigenes to effectively participate in the sector. Based on this, the research suggested, among other things, that the state government starts a comprehensive training programme for local engineers in the fields of oil and gas, as well as urge people and the corporate sector to invest more in human capital and state economic empowerment. Agro-allied projects were examined by Akpan et al., (2019) utilizing GDP, unemployment rate, and poverty rate metrics to examine their impact on economic growth in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 was used in the ex-post facto design of the paper to test the hypotheses stated to ascertain the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The study concluded that the organization of the farmers' loan programme, the planning of the chicken and

fish production programme, and the supervision of the fertilizer distribution programme, all had a considerable beneficial impact on the gross domestic product and the unemployment rate in Akwa Ibom State. The management of the Akwa Ibom Agricultural Development Programme was advised to ensure proper planning and coordination of the farmers' loan scheme so that the loans get to the farmers; increase farmer capacity building to ensure efficient utilization of the loans on agro-allied businesses necessary for economic development; and put in place appropriate monitoring mechanisms to check corrupt practices in the fertilizer distribution. Ojugbo & Ojugbo (2021) analyzed the impact of tourism on Cross River State's socio-economic development. A purposive sample of 200 respondents was used, and at a significance level of 0.05, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to evaluate the hypotheses. Data showed, among others, that there is a strong correlation between the growth of the tourism industry and infrastructure; the growth of the tourism industry and the generation of jobs and employment prospects are all closely related. The report suggested that the Cross River State government allocate enough funds for infrastructure development, including roads, potable water, and power, to boost tourism and provide jobs for the state's teeming population. Atakpa, (2023) examined corruption among Nigerian leaders in the context of fantastic corruption and underdevelopment of Nigeria. They maintained that leadership problems exist in Nigeria due to the recycling of an insincere class of leaders who, either occupied office as former military or civilian administrators, with promises to fight corruption if voted into power but while in office, do the opposite by practising worse corruption cases than their predecessors. Their studies provided a conceptual exposition of corruption and provided evolving theory-bound paradigm tag 'the spectator approach' was used to explain Nigeria's leadership style of cajoling the masses with promises to vote for them but while gaining office, do not fulfil promises. The study recommended that leaders should be investigated and called to account for corruption allegations levelled against them, and they should be tried if found guilty and penalised to act as a deterrent to future Nigerian leaders.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts human capital and transformational leadership theories for the analysis of political leadership and economic development in Akwa Ibom State. The human capital theory was first introduced by Becker (1962) and Rosen (1976) to discuss economic values that led to capital formation in society. According to proponents of the theory, investment in human beings brings the development of their skills and technical knowledge for to increase productivity and economic growth in the state. They opined that a better-educated population is the key to human development and economic growth. The basic tenets of the HCT include:

1. Building citizens' knowledge, technical and vocational skills for innovation and productive venture (manpower development for SMEs and industries).
2. Enhancing entrepreneurship development to boost economic growth and development of the state.
3. Encouraging self-confidence/reliance of the citizens/workforce to start SMEs for self-employment and job creation for others.
4. Increasing technology and innovations to increase productivity in the state.
5. Improving the quality of public services mostly in education, health, agriculture and other sectors of the economy.
6. Provision of modern infrastructure to the people of the state.

Applying the human capital theory implies that emphasizing education will help to build traits and skills in both the leaders and the followers and enhance their performance to increase productivity. It strives to retain state/organizational economy, efficiency and teamwork. It enables the organization or state to evaluate the worth, values and efficiency of its workforce in terms of cost-benefit and participation in capital formation.

The theory was found most suitable in the sense that human capacity development is measured by human capital through its index which entails significant innovation on how the index measures the contribution of

education and health to the productivity of individuals and the state. It maintains that the development of peoples' skills and knowledge contributes immensely to the economic growth and development of the state.

