

**Literature and Leadership in Nigeria: An Examination of Students' Reading Of
David Baba Danjuma's The Honourable Chairman In The Federal Polytechnic,
Idah**

Baba, D. D¹., and Adofu, R. E.²

¹Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria

²The Federal Polytechnic, Idah, Kogi State, Nigeria

Corresponding email: enemali4usall@gmail.com

Abstract

The desire and quest for good leadership and effective governance that would lead to smooth national development continues to gather momentum daily especially across African countries and most specifically, Nigeria. Both the citizens and those in power are clamouring for a better life and better leadership. This affirms the fact that leadership is significant to the development of any nation and to get it right, all stakeholders must play significant roles. In this, not much attention has been given to the place of literature, especially the dramatic genre as written by indigenous playwrights, as a panacea to the tooth-aching challenges of leadership in the African milieu, notably Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that this paper: literature and leadership in Nigeria: an examination of students' reading of David Baba Danjuma's *The Honourable Chairman* in the Federal Polytechnic, Idah, aims to examine leadership and national development in Nigeria. The paper, anchoring on the theory of transformational leadership vis-à-vis the literary theory of realism adopts the use of structured questionnaire analysed using the simple percentage method of data gathering and analysis. Four hundred (400) respondents randomly selected across four departments of two National Diploma (ND) and two Higher National Diploma (HND) formed the population of the study. Based on the findings which reveal that corruption, sycophancy and ignorance are parts of the triggers of leadership failure in Nigeria, the paper recommends amongst others a process of reconscientization and mobilization of the masses towards resisting the negativisms that breed underdevelopment through inefficient and corrupt leadership.

Keywords: literature, transformational leadership, realism, polytechnic sector

Introduction

National development simply means the process of developing a nation or advancing, increasing or widening the scope and capacity of the people of a nation. It refers to the improvement of a country in all areas including politically, economically, socially, culturally, scientifically and even in material spheres aimed at enhancing the standard of living for its citizens. Smith (2024) asserts that it encompasses the capacity of a nation to enhance its

citizens' standard of living. He further states that as contained in the Nigeria's National Development plan (NDP), national development is a medium term blueprint designed to unlock the country's potentials in all sectors of the economy for a sustainable, holistic and inclusive growth and development. This plan is intended to build a free and democratic society, a just and egalitarian society, a united, strong and self-reliant nation, a great and dynamic economy and a land full of bright opportunities for all.

Significantly therefore, plans and blueprints for the development of any nation must be people (citizens) centred. It must be aimed at improving the standard of living of the citizens of such nation. Also significant is the fact that it must be holistically designed to boost the political, economic, cultural, social, scientific and even material status of the nation. To achieve this, leadership plays very vital role because since machines do not run on their own accord, no matter how sophisticated they are built; plans do not implement themselves. They are designed and programmed by humans and must be implemented, monitored and appraised by humans. So, in the centre of the quest for national development is the human factor, the citizens, either as followers (the masses) or the leaders (the privileged few). Hence, if the leadership set development plans with a transparent and accountable intention, carrying the masses along in the implementation process of such plans, the followership will key in-even if grudgingly, and the nation will effortlessly witness development.

It is against this backdrop that this paper, literature and leadership in Nigeria: an examination of students' reading of David Baba Danjuma's *The Honourable Chairman in the Federal Polytechnic, Idah*, examines the fact that literature plays pivotal role in influencing the leadership and followership of any nation with the aim of setting them on the right path for national development.

The Concept of Transformational Leadership

Leadership is a task. It is a responsibility-a business that must be taken seriously. According to Baba (2024), leadership has been one of the most challenging factors across nations of the world as it determines the growth and development of any people or nation. It is so significant that even in the homes, leadership defines stability and growth. Hence, leadership is the act, process and means of guiding, influencing, piloting and directing the affairs of an individual or group of persons to achieve a common goal. Osabiye and Ikenga (2015) see leadership as "the exercise of influence in a social situation to such an extent that the followers oblige obedience voluntarily". Buttressing this, Chinazaekpere (2025) opines that leadership is the ability to influence and guide others towards a common goal, encompassing skills like motivation, decision-making and fostering collaboration. Leadership is influencing others to follow. It entails the process and capacity to encourage, motivate, inspire and challenge others (the followers, the masses, the workforce, team members) to produce their best at work or whatever they do.

Theoretically, there are several types of leadership style which include the *laisse faire*, autocracy, democracy, transactional, and transformational amongst others. In spite of all the arguments against the transformational model of leadership as put forward by Adejoh (2022), Ogbonnaya (2019), Musa (2024); the model as propounded and promoted by several scholars including Dewey and Smith (1974) stands out especially in the process of any sincere drive towards holistic national development. This is because it connects a team together through a common purpose and builds a relationship in the workplace that allows for effective communication, more creativity and better problem-solving skills. It enhances followers' motivation, morale, and job performance through various mechanisms.

