

Interrogating Democracy and Good Governance as Panacea for National Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines the nexus between democracy, good governance and national development in Nigeria. In doing this, the paper adopts descriptive analytical method of analysis to interrogate those issues under investigation. The theory used as a framework of analysis is the democratic theory whose central argument is based on good governance as a determinant for achieving the desired national development. The findings reveal that democracy and good governance are related in the attainment of national development, whereas, in Nigeria the practice of democracy has not been able to enthrone the concept of good governance as a condition to achieve development. And that to achieve this objective, other criteria such as political governance, economic governance and administrative governance are *sine qua non* which democracy offers towards the attainment of national development. The paper, therefore, recommends that for national development to be achieved a sound democratic governance should be instituted based on good governance criteria that will ensure sound policies and strengthening state capacity and increasing responsiveness in the performance of government activities for national development.

Keywords: Democracy, Good Governance, National Development, Panacea and Interrogating

Introduction

Since the Nigerian state returned to democratic governance in 1999 during the era of third wave of democratization, the nature of governance in the country has been the subject of intense debate by scholars of all divides. Admittedly, the rising concern about the governance project in Nigeria cannot be explained outside the country's historical experience, a history that has laid the solid foundation for the current wave of ethno-

religious and politico-economic crisis in the land. These states of affairs raise some serious concerns about the question of democracy, good governance and national development in Nigeria where the politics of deprivation and mismanagement of resources appears to be taking over the principles of accountability, transparency and responsive governance. This has thrown up serious challenges towards the attainment of socio-economic development of Nigeria. The questions now are: what is the explanation for bad governance in Nigeria? How can these governance deficits be corrected?

The thesis of this paper is that democracy and good governance is the key instrument that oils and sustained peaceful, secured and over all development of society. In other words, the survival of the society is dependent on how its democratic leadership and people are committed to the ideals of democracy and good governance where the atmosphere of peace, equal rights, justice, rule of law and freedom of choice prevail. This paper is segmented thus: concept of democracy, good governance, the link between democracy, good governance and national development, conclusion and recommendations for a way out of the underdevelopment quagmire.

Concept of Democracy

As a concept and form of government, democracy is quite old. It entails a system of government that allows the citizens freedom to decide their desires. Ancient Greece (Athens in particular) is widely regarded as the birthplace of western democracy (Lioba and Abdulahi, 2005). The word democracy is derived from the Greek words *demos* which means "the people", and *kratia* which means "to rule". This, in essence, means a governance system that is ruled by the people and, for the people, as opposed to rule by one despot (autocracy), or a few (oligarchy). Thus, literally, democracy signifies the rule by the people. Abraham Lincoln's definition of democracy is very close to its literal meaning. According to him, democracy is the government of the people, by the people, and for the people. In short, democracy as a form of government implies that the ultimate authority of government is vested in the people for the common good of the people.

It is paradoxical to note that despite centuries of democratic governance in various parts of the globe, there is currently no universally accepted definition of the term. There are intense debates among scholars of democracy, which can be placed into a continuum that ranges from maximalist to minimalist approach (Fayemi, 2009).

The body of minimalist democratic theory is drawn from several thinkers, such as Adam Przeworski, Joseph Schumpeter, Karl Popper, William Riker, and Russel Hardin. All these scholars share a viewpoint wherein democracy neither set conditions for its outcomes, nor

characterizes itself as anything other than an electoral system. Przeworski (1999, p. 108), for instance, explains minimalist democracy as "a system in which parties lose elections." He sees the essential value of democracy as being in the peaceful transfer of power enacted through regular elections. Schumpeter (1952) cited in Jev and Dzoho (2014, p.68) argue that democracy does not entail rule by the people, but that it is "... a method by which decision- making is transferred to individuals who have gained power in a competitive struggle for the votes of the citizens." Popper (1963) cited in Jev and Dzoho (2014) on his part, asserts that democracies are a system wherein one administration can be replaced by another without bloodshed, which indicates the conduct of elections. He rejects the concept of sovereignty in favour of elections, arguing that the imperfections and uncertainties of elections are preferable to the prospect of tyranny found within sovereignty.