For more priority on human capacity development and economic development of the state, the transformational leadership theory was also adopted to aid the building of capable and sustainable institutions which promote tolerance and inclusion, participation, transparency and accountability, constitutionalism and the rule of law, and policies geared towards combating corruption in the state. James MacGregor Burns (1978) and Bernard M. Bass (1985) are two academics who popularized the theory. For instance, Burns used the notions of transformational leadership to analyze political leadership in the state, which helped to popularize it. Burns claims that transformational leadership occurs when "leaders and followers make each other advance to a higher level by motivation". Through their vision and personalities, transformational leaders can inspire their followers to alter their expectations and perceptions as well as motivate them to work toward shared objectives. According to Burns, transformational leaders are those who can advance their followers up Maslow's hierarchy of needs. As a result, the followers' or employees' attitudes improve, as does the organization as a whole. Four unique actions, usually referred to as the four dimensions of leadership, are typically carried out by transformational leaders. These behaviours consist of motivating inspiration, idealizing influence, stimulating the mind, and giving each person their due regard (Khan et al., 2016).

One benefit of this theory is that it offers a framework for effective leadership that improves followers' motivation, morale, and job performance through a variety of mechanisms. These mechanisms include inspiring and stimulating followers' interest in state development by serving as role models, connecting followers' sense of identity and self to a project and the collective identity of the organization or state, and challenging followers. However, setting excessively high standards for team members might be risky for transformational leaders.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts qualitative and quantitative research methods. In the qualitative/descriptive research data were obtained from textbooks, newspapers, magazines, the internet, and official publications such as World Bank reports, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Transparency International (TI) etc. The survey questionnaire was used to elicit primary data from the projected population comprising public office holders in selected Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), projected at fifteen thousand two hundred and ten (15,210) as of November 2020 (Civil Service Commission Annual Report, 2020), with sample size of 375 determined through the Krejcie and Morgan table (1970). Simple random and stratified random sampling techniques were used to administer a 7-item questionnaire to the respondents from Ministries of Education, Health, Economic Development, Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs and Rural Development and affiliate Departments and Agencies. Simple percentages, Pearson Product Moment Correction Coefficient (PPMCC) and tabular presentation were adopted for data presentation and analysis. Secondary data from textbooks, Government publications, Journals, internet materials etc. were analyzed contextually.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In this section, data obtained from the literature (secondary) and survey (primary) methods are presented in tables, the hypothesis was tested using PPMCC to determine the degree of relationship among variables, and the analysis based on the objectives that guided the study.

Stylized Facts on Indicators of Economic Development in Akwa Ibom State

Table 1: Economic Growth Indicators in Akwa Ibom State from 1999 – 2023

Years	Employment rate	Infrastructures Built			No. of Industries	Housing	Inflation Stability rate	Investment	GDP per capita
		Sch	Hosp.	Roads					
1999 – 2003	30%	3	5	12	–	–	–	–	
2003 – 2007	31%	4		17	4	100 units, Udoudoma avenue, Uyo	–	–	6.5%
2007 – 2011	13,834 25.8%	10	11	28	10	200 units housing, Usungama, Uyo	22.2%	–	6.0%
2011 – 2015	17,233 34.7%	53		40	20	20 blocks of Security units in 31 LGAs	17.6%	5.1bn	2,259 7.4%
2015 – 2019	154,692 43.3%	32	19	37	10	200 units Estate, Ikot Ntuen Nsit, Uyo	16.4%	32bn	5,141 5.7%
2019 – 2023	300,162 45.1%	60	48	55	28	200 units Estate, Ibiono/ Iitak	22.4%	134.4bn	7.77tn 7.6 %
Total		162		189	72				

Source: NBS, 2020, as cited in Premium Times, 2021; Akwa Ibom Impact, 2022; AKSG Explore, 2022, Ministry of Information and Strategy, 2022

Table 1 shows indicators of economic growth and development in Akwa Ibom State and some of the major indicators of economic growth measured and assessed include employment rate, inflation, interest rates, wage growth (stable income), innovations, infrastructure development and industrial production in the state. Data revealed that 30% population were employed within 1999 – 2003; but reduced to 25.8% within 2007 – 2011 and later increased to 34.7% within 2011 – 2015, also increased to 45.1% within 2019 – 2023. Data also revealed that Akwa Ibom State’s economic growth is ranked 3rd out of 36 states in the country with a GDP of 7.77tn, the state is also ranked 4th in ease of doing business from 2019 – 2022, and ranked 1st in the SAE index with about 69% in South-South, and with about 62.23% of revenue growth and Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) of about 31.40 bn in the year 2022. The state is also seen as a favour able investment hub for businesses and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) (BudgIT Research, 2022).