Smith (2024) adduces further that the transformational leadership style inspires the employees to strive beyond required expectations working towards a shared vision since there is great reliance on effective communication, charisma, adaptability and empathetic support. This implies that a leader who adopts the transformational model is guided by principles such as individualised consideration, inspirational motivation, idealized influence as well as

intellectual stimulation and, in practice, self-awareness, open mindedness, adaptability and innovativeness as well as proactive-ness and humility remain the watchwords.

Sadly, many African nations including Nigeria operate very far from these laudable principles which form significant cornerstone for national development. Many leaders in African nations shy away from the transformational leadership style due to corruption, nepotism, ethnicity, mediocrity amongst others. Hence, even though such nations mouth sing consistently about their desire to adopt the transformational model in leadership, for instance the Goodluck Jonathan administration of 2010-2015 in his transformation agenda; their actions and activities stray very far from the principles and practice of the transformational leadership style thereby constituting themselves into administrators and not leaders (Chinazaekpere: 2025). This inability of the leadership of these African countries and most especially Nigeria to meet this standard of leadership is lucidly captured in literature as justified in several literary theories including realism thereby making literature a mirror of society as showcased in this study.

Realism in literature: a reading of *The Honourable Chairman*

Realism in literature according to Smith (2024) is a movement that emerged in the mid-19th century which focuses on depicting everyday life and society as it truly is rather than idealising or romanticising. Providing a ventilating channel for the middle and lower classes in their struggles, the concept of realism provides a viewpoint which accords to things which are known or perceived as existence or natural. Adejoh (2022) adds that in spite of its criticisms by scholars like Ejiga (2023), Williams (2021), realism is a philosophical and artistic perspective that emphasises the accurate representation of reality, rejecting idealised or romanticised portrayals in favour of a focus on the world as it is. Consequently, literary writers in their poems, plays and stories (poetry, drama and prose) mirror realistic events as they affect their immediate or universal environments. Themes such as politics, economy, religion, human relationships, interactions and coexistence are mirrored with the intention to praise and appreciate when things are done in accordance with the principles of growth and development or to lampoon, satirise or condemn when actions and activities go contrary. Such tenets of realism in literature as also captured in the theory of transformational leadership style are showcased in David Baba Danjuma's *The Honourable Chairman* as he uses the dramatic piece to mirror the political and leadership situation in Nigeria. The play divided into Act 1 with three scenes, Act 2 with single scene, Act 3 with four scenes, Act 4 with three scenes, a prologue as well as an epilogue examines the process by which supposed leaders emerge in a nation as well as their activities in certain positions of leadership and the response of the followers to such. As showcased in the play, to get it right in leadership with the aim of setting the nation on the path of development, there is need to get it right in the political process that now constitutes a significant channel through which leaders emerge. The plot of the eighty-four-page play opens with a prologue in which the narrator laments about the woes of the nation, the misplaced priority as well as the people that have strayed away from the path of transformational leadership. Using a fictional setting called Ome, the author presents the electioneering process and what elected officials do in positions of authority with the wealth of the nation in that, instead of appropriating for the growth and development of the nation as well as improving the living standard of the citizens, they grab for their selfish and personal purposes. This is echoed by Usman: "they come together as if this is for the interest of the people but to share the national cake. Their pockets even break at the weight ..." (P. 64). To buttress this point further, Elder Alewo in Adofu (2017) states "why would he suddenly claim to have turned a new leaf? why is he refusing to play to the gallery this time?... all they will need once in a while is small money and more lies...". This affirms the lack of concern for the plight of the citizens by those in positions of authority. All they care about as showcased in *The Honourable Chairman* and further buttressed by other literary texts-poetry prose or drama-as well as *The Council of Elders*; is their personal gains. They become very accustomed to such life that it becomes strange to do the right thing like "turning a new leaf". Glaringly in the play, and typical of the Nigerian situation, political parties like the D. M. P and P. O. P are seen

presenting their electioneering campaigns and making promises that they knew will never be fulfilled. In spite of the crowd they gather at such gathering due to the gullibility, greed and ignorance of the masses, the campaigns are flooded with blackmail of opponents, strategies on how to outsmart the people as well as the opponents and most significantly, they display the tendency of winning at all cost. For instance, a character in the play, Audu states, “winning is do or die affair in politics” (P. 33), and on the strength of this desperation, the D. M. P. presents its strategy for winning thus:

Idakwo: *I call them options. Option one is getting the under aged registered. How do you feel about that?*

All: *(simultaneously) correct.*

Audu: *I also think we can even get some ghosts registered.*

Okolo: *How do we do that?*

Audu: *It is possible. Nothing is impossible in politics as practised in our country. We can even use the names of our goats and chicken to register.*

.....