The minimalist conception of democracy has, however, been widely challenged by maximalists. The Maximalists argue that without effective guarantees of civil liberties, elections do not constitute democracy, and that a "procedural minimum" for defining democracy must include not only elections, but reasonably guarantees basic civil rights such as freedom of speech, association and assembly" (Diamond, 1988, p.33). Thus, beyond the procedural electoral minimum, the Maximalists have identified further characteristics that must be present for these basic procedures to meaningfully constitute a democracy. Robert Dahl, for instance, advances three essential conditions for the well-functioning multiparty democracy that requires an: (a) extensive competition by political candidates and their groups or parties; (b) political participation that provides the choice for the electorate to select candidates in free and fair elections; and (c) civil and political liberties that enable citizens to express themselves without fear of punishment (Dahl, 1971, p.221). Larry Diamond, another maximalist, sees democracy as encompassing not only a civilian, constitutional, multiparty regime, with regular, free and fair elections and universal suffrage, but also includes organizational liberties such as: freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations; effective power for elected officials; and functional autonomy for legislative, executive and judicial organs of government (Diamond, 1988, p.3).

Robert Dahl in his treatise on democracy, further argues that:

Democracy is a system of government with elected representatives operating under the rule of law, with the greater number of the citizenry having the opportunity to participate in the governmental process as well as have access to equal share of the resources through participation in the

decision making process that has to do with the allocation of scarce resources (Dahl, 1971, p. 221).

Deriving from the views of Dahl (1971), Okpaga (1999, p. 4) defines democracy to mean:

Any system of government that is rooted in the notion that ultimate authority in the governance of the people rightly belongs to the people, that everyone is entitled to an equitable participation and share in the equal rights and equitable social and economic justice as the birth right of every one in the society. The basic characteristics of democracy include the existence of the mechanisms for political and economic choice, balanced political structure and stable political system.

Democracy also means a system which gives periodic opportunities for the masses to choose their leaders. It is a system of government in which the will of the people prevails. It is a majority government; a government elected by the majority of the electorate who are qualified adult citizens. It therefore, means that in a democracy, political sovereignty is vested in the people or the electorate.

Dicey (1950) in his famous work *Law and Opinion in England*, cited in Jev and Dzoho (2014) treated democracy as a form of government under which majority opinion determines legislative action. According to him, it would be unwise in a democracy to enforce laws not approved by the people. James Bryce is one of the greatest champions of democracy and its most sympathetic critic. In his two monumental works: *The American Commonwealth* (1893) and *Modern Democracies* (1921) chiefly treated democracy as a form of government, in which the desire of the people is to express their sovereign will through the votes. Ultimately, he likened it to the rule of the majority. The test of government, according to Bryce, is the welfare of the people. Thus the standard of merit of any form of government can be judged by the adequacy with which it performs the chief functions of government: the protection from internal and external enemies, the securing of justice, efficient administration of common affairs, and the bestowal of aid to individual citizens in their several occupations. Democracy also has an additional merit in that it stimulates men to self-education, because participation by the people in government activities opens wider horizons for the individual and tends to broaden his interests. This participation is the essence of democracy. The people in a democracy exercise their authority in two ways: (a) to determine the ends towards which their government shall run and (b) to watch over those into whose hands they have placed the actual power of administration.

It is important to note that Bryce does not claim that democracy offers a panacea for all ills of society. Yet he prefers it to other forms of government because it has brought about considerable improvement in the standard of government. It has not led to world brotherhood, nor has it dignified and purified politics, but it has provided for better government as compared to other forms of government.

In recent times, the concept of liberalism has been added to the understanding of the concept of democracy. Liberal democracy today is distinguished from other forms of political system by certain principles and characteristics, that is, its procedure and institutional arrangements. Institutions are necessary for the realization of principles; without principles, the institutions might be reduced to a mere formality. The two must go together. Liberal democracy works on certain principles and certain mechanisms. Broadly speaking, principles of Liberal democracy includes: (a) Government by consent; (b) Public accountability; (c) Majority rule; (d) Recognition of Minority rights; and (e) Constitutional Governance (Gauga, 2007)

Government by consent here means that in view of the highly technical nature, the large volume and urgency of government decisions, it is impractical to consult the people on every detail of every policy. However, discussion of the broad issues is indispensable. Discussion is usually held at two levels: (a) among the representatives of the people in the legislative house of assemblies, where members of the opposition have their say; and (b) at the public level where there is direct communication between the leadership and the people. Mass media (newspapers, radio, television, etc) also serve as effective channels of communication between the leadership and the people. Democratic leadership is expected not to lose touch with popular sentiment on the major outlines of policy as the ruling parties are bound to seek a fresh mandate of the people at regular intervals.