Table 2: Average Percentage (%) of economic development using mean International Wealth Index (IWI) in Akwa Ibom State from 1999 – 2023

Regime	Population (Mn)	Household		Income (IWI)	Poverty Ratio		Housing (HH with 3 or More Rooms)
		size	Dependency ratio		PHH U70	PHH U35	
1999 – 2003	2.62	–	75.68	31.88	97.98	61.55	36.85
2003 – 2007	3.96	–	71.95	36.8	93.75	50.68	31.73

2003 – 2007	3.96	–	71.95	36.8	93.75	50.68	31.73
2007 – 2011	3.96	4.47	73.63	43.0	88.63	38.08	28.53
2011 – 2015	3.96	5.64	72.55	48.05	86.1	25.53	29.65
2015 – 2019	4.95	5.23	72.33	50.7	83.95	19.45	24.73
2019 – 2023	5.45	4.93	72.20	52.6	82.35	15.3	20.65

Source: Computed by Researcher (2023) using data from UNDP, 2016, NBS, 2020 & data from Radboud University, 2021.

Table 2 shows increases figures in the population figures of Akwa Ibom State from about 2.62 million people between 1999 and 2003 to about 3.96 million people between 2011 and 2015 and about 5.45 million between 2019 – 2023. Household size had increased from 4.47% between 2007 – 2011 to 5.64% between 2011 – 2015, while it declined to about 4.93% between 2019 – 2023. The household dependency ratio also decreased from about 75.68% between 1999 – 2003 to about 72.55% between 2011 – 2015 and also to about 72.20% between 2019 – 2023.

The income rate also increased from about 31.88% between 1999 – 2003 to about 48.05% between 2011 – 2015 and to about 52.6% between 2019 – 2023. The poverty ratio per household under 70 years revealed about 97.98% between 1999 – 2003 and kept reducing to about 86.1% between 2011 – 2015, and to about 82.35% between 2019 – 2023. The poverty ratio per household under 35 years decreased from about 61.55% between 1999 – 2003 to 25.53% between 2011 – 2015 and to about 15.3% between 2019 – 2023.

Housing is another major issue as data revealed poor housing development in the state. Households (HH) with 3 or more rooms were about 36.85% between 1999 – 2003 but reduced to 29.65% between 2011 – 2015, and to about 20.65% between 2019 – 2023 thereby calling for more affordable housing schemes for the citizens. However, the reduction in household poverty ratio may be attributed to the state social welfare policy aimed at human capacity building, infrastructural development and industrialisation (UNDP, 2016, NBS, 2020 & data from Radboud University, 2021; Global Data Lab, 2022).

Table 3: Average Percentage (%) of Education and Health development using School Enrollment/Literacy rate and Life Expectancy/Infant Mortality at 0-5 in Akwa Ibom State from 1999 – 2023 Contd.

Regime	Education				Health care Service		
	Attendance of children 6-8	Attendance of children 15-17	Attendance of children 21-23	Literacy rate	Life Expectancy	Infant Mortality at 0-5	Stunted Children (Malnutrition)
1999 – 2003	83.88	80.00	44.88	–	46.6	153.5	32.58
2003 – 2007	88.35	82.7	40.08	–	48.7	154.3	25.1
2007 – 2011	92.45	82.7	29.1	89.5	51.1	127.5	26.95
2011 – 2015	94.9	83.9	23.00	66.3	56.4	85.4	22.18

2015 – 2019	93.18	78.45	18.0	78.1	52.8	96.43	20.00
2019 – 2023	91.65	73.95	14.5	78.1	53.1	108	18.5

Source: Computed by Researcher (2023), using data from UNESCO, 2012, Global Data Lab, 2022.