Idakwo: *Option two is rigging.*

.....

Okolo: *... As for the returning officer, I know he can be bought ...*

....

Idakwo: *Option three is blackmailing the opponents. ... (P. 35-36)*

On and on the plans and options went with none considering the place of the electorates except for the sake of buying their votes and sealing their lips with gifts of salt, maggi, rice, fertilizer amongst other perishable items that would not sustain them within the circle of another election-the consistent cap in hand syndrome to continuously live as helpless paupers in the hands of the oppressors. And as evident in these lines, these plans completely negate the principles of transformational leadership as presented hitherto. In fact, it has no consideration for the citizens who ought in a democracy to determine who governs them. Hence, leaders who emerge through such platform have nothing about national development on their minds or in their agenda as occupying such privileged position as the local government chairman or any other position of authority and leadership is seen as an opportunity for embezzlement, self-aggrandisement and further corruption. For instance, Idakwo like Usman (P. 64) states “that is good money. As I was carefully explaining the other time, nursery education is not a priority for now. Besides, regimes that have come and gone never looked at that sector and it wasn’t that allocation wasn’t coming. Let us envelop the allocation. We need to recover our electioneering losses and make profits before we talk of education for kids that are still toddling, (P. 60). The play, by showcasing themes of corruption, bribery, sycophancy, hypocrisy, blackmail, embezzlement amongst others, brings to fore the high level of leadership failure in the nation represented as “Ome” as well as how occupants of positions of leadership as well as the followers have derailed from the tenets of transformational leadership, and undoubtedly with such, national development becomes a mirage to such a nation as it continues to take one step forward and two steps backwards. It is in the light of this that this paper using literature as mirror of society within the context of the theory of realism aims to draw attention to the fact that such situation stands as the bane of any nation including Nigeria where such as presented in the play is witnessed; and thereafter proffer solutions to these challenges.

Aim of the study

The main aim of this study is to examine the impact of literature, specifically the dramatic genre in ensuring effective leadership in Nigeria with particular emphasis on students’ reading of *The Honourable Chairman* by David Baba Danjuma. Although the playwright is a co-author in this paper, the play is chosen for this study because of its thematic relevance to the study as

well as the fact that it is a significant text of study in the semester that the research is conducted. The study shall also be guided by the following objectives:

1. Assess the extent of comprehension amongst students who take English and Literary Studies as General Studies (GNS/OTM) course in the reading of recommended texts in the polytechnic sector.
2. Assess the extent to which the themes raised in the text relate to leadership in Nigeria.
3. Assess the impact of such themes on students who would eventually hold positions of leadership in the future.

Study population

A total of four (400) hundred students are randomly sampled from the Federal Polytechnic, Idah in Nigeria. Four Departments made up of two National Diploma and two Higher National Diploma programmes are selected. The choice represents the four major schools in the institution. Hence, the Department of Public Administration, Department of Science Laboratory Technology, Department of Civil Engineering and the Department of Estate Management and Valuation representing the School of General and Administrative Studies/Business Administration and Management (two Schools merged in view of their similarities in scope for the sake of this study), School of Technology, School of Engineering and the School of Environmental Studies respectively: hundred (100) students are randomly selected from each of these departments. By this, the paper achieves a wide range of coverage which provides a balance and hence the validity and justification of this research.

Sample technique

For the purpose of this study, the stratified random sampling technique was used for the advantage of generalizing the findings to a larger population. Thus, the selection is done through the administration of questionnaire randomly to four (400) hundred students sampled from the selected departments and schools in the Federal Polytechnic, Idah. The proportionate stratified random sampling technique is used to represent it according to the population of the categories.

Method of data collection

The data for this research were collected from primary and secondary sources. The primary data is derived through the administration of questionnaires to students involved in English and Literary Studies as General Studies course. These questionnaires are completed and returned for analysis. The secondary source of data collection included the use of textbooks, online journals, periodic and previous scholarly works by researchers and are adequately acknowledged.

Method of data analysis

The survey design is adopted in this study because of the descriptive and qualitative nature of the study. The responses to questions on the questionnaire are presented and analysed using frequency table showing responses in their corresponding percentages. Four hundred (400) copies of the questionnaire were administered to students of the four selected departments in the Federal Polytechnic, Idah.

