

Rethinking good governance as a tool for peace and security In Nigeria, 1993 till date

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Abstract

The pursuit of good governance by any purposeful leadership/government world over is generally aimed at reducing to the barest minimum the problems associated with bad governance like insecurity, unemployment, banditry, corruption, infrastructural decay, violence, systemic failure, economic depression, etc. However, concerted efforts of international development partners like the World Bank, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), African Development Bank (ADB), and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) of NEPAD, to ensure the compliance of African states to tenets of good governance, the Nigerian situation still leaves much to be desired. The paper analyzed the numerous development and security challenges assailing the nation and the various attempts at explaining them in extant literature. Anchoring analysis on the system's theory, it demonstrated the overarching contribution of bad governance to these challenges. The paper found that bad governance, and by extension leadership failure, has endangered the peace and security of Nigeria. The study by way of conclusion and recommendation highlights the need for proactive and responsive governance as a tool for overcoming the country's nagging developmental and security challenges.

Keywords: Governance, development; poverty; peace; security.

Introduction

Remarkably, from 1993 till date Nigeria as a country has not experienced adequate sigh of relief on peace and security necessary for development in a society. Recall vividly that arising from the June 12, 1993 election debacle was the mass exodus of Nigerians running helter-skelter from various parts of the country to another for safety of their lives because of the envisaged looming crisis consequent upon the annulment of that election on 23rd June 1993. Many lives and properties were lost in the event of the crisis. In like manner, Nigerians also experienced another large-scale breach of peace and security in the country that led to destruction of lives and properties during and after 2003 general election under President Olusegun Obasanjo in the name of election violence.

Moreover between 2010 and date, the peace and security of the nation has been drastically reduced and endangered by the activities of Boko-Haram insurgent, Niger-

Delta militancy, herdsmen and other banditry groups scattered all over the country. Nevertheless, these experiences are undoubtedly attributed to lack of good governance. By implication therefore, embracing good governance by Nigerian leaders would go a long way to guarantee the eluded peace and security, and forestall the negative experiences of the citizens in all sectors of the society.

Resultantly it may not be strongly refuted from the angle of effective service delivery that the level of socio-political and economic growth and development maintained and envisioned in the developed nations of the world such as the United States of America, Britain, France, Germany, Japan and China could be attributed to high level of commitment to the practice of good governance by the governing elites in those nations. By the same logic, the negative developmental experiences of many developing nations such as Nigeria is invariably the resultant effect of the lack of commitment by their elite to the principles of good governance.

Suffice to say governance at any level of the society particularly in the public domain is not all-comers affairs. In this vein, Mukherjee and Ramaswamy (1999:59) suggested opined that “ruling, like any other task, required skills and qualifications, for its aim was the general well-being of all. A good ruler was one who not only preserved the level of his subjects, but also transformed them as beings”. Hence, in the wisdom of the ancient Greek philosopher Plato, in attempt to instill the notion of good governance in the mind of the governing elites over the management of public affairs in the society, had spotted out the virtue of wisdom (lover of soul) of the philosopher king (ruler), as a cardinal quality that should not be compromised in a ruler. Emphasizing the need for wise, talented individual(s) to be in control of the art of statecraft, Plato (1955:282) asserted that;

When the supreme power in man coincides with the greatest wisdom and temperance, then the best laws and the best constitution comes into being: but in no way ... Until Philosopher become kings in this world, or till that we now call kings and rulers really and truly become philosophers, and political power and philosophy thus come into the same hands... there is no other road to real happiness, either for society or the individual.

Thus, against the backdrop of Plato’s theory of philosopher ruler with particular reference to possession of wisdom, it becomes understandable that leadership given to learning (wisdom) would have the power to comprehend the idea of good in public policies. Obviously, except otherwise stated, the idea of good in this context simply corresponds to the logic of communitarian perspective of common good and by extension

equates to Jeremy Bentham's utilitarian formula of "greatest happiness of the greatest number"; not of course precluding the minority interest. Specifically, the aim of the state in the society is ultimately to achieve the 'common good' for the people. In this direction, Gauba (2003: 405) asserts, following Aristotle, that "the state exists for the sake of the good life", and "to promote moral objectives, justice and the common good". In a related development, Raphael in Gauba (2003: 405) comprehensively highlighted the principal functions of a modern states to include laying down laws, backed by force, requiring everyone to refrain from actions (crime and torts) that harm the common good, and to contribute in taxes and other impost to upkeep of services (such as defence, public utility and social services) that promote the common good.

