



# A Review of “*Leading from the Emerging Future*”: Any Lesson for Nigerian Leaders?

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## Abstract

This article reviews *Leading from the Emerging Future* [1] and explores whether or not the political leaders of Nigeria can learn any lesson from it. This book concentrates on practical approach that empowers leaders to shift their mindsets from ego-system awareness to eco-system reality to enable them to transform the extant extractive economic and political institutions that hinder national development. Unlike previous studies on leadership and change in Nigeria, which have simply observed that the system has been rendered unproductive for decades by poor leadership. This article argues that the problem with Nigeria is that the political leaders have failed to shift their engrained mindsets from “ego-system awareness to eco-system” to build effective institutions to drive the economy. It also argues that discussion of the issue of leadership in the society deserves a different approach to changing the ossified institutions into innovative and creative ones as this would inspire the leaders to collectively shift their mental models to design and implement policies that would fit into the 21st century economy and empower them to lead from the emerging future.

## Keywords

Leadership and Change, Emerging Future, Ego-System Awareness, Eco-System Reality, Shifting Mental Models, Nigeria

**Subject Areas:** Business and Economics Education, Development Economics, Economic System, Economics, Education, Human Resource Management, Political Economy, Politics

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## 1. Introduction

The basic structures of societies are the same as every society has sociopolitical and economic systems as well as educational institutions. But the performances of these institutions vary according to the political dynamics of every society. The transformation of Nigeria's seemingly chaotic sociopolitical and economic system requires a leader with the skills and knowledge to address the systemic bottlenecks that hinder the development of the society. That means building an inclusive political system and changing the structure of "human consciousness" [2] and the "mental models" [3] of the leaders' from their engrained "ego-system awareness" into "eco-system reality" [2]. Although the process seems daunting because of the disordered Nigerian environment, it is not by any means impossible to accomplish with collective mindfulness [2] [4] as every Nigerian is a stakeholder in the affairs of the nation.

According to some scholars [4] [5], "mindfulness", among other things, is a "moment-by-moment awareness". For others [5] [6], it means having awareness, attention, and remembering. In such a crowded field [6] [7] as mindfulness, it has been added that "mindfulness is a moment-to-moment awareness of one's experience without judgment". Yet others have noted that "mindful leaders" are "courageous", they perceive the "big picture" and "create environments of trust and safety", which would "ignite innovation" [7] [8].

Like in some other poorly organized and underdeveloped countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria is choking on its democratic experiment because of poor leadership and governance colored by unbridled corruption, non-functional healthcare and education systems, and institutions and infrastructure. These forces have resulted in a weak economy, rising youth unemployment, and poverty as well as insecurity in the society. Put differently, the extractive political and economic institutions [38] are enriching the elites while pauperizing the citizens.

There are conflicting reports on the rate of unemployment in Nigeria because of paucity of data. Available pertinent information, however, shows that Nigeria's unemployment rate is hovering around 24 percent (this is a very conservative figure). But youth unemployment rate is put at over 50 percent and that represents about 64 million people [9]. However, for the new *Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative* (OPHI), Nigeria's poverty rate is hovering around 43.3% of the estimated population 170 million [9] [10].

It is proper to note that three groups of unemployed youths have been identified in this article: university graduates, high school graduates not yet enrolled in any form of university program, and those who did not complete high school education. Others that have added to the rising rate of unemployment include people who choose to leave their current job to retire, those who went back to school for another career, and those who take a position at another organization. It is a general believe that most of the unemployed youths are vulnerable to anti-social activities as they are struggling to make ends meet without any form of government assistance.

