Political Clientelism and the Challenges of Good Governance in Nigeria

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Abstract

The Nigeria democratic system has been characterized with dominance of patron-client relationship thereby posing disequilibrium in accessing public resources made for all citizens. This research on political clientelism and the challenges of good governance in Nigeria is written to examine how political clientelism affects good governance in Nigeria. The study is anchored on the theory of servant-leadership theory. The study adopts a descriptive research survey design. Pilot study was conducted using a test retest method and tested using Cronbach alpha to establish the reliability of the instrument. Validity of the instrument was also tested. Additionally, population of the study is 1,646,350 which are the total registered voters in Kogi State, Nigeria during the 2019 governorship election. However, considering the large size of the population the study adopts Taro Yamani sample size statistical formula to reach respondents numbering 400 using a structured questionnaire but only 324 respondents completed and returned their questionnaire given 81% retrieval rate. The statistical tools used comprised descriptive and inferential statistics and hypotheses tested using linear regression analysis. Finding revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between political clientelism and good governance ($r = .864$, p-value <0.05). The study revealed that good governance has been threatened in Nigeria due to the reality of political clientelism. Based on this, the study recommends that the nations democratic institution strengthened with the view to promoting a fair, just and an egalitarian society.

Introduction

The quest for even distribution of public wealth has been an age-long agitation across the globe. Nations across the world are endowed with several resources and these resources are meant to enhance the wellbeing of the societies and citizens in particular. Though, while the nations common wealth's are endowed either through nature or string institutional framework to benefit the citizens, the managers of these resources play a significant role on the extent to which these resources are evenly distributed (Akintunde *et al,* 2015, Dike & Madubueze, 2019).

In the developed economy such as the united state of America, United Kingdom and other nation across Europe and America leadership play a significant role in rendering services to the citizens because the institutional frame work is strengthened thus emphasis is more on institutions rather than individual leaders. To this end, who becomes a leader and how resources are distributed do not have

any dominance from either any individual or group of persons. However, this is not common in developing nations like Africa particularly Nigeria which is characterized with chain of personal bonds between political patron and individual followers or clients. Thus, Lanre (2012) argued that such is induced with personal and mutual material advantage where the patrons furnishes the citizens restricted to their followers with funds or other opportunities in return for their operations and supports through attendance of relies, campaigns and votes thereby the patrons exclusively possessing disproportionate power at their domain.

Again, political clientelism where political process is dominated by patron-client relationship posed members of the society particularly the poor and middle class being marginalized in accessing certain resources from the leaders except they resort to engaging themselves into these perceived problem solving network as the pragmatic avenue of meeting their needs. This posed challenge to good governance characterized with easy and free access to basic amenities, protection of human rights, transparency and accountability in leadership equity, justice and strengthening of the Nigeria democratic institution. Therefore, the thrust of this research is to examine political clientelism and the challenges of good governance in Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

Generally, this study examines the political clientelism and challenges of good governance in Nigeria.

Research Question

The study is guided by this research question:

What is the relationship between political clientelism and challenges of good governance in Nigeria?

Statement of Hypothesis

Consequent upon the research objective and research question the study formulates this research hypothesis in its null form to guide the research:

H_1**:** There is no significant relationship between political clientelism and challenges of good governance in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Democracy is seen as the government of the people for the people and by the people. Thus, it means that a government that is not centred on the people is not democracy. Again, such a government should be an embodiment of all segments of the society that is the higher class, middle class and the lower class. In addition, the tenet of democratic institution is though exercise of votes by the people exhibited through a free and fair election (Goddy, 2014). To this end, democracy represents an increase in the political equality of the citizens where popular participation of the people is at the centre stage. Concurring this Uzohue et al (2016) noted that a democratic society is characterized by even participation in an electoral process conducted through conscious and deliberate will of the people.

Clientelism is seen as the kind of approach characterized by the relationship between or among actors of uneven status and power. This implies that this relationship is more of a vertical approach, which is characterized with patron client relationship. Clientelism according to Derick (2020) is the kind of

patron-client relationship characterized by the principle of reciprocity that is a self regulatory approach anchored on mutual exchange of trust and expected returns. Therefore, the emphasis on this kind of clientele patron relationship makes the relationship particularistic and personal thus focuses only self interests rather than the public, governance and the regulatory framework. In addition, clientelism involves an asymmetric but common relationship anchored on power and exchange. Thus, there is selective access to public resources thereby making others being denied of access to public resources.