Table 3 revealed improved attendance of children 6-8 from 83.88% between 1999 – 2003 to 94.9% between 2011 – 2015 but declined in attendance to 91.65% from 2019 – 2023; while attendance of children 15-17 increased to about 83.9% between 2011 – 2015 but declined to about 73.95% between 2019 – 2023. The attendance of children (21–23) at higher institutions kept declining from 44.88% between 1999 – 2003 to 23% between 2011 – 2015 and to 14.5% from 2019 – 2023, making up 40% of total enrollment between 2016 – 2018 while an estimated 581,800 children dropped out from school making up about 23% out-of-school children thus, making the state highest out-of-school children in South-South region of Nigeria as of 2020 and about 59% literacy rate and 41% illiteracy rate respectively as at 2020; as well as literacy rate of about 78.1% as at November 2022 (NBS, 2020; Premium Times 2021, Global Data Lab 2022).

On the other hand, the healthcare sector witnessed an improvement in life expectancy from 46. 6% between 1999 – 2003 to 56.4% between 2011 – 2015 which declined to 53.1% as of 2022 (Global Data Lab, 2022). Infant Mortality at 0-5 was 153.5/1000 per live birth between 1999 – 2003, 85.4/1000 per live birth between 2011 – 2015, and 108/1000 per live birth from 2019 – 2023. Also, Stunted Children (Malnutrition) had 32.58% between 1999 – 2003, 22.18% between 2011 – 2015 and 18.5% from 2019 – 2023 (Global Data Lab, 2022).

Table 4 Average Percentage (%) of economic development using mean International Wealth Index (IWI) in Akwa Ibom State from 1999 – 2023 Contd.

Regime	Household Asset/Investment				HH Access to Public Service		
	Tv	Refrigerator	Motorbike	Computer	Electricity	Safe Water	Phone
1999 – 2003	31.13	18.35	16.55	–	46.3	–	2.40
2003 – 2007	38.6	17.95	23.6	1.22	50.93	–	30.38
2007 – 2011	49.85	19.35	33.7	2.97	61.28	38.08	64.8
2011 – 2015	63.43	26.58	36.2	4.92	68.48	49. 2	82.4
2015 – 2019	59.23	28.9	35.7	6.63	73.15	33.99	87.33
2019 – 2023	54.9	30.3	35.1	7.90	76.8	35.2	90.25

Source: Computed by Researcher (2023) using data from Global Data Lab 2022

Table 4 contains data on the average percentage of household asset/investment and household (HH) access to public service. Households with television (TV) were about 31.13% between 1999 – 2003, it increased to 63.43% between 2011 – 2015 but decreased to about 54.9% between 2019 – 2023. Households with Refrigerators were about 18.35% but increased to about 26.58% between 2011 – 2015 while it moved upward to about 30.3% between 2019 – 2023.

Households with motorbikes were 16.55% between 1999 – 2003 increased to about 36.2% between 2011 – 2015, but declined to about 35.1% between 2019 – 2023. Concerning households with computers, data revealed about 1.22% between 2003 – 2007, then increased to about 4.92% between 2011 – 2015 and to

about 7.90% between 2019 – 2023. On the part of access to public service, about 46.3% of households had access to electricity between 1999 – 2003; about 68.48% between 2011 – 2015 and 76.8% between 2019 – 2023 meaning there is an improvement in access to electricity in the state due to building of power sub-stations across the three senatorial districts in the state (Akwa Ibom Impact, 2022).

Households’ access to safe water has been declining from about 49. 2% between 2011 – 2015, to about 35.2% between 2019 – 2023. Household access to phones improved from about 2.40% between 1999 – 2003 to about 82.4% and about 90.25% making communication very easy in the state.

Table 5: Akwa Ibom State Human Development Index (1999-2022)

Years	Life expectancy at adult	Expected year of schooling	Mean years of schooling	GNI per capita (PPP\$)	HDI value
1999	46.1	6.7	5.9	2.743	0.513
2003	46.1	7.2	5.9	2.529	0.513
2005	46.6	8.0	5.8	2.378	0.513
2007	48.7	9.0	5.2	2.779	0.538
2010	51.3	9.6	5.2	2.779	0.538
2011	51.7	9.7	5.5	2.795	0.564
2013	52.1	9.8	5.7	2.873	0.564
2015	56.4	10.0	5.9	2.259	0.564
2018	52.8	10.0	5.9	6.120	0.565
2022	53.1	10.0	6.0	7.77trn	0.608

