



National Land Policy for Social Justice and Economic Growth in Nigeria: Systematic Review of Literature

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Abstract

This paper highlighted the significant of useful and effective national land policy for social justice and economic prosperity in Nigeria. Due to the importance of land and landed property to nation building. National land policies are cardinal principles for any meaningful development for human race. Good national land policy is an indication of developments and advancements in terms of land administration and management. Land as a factor of production, in many respects it needs proper management. Land is a one of main asset to urban and rural poor. Criterion for many advancements has an impact with the efficient mechanisms for land policy implementation. Different approach to national development in many spheres of nations struggle is irrelevant when land policies are not in efficient. Land tenure before and after colonial masters were reviewed to ascertain the development of different land reforms that took place in Nigeria. National land policy and economic growth relationship was established within the framework of national economic development. Economic growth and stability are the results of national land policies. Issues bothering access and control over land was stated. Unemployment and job creation were stated that emanates from poor land policies. It was recommended that national land policy should be employed for national security and development. Issues related to access to land were incorporated to the proper land policy. The significant of national land policies cannot be over emphasised, because of it is paramount for egalitarian society. It is recommended to the concerned government agencies to reflect on importance of national land policies. And regularly inspection of statutory documents related to land policies

should be revisiting for time interval. It is also recommended that public enlightenment and sensitisation should be encourage to help the citizen have knowledge on issues related to land. The study would be of immense benefit and points of direction for future researches.

Keywords: *National land policies, rural and urban land, economic growth, land tenure system and land reforms*

Introduction

National Land Policy (NLP) is a main issue in making accessibility and used of land and buildings. 'Land Policy is the set of laws prevailing access to and the distribution of the reimbursement from one of the country's Land (Molen, 2008). Good NLP is an indication of developments and advancements in terms of land administration and management. Land as a factor of production, in many respects it needs proper management. Land is a one of the main assets to urban and rural poor. Land provides the physical bedrock for human activity; it is the indispensable base of all communal and economic interaction. Land law is, accordingly, that part of the law which governs the allocation of rights and obligations in relation to 'real' or 'immovable' property (Chigbo, 2013). The land tenure system usually has relation with NLP (Fan & Zhang, 2004; Silayo, 2008). Based on the assertion of Udoekanem, Adoga, & Onwumere, (2014) The predominant land holding in Nigeria before the coming of colonial masters was customary land occupancy where land belongs to individuals in the

villages, towns, communities and families. Land policies try to organised the methods of land access and development. Population growth, rapid urbanisation promotes NLP in many urban centres even though rural centres are witnessing bundles of land policies. Furthermore, land is said to be inert or stationary in the sense that it stays where it is, unlike say ships and other moveable items. Policies development for proper economic developments were associated with land distribution because economic activities were built and carry out on earth (Agbosu, 2000; Nolte, and Vãth, 2013), creation a wealth is sufficiently reliable with pattern of land holding and the laws guiding access and use.

Despite the facts that NLP plays a major role in the development pace in Nigeria with largest population in African Continent, the policies and reforms are been made to regulate land titles and administration (Atteh, 1985; NYERERE, 1968; Richards, 1977). Land reforms in many African countries were taken place at the time interval

(Chigbo, 2013; Khamaisi, 1995; Bello, Aliyu, & David, 2017). The importance of national land policies for economic stability and protection of life and property of citizens was reported in works of (Kumar, 2016; Oduro, 2010). For the fact that NLP progress of any country is dependent on the good will of the government on the reign (Akin, 2009; Famoriyo, 1984; Fereidouni, Masron, 2013; Khamaisi, 1995; Okonkwo, 2009). General speaking,