Given the above scenario on the logic of state existence and public expectations from it, the devotion of successive leaderships of modern Nigerian nation towards achieving security of lives and properties, employment/empowerment of the youth, economic progress, low crime rate, enhance people's standard of living, fight corruption to a stop, etc. as issues of common good of the society becomes questionable. Drawing analogy from the typology of peoples on the earth according to the ancient Greeks, it could be said that governance in Nigeria, and much of Africa has been dominated by the 'idiots and tribesmen' as against 'citizens', according to this typology. This perhaps explains the privileging of rotation or representativeness, or what is euphemistically called federal character, over merit and competence in the recruitment of Nigeria's leadership corps. It is against this backdrop that this paper advocates Rethinking good governance as a tool for tackling the daunting developmental and security challenges that currently assail the lives of the citizens and legal residents in Nigeria. To kickstart this process, the paper is structured in the following order: Theoretical perspective; Conceptual issues; An Overview of the Fallout of Governance Deficit in Nigeria; and Conclusion and Recommendations.

Theoretical perspective

In attempt to provide theoretical insight into good governance vis-à-vis Nigerians' quest for peace and security in the country, we anchor this study on the epistemic foundations of the systems theory as espoused by David Easton. The choice of the theory is premised on the assumption that good governance is necessarily related to specific situation of interrelatedness of the units to perform important functions that sustain the

system and ensures its survival. This is by and large the posit of systems theory. David Easton is regarded to be the pioneer of systems analysis. Easton (1957) defines political system as a system of interactions that are related to the authoritative allocation of values in the society. According to Dahl (1984), any collection of elements that interact in same way with one another can be considered a system: a galaxy, a football teams, and legislature, a political party. A political system is, therefore, only one such system and can be identified by “any persistent pattern of human relationships that involves to a significant extent control, influence, power or authority.” (Dahl, 1984: 9-10). In the case of a political system, therefore, we are specifically talking of a pattern of political behaviour that is connected and expresses itself within a clearly defined analytical boundary. This, according to Easton (1954), suggests that: a political system implies interrelatedness, reciprocity, and the search for a situation of equilibrium. It also implies that that political system usually has certain needs that must be satisfied or else such a system is bound to die.

In analyzing the characteristics of political system raised above vis-à-vis the imperatives of good governance as a panacea to peace and security in Nigeria, we are particularly interested in all the issues but for paucity of space we will dwell only in the last attribute. Primarily, therefore, every political system must satisfy the needs of peace and security which of course are determinant to fulfilling other individual and group needs of the system. The fulfillment of these needs is sacrosanct and should be treated as common good which the state by the fact of its existence is bound to promote. In consonance Gauba (2003: 407) conceptualized common good as a goal which is regarded by the consciousness of the community as conducive to the welfare of the whole community, transcending the immediate interests of different individuals and or group. He further adds that where its realization entails some loss or benefit to a particular individuals or group, that loss or benefit is not treated as a matter of setting individual claims.

Good governance and common good are two sides of a coin. Good governance seen as running the affairs of government in a manner that enhances the opportunities for better living and hope for the governed, invariably without doubt seeks to achieve common good in the society. In like manner, the achievement of common good in a society is mere wishful thinking without the practice of good governance.

Conceptual Issues

Governance

The concept of governance is not a modern innovation in public affairs but yet without unanimous acceptable definition. Commenting on that, Udo (2004:2) observes that there has hardly been consensus as to its core meaning and as to how it could be applied in practice. Etymologically, the word governance is traceable to its first usage by Plato, to denote the governing of men, the governing of people (Adegbami & Adepoju 2017:146). World Bank (1993) defined governance as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's political, economic and social resources for development. Very crucial from this definition is that governance is geared towards achieving development as its end target. Sharing the same view, O'Brien and Williams (2007: 400) acknowledged that "governance has been identified as a crucial issue in the promotion of development and it is now widely accepted that in the absence of effective governance mechanism there will be limited achievement of development goal. It is therefore power exercised in the control of both human and physical resources of a country for its overall development.