Data presentation

The population of this study is about four thousand (4000) which cuts across the five (made four) schools in the polytechnic. A sample size of four hundred (400) was drawn from the population of four thousand (4000) via the Yamane's formula of sample size derivation. The formula according to Yamane (1965) as affirmed by Osuala (2022) goes thus:

$$n = N$$

$$\frac{1 + N(e)^2}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size

$$n = \text{population}$$

$$e = \text{level of significance}$$

$$n = 4000$$

$$1 + 4000 (0.05)^2$$

$$n = \frac{4000}{10.0025}$$

$$n = 3.99.9 \text{ approximately } 400$$

Note: 5% of significance was used and the distribution of the data collected through the use of structured questionnaire randomly distributed to learners of English and Literary Studies as General Study course in the Federal Polytechnic, Idah is shown in the table

Key:

PUB: Department of Public Administration

EST: Department of Estate Management and Valuation

SLT: Department of Science Laboratory Technology

CVE: Department of Civil Engineering

RESULTS OF ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Data presentation										
QUESTIONNAIRE DETAIL	FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION				PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION				CUMULATIVE	
	PUB	EST	SLT	CVE	PUB	EST	SLT	CVE	No.	%
Distributed	100	100	100	100	100%	100%	100%	100%	400	400%
Returned	97	86	96	89	97	86	96	89	368	92%
Unreturned	2	10	3	8	2	10	3	8	23	6%
Unusable	1	4	1	3	1	4	1	3	9	2%
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	400	100%

Field work: 2025

Results/ Discussion

The analysis presented in **Table 1: Data Presentation** summarizes the distribution and return rates of questionnaires across four categories (PUB, EST, SLT, and CVE). The table contains three sections: **Frequency, Percentage and Cumulative Distributions**. The table indicates the number of questionnaires distributed, returned, unreturned, and unusable for each category, displays the percentage equivalent of the frequency data and provides the overall totals and percentages for all categories combined. For example, the PUB category had 100 questionnaires distributed, of which 97 were returned, 2 unreturned, and 1 unusable. While the returned questionnaires in the PUB category account for 97%, the total 400 questionnaires distributed, 92% were returned, 6% were unreturned, and 2% were unusable. This analysis highlights the response rate's reliability and the data's completeness, which are critical for ensuring the validity of statistical modeling in the study.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents										
Gender of respondents	PUB		EST		SLT		CVE		CUMULATIVE	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Female	58	59.80	46	53.50	50	52.08	37	41.57	191	51.90
Male	39	40.20	40	46.50	46	47.92	52	58.43	177	48.10
Total	97	100	86	100	96	100	89	100	368	100
Age of respondents	PUB		EST		SLT		CVE		CUMULATIVE	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
16-21	27	27.80	35	40.70	23	23.96	44	49.44	129	35.05
22-27	50	51.50	34	39.50	53	55.21	31	34.83	168	45.65
28-33	15	15.50	10	11.60	12	12.5	9	10.11	46	12.51
34 & above	5	5.150	7	8.14	8	8.33	5	5.62	25	6.79
Total	97	100	86	100	96	100	89	100	368	100
Academic level of respondents	PUB		EST		SLT		CVE		CUMULATIVE	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
National Diploma	48	49.50	35	40.70	51	53.12	45	50.56	179	48.64
Higher National Diploma	49	50.50	51	59.30	45	46.88	44	49.44	189	51.36
Total	97	100	86	100	96	100	89	100	368	100

Field work: 2025

Results/ Discussion

The analysis in Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents provides a breakdown of respondents across three key dimensions—gender, age, and academic level—within four groups (PUB, EST, SLT, CVE) and their cumulative totals. On gender distributor, female respondents make up a slightly higher percentage overall (51.9%) compared to male respondents (48.1%). The breakdown shows variability across groups, with PUB having 59.79% female respondents and CVE showing a shift with 58.43% male respondents dominating. Similarly, on age distribution, most represented age group overall is 22-27 years (45.7%), followed by 16-21 years (35.1%). The other age groups, 28-33 years (12.5%) and 34 & above (6.79%), have significantly fewer respondents which indicates that the majority of participants are younger adults. Furthermore, on the distribution according to academic level, the table revealed the respondents are split between National Diploma (48.6%) and Higher National Diploma holders (51.4%). There is relative consistency across the groups in academic levels, with CVE slightly favouring National Diploma holders (50.56%). This demographic analysis offers insights into the composition of the study participants, which is crucial for interpreting the findings and ensuring representativeness. It helps highlight potential patterns or biases that might influence the study, such as age-related or gender-based perspectives.