LAND TENURE BEFORE NIGERIAN SELF-GOVERNMENT

Before the coming of European land in this part of the world is regarded as communal land (Chigbo, 2013; Udoekanem *et al.*, 2014). The perception within the communities at that time is land cannot be alienated to strangers because it has been qualified and presumed as community resources. Williamson, (2001), added that land holding in the era of pre-colonial was customary land where land holding is owned by the community, head of house in trust to the all individuals in the communities. During the era of colonial masters land matters has been withdrawn from the individual holdings to a more sophisticated. This means that land ownership is based on the norms and culture of that settlement (Wubneh, 2018). General understanding of people before the self-government is that land belong to the village head, head of family within the given community (Udoekanem *et al.*, 2014). Throughout this period, as mentioned above, land belonged to the people or a huge family of which a lot are dead, not many are living and limitless members yet unborn. Therefore, folks had rebuffed such interest as the fee simple absolute in rights as the actual possession of land or total interest was vested in the community itself. Benefit or rights of those in community land were imitative interests. Dosumu, (1977) and Aniyom, (1983) ,the customary land system in the areas encompasses the Southern States of Nigeria before colonial administration was held in the following;

- I. Communal lands
- II. Stool or Chieftaincy lands
- III. Individual Separate lands
- IV. Family lands

The community lands include lands which the whole community have an individual or proprietary attention. Such community lands were overseeing and controlled by the village heads and indigenous rulers. The stool or chieftaincy lands were found frequently among the people from South West (Yoruba) then encompassed the Oba's palace and the surrounding lands. The family lands were domains that were vested in the members of the family as a corporate group. Individual property comprised lands whose designation was vested on individuals and was obtained by segregating of the

family land to individual members of the family. However, before colonial period, land held under customary tenure cannot be sold or alienated (Brandful, Osei, Opokuyamfi, & Peprah, 2019; Molen, 2008; Wineman & Liverpool-tasie, 2017a). Such an act was commonly regarded as gifted of depriving the forthcoming generations of the opportunity to acquire land (Deiningner, 2003).

NATIONAL LAND POLICY FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH IN NIGERIA

Economic activities in any given society is related to the type of land use therein (Anaafo, 2015). Land's useful importance can only be attained when suitable policy directions and execution mechanisms lead to enhanced and obtain access to land for the large number of land users. Realising this has been the area of land reforms, "the generic term for amendments in the legal and institutional context governing land policy (Anaafo, 2015; Mansuri, 2013; Ian. P. Williamson, 2001). These trends is that land policy have to administer a greater diversity and intricacy of rights, limitations and tasks and have to take a more combined, holistic and national view of land management (Udoekanem et al., 2014; Wineman & Liverpool-tasie, 2017b). Investigations on land issues are usually carried out within the context of public theory (Clifford & Ackland, 2011; Garba, 1997). Property development is integral part and beneficiary of national land policy (Adeoye, 2016; Delladetsima, 2015). Property development and management are subject of good land policy, many properties are situated in a relevant area because of good and adequate coverage of land policy. Property managers has less concern with their legitimate dealings because property owners have compliance with the existing policies governing the rightful ways of acquiring and developing land (Salleh, Zoher, Mahayuddin, & Abdul, 2015). Undertaking "best practice" on land policies, economic growth must be life line of achievement records of government policies on land matters.

Job creation and tackling unemployment in Nigeria can be achieved if national land policy can be effective through easy access to land and other economic activities related to space management and agriculture (Williamson, 2000; World Bank, 2000). Nigeria as a one of the front liners of global transparency signatory, land allocation should be justified by allocating titles and approvals of land occupation and utilisation. Access to land is a catalyst for economic growth has witness in 1970's and 1980's (Akinola & Oluwatayo, 2018; Garba, 1997). Another benefit of NLP is safeguarding life and property of people by providing and demarcating territorial integrity and administrating portion of the entire political space (Coulson & Li, 2013). Matters related to land and people should be regulated through NLP. Meaningful development and achievement are recorded where objective land reforms took place as stated by (Famoriyo, 1984).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

National land policies have been the frontline for social justice in terms of access to and control over land in many developing countries most especially Nigeria. National land policies create harmonises different land uses in urban and rural areas. It is on record that different land reforms have assisted in national development in terms of wealth distribution, job creation, land markets regulations and political stability. The significant of national land policies cannot be over emphasised, because of it is paramount for egalitarian society. It is recommended to the concerned government agencies to reflect on importance of national land policies. And regularly inspection of statutory documents related to land policies should be revisiting for time interval. It is also recommended that public enlightenment and sensitisation should be encourage to help the citizen have knowledge on issues related to land.

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