IMF (2016) on its part sees governance as encompassing all aspects of the way a country is governed, its economic policies and regulatory framework. This definition clearly lays emphasis on 'economic policies' and 'regulatory agencies' of the society, which presupposes that well-articulated and implemented economic policies is germane and useful for the overall development of the society. According to UNCESCAP (n.d) simply put governance means: the process of decision making and the process by which decision are implemented/or not implemented). As a process, governance invariably involves whole lots of human activities such as law making and adjudication, civil society, political parties, formal and informal advisors, etc, for decision to be made or not. Governance as a process is, therefore, not a unidirectional or unilateral endeavour. Rather, it involves a gamut of formal and informal human actors to arrive at decision for the common good of the people which in turn would guarantee peace and security in the society.

Good Governance

The concept of good governance is one of the essentially contested concepts in social sciences. Holding the same view Best (2006:102), observes that good governance

is a controversial concept, especially to the governing elite in Africa, which is reluctant to be held accountable.” Perhaps, this stems from the fact that the concept has both cultural and ideological conceptualization. Essentially, proponents of good governance see the vision as a programme for the developing countries. Gisseltquist (2012:1) explained that in poorly governed countries, corrupt bureaucrats and politicians badly hinder development efforts by stealing public funds or misdirecting them into unproductive activities. Less obvious but equally pernicious is that governments that are not accountable to their citizens and with inefficient bureaucracies and weak institutions are unwilling or unable to formulate and implement pro-growth and pro-poor policies.

Similarly, Burnell in O’Brien and Williams (2007:325) states that good governance refers to a set of policies intended to reform domestic politics in many developing states. This definition as earlier pointed out has high level of both cultural and ideological conceptualization against the developing countries as if the experience of good governance by the developed countries was automatic. The wrong notion on where good governance should be ‘domiciled’ has attracted different meanings to the concept as well compounded the problem of universally acceptable definition. Accordingly, World Bank (1989) asserts that good governance consists of public service that is efficient, a judicial system that is reliable, and an administration that is accountable to the public. In the words of Downer (2000) good governance is the process whereby public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources and guarantee the realization of human rights. The UNESCAP (n.d.) rather than entangle itself with definition problem of good governance went straight and enumerated the eight characteristics of good governance to include the following: “participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law”. Good governance may be defined as the running of the affairs of government in positive and progressive manners beneficial to the governed and which delivers the public good (Best 2006:102). UNDP (2002:2) sees good governance as striving for the rule of law, transparency, participation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency and administrative authority.

From the foregoing review, it could be inferred that the task of instituting good governance calls for a whole lot of sacrifices and dedication on the part of those saddled with the task of piloting public affairs. However, it also requires the cooperation and vigilance of the populace.

Peace

Peace as a concept is one thing that is extremely treasured by all human societies but yet it means different thing to different societies and people. The concept is highly fluid in nature and as such has resulted many perspectives or variants of definition. These include: philosophical, psychological, sociological and political. One after another we shall extrapolate these variants in a very abridged manner. Philosophically, peace is viewed by philosopher like St Augustine of Hippo as natural, original and God-given state of human existence. Very related to St. Augustine's idea of peace, is John Jacques Rousseau conception of the original state of existence of man in which there are no desires, meaning that there were born free without desire of evil. Thomas Hobbies in the bid to overcome the short-comings of the state of nature by way of entering social contract, requiring the surrendering of individual right of life to the Leviathan in order to create peaceful and orderly life in the society. On their part the Epicureans seek happiness of people in the society and avoid pains. Invariably they prefer peace to war.