All economic and political institutions are created by the nature of politics in the society. Nigeria is not an exception. The political leaders who have created or are creating the ineffective and inefficient political institutions are not taking responsibility for these problems facing the nation as everyone is blaming everyone else. Nigeria's leaders, it appears, hate to be held accountable for anything. It is proper to note that the root cause of the present social, political, and economic predicaments in the society is not the making of the leaders alone, but collective selfishness [2] [10]. Everybody in Nigeria, it seems, wants to be in politics and to occupy a leadership position whether or not they have the skills and knowledge to stimulate healthy competition, increase the wealth of the nation, and thus create economic opportunity for everyone. This group does not seem to realize that leadership is not about revenue sharing, and that it is about moving people to action to create wealth. All these are possible in a society where the leaders are committed to improving the living conditions of the people.

The challenges facing Nigeria appear to be deep-rooted in the mindsets of the leaders and the nation's extractive political and economic institutions that do not encourage productivity and development. It has been noted that there is a serious disconnect between ego-system thinking and eco-system reality [2] [3]. It has also been argued that the state of our mindsets or our mental models [2] [3] affect what we do—our performance, decision-making process, and how we manage ourselves. For Nigeria to move forward socially, politically, and economically, the leaders and followers (in collective leadership) should have a deeper shift in their mindsets and gravitate towards "eco-system awareness" from their engrained "ego-system thinking" [2] [10]; also see [10] [11]. With that the people will be empowered to make efficient and effective use of the abundant resources in the society to improve their living condition.

As the famous dictum of Albert Einstein has aptly noted, we cannot solve our present problems with the same level of mindset or consciousness that created them. Thus, the failure of the political leadership to change their

mindsets and embrace creative and innovative ideas that will transform and restructure Nigeria's institutions and infrastructure as well as the education and healthcare systems will continue to hinder the growth and development of the economy as these are the main engines that drive individual and national productivity. But for many people, "failure is not an option" (Blankstein, 2010: p. 1) [3] [11] for Nigeria. However, what Nigeria will become will be determined or created by the collective efforts of the leaders and followers. But the process will be engineered by a leader who has the skills, knowledge and capability to lead from the emerging future possibilities.

## 2. Purpose

This article reviews leadership in Nigeria and to investigate as whether to or not the leaders can learn any lesson from *Leading from the Emerging Future*, which focuses on practical approach to help leaders shift their mindsets from their ego-system awareness to eco-system reality. This article, thus, seeks to discuss some of the issues raised in this book as they relate to leadership and development problems facing Nigeria.

## 3. Research Methods

Information for this article were derived from *Leading from the Emerging Future*, the research and analysis of other scholars, analysts and practitioners as well as recent newspaper and journal articles pertinent to the issues in discourse. Thus, the primary method of study was an extensive review of available related literature for an in-depth analysis of leadership problems facing Nigeria and their implications on the health of the society. The sources of data were diligently evaluated and analyzed to determine their authenticity.

## 4. Problem Statement

Debates about the absence of effective leadership in Nigeria have been going on for decades as the leaders have been unable to change their mental models [3] [12] that are critical in transforming the society into the 21<sup>st</sup> century system. Yet the political leaders appear to think that Nigeria can be transformed into an industrialized society without changing their mentality and reframing their meaning of leadership and make functional policies. The political leaders of the developed countries could not have been able to transform their economies into the healthy and productive state they are today without shifting their mindset and creating a system that enabled them to lead from the emerging future.

## 5. Research Questions

This article focuses on the following questions: What are the forces that prevent the political leaders of Nigeria from changing their mindset from "ego-system awareness" to "eco-system reality"? How can the leaders and policymakers lead from the emerging possibilities?

## 6. Designing a New Strategy

Leaders of the developed nations are known to have continually shown their knack in managing difficult situations by crafting functional strategies that align with the culture of the society or organization. When a society, a person, or an organization has a problem, the first instinct will be to find a solution(s) to the problems [12] [13]. A well-designed strategy is a symbol of action that will enable the authorities to achieve the desired goal—whether it is changing the behavior of a people or engineering a social change. A strategy is thus a "game plan" to achieve one or more goals. It is a plan, a "how" and "a means of getting from here to there" [13] [14]. A "... strategy is [also] a solution to move from where you are now to where you want to be" [2] [14].