By public accountability, it means that the political leadership must constantly remain answerable to the people who elected them. Locke cited in Jev and Dzoho (2014) refers to it as a 'trustee'. He wanted the people to remain constantly vigilant. He thought of the people as a householder who appoints a watchman for protecting his house, and then, he himself keeps awake to keep a watch on the watchman. In order to prevent the abuse of their power, governors should be directly accountable to an electorate who will frequently check whether their objectives have been reasonably met.

John Stuart Mill (cited in Jev and Dzoho, 2014) have identified the appropriate region of human liberty as including liberty of thoughts, feeling, discussion and publication, liberty of tastes and pursuits, and liberty of association or combination provided it causes no harm

to others. He asserts that liberty and democracy taken together- create the possibility of human excellence. In his view, a system of representative democracy makes government accountable to the citizenry and creates wiser citizens capable of pursuing the public interest.

It is instructive to note that this is the kind of democracy that Nigeria desperately needs in order to achieve national development. Over time, public accountability of government has been of great concern as those in authority in Nigeria do not see it as a responsibility to be accountable to people who elected them in office. Since sovereignty does not only originate in the people but continue to stay with the people, it is instructive that leaders be accountable to the people whom they represent. The people's deputies are not, and could not be, its representatives; they are merely its agents; and they cannot decide anything finally (Rousseau, 1762 cited in Gauba, 2007)

On the concept of majority rule, it means that in all these decision-making bodies, from the electorate to the last committee, the issues are to be resolved by voting. Politically, equality is secured by the principle of 'one man, one vote', which implies that there will be no privileged section claiming special weight-age, nor any underprivileged sections whose voice is ignored. No discrimination is allowed on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth, ownership of property, and even educational qualifications. Any restriction of suffrage should be based on sound reason, that is, where the ballot cannot be used in a rational and responsible manner, such as, in the case of convicted criminals, mental patients, and persons below a legally fixed age. The principle of majority rule relies on the wisdom of the majority. Minority opinion has the option to enlist the support of large numbers by persuasion in an atmosphere of free discussion.

The principle of majority rule, by no means, implies the suppression of minorities. In modern nation-state, there may be several racial, religious, linguistic or cultural minorities who fear discrimination of the tyranny of the majority. Minority grievances may take many forms ranging from psychological insults over discrimination in housing, education and employment to physical persecution and genocide. Legal safeguards are, therefore, considered essential for the realization of the 'democratic principles because their presence helps to raise the level of awareness of both majority and minority and thus promote a favourable climate for democratic politics (Gauba, 2007).

By constitutional government, it means a 'government by laws' rather than by men. Democracy requires an infinitely complex machinery of processes, procedures and institutions to translate the majority will into action. It makes enormous demands on the

time, goodwill and integrity of its citizens and public servants. Once the prescribed procedure is set aside, even for a legitimate purpose, it can set a precedent that may be followed for pursuing illegitimate purpose and the flood-gates of corruption might be thrown wide open (Gaubu, 2007). It is, therefore, essential to have a well-established tradition of law and constitution for the stability of a democratic government.

These five principles have thrown sufficient light on the nature of liberal democracy to be practiced. However, the experience of democratic rule in most African countries leaves much to be desired. Evidence have shown that rather than guarantee the welfare and security of lives of the citizenry, the practice of democracy has thrown out more challenges of insecurity of lives and property. Elections have become a do or die affair. It has also become a matter of winner takes all. Rather than been magnanimous in victory, democratic practice has rather narrowed the chances of providing the social services needed by the people. As a result, most African countries such as Nigeria have not been able to enthrone a virile and sound democratic ethos capable of enhancing sustainable development. This failure is attributed to unethical behaviours and lack of accountability on the part of the political leadership as well as poor and uninformed followership (Sorkaa, 2001). This, therefore, is said to explain the reason for Africa's crisis of stability and underdevelopment in the continent. As laudable as these features of democracy which we have enumerated above, are in actual sense what is obtainable in the continent of Africa and particularly in Nigeria, include failure of leadership, corruption, insecurity, ethnicity and the likes.