Psychologically, peace is a state of mind in harmony and balance, invariably, a function of the mind set of an individual or group of people to their state of being, their weltanschauung (Ikejiani-Clark and Ani; 2009:3). Sociologically, peace refers to a condition of social harmony in which there are no social antagonisms (Best 2006:5). Peace in this context is a state of orderliness in the society where everybody is at his best unhindered by nobody. This sociological conception of peace is realizable through structural-functionalism of Talcott Persons and dialectical materialism of Karl Mark traditions of social analysis. Structural-functionalists therefore see peace in the society as a function of every structure performing its functions adequately according to the culture, norms and values of the society. Marx views peace in the society as freedom of the oppressed people through the overthrow of the dominant (exploitative) class by the proletariats (workers) in proletarian revolution.

Politically, peace is a multifaceted concept. Normatively, peace in the society entails political order that is the institutionalization of political structure. Huntington in Ikejiani-Clark and Ani (2009:5) states that peace entails institutionalization of political structures acquire value and stability. The implication of this is that peace in the society is made possible only by the existence of functional structures and proactive participation of the citizens in these structures. Peace could mean a balance of powers at the international level or world stage. The balance of power is a must for peace as a social

contract underlying a structure of social expectations and associated social cooperation (Ikejiani-Clark & Ani, 2009:5). Still in search of definition that expresses the reality of peace in the 21st century situation, it is worthy of note that “—Peace is not merely the absence of war but the presence of justice, of law, of order – in short, of government.” (Vesilind, 2005:43).

Ibeanu (2006:9) extrapolated from the preceding review that “One thing that extant conceptions of peace have in common is that there is a state of affairs or condition in nature and society that is characterized as peace”. This condition, according to him, “is pristine, perfect, ordered and tranquil”. Citing Rousseau, he stated that “it is a condition in which, ... “all men are born free” and exist as “gentle savages”, but subsequently social conditions put them “everywhere in chains”. Ibeanu nonetheless stated that while extant conceptions of peace are not necessarily wrong, they are inadequate in understanding the entire reality of peace. One problem many of them share, according to him, is that there is no recorded human society corresponding to such a stylized state of tranquil existence. Even the earliest humans had to confront nature in its new and brutal form, including dangers posed by wild animals. Another problem is that these conceptions of peace create the impression that we can find peace as an absolute, once-and-for-all condition. Although many have come to see conflict as inherent in society, meaning that conflict is always present in different gradation, they fail to also see that peace exist in all societies in different gradations. Ibeanu then went on to conceptualize peace as “a process involving activities that are directly or indirectly linked to increasing development and reducing conflict, both within specific societies and in the wider international community” (Ibeanu, 2006:10).

Security

According to Akinyeye (2001:17), “the concept of security is a multifaceted one that covers every sphere of human endeavours”. This is evident in the fact that people talk about “social security, economic security, psychological security, job security among others”. Akinyeye further observes that even in relation to the state, security does not have a universally accepted definition as various scholars have defined it in various ways depending on their intellectual predilection and/or ideological orientation. For instance, Handreder and Buel in Nezekwe (1991:4) see security as the protection of a nation against all types of external aggression, espionage, hostile reconnaissance, sabotage,

subversion, annoyance and other inimical influences. Security is “the condition or feeling safe from harm or danger, the defence, protection and preservation of core values and the absence of threats to acquire values” (Francis 2006:22). Arnold Wolfer (1965) submits that security is concerned mainly with such indices as “the military aspect of a nation’s goals, competition, between satisfied and dissatisfied powers, strategic issues of superpowers, alliance-building process, independence and sovereignty, civil-military relation, economic basis for strategies systematic balance”.