As mentioned earlier, Nigeria is facing myriad of sociopolitical and economic problems and the leaders do not appear to have the skills and knowledge to design and implement effective strategies to resolve them. For instance, they are unable to tackle the nation's infrastructural and institutional problems, improving its standard of education, and rebuilding the economy. The nation's system of education and that of the economy must align in order to make a difference in the life of the people. The political leaders should flip the lens around a little to work out ways and means to serve the public good. They should collectively "develop cross-sector platforms [or framework] of innovation and leadership" [2] [15] for positive change in the country.

Nigeria's leadership quality is in its DNA. It appears that there is no chance of sustained sociopolitical and economic growth and development under the present condition of things in the society. For instance, the fundamental causes of Nigeria's weak economy are poor leadership and governance that contribute immensely to non-functional infrastructure and institutions, low quality of education and the citizen's lack of practical skills and knowledge to drive the economy. Worse still, there is no discernable change of attitude on the part of the leaders to address the shortfalls in the system. They are not willing to put their egos aside and listen to the people as many of them are mired in what has been branded "ego-system awareness" [2] [16]. The leaders, it appears, worry about the realities in the eco-system only when there are serious national issues that threaten their own well-being such as the *Ebola* crisis [2] [15] that has been described as "an epidemic without mercy" [2] [16].

As noted, political stability in any country comes from the development of the institutions and infrastructure that drive the economy, create of employment, and take care of the people's needs. Nigeria's institutions (political and economic) have either decayed or stagnated over the years. Nigeria has abundant natural and human resources, but the non-functional institutions have prevented the economy from developing and for the people from tackling their family and community obligations. This is possible only if the leaders can change their "mental models" [3] [17] and transit from their ego-system awareness to eco-system reality [2] [18].

Without the political leaders reframing their thinking model and their meaning of leadership; without fixing the infrastructure and institutions that drive the economy; and without transforming the education system into the 21<sup>st</sup> century model and empower the students with the knowledge and skills to compete effectively in the knowledge-driven global economy [17] [19]; and without taking care of the needs of the growing number of the people in poor health, the society will remain unproductive and underdeveloped.

## 7. "Reframing Leadership" in Nigeria

It is a common observation that deplorable leadership is a major part of the problem forestalling the development of Nigeria. Thus, debates about the seemingly absence of effective leadership in Nigeria have been endless. For instance, it has been observed by well-meaning scholars that "the problem with Nigeria is the failure of leadership" [18] [20]. Other scholars have also noted that there is poor leadership in Nigeria because most of the leaders are mired in a sense of entitlement [21] in their actions, beliefs, and attitudes [6] [19]. The leaders of Nigeria appear to have adopted institutions and policies that disadvantaged the majority of the citizens over the years to enable them hold on to the apparatuses of political and economic institutions. It has also been observed that those who are in control of power determine the economic and political destiny of the general population.

However, the people would like their myriad social, political, and economic problems to be resolved by their political leaders. Specifically, they would like to have an enabling environment and a healthy economy; they would like to have peace and stability in government; and good roads, functional hospitals and schools. Also, they would like their human and civil rights to be respected. The leaders know and talk about all these issues without resolving them; instead, they lock themselves up in their lofty offices dishing out orders that are unimplemented. But the people may not get the services they want without forcing the leaders to reframe their meaning of leadership [22] [23]. In fact, achieving all this will entail solving the basic political problems that are holding the nation back.

True leaders have passion and understanding for those they lead. And they are known to resolve conflicts by reframing the situation, which means "looking at the situation with a new set of eyes" [2] [6]. The logic is that when the leader reframes, it will enable him or her to respond to situations by commanding control with confidence [6] [23]. As noted earlier, leadership is not in the position one occupies; leadership resides in responsibility and accountability. More importantly, it is for the good of society to enable the people to achieve their full potential [23] [24]. However, instead of providing the people the services they need, the political leaders of Nigeria and their cronies use government policies to buy support from the gullible masses (it must be emphasized here that this is not peculiar to Nigeria).