Source: UNDP, 2012, 2016, NBS, 2018 as cited in State of State Kingmakers, 2022; BudgIT, 2022)

Table 5 contains data on the human development index in Akwa Ibom State from 1999 – 2022. Data revealed that life expectancy at mean years as of 1999 was 46.1. it increased to about 48.7, 51.7, and 52.1 in 2007, 2011 and 2013 respectively, but recorded the highest score of about 56.4 in 2015 but declined to about 52.8 in 2018 while improving again to about 53.1 in 2022. Hence, the expected year of schooling ranges from 6.7 in 1999 to 9.0 in 2007, to 9.8 in 2013 and 10.0 within 2015 – 2022. Mean years of schooling as of 1999 was 5.9, moved to 5.2 in 2010 and then back to 5.9 in 2015 – 2018 and to 6.0 in 2022. Concerning the GNI/per capita income, the state recorded about 2,743bn in 1999 improved to about 2,873bn in 2013, and then to about 6,120bn and above within 2018 – 2022, and improved about 7.77trn in 2023.

Table 6: Questionnaire responses of three hundred and seventy-two respondents to questions 1 – 7 in Likert format

Questions in appendix	SA	A	SA+A= Yes(x)	SDA	DA	SDA+DA = No(y)	Total
1	102	117	219 (58.87%)	27	123	150 (40.32%)	372
2	30	95	125 (33.60%)	56	184	240 (64.52%)	372

3	97	103	200 (53.76%)	25	145	170 (45.70%)	372
4	91	125	216 (58.07%)	2	148	150 (40.32%)	372
5	80	121	201 (54.03%)	17	153	170 (45.70%)	372
6	94	126	222 (59.68%)	20	132	152 (40.86%)	372
7	40	75	115 (30.91%)	49	201	250 (67.20%)	372
Total	537	762	1296	196	1086	1282	2604

Source: Computed by the researcher using field data (2023)

Table 7: Contingency table showing the relationship between political leadership and the economic development of Akwa Ibom State (X and Y)

Questions in Appendix	Responses		(x) ²	(y) ²	Xy
	Yes = x	No = y			
1	219 (58.87%)	150 (40.32%)	47961	22500	32850
2	125 (33.60%)	240 (64.52%)	15625	57600	30000
3	200 (53.76%)	170 (45.70%)	40000	28900	34000
4	216 (58.07%)	150 (40.32%)	46656	22500	32400
5	201 (54.03%)	170 (45.70%)	40401	28900	34170
6	222 (59.68%)	152 (40.86%)	48400	23104	33440
7	115 (30.91%)	250 (67.20%)	13225	62500	28750
Total = \sum	1296	1282	252268	246004	225610

Source: Computed by the researcher using field data (2023)

Table 3 shows that 58.87% of respondents indicated that the citizens' none access to potable water, electricity, health care, schools, good roads etc. hinders economic development in Akwa Ibom State, while 40.32% disagreed.

While 33.60% of the respondents agreed that political leadership in Akwa Ibom State is transparent and accountable to the people in terms of effective service delivery, 64.52% disagreed.

53.76% of respondents think that the inability of the citizens to meet such basic needs as food, shelter and clothing is due to their low purchasing power which directly affects economic development in Akwa Ibom State, while 45.70% do not think so.

58.07% of respondents feel that inequality in the distribution of resources by political leaders leads to poverty and directly affects the level of socio-economic development in Akwa Ibom State, while 40.32% do not feel so.

54.03% of respondents agreed that corruption and poor implementation of social policies and intervention programmes hurt the economic development of Akwa Ibom State whereas 45.70% disagreed.

59.68% think that lack of industries causes unemployment in Akwa Ibom State which hinders economic development in the state, while 40.86% of respondents disagreed.

30.91% maintained that the political leadership building more industries and infrastructure in Akwa Ibom State leads to an increase in employment rate, while 67.20% disagreed.

