

Key Determinants of National Development: Historical Perspectives and Implications for Developing Economies

by K. Appiah-Adu and M. Bawumia (Eds)

Surrey

Gower Publishing Limited

2015

ISBN: 978-1-4724-6283-1

Review DOI [10.1108/EJTD-12-2017-0108](https://doi.org/10.1108/EJTD-12-2017-0108)

Introduction

This book seeks to provide a guide to national development for developing economies throughout the world. The editors and authors explore key issues and challenges associated with national development by examining countries that have successfully ascended to a level that developing countries are striving to attain. They seek to add a road map of sorts to the knowledge base of developing economies to lessen their struggle for economic success and viability to a continuously expanding, global economy. Examining the history of similar countries provides an attainable goal for developing countries to strive towards. This book shows that with focus on the right aspects of national development, developing countries can move forward and enhance the lives of all their citizens, not just a select few at the top.

The book consists of 23 chapters, including the introduction, grouped into six sections. Part 1, titled “Leadership, Governance, Policy, and Strategy”, contains three chapters and describes the importance of leadership, governance, policy and strategy development that shapes a nation’s ability to be successful in creating goals, rules of law and strategies that are applicable and fair for all citizens. In Chapter 2, the authors discuss “Leadership, Governance, and National Development”, providing reasons why good leadership and governance is important to national development. Chapter 3, “Strategic Thinking and Economic Development”, describes why strategy development alone is not enough for economic success and the adaptability through strategic thinking is more valuable. Chapter 4, “Policy Management and National Development”, explains how shifting policies can disrupt the national development process and how a documented transition programme is essential to success.

Part 2, titled “The Public Sector”, contains two chapters and describes the role of the public sector in developing economies. In Chapter 5, “The Public Sector as an Enabler of National Development”, the author tells how important it is for the public sector to meet the needs of the people of the country so that they will support national development. Chapter 6, “The Impact of Sound Public Financial Management on National Development”, discusses how leaders should leverage the public sector resources, mainly taxes, in a way that is beneficial to the citizens and the nation’s development.

Part 3, titled “Culture, Institutions, and People”, contains three chapters and discusses how a country’s culture, institutions and people contribute to its development. Chapter 7, “Institutional Building and National Development”, discusses how institutions are central to accomplishing the vision of a nation through sound processes and systems. Chapter 8, “National Culture and



Economic Development”, focuses on the benefits of understanding a nation’s culture to be able to influence its people for economic development success. Chapter 9, “Human Capital and National Development”, offers the cornerstone element of national development, the people of a country, without whom there is no need for national development efforts.

Part 4, titled “Natural Resources”, contains three chapters and discusses how a country’s natural resources must be discovered, developed and sustained for economic development. Chapter 10, “Harnessing Land Resources for Economic Development”, discusses the dilemma of land rights and how difficult it is to navigate property rights issues in the context of economic development needs of a nation. Chapter 11, “Management of Energy Resources for National Development: Trinidad and Tobago Model”, provides a model of how to use a newly discovered resource for national development and to use the lessons learned and recommendations for the betterment of other developing economies. Chapter 12, “Mineral Resource Policy Dynamics and the Contribution of Mining to Ghana’s Development”, provides an example of how mineral resource policies shape the understanding of both critics and supporters of the mining industry.

Part 5, titled “Science, Technology, and Infrastructure”, contains three chapters and examines national leaders’ roles in science, technology and infrastructure for national development. Chapter 13, “The Role of Science, Technology and Innovative Industries in National Development” provides the reader with Asian country examples where national development was enhanced through the advancement of science and technology. Chapter 14, “Information Technology and National Development”, discusses trends in information communication technology (ICT) and the experiences in Ghana when using ICT. Chapter 15, “The Impact of Sound Infrastructure on National Development”, describes infrastructure as the back bone of all countries and emphasizes its importance to economic development.