It has been noted that law and order support economic undertakings in any society and that personal growth is a component part of leadership that make it possible. Thus, the leaders of Nigeria, as noted earlier, must change their mindsets in order to lead from the emerging future possibilities [2] [17]. As Peter F. Drucker has noted, "You cannot manage other people [or a society] unless you manage yourself first" [23] [25].

In *Leadership* [23] [24] two types of leaders have been noted: 1) *transformative*; and 2) *transactional*. *Transformative* leaders are those who have a vision to mobilize people to action, while *transactional* leaderships are addicted to *quid pro quo*—"If you scratch my back, I will scratch yours" [17] [26]. This style of leadership

seems pervasive in Nigeria. Yet, another type is leadership that hands down orders from top to bottom. This style of leadership is mostly adopted by leaders who want utmost control over the decision-making process in an organization [25] [27]. Also, most of the leaders of Nigeria appear to fall within this category; the society has powerful leaders without effective institutions to tame their actions [2] [23].

Many people wish to be a leadership position, but very few understand the essence of leadership [21]. True leadership is about serving the people; as noted earlier, it is about having a sense of responsibility; leadership is about providing the people the service they need, or “getting things done through people” [10] [26]. In addition, leadership is about inspiring others to excel. In a democratic society, power is said to come from the people at the grassroots. Thus, in making decisions the leaders must take cognizant of the opinions and needs of the people. In addition, the leader will assume responsibility for what went well and what went wrong, because “True leadership is about taking responsibility wherever responsibility needs taking” [27] [28]. Put differently, “The essence of leadership has always been about sensing and actualizing the future” [2] [29]. This is not the case with Nigeria’s leaders. The political leaders of Nigeria are known to be filling their pockets with public money, instead of serving the people.

Nations are said to retrogress, stagnate or fail completely when they have leaders who make policies that hinder economic growth and pauperize the people. To move forward, Nigeria’s leaders must change their mindsets and the people must not allow them to continue “patching problems”, instead of “redesigning” the system to make it function effectively [3] [10]. Put differently, the people must push for a radical change in the system away from the policies that enslave them toward a more inclusive and progressive one. The leaders should also learn to become better listeners and empower the people with the skills and knowledge they need to become more productive. Additionally, they should be “grounded in mindfulness and service” [28] [30] to enable them design and execute effective policies, and offer solutions to the nation’s myriad social, political, and economic problems. That means reframing leadership and the environment.

## 8. Reinventing the Environment

Nigeria’s extractive economic and political institutions do not create incentive for the citizens to save, invest, and innovate. Power and wealth are concentrated in the hands of those controlling state apparatus. In other words, only those in control of political power or connected to those in political power are benefiting from the dysfunctional system. And this has destroyed the environment leading to lack of law and order and economic incentive; it has protected the interest of the elites controlling or dominating the political environment.

As human beings our actions, attitudes, and beliefs are defined by our “physical environments” [29] [31]. As such, we cannot remain in a dysfunctional environment and expect good outcomes in what we do. As our “physical life” is affected by the “physical environment” [29] [32], so also our nation’s environment will affect the quality of attention the people will give to their actions. The Nigerian system is corruption-charged; and that has affected the “moral life” [29] [33] of the people and the health of the economy. Therefore, according to Dewey (1934) “No permanent solution is possible save in a radical social alteration” [29] [34].

Scholars have observed that your mentality dictates what one does; therefore, mentality really matters [3]. The political leaders can only change the system by changing their mental models [3] [35]. In Nigeria the leaders are always on each other’s throat with their petty politics [30] [36], instead of dealing with broad national issues such as creating an environment that would accommodate the interests of the diverse population. For instance, the former president, Olusegun Obasanjo, is always critical of the policies of President Good Luck Jonathan [2] [31], instead of working collaboratively with his administration to build a stable and brighter future for the society. Also, instead of designing and implementing effective monetary policies to build a healthy economy, the former governor of Central Bank of Nigeria, Mallam Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, who is now the Emir of Kano, took delight in heating up the polity when he alleged that the NNPC failed to remit about \$49.8 billion to government’s coffer [32] [36].