In its quest to democratize, Africa (Nigeria) continues to remain in the learning process and this process seems to deteriorate at every passing democratic experiment in most African nations. African leaders, instead of carrying out a clear-cut transition to democratic rule, prefer to perpetuate themselves into power using all kinds of nuances of "second term", "Third Term", "Fourth Term" and even life terms (Jev, 2011, p. 27). Constitutional provisions are manipulated to give way for "sit-tightism" in most of African countries. This practice is a clear departure from the democracy enunciated by Plato and Aristotle, Dicey, James Bryce, John Stuart Mill, Jeremy Benthan, Jean-Jacques Rousseau etc.

Elections in most African countries and Nigeria to be precise, is characterized by irregularities such as ballot box snatching and stuffing. In Africa (Nigeria), citizens seem to be held captive by non-performing political office holders. Elections seem no longer a factor in determining electoral context and victories during pools. Those in government

force their way into power without the mandate of the people. The most worrisome aspect of this scenario is that development eludes the continent and poverty has become a household name with most people living below the poverty line -1US dollar a day. This situation has made many to question the option for democracy in Africa, particularly in Nigeria (Edoh, 2007).

Good Governance Conceptualized

According to the World Bank Report (1989) governance is the exercise of political power in the management of a nation's affairs. This definition thus implies that governance encompasses the state's institutional and structural arrangements, decision-making processes and implementation capacity, and the relationship between the governing apparatus and the governed- that is the people in terms of their standard of living.

Odock cited in Jev (2011, p.37) sees good governance as "a system of government based on good leadership, respect for the rule of law and due process, the accountability of the political leadership to the electorate as well as transparency in the operations of government." Transparency in governance, has to do with the leadership carrying out government business in an open, easy to understand and explicit manner, such that the rules made by government, the policies implemented by the government and the results of government activities are easy to verify by the ordinary citizens. On the other hand, accountability as a component of good governance refers to the fact that those who occupy positions of leadership in the government must give account or subject themselves to the will and desire of the society and people they lead. However, the experience of democratic rule in Nigeria seems to negate these cardinal principles. Instead, profligacy and outright abuse of office take center stage in all ramifications. This attitude has greatly affected the output of governance in Nigeria in terms of social provisioning and development in the country (Sorkaa, 2001).

According to Sorkaa (2003) bad governance typically emphasizes leadership which suggests the way political leaders, meaning the apparatus of the state, use or misuse power, to promote social and economic development or to engage in those agendas that largely undermine the realization of the good things of life for the people. While good governance is in tandem with democratic governance which is largely characterized by high valued principles such as rule of law, accountability, participation, transparency, human and civil rights. These governance qualities have the capacity to provide the development process of a country. The African continent generally has not yet created a government that is

transparent and accountable, one that serves its people and is free from corruption which undermines the governance process. Obama (2006, p.11) notes that:

Governance in Africa is crisis ridden and it is a crisis that is robbing honest people of the opportunities they fought for. Corruption erodes the state from the inside out, sickening the justice system until there is no justice to be found, poisoning the police forces until their presence becomes a source of insecurity rather than a source of security. In the end, if the people cannot trust their government to do the job for which it exists, to protect them and to promote their common welfare, all else is lost.

The absence of good governance has not been able to provide the people of Nigeria and Africa generally with public goods of health care, education, clean water, electric power, physical security, a good sanitary environment, and decent transport infrastructure.