Table 3: The variable centres on the extent to which literature is studied as part of the GNS courses in FPI

Response	PUB		EST		SLT		CVE		CUMULATIVE	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Very large	40	41.20	38	44.21	39	40.62	20	22.47	137	37.23
Large	35	36.10	34	39.51	36	37.50	25	28.09	130	35.33
Small	12	12.40	8	9.30	10	10.42	30	33.71	60	16.30
Very small	10	10.30	6	6.98	11	11.46	14	15.73	41	11.14
Total	97	100	86	100	96	100	89	100	368	100

Field work: 2025

Results/ Discussion

The analysis in **Table 3** evaluates the extent to which literature is studied as part of the GNS (General Studies) courses at FPI (Federal Polytechnic Idah). The responses are grouped into four levels: **Very Large**, **Large**, **Small**, and **Very Small**, reflecting the perceived extent of literature's inclusion in the curriculum. The data is presented across four groups (PUB, EST, SLT, CVE), each showing the number of respondents and the percentage representation for each category within the group. The cumulative column aggregates the total number and percentage from all groups combined, providing an overall perspective. It discovers that **37.2%** of respondents rated the inclusion of literature as "Very Large" as "**35.3%** rated it as "Large" while **16.3%** and **11.1%** considered it "Small" and "Very Small," respectively. It was observed that a significant proportion (72.5% when combining "Very Large" and "Large") indicates a broad agreement that literature is substantially studied within GNS courses. While a smaller percentage (27.4%) suggests that some respondents perceive the inclusion to be limited. This analysis sheds light on the prominence of literature in the curriculum, which could inform adjustments to meet educational goals and expectations.

Table 4: The variable centres on the significance of literature in enhancing knowledge about leadership

Response	PUB		EST		SLT		CVE		CUMULATIVE	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Very significant	42	43.3	36	41.90	43	44.79	23	25.84	144	39.13
Significant	37	38.1	40	46.50	38	39.58	30	33.71	145	39.40
Not significant	9	9.28	4	4.65	0	0	16	17.98	29	7.88
I don't know	9	9.28	6	6.98	15	15.63	20	22.47	50	13.59
Total	97	100	86	100	96	100	89	100	368	100

Field work: 2025

Results/ Discussion

The analysis in **Table 4**, titled "The variable centres on the significance of literature in enhancing knowledge about leadership," summarizes respondents' views across four groups (PUB, EST, SLT, CVE), with a cumulative column showing the overall responses. **39.1%** of respondents overall consider literature to be "Very Significant" in enhancing leadership

knowledge with SLT having the highest percentage at **44.79%**, while CVE is notably lower at **25.84%**. The largest category overall, with **39.4%** of respondents identifying literature as "Significant." with EST leads with **46.51%**, showing strong support for this perspective. A minority of **7.88** believe literature is "Not Significant." with most of these responses coming from the CVE group (**17.98%**). Besides, **13.6%** of respondents are uncertain about literature's role in leadership knowledge. CVE has the highest rate of "I Don't Know" responses at **22.47%**, suggesting possible gaps in awareness or understanding. The table aggregates data from all groups, showing consistent participation and a shared focus on evaluating literature's impact. The analysis provides valuable insights into the perception of literature's significance in leadership development. The high percentages in "Very Significant" and "Significant" categories (78.5% combined) affirm literature's crucial role. However, the 13.6% uncertainty ("I Don't Know") signals an opportunity to increase awareness of literature's benefits in leadership education.

Table 5: The variable centres on the themes showcased in the text of study

Response	PUB		EST		SLT		CVE		CUMULATIVE	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Corruption/fraud	8	8.25	17	19.80	15	15.63	10	11.24	50	13.59
Sycophancy	4	4.12	7	8.14	4	4.17	5	5.62	20	5.43
Blackmail	4	4.12	4	4.65	10	10.42	12	13.48	30	8.15
Greed	10	10.30	5	5.81	7	7.29	9	10.11	31	8.42
Lack of Patriotism	20	20.60	10	11.60	10	10.42	11	12.36	51	13.86
All of the above	50	51.50	41	47.70	49	51.04	39	43.82	179	48.64
None of the above	1	1.03	2	2.33	1	1.04	3	3.37	7	1.90
Total	97	100	86	100	96	100	89	100	368	100

Field work: 2025

Results/Discussion

The analysis in **Table 5**, titled "The variable centres on the themes showcased in the text of study," evaluates the prevalence of specific themes discussed in the study. These themes include **Corruption/Fraud**, **Sycophancy**, **Blackmail**, **Greed**, **Lack of Patriotism**, and combined themes categorized as **all of the above or None of the Above**. The "all of the above" category dominates the responses, with **48.64%** overall which reflects the consensus that all listed themes are prominently featured in the text, indicating a broad and integrated thematic exploration. The "**Lack of Patriotism**" ranked second in prevalence, representing **13.9%** of responses which highlights a significant emphasis on the theme of patriotism—or its absence—as a focal concern in the text. The "other theme" category shows that **Corruption/Fraud** accounts for **13.6%**, emphasizing its relevance in the discussion while **Greed** and **Blackmail** are also notable, with **8.42%** and **8.15%**, respectively, **Sycophancy** appears less frequently, at **5.43%**. In addition, "**None of the above**" category recorded a minimal **1.9%** of respondents selected this option, suggesting that the text strongly reflects the identified themes. The distribution across groups (PUB, EST, SLT, CVE) reveals variations in how each theme is perceived, with "All of the above" consistently being the majority response in every group.