This is not to mention the long-running misunderstanding between the Federal Government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)—a union of university academic professors founded in 1978 [33] [37] that disrupted the academic calendar of higher institutions for months. In addition, the relentless drop in global oil prices is putting enormous economic pressures on the government that lacks any solution to the problem. Worse still, the *Boko Haram* (a militant Islamic group) onslaught [2] [17] [34] [35] in the northeast is threatening to destabilize the country. The state does not seem to have the capacity to stop the terrorists from creating chaos. It appears that they are not selecting a particular group of people to kill; they are indiscriminately killing people.

Everyone seems to agree with the general observation that corruption and economic mismanagement [36] [38], which has scared away both domestic and foreign investors from the economy, is a major part of the problems facing Nigeria today. It has also been observed that how well a nation tackles the issues facing it depends on the effectiveness of the institutions it has in place. It appears, therefore, that the ineffectiveness of the institutions created by poor leadership in Nigeria are the main reason the nation's sociopolitical and economic problems remain perpetually unresolved.

The political leaders are only good at blaming everyone else, instead of working collectively to find solution(s) to the naughty problems in the society. The energy wasted on all these sociopolitical plots could have been channeled towards reinventing the education system to open the nation "up to the highest future possibilities" [2] [17]. It is feared that the cumulative problems could precipitate into chaos and state failure. Nigeria needs a radical transformation in the education system to empower the people with the skills and knowledge to deal with their personal problems (the constraints from the political and economic institutions) as well as those facing the nation.

## 9. Radical Transformation of the Education System

As this article has repeatedly observed, Nigeria is facing major challenges, including the crisis in the education system and corruption-scandals [36] [38] that are strewn the political landscape like straw hut in a hurricane. In particular, the education system lacks proper funding and planning [37] [39] and teaching and learning are based on theory with little or no practical application of what the students learned in the classroom. Practical application is the way for any society to become innovative and creative and thus produce results the people wants [2] [38]. The system lacks teaching and learning facilities and it is plagued by teachers' absenteeism. It has been observed that the ultimate goal of teaching is to ensure that students develop a deep understanding of the subject matter and interconnected knowledge and skills they can draw upon when needed [17] [40].

The story of the poor standard of education in Nigeria seems deep-rooted in the inefficiency of governance and failure of leadership. Due to the poor state of the education system (particularly the government managed institutions) many Nigerians prefer to attend the very expensive private institutions and foreign higher institutions. The problem facing the education system and other facets of the polity is dictated by the political and economic institutions that do not shift toward progressive and destructive innovation and economic success. Nigeria's repressive political and economic institutions have contributed immensely to eventual socioeconomic decay or stagnation [17] [38]. To transform the education system, the leaders' of Nigeria must shift their mindsets as well as shift their policies toward promoting favorable institutions and progressive innovation [2] [38]. And the teachers and administrators in the education sector should be motivated to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to introduce practical education that works [17] [41]. It has been observed that with the right mindset, we can motivate the people around us as to achieve their purpose well as achieve our own personal and professional goals.

Scholars have observed that nations rise when they design and implement pro-growth policies and inclusive political institutions that share power [17] [38], train, educate, and produce productive workers. But they fail when the institutions fail to adapt to the environment or when the powerful political elites benefiting from the *status quo* prevent the institutions from being effective. So, to move forward the leaders should create progressive institutions and adopt methods that have been tested by successful countries and adapt them to fit into Nigeria's environment.