Onifade (2011) posed a critical question as to whether it is possible to have good governance without good leadership. Our understanding of reality points to the fact that the former is logically derived from the latter because where there is effective and efficient leadership, there is bound to be good governance. Achebe (1983) argues that the failure of leadership to rise to its responsibility, to the challenges of personal exemplary life clearly shows why the nation has the problem of true leadership. According to him, it is exemplary leadership that can uplift the people, better the lives of the citizenry and see that the people as much as possible enjoy the public resources without any hindrance as is the case in most advanced democracies. The quality of leadership in Nigeria leaves much to be desired as most often, our leaders alienate themselves from the people they govern. This alienation creates room for failure of governance and in its place massive corruption takes the center stage because the leadership is not accountable to the people.

Relatedly, Migdal (1988) and Zartman (1995) argue that in the absence of good governance, a nation may experience state collapse or failure. Nigeria has severally been described as 'failed state' by many scholars (Onimade, 2000; Ake, 1979). A state ideally is meant to be an organization, composed of several agencies led and coordinated by the state leadership (executive authority) which has capacity and authority to make and implement the binding rules for all the people and applying force if necessary to have its way. Zartman (1995), notes that the status of a state is considered as failed or collapsed when it exhibits inability to fulfil the functions of a state such as the sovereign authority, decision-making institution and security guarantor for its population. This can lead to structured authority (legitimate power), law and political order falling apart.

Democracy, Good Governance and National Development: The Nexus

In the 1990s, the concept of democracy and good governance had entered the development discussion not only as a condition for aid, but also an instrument for development. It is argued that the mere existence of elections or electoral democracies does not foster development in itself -it requires good governance (World Bank, 2000). The World Bank further proposes that financial aid works best in a good policy environment characterized by effective and accountable institutions. Democracy emphasis good quality and accountable leadership. It is believed that qualitative leadership is the hallmark of development initiatives in any society. This type of leadership is capable of galvanising support from the people for the attainment of socio-economic development of the country. It therefore, means that democracy has a link with national development and that national development can only take place where there is good governance.

To qualify for foreign aid to enhance national development, the World Bank (2000) have suggested that aid should be targeted primarily to poor countries who have attained democratic status and incorporated good governance, with sound political and economic management. The demand by the World Bank shows that democracy, good governance and national development has a relationship. However, most of the recipients of financial aid in developing countries argue that the demand for democracy and good governance is a new form of imperialism made by the donor countries to impose Western values of democracy, human rights and capitalism on developing countries (Martinusen and Pedeson, 1999 cited in Jev (2011)).

Good governance also has to do with the level of human capital development all of which serve as a measurement for development. The promotion of good governance is widely accepted as a prerequisite for development among international organizations and scholars of human development (UNDP 1994 and David, 2000). But what constitutes good governance and human development, and what is the nexus between good governance and development?

Development is often defined as achieving economic growth or wealth. We believe this definition is too narrow, as it builds on the simplistic assumption that economic growth trickles down and benefits the entire population (Martinusen, 1998). Accordingly, we choose a broader definition that links development with human development. Economic growth makes resources available for human development, but what counts most is not growth per say but the quality and management of the growth. The substance of human development is the enlargement of choices in the economic, cultural and social spheres of

life, leading to a free, long and healthy life (UNDP 1997; UI Haq 1999). Equity, sustainability, productivity and empowerment are four core characteristics of human development. Equal access to the market, education, health, and the political process are critical elements of human development. Also, a well- functioning health or education sector is, therefore, not enough if it is not accessible for majority of the population.

Human development also entails the respect for human rights and overall development of the nation even though it is disputed by authoritarian leaders (Sen, 2000). Consequently, empowerment and human rights are also crucial elements for the enlargement of choices and therefore for human development. In sum, human development puts people at the center of concern and sees the promotion of human development and an enabling environment as the most important features of development. In other words, for national development to be achieved human capital development must be accorded the rightful place in that development process. To achieve this objective, democracy and good governance are a necessary condition to be attained if national development is to be achieved. Many positive attributes and dimensions are attached to good governance. In order to make it measurable and comparable; three essential dimensions of good governance must be introduced: political, economic and administrative governance.