Using Pearson Product Moment Correlation formula:

$$\begin{aligned}
 r &= \frac{N\sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum(x)^2 - (\sum x)^2][N\sum(y)^2 - (\sum y)^2]}} \\
 &= \frac{7(225610) - (1296)(1282)}{\sqrt{[7(252268) - (1296)^2][7(246004) - (1282)^2]}} \\
 &= \frac{1579270 - 1661472}{\sqrt{[1765876 - 1679616][1722028 - 1643524]}} \\
 &= \frac{-82202}{\sqrt{[86260][78504]}} \\
 &= \frac{-82202}{\sqrt{6771755040}} \\
 &= \frac{-82202}{82290.67} \\
 &= 0.9989 \sim 0.99 \\
 \therefore r &= 0.99
 \end{aligned}$$

(a) The relationship between X and Y is positive and is of high correlation (0.99), which implies that an increase in variable Y (economic development in Akwa Ibom State) has a significant relationship with X (Political leadership). If the value of the correlation is squared, we obtain the coefficient of determination. Hence $(0.99)^2 = 0.9801$ which = 98.01%. This means that about 98.01% of the variation in Y (independent variable) is explained by X (dependent variable).

(b) To test the significance of the correlation coefficient, we make use of the t-test given thus:

thus:

$$t = r \sqrt{\frac{N-2}{1-r^2}}$$

H₀: the correlation is not significant.

H_i: the correlation is significant.

} Two tailed Test.

$$t = r \sqrt{\frac{N-2}{1-r^2}}$$

$$= 0.99 \sqrt{\frac{7-2}{1-0.99^2}} = 0.99 \sqrt{\frac{5}{1-0.98}} = 0.99 \sqrt{\frac{5}{0.02}}$$

$$= 0.99 \sqrt{250} = 0.99 \times 15.81 = 15.652 \sim 15.65$$

Calculated value = 15.65

D/F = N - 2 = 7 - 2 = 5

Table value = 2.57 at 0.05 two-tailed test.

Decision: Since the calculated value (15.65) is greater than the table value of (2.57), the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected, while the alternate hypothesis (H_i) is accepted on the ground that the high correlation coefficient of 0.98 is significant. This implies that political leadership has a significant and direct impact on the economic development of Akwa Ibom State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The major finding revealed that political leadership has a significant direct relationship with economic development in Akwa Ibom State and this is supported by the findings of Ibiok & Ibanga (2014); Lin (2017); Ojugbo & Ojugbo (2021). Thus, political leadership is transformational when it works to serve the general interest as well as the development of the state, rather than egoistic and selfish interests.

The second finding shows that political leadership through industrialization policy has improved employment opportunities in Akwa Ibom State and this is supported by studies previously conducted by Akpan et al., (2019).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Development is multi-faceted ranging from personal to societal levels, cutting across various spheres such as economic, social, political, cultural, education and technology etc., while leadership involves not just the ability to influence, motivate and inspire but also to mobilize and galvanize available resource towards the success of the state. This study found that among others, that political leadership has a significant direct relationship with economic development in Akwa Ibom State; and that political leadership through industrialization, has improved employment opportunities in Akwa Ibom State. Thus, leaders in Akwa Ibom State have worked to establish social harmony and promote sustainable economic development within the state.

The study recommends the following:

1. Leaders in Akwa Ibom State should adopt the tenets of the transformational leadership style which works to serve the general interest as well as the development of the state, rather than the egoistic and selfish interests of a few.
2. The diversifying of the state economy from oil to agriculture, tourism, aviation, and industrialization to enhance job creation and employment opportunities for the numerous unemployed persons in the state.
3. Provision of functional education for the citizens' especially entrepreneurship, vocational and technical education that can help the populace to be more skilful in production for income generation and employment for the citizens.
4. Building of human capacity through training and re-training of public officials to develop competence and skills to handle technical jobs and sustainable institutions that can lead to political stability in the state;
5. Establishment of a political system that encourages democracy and popular participation in the decision-making process of the state (inclusive government for youths and women), to foster tolerance and inclusion and not the winners-take-all-all scenario often experienced in Akwa Ibom State.
6. The state policy should encourage Public-Private Partnerships for more accessibility to funds and investment in the health care, education and economy of Akwa Ibom State.

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