Although some leaders, educators, and policymakers think that investing in technology will improve the standard of education and student performance, others have different opinion. For instance, a new inspiring book, *The Triple Focus: A New Approach to Education*, thinks that blend in lessons in social and emotional learning can help students better understand themselves, their peers and the larger systems around them [24] [39]. It argues that such instructional techniques can improve both social skills and academic performance. Unfortunately, such approach that will teach soft skills and engender better social relationship among the plethora of religious and tribal groups in Nigeria and promote economic group and improve the quality of life of the citizens appears to be lacking in the education system.

Improving Nigeria's education system should go beyond rhetoric; it requires planning, resources (human and material), and practical and effective solutions. Blaming and insulting the hardworking teachers is not the answer to the failing standard of education in Nigeria. The extractive political and economic institutions in which the teachers work are the problem; they do not encourage creativity and innovation; they do not respect human

and civil rights. And they do not provide basic social service, but rather they allow the leaders and elites to enrich their pockets with public funds [38]. These are to blame for the poor state of the polity. As long as the underlying institutions (political and economic) are not inclusive [38] the problems facing the nation may remain unresolved. Nigeria should build inclusive political and economic institutions [38] that will empower the citizens and treat the teachers the as professionals they really are. On their part, the teachers should adopt effective teaching and learning methods and encourage education reform that will add value to the system. But this is possible only through building mindful schools and training mindful educators—those who have the welfare of students at heart, and are committed and motivated to making teaching and learning enjoyable. It has also been observed that mindfulness is an antidote to the diseases of the twenty-first century life [40] [42].

Perhaps because of poor investment in human capital development (education and health care), Nigeria's secondary school (high-school) graduates churn out yearly from the nation's educational institutions are ill-prepared to face the rigors of university education. To reverse this ugly trend, the administrators and leaders of the secondary school education sub-sector should develop progressive policies and educate the educators so that they can empower their students with the knowledge and skills to become effective participants in 21<sup>st</sup> century society [17].

The focus of this article has been on how the people, particularly the leaders, can shift their mindset for the society to achieve its purpose and for the people to be successful and happy in what they do. But because many if not most of the leaders of Nigeria have selfish fixed mindset they have not given proper attention in preparing high school graduates for university education. And this seems to pose a serious problem for the development of creative, innovative and productive citizens. But for Nigeria's workers to compete effectively in the 21<sup>st</sup> global economy [2] [43] the education system should be transformed to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century standard so as to equip the workers with the 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge and skills [38] [41].

To restructure the education system, Nigeria needs leaders “who are transformative in orientation” [17] [29]. Some scholars have observed that transformative leaders [17] [24] have a vision to organize and mobilize other people to action. Without retooling the education system and empowering the workers with appropriate skills and knowledge; and without abolishing policies and politics that are inimical to economic development and prosperity, Nigeria cannot become a real productive society. Developed and progressive countries became what they are today because their people fought and overthrew the powerful political elites who dominated political power and create a society where political rights were properly shared and the government was responsive to the needs of the people [38]. As noted earlier, to improve the education system the educators should first be educated and motivated to empower their students, because the quality of the faculty and teachers matter [42] [44] in the quality of teaching and support they provide their students.

Nigeria's education leaders are good at blaming the teachers and students for the poor performance in external examinations such as WAEC and NECO without taking responsibility for their own contribution to their poor performance. Quality counts! The leaders should develop an education system that serves the society well. Thus, they should upgrade the status of the educators and respect them like other professionals; they should empower them to make better decisions [17] [45] and effectively perform their duties. As it has been noted, “A teacher's skill makes a difference in student performance” both “in school and their feelings of well-being” [43] [46].

According to authorities in this area, without inclusive political and economic institutions [38] [47] sustainable growth and development is difficult, if not impossible. It is unreasonable to expect the disrespected teachers to educate and motivate the youths; the society should expect to get only what it has invested in the education system. As it has been observed, and rightly too: “... we receive but what we give...” [29] [44]. When teachers feel honored they will develop the will and capability to educate their students and equip them with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to “become change agents [in the] society” [2] [17]. The bottom line is that the society should reform the institutions and discard the education policies that don't work because the state of the education system will affect the conditions of the whole system, including the healthcare system.