In democratic settings the nation is supposed to be governed by a strong institution where the will of the people takes place and there is common access to public wealth protection of fundamental human right, free, fair and credible election as well as transparency and accountability in governance. But, a situation that is characterized by the state of patrimony and premendalism where public matters are treated privately or private matters are treated publicly threatened the nation's democratic process. This scenario is common in a democratic system which is characterized with patron client relationship where the patrons dominate in decision making, distribute resources and opportunities to the citizens (Levis, 2008 & Hilgers, 2012).

Governance is seen as the deliberate process of making policy through a cohesive and active deliberation among policy makers that are interrelated through an array of networks (Gbererbie, 2019 & Ahmad, 2011). Adekunle et al (2015) sees governance as the conscious process of governing at all levels but the authors noted that political governance refers to the way and manner though which political process/ system is exercised and organized. This implies that political governance entails how political power is organized to manage public affairs targeted at making lives meaningful for the citizens. To this end, political governance according to Mokwugwo (2011) Musdapher (2012) and Olu (2008) argued that good governance borders on rule of law, freedom of expression, protection of fundamental human right, responsiveness, development oriented leadership, accountability and transparency with the view to making lives meaningful for the citizens.

Challenges of Good Governance in Nigeria

Nwabueze (2005) sees governance as the exercise of power through the nation political, social and economic institutions. Governance in Nigeria could be traced to the pre-colonial era however, the concept of good governance became pronounced in the Nigeria 1979 constitution which contained the fundamental objectives as well as directive principles of state policy. Thus, good governance then occupied a prominent position as it became the reducible criteria in assessing the government under the Nigerian 1999 constitution. More so, good governance according to the constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria 1999 have been given eminence and it s evaluated with indices such as promotion of rule law, protection of the fundamental human right of the citizens, provision of economic and social priorities based on consensus, accountability and transparency in leadership. However, Nweke (2019) noted that the leadership challenges in Nigeria have threatened good governance and this is posed by the 1999 democratic military-in-civilian garb leadership. The Nigerian fourth republic has been characterized with leadership challenges. These challenges are demonstrated in different manner and magnitude and that has threatened the developmental agenda of the Nigerian state. For example, transparency international sees corruption as the use of entrusted power for private gain thus, the stack reality of monumental corruption in Nigeria portrays betrayal of public trust by the political class. To supporting this, Lanre (2012) revealed that the fundamental goal of seeking for public officers in Nigeria is for personal gain and enrichment. These challenges have posed develop crises to the Nigerian state in different forms. No wonder, Olu-Adeyemi (2004) pointed out that what constitutes corruption in Nigeria what transcends officialdom thereby making corruption having

dominant norm and reflections on our national lives in the Nigeria fourth republic. This is widely manifested through the succession of kleptocratic government where extreme wealthy men/women are raised by simply occupying leadership positions.

Furtherance to this, the challenges of good in Nigeria is characterized with abuse of fundamental human right due to weakened democratic institution as well as non-availability of the necessary socio-economic infrastructure that will guarantee and protects human rights without any forms of abuse.

Again, election is seen as the most acceptable avenue of choosing or changing leadership globally. But, the Nigeria political structure has been posed to several abuses and this threatened the nation democratic institution. Good governance in Nigeria: The role of Independent National Electoral Commission.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was established by the constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria 1999 to carry out several functions especially to organize elections into various offices in Nigeria. The commission according to section 15, part of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (As amended) and section 2 of the 2010 electoral Act (As amended) is charged to perform the following functions.

1. To organize, undertake and supervise all elections to the offices of the president and vice president, the governor and deputy governor of a state, and to the membership of the senate, the House of Representatives and the House of Assembly of each state of the federation.
2. To register political parties in accordance with the provisions of the 1999 constitution and Act of the National Assembly.
3. To monitor the organization and operation of the political parties, including their finances, conventions, congresses and political primaries
4. Arrange for the annual examination and auditing o the funds and accounts of political parties and public a report on such examination and audit for public information.
5. Arrange and conduct the registration of persons qualified to vote and prepare, maintain and revise the register of voters for the purpose of any election under the constitution.
6. To monitor political campaigns and provide rules and regulation which shall govern the political parties.
7. To conduct any referendum required to be conducted pursuant of the provision of the 1999 constitution or any other law or Act of the national Assembly.