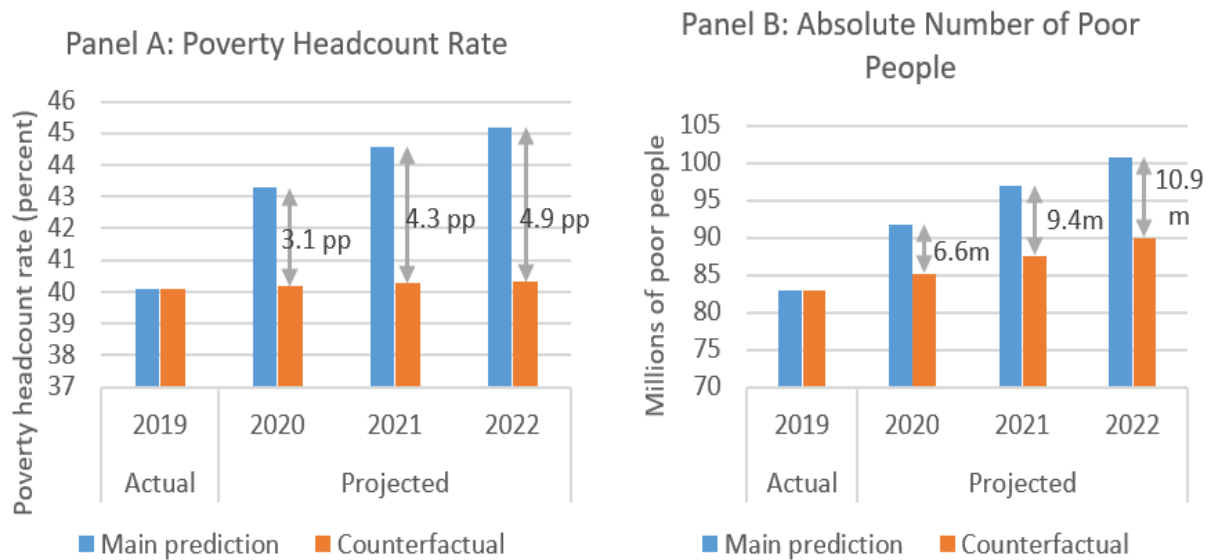
From the foregoing definitions, it becomes understandable that security even from state centric view has no claim to universally acceptable definition. However, because of the broad analytical content therein, the definition by Akinyeye is nonetheless adopted in this study. In his words, security is seen to mean the protection of the interest and values of state or nation-state against threats (Akinyeye 2001:18). Analytically, broadening security agenda to include non-military dimensions such as environment, food, ethno-religion and national identities, diseases, poverty, etc with the use of the words “protection...against threats; makes it more comprehensive and acceptable definition.

An Overview of the Fallout of Governance Deficit in Nigeria

Undoubtedly, the negative effect of governance in the present-day Nigeria is better imagined than experienced. The effect is felt bitterly in every sphere of life. To begin, one would discover quickly as he tries to satisfy the physiological need of ‘daily bread’ that the overbearing negative effect of poor governance in Nigeria has reached dangerous level. Lending credence to this position, Adegbami and Adepoju (2017:152) observed that “the governance pattern has impoverished the large member of the nation’s citizens as poverty continues to deal ruthlessly with majority of Nigeria”. The 2019 Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria report by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) highlighted that 40 percent of the total population, or almost 83 million people, live below the country’s poverty line of 137,430 naira (\$381.75) per year. The NBS report is based on data from the Nigerian Living Standards Survey, conducted in 2018-2019 with support from the World Bank’s Poverty Global Practice and technical assistance from the LSMS program. Many however believe that the actual situation is much grimmer than the official statistics depict. Projections by Irwin, Lain, and Vishwanath (2021) strongly suggest that more than 10 million Nigerians could be pushed into poverty by the economic effects of the

COVID-19 crisis alone. According to them, were the crisis not to have hit, the poverty headcount rate—as per the national poverty line—would probably have remained unchanged at a little over 40%, although the number of poor people would be set to rise from 82.9 million in 2019 to 90.0 million in 2022 due to natural population growth (see Figure 1). But with the economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis, the national poverty rate is instead forecast to jump from 40.1% in 2019 to 45.2% in 2022, implying that 100.9 million Nigerians will be living in poverty by 2022. Taking the difference between these two scenarios shows that the COVID-19 crisis alone is forecast to drive an additional 10.9 million people into poverty by 2022. Perhaps more worrisome is that these simulations only cover monetary poverty whereas multidimensional poverty is even more widespread in Nigeria and is also set to rise as the crisis evolves.

Figure 1: The COVID-19 crisis may push more than 10 million additional people into poverty by 2022



Note: Estimates exclude Borno. Real consumption deflated temporally and spatially to compare with the national poverty line. Pass-through from per capita real GDP growth to household consumption set to 1. Source: 2018/19 NLSS, United Nations population projections, and World Bank estimates.

