LEADERSHIP, DEMOCRATIZATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA: AN INTERROGATION

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Abstract

Leadership, democratization and good governance as concepts have assumed prominence in the world's history of both underdevelopment and development discourse. In Nigeria, people have continued to experience a severe economic poverty and wretchedness over the years due to leadership that is absence of a moral principle. This frightening situation appears nonstop consequent upon the democratic and military rulers who have been advocating for good governance, economic prosperity and establishment of critical infrastructures since independence in 1960 who are not effective "change agents". Therefore, the main thrust of this paper is to explore the paradox of political leadership and the challenge of good governance in Nigeria in the midst of abundant human and material resources. The paper is divided into six segments: introduction; theoretical framework; methodology, conceptual debate; the lamentation and ended with recommendations. It adopted transformational leadership theory which canvasses the transformation of people and organizations in a literal sense. The paper recommended the strengthening and creation of more anti-corruption institutions, avoidance of the emergence of accidental leadership and considering of good governance as a right to be demanded and enjoyed by the citizens.
Keywords: Democracy, Governance, Leadership, Politics, Transformation

1. Introduction

In many developed nations of the world, effective leadership smooth the progress of high standard of living with provision of critical infrastructures that render efficient services, ensures a sense of national unity and human capital development. According to Tshiyoyo (2015), it provides an overarching sense of direction and vision, an alignment with the environment, a healthy mechanism for innovation and creativity, and a reservoir that invigorates and lightens national development. Notwithstanding, Nigerian leadership has fallen short of these. Therefore:

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> At present, Nigeria is facing acute and chronic problems of development: a neglect of citizenship education and rapid developments [e.g., an increase in crime, galloping inflation, mass poverty, a widening unequal distribution of wealth, savage exploitation, open starvation, irrational waste, environmental decay, increasing rates of stagflation (simultaneous inflation and unemployment), capital flight, brain drain, and political instability]. In plain language, the country is in great ruin. Worse still, no administration (whether military or civilian) seems to have found a better way to solve these problems; instead, the country continues to experience, as never before, a deep regression in all phases of development (Umez, 2000:23,24).

Leadership development has emerged as an important theoretical and practical stream of administration (Tshiyoyo, 2015). Though it is basically the process of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts towards target achievement, Drucker as cited in Sharma & Sadama (2007) says it is lifting of people's vision to a higher sight, and the raising of their personality beyond its normal limitations. Yukl (2002) in his view asserts that leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish the shared objectives. Thus, leadership is a critical factor in achieving good governance by any nation. However, as Umez (2000) citing Achebe (1983) notes, it is obvious that Nigerian leaders have generally failed to rise to the responsibility and challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership.

Suffice to say that leadership is not everything, but it is an extremely important factor (Tshiyoyo, 2015). If Nigeria is to have sustainable development and succeed in nation-building, it must have a leadership that is committed to the rule of law, and has a demonstrable sense of fair play and democratic tolerance; a leadership with ability and integrity, and above all, it must have a leadership that can see beyond the ostentatious pomp of office. It was Achebe (1983) who says at the dying days of second republic that;

> The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility and to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership.

Today, leadership is at the front burner at any given opportunity. Nigerians have endured untold economic hardship and misery over the years because of leadership without a moral purpose and the nightmare appears endless because the political and military leaders, who have been anchoring matters of good governance, economic prosperity and democracy since the end of colonialism on 1st October, 1960 are not effective agents of change and development. They are not working for the common good, but prefer the status quo which enables them to amass wealth through deceit and intimidation (Dike, 2009).

Therefore, this paper is analytically aimed at exploring both the debacle of political leadership, democratization and good governance in Nigeria. It will mainly discuss the inconsistency of political leadership, democratization and the challenge of good governance in Nigeria in the availability of abundant human and material resources after so many years of political independence with a lot of leadership styles and forms of government.

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2.   Theoretical Framework

Social scientists have advanced several theories of political leadership among which are the theory of traits, crisis or cause theory, the dynastic theory of leadership and the transformational leadership theory. This paper is positioned within the transformational leadership standard which was first postulated by J.V. Downton (1973) in Rebel Leadership and James MacGregor Burns (1978) study of Leadership (Akinajo, 2000; Ibn-Mohammed, 2015). Nevertheless, Ibn-Mohammed (2015) citing James MacGregor Burns identifies political leadership, and recommended the categorization of political leadership into transactional and transformational. He describes it not as a set of specific behaviour, but rather an ongoing process by which "leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation". Transformational leadership model have a dual focus on who a leader is as well as what a leader does, merging both the personal; characteristic and behavioural theories of leadership. The major aim of this model is targeted at transforming human element's vision and mission in organizational management. This concerns itself with conversion of the mindset and perception of individual in the organization to achievement of set aims and objectives. The conduct must match with beliefs, principles, or values; and bring about changes that are permanent, self-perpetuating, and momentum building.