Political governance is about the political process, whereas economic governance is about economic decision making that affects a country's economic activities. The final dimension, which is administrative governance, is concerned with the overall state capacity and the institutional quality of the state. Capacity and legitimacy are key words for good governance (Kjer, 1996 cited in Jev and Dzoho, 2014). Legitimacy is about ensuring that political, economic and social priorities take account of all the voices in society when allocating resources and as well as in the policy making. Legitimacy is a critical element in the processes of governance because it facilitates the formulation and implementation of policies. On the other hand, capacity is important for the government to formulate and implement some policies. If the state cannot implement basic policies or important reforms due to few resources, corruption or lack of human capabilities, good intentions and political legitimacy are of little importance. Hence, it is clear that the capacity component has the most evident and measurable impact on national development.

The Influence of Political Governance on National Development

In the context of political governance, World Bank (2000) posit that responsiveness, participation, and decentralization of the political structures are important aspects in the governance process and must be present. Where these components exist, politicians are likely to be more accountable and responsive to the citizens if they are elected in a political system, characterized by free and fair elections. However, our experience of democratic governance in Nigeria over the years, has shown that these attributes which enhance good governance and national development are non-existent and hence the outcome of all elections in Nigeria are said to be fraudulent and as such not capable of producing quality leadership that will ensure accountability and prudent management of resources for national development to be achieved.

Meaningful and unconstrained participation in the political process is important in achieving democracy, good governance and national development in Nigeria because it is a way of influencing policies and of developing new capabilities. Widespread public participation of the citizenry in the political process is also seen as their contribution in the formulation and implementation of policies that enhance their welfare and that of society generally (Danida, 1999). The participation of women in the political process is also considered to be essential in the attainment of a virile democratic governance and national development (Danida, 1999). Recent studies also indicate that women are less selfish, more socially oriented, and are less corrupt (Dollar, Fishman and Gatti, 1999 cited in Jev, 2011). Thus, it is likely that unconstrained participation of women in the democratic process has direct effects on good governance and national development. The increasing participation of women will affect other spheres of society (Diamond 1988). For that reason, it can be argued that meaningful representation at all levels of governance enhances the quality of public service delivery systems of nation states in their quest to achieve national development. To sum up, a democratic political process is not only a goal in itself that enhances the legitimacy of the political regime, but it is also critical for human development because it provides the population with tools of influencing their own lives.

Responsiveness of the political leadership is also measured by the index of political rights enjoyed by the citizens. Despite its shortcomings, the index of political rights is perceived to be the most valid measure of the democratic political process. This is because the percentage for instance, of women in parliament is also used as a basis in assessing the level of political culture and for the quality of democracy that is practiced by any state or nation. For instance, if women are represented in parliament in higher percentage, it can be taken as a sign that citizens are aware of their rights as women in the political process

are also part and parcel of decision making. In this vein participation is measured by the average of any electoral turnout rate. Putman (1993) uses it as one of the measures of civicness.

The Influence of Economic Governance on Development

Economic governance also has to do with the institutions that regulate the economy of a nation so as to enhance the prospect of democracy, good governance and national development. These can be done in two ways: directly through the economic policies of the state, and indirectly via the state policies that influence the market and the private sectors. In achieving these goals, specific economic institutions and social policies that ensure the provision of positive externalities like education, health, infrastructures and technology and the regulation of the market are necessary tools for national development. Over the years, Nigeria has implemented several economic policies and programmes aimed at achieving socio-economic development of the nation without much success. These policies have not yielded any positive results to warrant any positive development due to lack of attention and commitment of those in leadership positions. This is also attributed to the poor quality of leaders produced based on manipulated electoral process (Edoh, 2007).

Diamond (1999) argues that the penetrating state regulation over the years in Nigeria is inimical for economic growth and national development as it often leads to enormous waste, impeded the development of a healthy private sector and create the opportunities for corruption and rent-seeking. Another important aspect of economic governance is the level of military expenditure. While stability and peace is important for development, excessive military expenditures divert resources away from development needs (World Bank, 2000). In Nigeria, these excessive spending on military affects other sectors of the economy. If excessive resources from the military were to be channelled to health and education sectors, many poor countries such as Nigeria would presumably raise the level of human capital development and ensure sustainable development. While stability and peace is important for development, excessive military expenditures divert resources away from development needs and hinders national development (DAC, 1995 cited in Jev and Salifu, 2017).