Source: Irwin, Lain, and Vishwanath (2021, p.2)

In another dimension, government’s inability to render purposeful governance has also created high scale insecurity in the country. In fact, no day passes without the news of destruction of both public and private properties including losses of lives. Daily, there is news of one attack or the other at different parts of the country for destruction of lives and properties by insurgent group such as Boko-Haram, and the Fulani herdsmen that launch attack mostly in the North Central, South East and South West. The new

Security outfit otherwise known as Eastern Security Network (ESN) is not an exception in the destruction of government properties as way of registering their grievance against government failure to pursue good governance.

A report by an international rights organization, Global Rights Nigeria, indicated that 1, 603 Nigerians were killed in the first quarter of 2021 alone. The report attributed the killings to 'mass atrocities across the country between January and March 2021. According to the report, there has been Harvest of Abductions, Insecurity of Security Officers, Ethnic/communal tensions, Unending Terrors, and others, which have worsened the insecurity situation across the country. The report also pointed that banditry alone claimed 906 lives, which made it the highest cause of killings in the country and followed by Boko Haram attacks claiming 207 lives in Nigeria while kidnapping recorded 1, 774 abductees within the period under review (Ewepu,2021).

Insecurity and general hardship situations in Nigeria have culminated to a point where angry Nigerians now resort to self-help to live. A case in point was the eruption of the End-SARS protest staged in 2020 by the Nigerian youths against police brutality. The insecurity situation appears to have been further compounded by the practice whereby security agents now run for their lives on noticing the arrival of any of protesters near their duty post. Suffice it to say that government does little or nothing to checkmate the arrival and successful operations of these groups even when there is an early warning notice to the government.

Moreover, it is equally pertinent to understand that the appalling security situation resulting from poor governance has dangerously affected the general economy of the nation. The situation repels both foreign and local investors from investing in our economy. Also, the Nigerian economy has failed the populace because of poor governance. A situation where the youth unemployment/underemployment rate is estimated to reach 32.5% and projected to increase further in 2022 should be an issue of serious concern to leadership and Nigeria generally (Varrella, 2021). This is very unacceptable for presupposed burgeoning economy such as Nigeria. Managers of government have forgotten that governments world over are not major employers of labour but rather have the mandate through policy thrust, to create conducive environment for private sector as a major employer of labour to thrive. Specifically, one may ask the question, where are the companies we use to hear their names and equally

enjoyed their products as pupils and students in the eighties? Going through the same memory lane Adegbami and Adepoju (2017:150) regret thus:

Gone are the days when companies and organizations such as Peugeot Automobile Nigeria; Volkswagen Nigeria; Dunlop Nigeria Limited; Michelin Nigeria; BATA; Lennards; Kingsway; A.G. Leventis; and Philip Nigeria among others were flourishing in Nigeria, but now these companies and organizations are not in the country again.

In a similar vein, industries such as Steel Rolling Mill, Osogbo; Steel Rolling Mill, Ajaokuta; Arewa Textile Mill; Nigeria Airways all are now moribund. For the failure to make Nigeria Airways operational, the nation is losing as much as \$2 billion to foreign airlines annually (Tokunbo in Adegbami & Adepoju 2017:150). Also, the three 'foundational pillars that gave pride to Nigerian economy which our forebears in the persons of M.I. Okpara, Obafemi Awolowo and Ahmadu Bello, laid with respect to palm, cocoa (plantations) and groundnut pyramid respectively have either been destroyed or made unproductive by poor governance. Indeed, there is no sector of Nigeria's economy that has not been adversely impacted by the disappointing performance of the country's present-day leaders in the sphere of governance.