## 10. Transforming the Health Care System

It has been observed that there is no easy way to move a nation from poverty to prosperity [38]; but institutions matter! Nigeria has been grappling with ineffective and inefficient healthcare delivery for decades. It is a common observation that the story of poor health care delivery in Nigeria is deep-rooted in the failure of leadership and governance. Government owned healthcare facilities are ill-equipped and many of the personnel are poorly

trained and poorly motivated. And the private hospitals, which are very expensive, are poorly regulated; and thus many of them are deficient. The citizens are unable to get the kind of healthcare they need, because of many factors, including absenteeism of doctors, nurses and other healthcare personnel as they are more often than not on strike actions.

Nigeria needs “institutions that encourage prosperity, create positive feedback... that prevent efforts by [the greedy and selfish political] elites to undermine them” [38] [46]. As noted, like the education system, Nigeria’s healthcare system does not meet the needs of the people. There are poorly equipped hospitals and health clinics are strewn all over Nigeria [44]-[47]. And like the educational institutions, the healthcare institutions are lacking the emerging 21<sup>st</sup> Century medical science and technologies that would enable healthcare workers to provide high quality health services to the people [34] [45]-[47].

Due to ineffective institutions, healthcare providers are unable to provide good quality services without proper training, tools, and resources. Worse still, they operate in unsafe work environments [44] [48]. Thus, the transformation of the healthcare system should “revolve around transforming the relationship between patients and the healthcare providers” [2] [44]. That requires changing the mindsets and political attitude of the elites to enable them create pro-growth healthcare strategies and institutions. It is no longer news that there are many communities in Nigeria without basic healthcare facilities; as a result the people do not have access to basic healthcare services [2] [46]. Consequently, thousands of Nigerians die every year from preventable diseases or minor ailments’ such as high blood pressure, hypertension, prostate cancer, diabetes, breast cancer, maternal child birth issues, and malnutrition [47] [49].

Unfortunately, because of ineffective institutions and deterioration in the healthcare system, the political leaders often travel abroad to receive high-quality healthcare services at the expense of the public [3] [44] [46]. The ordinary citizens often resort to mushroom churches and private assistance to resolve their basic health problems [45] [50]. To produce a healthy and productive workforce for the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy and to build a stable society the leaders should rethink the ways they manage the nation’s healthcare institutions.

The ineffective and efficient political institutions are inimical to Nigeria’s sociopolitical and economic growth. Medical doctors and other healthcare workers are often on strike (as noted earlier) to press home their demands over diverse issues, including non-payment of salaries and allowances, which often lead to unnecessary loss of lives [2] [45]. Some people think that the healthcare professionals care only about their remuneration than provision of health services to the needy [3] [48]. Consequently, many Nigerians have lost faith in the nation’s healthcare system as they perceive the healthcare workers as unreliable, unskilled, undereducated, and not kind-hearted care providers [44] [51].

The health of the people affects their productivity; healthy people are known to be more productive, all things being equal. Therefore, to improve their productivity everyone should have access to high quality health care that is being now enjoyed only by the rich political leaders. The administrators of the healthcare system, in collaboration with the medical community, should transform and modernize the healthcare system for the benefit of everyone. Building functional healthcare facilities in every community to deliver high quality health services to the citizens and building a healthy economy is essential to the development of the nation. But this requires an effective and inclusive institution [38] as well as a transformative leader [23] [24] who is willing and committed to working collectively with others in the society.

## 11. Building a Healthy Economy

Ineffective political and economic institutions are known to create a weak economy, which in turn breeds high unemployment and poverty and generates sociopolitical uncertainty [2] [52]. Yet the political leaders do not seem to take the threat to national stability seriously as they are mired in their selfish political interest [21]. According to *Leading from the Emerging Future*, “In order to meet the challenges of our time, we need to shift our thinking as individuals and as a society” because “Today’s economy works as a set of locally embedded and globally interlinked eco-systems” [2]. Nigeria’s economy is no exception.