In summary, economic governance affects political governance and also enhances the stability of the democratic process. State provision of public goods is based on economic

growth of a nation. The index of economic freedom, which measures regulation, subsidies and inflation (Gwarny and Lawson, 1997) are all essential elements of economic growth needed to achieve political stability and national development.

The Influence of Administrative Governance on Development

Institutional quality is becoming a standard variable in explaining governance performance. Since institutional quality is a precondition for state capacity, it is also plausible that institutional quality is crucial to the provision of public goods, for the existence of a well- functioning political and administrative system and for the overall national development. There are three determinants for administrative governance to enhance service delivery system of a nation. These include; the functioning of the bureaucracy, the law and the level of corruption (DAC, 1994; Diamond, 1998 and Kochanowicz, 1994 cited in Edoh, 2007).

The Bureaucracy: - The existence of an effective and non-politicized public bureaucracy is a cornerstone for the institutional quality and for the capacity and legitimacy of the state (Peters, 1995; Suleiman, 1999). Some of the severe economic and social problems in Eastern Europe, Latin America and in Africa are probably caused by in-efficient bureaucracy (Kochanowicz, 1994; Peters, 1995). Furthermore, two core Weberian features are especially important for the bureaucracy: meritocratic recruitment and (ii) rewarding long term careers (Ranch and Evans, 1999; 2000). Together these features are likely to increase the capacity, and to make it more costly to pursue individual gains. These Weberian qualities are associated with higher levels of growth in 34 developing countries, and it is possible that they also affect other aspects of human development (Ranch and Evans, 2000).

However, in Nigeria, the negative aspect of bureaucracy of red tape, rigidity and the likes has rather hampered effective performance and institutional quality that would deliver good governance to the people. The process of public service delivery system in the continent of Africa and Nigeria in particular, is greatly hampered by unnecessary delays occasioned by what many refers to as bureau-pathology (Sorkaa, 2003). There are a lot of bottlenecks with the public service of Nigeria, and hence, it has not been able to ensure effective performance capable of ensuring sustainable growth and development. Worse still, meritocracy has been jettisoned in the recruitment and appointment in the public service of Nigeria; in its place moonlighting and the spoils system have become the hallmark of bureaucratic system in Nigeria (Jev, 2011). This practice cannot guarantee

development in any way since those who end up being recruited are ill-qualified to perform the relevant tasks to enhance development.

Corruption: The term corruption is defined as the misuse of public power for private benefits (Transparency International, 1999). It is the abuse of public office for private gains (World Bank, 1997). Public office is abused for private gains when an official accepts, solicits, or extorts bribe. It is also abused when private agents actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and process for competitive advantage and profit. Public office can also be abused for personal benefit even if no bribery occurs, through patronage and nepotism, the theft of state assets or the division of state resources (World Bank, 1997). In a related development, the Asian Development Bank links corruption with unethical behaviour on the part of both public and private officials in which they “improperly and unlawfully enrich themselves and/or those close to them, or induce others to do so, by misusing the position in which they are placed” (Asian Development Bank, 1999).

Corruption is generally linked with manipulation of the coercive potentials of one’s social position to gain personal or group advantage at others expense or the abuse of public office for personal gains even if no bribery occurs, through patronage and nepotism, the theft of state resources or its diversion (Ikoni, 2010; Aliegba, 2010).

In view of the above, corruption can generally be seen in this paper as those unethical practices both in the public and private realms which seek to utilize state resources for personal or group gains at the expense of the generality of the people and national development, induced by greed and selfishness. Corruption can be classified into a variety of types such as political, economic, corporate, social, electronic and organized crimes (Ikoni, 2010). Nigeria has, therefore, witnessed all types since her existence as an independent nation over fifty six (56) years ago.

It is a problem both at small and grand scale and has, to some extent, hampered human and physical development. At a higher level, grand corruption is inimical for human and physical development in Nigeria because it lowers growth and the incentives to invest (Mauro, 1997, Gupta et al, 1998 cited in Jev, 2011; Edoh, 2007). It has also been shown that corruption decreases the resources spent on education (Mauro, 1997). Corruption thus inhibits the enlargement of choices and opportunities and in so doing affects the overall possibilities of development. Corruption has been institutionalized in our public life. In fact, people seek to occupy political offices in the country to have unfettered access to huge sums of money to loot. Corruption has also resulted in neglect in all sectors and has

created hatred among the ethnic nationalities that make up Nigeria. This explains the reason for heightened quest to attain power and other conflicts at the slightest provocation.