In the social sphere, the problem appears to be even more pronounced. In the education sector, for instance, the problem has reached such a bad extent that industries no longer have confidence in the products of the system, hence the saying that most Nigerian graduates are not employable. Even at the primary education level where the proper foundation for academic pursuit in life ought to be laid, poor teacher quality combined with infrastructural decay and notoriously poor funding have combined to frustrate the realization of the target objectives. Tertiary level is not left out as research-oriented programme that is supposed to run for four uninterrupted years runs for two and half years as a result of incessant strike occasioned by poor funding. Also in the health sector, the situation is basically the same if not worse. The neglect of the health sector is very obvious as some ailments that should ordinarily be treated locally are easily referred abroad for lack of equipment and drugs. Only a micro percentage of the population can afford the luxury of overseas treatment of course. This has resulted in what has come to be known as medical tourism by Nigeria's public office holders and the resultant loss of huge foreign exchanges in the process. The situation has reached a dangerous point that visit to any of Nigeria's public health facilities is one often laden with uncertainty as either the doctors or nurses' union, or any of the associated unions are almost all the time on strike occasioned by disagreement with government over wages and general working

conditions, including the provision of basic facilities in the hospitals. Even as we put finishing touches to the paper, medical doctors in the country under the aegis the Resident Doctors Association of Nigeria have been on strike for over six weeks thereby leaving their patients to the mercy of quacks or the prohibitive exploitation by the same medical doctors in the private medical outfits. That leaves the average citizen between the proverbial rock and hard place.

The power and energy sectors are now simply the conduit pipe for stealing the hard-earned money of the citizens who are made to pay extortionate charges for services not rendered. Owing to the epileptic power supply, many small and medium scale industries, including artisans who could not easily source alternative power supply have been forced to close operations, with many of them resorting to commercial motorcycle riding for sustenance. Even the privatization of electricity distribution in the country appears to have done little to assuage the situation.

In the energy sector, one will quickly notice that the crude oil deposit in Nigeria has in many ways turned out to be a curse rather than a blessing to an average Nigerian. Pump prices of petroleum products are frequently and indiscriminately hiked at the whims and caprices of the particular leadership in power, thus making Nigerians to pay higher for petroleum products than in many non-oil producing countries. In fact, poor governance in respect of this sector has cost Nigeria its refinery stations in preference for importation of petrol and petroleum products usually sold to the citizens at exorbitant prices.

Another important area the system of governance in Nigeria has impacted negatively is our political culture and belief system. An average Nigerian in this regard is made to accept sycophantic life as the best way to survive in the midst of economic hardship the nation has been into. It has now become an accepted norm and way of political life among Nigerians to sing undue praises of people in a position of authority (politicians) in order to be considered loyal or worthy of being 'errand boy' for both economic and political advantages in the hand of politicians. Essentially, these sycophants go about canvassing publicly during and after electioneering campaign that such politicians have credibly fulfilled all their campaign promises even when the politicians in question knew quite well that they have done nothing to justify the previous mandate they were given by the electorate. This aberrant political culture tends to sustain poor governance in Nigeria as followers fail to demand accountability from their leaders. The

culture has also distorted the belief system of Nigerians. Hence an average Nigerian sees nothing wrong in a life of dishonesty and insincerity provided that one ekes a living out of it.

Regrettably, the culture which this paper calls 'culture of false survival' and the present belief system has adversely permeated into our electoral system thereby creating the opportunity of governance for the mediocre as against brilliant/capable leaders.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper has spotted various anomalies resulting from poor governance in Nigeria. Although the study cannot claim to have done so exhaustively on issue raised, we present them as a starting point to rethink good governance as better option to solving the numerous developmental and security problems that currently bedevil the country. Anchoring analysis on theoretical insight of systems theory, the paper demonstrated for the failure of the various components of the Nigerian political system to work in tandem for the development of the polity has instead resulted in dysfunctionality of the system thereby giving rise to all forms of maladies ranging from grinding mass poverty, breakdown of social infrastructure, pervasive security challenges and the hoisting of an aberrant political culture on the polity. The paper therefore concludes that it is only the practice of good governance premised on delivering services of common good to people in areas of security, education, health, employment, power and energy etc that can guarantee peace and security, which has hitherto eluded the nation. The study therefore recommends that practical step by way of real practice of good governance should be taken by Nigerian leaders as a matter of necessity to build virile and sustainable society where both citizens and legal residents can live happily. This could only be achieved if both the leaders and followers embrace the characteristics of good governance such as participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus-oriented governance, equity and inclusiveness, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency as a way of life, rather than play politics with them.

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