Therefore, these functions are charged with strengthening the democratic institution in Nigeria and promotion of good governance. The independent national Electoral Commission is anchored on the core values of autonomy, transparency, integrity, credibility, impartiality, dedication, equity, excellence and team work.

The Nexus between Political *C*lientelism and Good Governance in Nigeria

Historically, clientelism was seen as a display of unaccomplished modernization that will be addressed through the development of democratization process. During the early post independent era in Nigeria, there were traces of political clientelism where the few political elites dominated their various regions in making political decisions for the people. However, it was mild considering the extent of personal belief system and ethical norms demonstrated by these leaders. Today, the story is far from this where the patrons "political godfather's dominates decision making process, distribute resources, share power to the citizens dissportotionally (Luis, 2008). This scenario has

posed externalities to the contemporary political societies where public accountability and transparency is being put in jeopardy. Thus, political clientelism is perceived to be inimical to the development of promoting good governance, advancement of a free, just and an egalitarian society where these is equal access to public resource, existence of a strong democratic social and economic infrastructure as well as integration of modern society characterized with value, promotion of peace and harmony and public trust on the elected leaders elected through a democratic process. Table 1 describes the major arguments in favour and against the reality of clientelism in the Nigeria society.

Table 1: is clientelism good or bad for late modernity countries?

An overview of the major arguments in the literature.

Tonic	Toxic
• It enables integration of citizens with low levels of literacy and immigrants into politics. • It articulates local –regional-national relations thus contributing to cement the political community. • It levels off growing demands from citizens in relation to the low capacity of response of the state by allowing brokers to make a more effective use of the limited state resources (process of natural selection by quid pro quo exchanges). • It helps parties to consolidate electoral support and thus plays a role in their institutionalization and legitimization in society • It helps state institution to develop natural resistances and further the creation of controls and accountability. • Like corruption, it "greases the wheel of the system". It allows an obstructive and inefficient state to function (despite being unjust or selective); • It helps to develop an expedient and creative political class (it promotes political entrepreneurialism); • It is a substitute for other form of political domination by means of violence.	• It is dysfunctional and raises instability to systems of legitimization: it is selective in its redistributive approach (it may be a short term solution to some, i.e those who can mobilize their social capital, but it becomes a long terms problem to all); • It hinders citizens' trust in institution by inflicting negatively in the ethical standards governing modern public life (such as transparency, impartiality, accountability, fairness, etc) and generates cynicism. • It violets citizens' rights, in particular the universal and equal access to the state. • It represents a cost to the public purse leading to the embezzlement of funds; overpricing of public works; and biased bidding for public works which often disregards value-for-money considerations • It reduces government efficacy by increasing public spending and making government hostage to their clienteles. • It produces s political class with a low sense of public good and irresponsible with regard to the management of public resources. • It hinders the modernization of bureaucracy by leading to over-employment and under-qualified personnel in the public administration

Sources: Luis, (2008)

Though, the table 1 presented both the benefits and challenges of political clientelism to the Nigeria modern society. For example, it revealed that clientelism enables integration of citizens with low levels of literacy and immigrants into politics. But, the constitutional functions of the independent national electoral commission (INEC) are not different from this. Gains, it revealed that clientelism

articulates local-regional-national relations thus contributing to cement the political community; this roiled is not different from the duties of INEC and the mass media. Again, it revealed that clientelism helps political parties to consolidate electoral support and thus plays a role in their institutionalization and legitimization in society, this role is not different from function of INEC. There are adverse effects of political clientelism as demonstrated in the table which is detrimental of promotion of good governance and nation building. Therefore, political *clientelism* hinders good governance Nigeria.