Part 6, titled “The Private Sector and Financial Markets”, contains eight chapters and discusses how a country’s natural resources must be discovered, developed and sustained for economic development. Chapter 16, “The Private Sector as an Engine of Economic Growth”, shows how for-profit organizations influence financial markets in developing economies. Chapter 17, “The Impact of Global Capital Markets on Developing Countries’ Economic Growth”, provides the reader with an assessment of where the continent of Africa, as an investment option, fits within global capital markets. Chapter 18, “The Role of Stock Markets in National Development: The Case of the Ghana Stock Exchange”, is a case study that explains the history of the Ghana Stock Exchange and its role in national development as it relates to private pension plans. Chapter 19, “The Role of the Central Bank in Reforming the Financial Sector: The Case of Ghana”, provides another case study of Ghana’s banking industry and the impact of financial sector reform programmes on its economy. Chapter 20, “Marketing and Economic Development”, suggests that marketing in developing countries has been neglected and needs more focus alongside fields such as finance and human resources. Chapter 21, “Branding and National Development”, shares examples of countries such as Malaysia and South Africa have used branding to enhance national development. Chapter 22, “Enhancing Service Delivery for National Development”, reveals how the service industry influences national development and the extent to which it outpaces manufacturing and agriculture in developed countries such as the USA and Switzerland. Chapter 23, “Conclusion”, provides an overview of the book with regard to findings that leadership and a clear national vision are essential to moving any nation forward. It provides a succinct narrative of all the chapters and how the content of these chapters can propel developing countries to economic success.

Abstract

The Foreword by Dr Mohamed Ibn Chambas who is currently the Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa establishes the book’s important contribution to national development

as turbulence and change continues to create emerging economies within developed and undeveloped nations. This book provides research that crosses multidisciplinary areas of inquiry. It has relevance for economists, development practitioners and scholars, business executives, non-profit leader and politicians, among other scholars. Each chapter begins with an abstract, followed by significant content of their topic, a detailed conclusion and references to support the work. The book's theoretical and practical insights from leading scholars on national development makes it valuable to both scholars and practitioners.

Evaluation

Key determinants of national development: Historical perspectives and implications for developing economies is a book about emergence, development, growth and national success for a developing country. The book builds upon the authors' expertise in exploring what has and has not worked for other developing countries to provide a road map with fewer pitfalls for newly emerging countries to follow. Many times while reading the chapters, I thought about the applicability of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and how the authors are showing through superb writing and case studies that those needs can be met within these developing economies. The authors have provided historical data and context to support their suggestions and examples. The book provides many models, frameworks and case study of examples that can be applied in other contexts. Yet, they recognize the differences in cultures across countries that must be understood, respected and valued as outsiders come in to assist with national development efforts of host countries. All of a country's human capital must be considered for national development to truly be successful. This book challenges scholars and practitioners to examine how they think about human capital development as it is essential to every aspect of national development including leadership, governance, strategy, the public sector, culture, institutions, natural resources, science, technology, infrastructure, the private sector and financial markets. Without trained, skilled and well-educated workforce, national development is essentially not accomplishable. Many institutions within a nation "lack an organizational model that fits the strengths and weaknesses of its people" (p.130). This is vitally important in developing countries because people are often a scarce resource, so all of the people's contributions must be ascertained, valued and leveraged to benefit the nation. Essential to achieving the national development is strategic thinking, which is described as "the ability to learn from the environment while adopting a wider perspective" (p. 34). As leaders attempt to solve complex problems related to national development, they must have the ability to think strategically, but they must also have employees and constituents who also have strategic thinking ability. Teaching and training strategic thinking is a difficult task, but this book provides clear examples and urgency for it to be done. For practitioners and researchers who seek to help with national development within emerging economies or rebuilding in countries and territories such as Haiti and Puerto Rico, this book, which shows how Ghana is evolving, can be a valuable asset. The scholarly studies cited and the historical knowledge and case studies provide a rich empirical landscape from which to build a foundation for national development in emerging economies.

Claretha Hughes

*Department of Human Resource and Workforce Development, College of Education
and Health Professions, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas, USA*