Nigerians appear to have entrepreneurial skills but poor political institutions, unfriendly business environment, and poor leadership, which have combined to stunt the economy, have not allowed the society to tackle its systemic problems at their roots. With the right mindset, the leaders can motivate the people to reach their full potential. However, unfavorable business atmosphere does not allow for creative destruction and innovation [49]. According to the eminent economist, Joseph Schumpeter, economic growth and technological change by its nature go with what he branded creative destruction, which would replace old technology with new one. Put dif-



ferently, creative destruction [49] brings new technologies and makes existing technologies obsolete [2] [49].

However, to build a healthy economy the political leaders must shift their mindsets and invest in the infrastructure and institutions that drive the economy and enhance individual and national productivity. Also, the society must empower the youths with the skills and knowledge to take initiatives, to conduct independent inquiry, compete effectively in the global economy, and produce results the society wants [2] [8]. As it has aptly been observed by experts, “When... people develop [effective institutions and work collaboratively]... they can be a formidable force for change” [50] in the society.

In reality, the secret of economic growth, since the time of Adam Smith is specialization. But this is possible with effective political and economic institutions that will enable Nigeria to train the needed technical manpower to specialize in producing the goods and services the world wants. This goes to say that economic growth and investment in human capital development are inseparable as they complement each other [2].

While Nigeria has a history of democratic elections, it does not seem to have an inclusive political institution. This is because during elections there are often political violence, intimidation, and electoral fraud as the system does not have a level playing field. In some cases, chaos would reign with kidnapping and political murders. Those who can afford it would hire private security personnel for protection. Nigeria cannot build a healthy economy and lead *from the emerging future* without the leaders shifting from their engrained “ego-system to eco-system awareness both individually and collectively” [3]. Without that the society will remain chaotic and underdeveloped with untold human misery.

## 12. Concluding Remarks

This article focuses on leadership in Nigeria and how the leaders can change their seemingly fixed mindsets to create inclusive political and economic institutions [38] and make effective policies to improve the living conditions of the citizens. After exploring and analyzing *Leading from the Emerging Future*, it relates to the myriad problems facing the society. The article hazards to conclude that the political leaders of Nigeria have invaluable lessons to learn from the inspiring work. After reviewing its change framework and the activities of the political leaders, it appears that the most important lesson is that the current extractive political and economic institutions [38] in the society cannot grow the economy and generate enough employment for the teeming population. It has also conclusively shown that the current Nigeria’s political leaders who are trumpeting change lack the courage and political to transform the society.

For instance, the leaders are unable to shift their mindsets to dismantle the nation’s “man-made political and economic institutions” that are inimical to its economic growth and development. Effective institutions and infrastructure are known as the foundation for a long-run economic growth. That is the crux of the matter with Nigeria.

If the leaders cannot change their mentality how would they build effective institutions to give the people a voice in the political process? And without empowering the people how can they alter the quality of attention the people give to their own actions? As the behavioral dimension of change espoused by this seminal research has noted “The quality of results produced by any system depends on the quality of awareness from which people in the system operate” [3].

Given the poor state of affairs in Nigeria, the chaotic nature of its politics and inept leadership that have combined to create a weak economy, the political leaders of Nigeria do not appear to be leading with integrity as they are not keeping their promises. To move forward, the leaders should shift their mental models [51] to enable the society create inclusive political and economic institutions [38] to empower the people to elect a leader with the courage, political will, and commitment to enthrone positive change in the society. In conclusion, Nigeria needs a leader with an open mind, an open heart, and an open will [51] [52] to transform the education and healthcare systems and invest in the infrastructure and institutions that will enhance individual and national productivity, without which the nation will be hamstrung by economic problems and political instability.

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