Achieving good governance in Nigeria

In Nigeria the reality of political clientelism has threatened good governance thus, pursuance of good governance need to be given adequate focus with the view to promoting good governance and nation building for the Nigeria nation to attain good governance the following among others are required: the need to de-emphasize individualism and focus on strengthening the nation institutions. Again, there is need to counter nepotism and patronship in selecting individual for public offices rather meritocracy should be the watch word. In adding, there should be introduction of limitations of mandates. Through tendencies of limiting the possibilities of patrons retaining power over a long period of time without any barrier.

Mores so, there should be introduction of conflict of interest rules and mechanism of control. Through this the tendency where the patron drives and dominates their interest without necessary considering the adverse effects on the citizens will be greatly reduced. Additionally, there should be introduction of budget accountability and transparency mechanism. Through this more public accountability and transparency of leaders can easily be audited. Apart from this, finding of political parties should be monitored to ensure that these political parties adhered strictly to the regulatory framework stipulated by the independent national Electoral Commission (INEC).

More so, the anti- graft agencies such as the economic and financial crime commission (EFCC) and the independent corrupt practices and other related offences commission (ICPC) are strengthened to sanction erring public officers without any undue interference.

Finally, the independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) intensifies efforts towards sustaining free, fair, credible and transparent elections in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

There have been several theoretical postulations bordering on democracy and good governance. However, this study examines the following as shown thus:

i. Great man theory

The great man theory believes that the capability of a leader is inherent thus, great leaders are born not made. The great man theory believed that leaders are greater and heroic, mythic and destined to advance to position of leadership when the time comes. To this end, Olumide (2013) argued that great man leadership theory focused on quality exhibited by male especially in the military setting.

ii. Participative Theory

The participative leadership theory noted that the ideal leadership style is one that takes suggestions of other (the followers into account). Thus, the leaders encourage wide participation and contributions from member thereby enhances the decision making process centred on the people. The theory posits that people are more committed to actions where they are fully involved in the

decision making process. However, despite the fact that the people are given the opportunity to participate in the decision making process, the leader retain the right to allow such inputs from the people to prevail or not. This theory attracts wider participation and broadened increase collaborations and cooperation of the political class.

iii. Servant Leadership Theory

The servant leadership theory as noted by Uzohue (2016) noted that leadership energies from a leaders belief system, values and principles. This theory is service centered hence; leaders are willing to serve rather than to be served. To this end, Spears (2004) identified the common features of servant leaders as listening, empathy, vision, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment and trust, listening and encouragement. This theory is deal for good governance and promotion of democratic tenets. Therefore, the research is anchored on the theory because of its practical application and its relevance to the study.

Research Methodology

The study adopts the descriptive research design which is technique involving surveying respondents for the purpose of analysis. To this end, the primary data obtained were through a structured questionnaire and the collected data were subjected to descriptive and parametric statistical analysis. Additionally, population of this research comprised the entire population in Nigeria but restricted to the registered voters in Kogi State during the 2019 governorship election. To this end, the total population is one million six hundred and forty six thousand, three hundred and fifty (1,646,350).

A sample is said to be representative of the population from which it is drawn if the aggregate characteristics of the sample closely approximate those same aggregate characteristics of the population. Sample also means a proportion or a subset of the population which is studied in place of the entire population. The Taro Yamane formula was used in selecting the sample size.

$n = N/1+N (e)^2$
n = Sample size
N = Population size
e = Level of significance (0.05) e = 0.05
$n = 1,646,350/1+ 1,646,350 (0.05)^2$
n =1,646,350/1+1,646,350(0.0025)
n = 1,646,350/1+4115.875
n =1,646,350/4116.875 =399.9 =400

Therefore, the sample size = 400

However, out of the total questionnaire distributed only 324 were duly completed and returned giving a retrieval rate of 81%.

The research collected data using the primary sources. The questionnaire was the source of primary data therefore; the study designed a structured questionnaire which was close ended questionnaire while a five- point Likert-scale responses of strongly agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and strongly disagree was used.