The Rule of Law: The rule of law is also a critical element of democracy and good governance, without it, the functioning of the economy, the society and the overall legitimacy of the political leadership is at risk. An independent, predictable legal environment and equality before the law, and the practice of a consistent rule of law is a prerequisite for the legitimacy of the state. The practice of democracy and good governance are all essential ingredients for the attainment of national development. Countries such as Nigeria in which the rule of law is not adhered to are likely to exhibit lower levels of growth and political instability. Furthermore, the citizens in particular, do not know their rights and they do not have the resources to fight violations of the rule of law as it pertains to their fundamental rights.

To ensure a virile democratic rule, good governance and Sustainable development, politicians in Nigeria and in other new democracies must comply with the tenets of the rule of law which also serves as a foundation for good governance and national development.

Conclusion

This paper sets out to examine the phenomenon of democracy, good governance and national development. The findings from this study reveal that democracy, good governance have a relationship. That the political process in Nigeria has not been able to bring out qualitative leadership due to the flawed nature of the electoral process in Nigeria. Other findings are that for national development to be achieved, both the political, economic and administrative capacities are necessary ingredients. However, findings have indicated that these capabilities are either lacking or weak and so do not propel the desired national development the country yearns for.

In the light of the foregoing, the paper concludes that a sound democratic system is *sine-qua-non* for good governance to thrive. Good governance presupposes political, economic and administrative governance which is associated with measures to enhance national development. On a whole, a comparison of all these dimensions of good governance reveal that good economic governance is the most important dimension of democracy and national development. Also, low level of military expenditures can release resources for the growth of other sectors of the economy which will in turn enhance the attainment of national development.

The paper also concludes that good governance is important when designing policies and institutions that will strengthen new democracies. In a multi-ethnic society like Nigeria, the emphasis on enthroning good governance cannot be over emphasized as that is the only panacea to deliver social services to the people and reduce tension that results in violent conflicts which threatened the unity and corporate existence of Nigeria. Conflicts in whatever dimension, can only be controlled when we adhere to the tenets of equity, fairness and accountable leadership which is the hallmark of democracy. Until that is done, energies will continue to be exerted on socio-political conflicts which have become endemic in most parts of Nigeria and national development will elude us *ad infinitum*.

This paper, therefore, makes the following recommendations as a pre-condition for enhancing democracy; good governance and national development in Nigeria.

First and foremost, our electoral process should be devoid of manipulations so as to produce qualitative leadership that will be transparent and accountable to the people. Such leadership is needed to champion the course of national development in Nigeria. Secondly, the practice of democracy should entail a system of government that allows the citizens freedom to decide who become their leaders and how their desires and aspirations can be fulfilled.

Thirdly, there should be extensive competition by political parties and their candidates; a political participation that provides the choice for the electorate to choose candidates in a free and fair electoral contest and a civic and political liberty that enable the citizens to express themselves without fear of punishment.

Fourthly, to achieve national development requires political, economic and administrative governance capacity that will propel national development in Nigeria.

Fifthly, to achieve national development, the policies of democratic governance must be based on the concept of good governance based on good leadership, respect for the rule of law and a transparent and accountable political leadership to the electorate as well as transparency in the operations of government.

Lastly, to achieve democracy, good governance and national development, there is the need to ensure political, economic and administrative governance. All these are necessary conditions for achieving stable political system that will guarantee good governance and national development.

It is hoped that if all these recommendations are strictly adhered to, our desire to enthrone a sound democratic system of governance capable of upholding good governance and national development will be achieved.

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Assessment of Radio Benue Programmes in Promoting Food Security in Benue State

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Abstract

The study looked at how Radio Benue Programmes have promoted food security in Benue State. The methodology adopted for the study was survey with questionnaire as the research instrument. Results showed that Radio Benue programmes promoted food security in Benue State. The programmes educated the farmers on mechanized farming