This analysis underscores the rich thematic diversity within the study. The predominance of "All of the Above" suggests a multifaceted exploration of societal issues, while the significant percentages for individual themes like "Lack of Patriotism" highlight areas of particular focus. These findings provide a foundation for further discussion or research on the impact of these themes.

Table 6: The Variable centre on the extent to which the themes are reflected in the Nigeria milieu										
Response	PUB		EST		SLT		CVE		CUMULATIVE	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Greatly reflected	49	50.50	50	58.1	43	44.79	39	43.82	181	49.18
Fairly reflected	41	42.30	25	29.1	38	39.58	30	33.70	134	36.41
Not reflected	2	2.06	5	5.81	6	6.25	9	10.11	22	5.98
I don't know	5	5.15	6	6.98	9	9.375	11	12.36	31	8.42
Total	97	100	86	100	96	100	89	100	368	100

Field work: 2025

Results/ Discussion

The analysis in **Table 6**, titled "The Variable centers on the extent to which the themes are reflected in the Nigerian milieu," evaluates how different groups perceive the reflection of certain themes in their environment. The "greatly reflected" response category has the highest percentage overall, with **49.2%** of respondents agreeing that the themes are greatly reflected in the Nigerian milieu with the EST group leads this category with **58.14%**, showing strong alignment with this view. Also, **36.4%** of respondents believes the themes are fairly reflected with PUB, SLT, and CVE groups show similar moderate levels of agreement, with percentages ranging from **38.20%** to **42.27%**. Besides, only **5.98%** of respondents think the themes are not reflected with SVE shows a slightly higher percentage (**10.11%**), suggesting a minor dissent from the majority view. Furthermore, **8.42%** of respondents are uncertain about the reflection of themes as CVE leads in this category with **12.36%**, indicating possible gaps in understanding or awareness. It is worthy of note that each group (PUB, EST, SLT, CVE) contributes unique insights, showing variability in perceptions, with EST most affirming the themes' presence and CVE exhibiting the most uncertainty. The analysis highlights how respondents perceive the reflection of themes in the Nigerian context. The dominance of "Greatly Reflected" and "Fairly Reflected" responses suggests a strong acknowledgment of these themes in the milieu, while the smaller percentages for "Not Reflected" and "I Don't Know" point to areas of ambiguity or lesser impact. This is valuable for understanding societal attitudes and guiding further exploration or policy-making.

Table 7: The variable centres on the extent to which the reflected themes show a deviation from the tenets of transformational leadership in Nigeria

Response	PUB		EST		SLT		CVE		CUMULATIVE	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Very large	49	50.50	39	45.3	50	52.08	48	53.93	186	50.54
Large	37	38.10	40	46.5	32	33.33	31	34.83	140	38.04
Small	9	9.28	5	5.81	10	10.42	6	6.74	30	8.15
Very small	2	2.06	2	2.33	4	4.17	4	4.49	12	3.26
Total	97	100	86	100	96	100	89	100	368	100

Field work: 2025

Results/ Discussion

The analysis presented in **Table 7** evaluates the extent to which the reflected themes show a deviation from certain tenets, based on responses grouped into four levels: **Very Large, Large, Small, and Very Small**. It is observed that **50.5%** of respondents overall agreeing that the themes show a very large deviation from established tenets, with SLT group leads this perspective with **52.08%**, closely followed by the CVE group at **53.93%**. The table disclose that **38%** of respondents perceive a large deviation. Among the groups, EST has the highest representation here at **46.51%**, indicating strong agreement with this view. In addition, the table revealed that **8.15%** of respondents believe the deviation is small with SLT reflects slightly higher alignment with this category at **10.42%**, while other groups are lower. Also, **3.26%** of respondents see very small deviation, suggesting minimal impact with SVE showing a slightly higher representation in this category at **4.49%**, while other groups remain comparable. The cumulative data shows a strong consensus on substantial deviations ("Very Large" and "Large" together account for **88.5%**), highlighting the perceived disconnect of themes from key tenets. The minority views ("Small" and "Very Small") suggest marginal recognition of deviations, likely influenced by individual experiences or contextual factors. The analysis underscores significant deviation from established tenets, as perceived by the majority. This suggests the need for critical examination of these themes and their broader societal impact, offering opportunities for discussion or intervention.