The study adopted both descriptive and parametric statistics in analyzing the data. Therefore, the inferential statistics was used in testing the earlier formulated hypothesis and the simple however, the research directly make inferences thus, tested hypothesis earlier formulated. Again, regression analysis which is an inferential technique of examining the relationship of the independent on

dependent variables was used. The study tests one hypothesis using the linear regression statistical analysis with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). The independent variable is political clientism and the dependent variable is good governance. The analytical approaches adopted are the model summary, analysis of variance ANOVA and coefficients. The decision rule is to accept P. value if the alpha value is ≥0.05 otherwise the null hypothesis be rejected.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

Reliability which means the extent to which data collection techniques or analysis procedures yield consistent results while validity is seen as the ability of the instrument to measure what it is designed to measure. Content validity was used to ascertain if the content of the research instrument is appropriate and applicable to the study objective. To estimate the content validity, the researchers seeks the opinion of experts in the area of political science and public administration. Thus, in establishing the reliability of the instrument; a test-retest method was used. This entailed the collection of two sets of scores on two different times. The instrument was administered to respondents numbering 25 at interval of (2) weeks. If the results from the test show some similarity, then it suggests that the questionnaire is reliable. Measurement of the model reliability assessed using Cronbach's alpha (CA) based tests; therefore the CA provides an estimate of the indicator of inter correlations and an acceptable measure for CA which is 0.7 and above. The results of croncach statistics is shown in table 1.

Table 2. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.781	.776	25

The table 2 above shows that the calculated CA is 0.781 and is higher than the recommended acceptable measure of CA 0.7 which makes measurement of model reliability accepted.

Data Analysis and Results
Test of Hypothesis

H_1: There is no significant relationship between political clientelism and challenges of good governance in Nigeria.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Political clientelism	3.742	1.434	324
Good governance	3.523	1.235	324

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of the two variables, it shows that the selected scale means lie within the accepted range, therefore, they are highly reliable and the research concludes that data obtained and analyzed is significant and reliable. The mean value for political clientelism is 3.742 and good governance is 3.523 as well as standard deviation for political clientelism as 1.434 and

good governance as 1.235. This implies that good governance is highly dependent on political clientelism.

Table 4. Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.864[a]	.757	.774	.52352	1.672

a. Predictors: (constant), political clientelism
b. Dependent variable: good governance

The model summary table reports the strength of relationship between the independent and dependent variable. The result of R stood at 0.864 indicating a strong relationship between the dependent variable good governance and the explanatory variable political clientelism. The coefficient of multiple determinations R^2 measures the percentage of the total change in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent or explanatory variable. The result indicates a R^2 of .757 showing that 76% of the variances in good governance is explained by political clientelism while the remaining 24% (i.e. $100 - 76$) of the variations could be explained by other variables not considered in this model. The adjusted R-square compensates for the model complexity to provide a fairer comparison of model performance. The result is supported by the value of the adjusted R which is to the tune of 74% showing that if the entire population is used, the result will deviate by 10.7% (i.e. $86.4 - 77.4$). With the linear regression model, the error of the estimate is considerably low at 0.52352. The result of Durbin Watson test shows 1.672 therefore it shows that there is no auto correlation.

Table 5. ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	242.234	1	243.212	3726.134	.000[b]
	Residual	56.723	323	.172		
	Total	298.957	324			

a. Dependent Variable: good governance
b. predictors: (constant), political clientelism

The ANOVA table confirms the results of model summary, analysis of the result revealed that F = 3726.134 which is significant at (0.000) < 0.05. Hence, since the P-value < 0.05 (critical value), the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between political clientism and good governance is rejected.

Table 6. Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.767	.043		13.148	.000
	Political clientelism	.734	.023	.738	64.342	.000

a. Dependent Variable: good governance

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The coefficient provides information on how the explanatory variable (the estimated coefficient or beta) influences the dependent variable. The result shows that the regression constant is 0.767 giving a predictive value of the dependent variable when all other variables are zero. The coefficient of political clientelism is 0.734 with p-value of 0.000 less than (0.05%) critical value. Therefore, it can be concluded that the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between political clientelism and good governance is rejected.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This research has been able to examine the concept and reality of political clientelism and how it affects good governance. The study noted that good governance has been greatly hindered in Nigeria over the years due to the reality of political clientelism. Therefore, the study recommends that the democratic institution be strengthened in Nigeria so as to promote good governance, promotion of values ethics and national prosperity. Again, there should be focus on meritocracy in election of political leaders rather than emphasis on nepotism and relying on patron-client agreements where the patrons dictate who and how leaders are elected. This will go along to promoting a just, fair and an egalitarian society.

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