Table 8: The variable shows the extent to which the reflected themes hinder good leadership and hence national development

Response	PUB		EST		SLT		CVE		CUMULATIVE	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Very large	46	47.4	40	46.50	52	54.17	47	52.81	185	50.27
Large	35	36.1	39	45.30	33	34.38	31	34.83	138	37.50
Small	10	10.3	5	5.81	8	8.33	7	7.87	30	8.15
Very small	6	6.19	2	2.33	3	3.13	4	4.49	15	4.08
Total	97	100	86	100	96	100	89	100	368	100

Field work: 2025

Results/ Discussion

The analysis in **Table 8**, titled *"The variable shows the extent to which the reflected themes hinder good leadership and hence the nation,"* evaluates the perceptions of respondents across four response categories: **Very Large**, **Large**, **Small**, and **Very Small**, distributed among four groups (PUB, EST, SLT, CVE), with cumulative totals provided. A significant **50.3%** of respondents overall believe the themes create a very large hindrance to good leadership and the nation's progress as SLT leads this perspective with **54.17%**, followed closely by CVE at **52.81%**. Besides, **37.5%** of respondents perceive the hindrance as large with EST contributes the highest percentage in this category, with **45.35%**, indicating strong alignment with this view. Only **8.15%** of respondents believe the hindrance is small as SLT accounts for a slightly higher proportion here at **8.33%**, while other groups remain comparable. In addition, a minimal **4.08%** of respondents perceive the themes as causing very little hindrance with CVE shows slightly higher representation in this category, at **4.49%**, though the overall percentage remains low. The cumulative data reveals a strong consensus on significant hindrance, with **87.8%** of respondents combined (Very large and large) affirming a substantial impact on leadership and national progress. The smaller percentages for "Small" and "Very Small" categories highlight minority perspectives, likely influenced by specific contexts or individual experiences. This analysis highlights how the reflected themes are perceived to negatively affect leadership and the nation's development. It suggests a need for targeted interventions to address these hindrances and foster better governance practices.

Table 9: The variable centres on the possible ways to remedy the situation through literature										
Response	PUB		EST		SLT		CVE		CUMULATIVE	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Improved reading culture	15	15.50	17	19.80	20	20.83	25	28.09	77	20.92
Improve reorientation efforts	10	10.30	8	9.30	10	10.42	9	10.11	37	10.05
Increase patriotism	5	5.15	4	4.65	9	9.375	7	7.87	25	6.79
Increase literature scope in schools	32	33.00	25	29.10	40	41.67	36	40.45	133	36.14
All of the above	33	34.00	29	33.70	13	13.54	11	12.36	86	23.37
I don't know	2	2.06	3	3.49	4	4.17	1	1.12	10	2.72
Total	97	100	86	100	96	100	89	100	368	100

Field work: 2025

Results/ Discussion

The analysis in **Table 9**, titled *"The variable centers on the possible ways to remedy the situation through literature,"* evaluates respondents' perspectives on improving the situation using literature. The responses are distributed across six categories, with cumulative totals provided. **Increase Literature Scope in Schools** received the highest overall support, with **36.1%** of respondents agreeing it is the most effective solution as SLT group leads this category at **41.67%**, showing strong advocacy for enhancing literature's presence in educational institutions. The second most popular choice, selected by **23.4%** of respondents

was “**all of the above**” with PUB group shows strong preference for this option at **34.02%**, indicating recognition of the multifaceted approach to improvement. **20.9%** of respondents believe fostering better reading habits is essential as CVE group leads this perspective at **28.09%**, emphasizing cultural change as a solution. **10.1%** overall, highlighting the importance of reeducating and redirecting societal attitudes (**Improve Reorientation Efforts**) as PUB and SLT groups exhibit moderate support for this option. The least popular option, with **6.79%** overall is **Increase Patriotism as** responses are relatively low across all groups, though SLT shows slightly higher alignment at **9.375%**. **About 2.72%** of respondents expressed uncertainty (**I don't know**) about the best course of action as CVE group has the lowest percentage here, at **1.1236%**, indicating greater conviction among its members. The cumulative data emphasizes a strong preference for expanding literature's role in schools and adopting a holistic approach ("All of the above"). Minority responses suggest areas for further awareness or exploration, particularly regarding patriotism and societal reorientation efforts. This analysis highlights the importance of education and cultural initiatives in addressing societal challenges through literature. The data provides a foundation for actionable recommendations and further research into effective implementation strategies.

Table 10: The variable centres on those who ought to spearhead the drive towards transformational leadership in Nigeria										
Response	PUB		EST		SLT		CVE		CUMULATIVE	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Occupants of positions of responsibility	54	55.70	36	41.90	26	27.08	25	28.09	141	38.32
The followers/citizens	33	34.00	33	38.40	23	23.96	28	31.46	117	31.79
The mass media	6	6.19	12	14.00	35	36.46	15	16.85	68	18.48
External influence	0	0	2	2.33	5	5.21	15	16.85	22	5.98
All of the above	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
I don't know	4	4.12	3	3.49	7	7.29	6	6.74	20	5.43
Total	97	100	86	100	96	100	89	100	368	100

Field work: 2025

Results/ Discussion

The analysis in **Table 10**, titled "*The variable centres on those who ought to spearhead the drive towards transformational leadership,*" examines the distribution of opinions across categories: **Occupants of Positions of Responsibility**, **The Followers/Citizens**, **The Mass Media**, **External Influence**, **All of the above**, and **I don't know**, with data from four groups (PUB, EST, SLT, CVE) and cumulative totals. The table revealed that **Occupants of Positions of Responsibility** garnered the highest support, with **38.3%** overall identifying these individuals as the key drivers of transformational leadership as PUB leads here, with **55.67%** of its respondents favoring this group. The second most supported option, with **31.8%** overall with the CVE group contributed the largest percentage in this category at **31.46%**, indicating strong faith in the collective power of citizens. **The Mass Media** represents **18.5%** of the

cumulative responses, highlighting its role in influencing leadership with SLT stands out, with **36.46%** prioritizing the media as a key player. **External Influence** were selected by a smaller proportion, **5.98%**, indicating limited belief in external forces driving change with the EST and CVE groups show minor contributions to this category. **I Don't know** represents **5.43%** of the total responses, reflecting uncertainty among a small number of participants. **All of the above** was not selected by any respondents, indicating clear delineation of roles and responsibilities in the minds of participants. The results indicate a strong preference for leadership to originate from those already in positions of responsibility, followed closely by empowering citizens as a collective force. The significance of the mass media also suggests its potential as a tool for advocacy and education. Lower support for external influence highlights a focus on internal, locally-driven solutions to leadership challenges.

Conclusion

It is established in this study that the place of literature in national development cannot be overemphasized. Unarguably, literature plays pivotal role in the setting of agenda for the leadership of any nation by showcasing themes that lampoons the socio-political, economic and religious ills in the society. As writers point out these ills and provide ways by which such could be remedied with the intention of creating avenues for the improvement of the living standards of the citizens, the society is placed on the right path of growth and development. The paper, examined how literature is used as mirror of the society. It anchored on the principles of transformational leadership with particular reference to the concept of realism in literature. Findings revealed that leadership failure in Nigeria is largely caused by the lack of patriotism, greed and selfishness, corruption as well as sycophancy.

Recommendation

Based on the findings as well as the conclusion drawn from the study, the paper hereby recommends as follows:

Citizens, either as leaders or followers must reawaken the spirit of the reading culture in the country. Conscious efforts must be made by all stakeholders especially in the education sector and across institutions to revive the reading culture that is gradually being eroded due to advancement in technology through the use and addiction to phones and other smart devices. Government and government institutions must urgently begin a sincere process of sensitization and reorientation. The need to intensify campaigns aimed at re-conscientizing the citizens on the need to be patriotic, imbibe the spirit of contentment, sacrificial service, commitment to transparency, accountability and fairness cannot be downplayed or trivialized at this critical stage in the life of the country. The media, the class rooms, religious bodies and institutions must all sincerely key into this knowing that the task of good leadership for national development is collective and must be holistic.

Finally, studies in literature across institutions of learning must not only be sustained but also enlarged and improved upon. Writers must be encouraged to write through the provision of support for publications and marketability of creative works.

Reference

- David Baba Danjuma (2011). *The Honourable Chairman*. Kaduna:Scopy Prints.
- Adofu, E. (2017) *The Council of Elders*. Revised Edition. Idah: Adura Press.
- Adejoh, D. (2022). *The Concept of Leadership*. Akure: Bamise Publishing Co.
- Baba, D. (2024). Organizational Communication. In Baba, D. & Elegba, F. (ed.) *Dynamics of English Language, Communication and Literary Appreciation*. Ilorin: Hayti Publishers.
- Baba, D. D. (2025). Leadership and National Development. A lead paper at the Conference of SOGAS, Federal Polytechnic. Idah.

- Chinazaekpere, E. (2025). The Impact of Strategic Leadership Style on Employee Performance: An Evaluation of Nsukka Local Government Area. Unpublished Research. Idah: Department of Public Administration, The Federal Polytechnic.
- Dewey, F. & Smith, K. (1974). Leadership Theory. London: Heinemann .
- Ejiga, C. (2023). Mother Tongue and Language Development in Nigeria. Unpublished Conference Paper. Katsina: KAP-NATECEP.
- Musa, Z. (2024). *Transformational Poetry*. Akure: Bamise Publishing Co..
- Ogbonnaya, E. (2019). Leadership in Nigeria After Independence. Unpublished conference Paper. Ankpa: College of Education.
- Osabiye, N. & Ikenga, F. (2015). *Leadership and National Growth in Nigeria*. Idah Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities. Idah: The Federal Polytechnic.
- Smith, J. (2024). *Literary Realism and the Transformation Agenda*. Ibadan: Seamoon Printers.
- Williams, O (2021). Radical Realism in African Literature: Issues and Challenges. Akure: Adura Printing/Publishing Press.