In his finding, Odesola (2012) states that transformational leaders are likely to have many of the following personal characteristics:
  i.   A deep sense of personal purpose coupled with unshakable self-confidence in the ability to realize purpose;

 ii.   A strong desire to take charge and make things happen;
 iii.   Value driven (e.g. Have core values and congruent behaviour);
 iv.   Identify themselves as change agents;
  v.   Sense of public need;
 vi.   a sensitivity to how people are feeling and an ability to connect with them;
 vii.   An internal locus of control, with a 'what can I do with what I have now' attitude;
viii.   A willingness to take personal risks and make sacrifices in order to realize their vision;
 ix.   Ability to deal with complexity, uncertainty and ambiguity.

From the foregoing vis-à-vis the nature of leadership we have in Nigeria, there is a dire need of transformative leadership that is not instrumentalists and naked opportunist which have been the bane of sustainable development in Nigeria and what have plunged the nation into unmitigated misery. It is pictured that:

> No amount of efforts in terms of development strategies can get out Less Developed Countries (LDCs) from this development-related quagmire without a change of heart of their leaders. They should see going into politics, or holding top political/administrative positions, and in the other strategic sectors of their economy as service to humanity and not avenues for looting the national treasury. They should see all the billions of dollars stolen from their nations and all partial houses scattered all over the world built or bought with the wealth of their respective countries as vanity as most of them may not live more than (active) 100 years on earth (Onuoha, 2009).

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Transformational leaders have great potential to promote performance beyond expectations and to effect enormous changes within any organization or nation. This no doubt appears to be a form of leadership well-suited to these current times characterized by uncertainty, global turbulence and socio-economic instability. The suitability of this theory is based on fundamentalism of the much desired good governance at this moment of nation building hinged on such kind of leadership.

3.0 Methodology
The research is an explanatory type. In other words, it is an ex-post facto research design which Ibietan, Abasilim & Ebhohimen (2017) explain to essentially means the textually analysis of secondary data before the conclusion and recommendations of a paper. The adoption of this method for this paper contains the use of relevant secondary data which were accessed, collected and analyzed systematically using the content analysis.

4.0 Political Leadership and Good Governance: The Conceptual Debate

4.1 Political Leadership
Political leadership means the ability and willingness of persons in position of authority to harness and maximize the available resources of the country for the greatest good and for the benefit of the greatest number of its citizens. Dunmoye (1991) conceives that political leadership must be able to set an agenda for national development that will take into cognizance the evolution of a national consensus through social engineering which will involve the issue of national unity given Nigeria's heterogeneity in every aspect of social life. Political leadership is of great importance in the desire for sustainable and stable polity. Hence, Deakaa (2007) asserts that for developing political system like Nigeria with a myriad of socio-economic and political problem, focused political leadership is required to confront these challenges and to also bring together the disparate groups and interest within the Nigerian polity and mobilize them for the much desired politico-structural transformation and socio-economic development.

Political leadership is necessary for initiating as well as hastening the process of change in any society that is in dire need of all sectoral and critical infrastructural development. In addition, it may be serious change in constitutionalism (Thimmaiah, 2000). In all these process of change, political leadership plays a very critical and concrete role in the regeneration, restructuring and re-engineering of any underdeveloped and developing nation of the world. Political leadership is significant to a country's development (Eneh, 2007). It is supposed to understand the hopes and aspirations of the people and identify the goals of the society; and the propagation. They formulate the vision of a country. Leadership acquires or develops the capacity to mobilize the people to achieve the common national goals.

4.2 Good Governance
Governance on the other hand is described as a methodology coined to deliver public good's purpose of the state. Governance deals with administration of public policies and programmes for a given number of people living in any geographical territory recognized by both local and international laws. The workability of governance is dependent on the notable organs of the state like executive, legislature and judiciary across the tiers of government. As Hirst & Thompson (1996) view, it is "the control of an activity" through methodologies that will lead to result attainment. Hence, there are two dimensions to the issues of governance in a political sense.
  i.   It is a more complex and compacted activity.

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ii. The centrality of political governance is service-oriented.

Drawing analogy from Lasswel long-established description of politics as who gets what, when, possibly how much in this cycle of governance is not a misrepresentation. Essentially, the business of governance deals largely with distribution of resources within a given territory. Conceptually, politics is a progenitor while good governance is a product. It is socio-culturally contextual and borders with politics. Politics discusses the allocation of resources and governance remains the mechanisms and processes of administration without compromising the doctrines of fairness, equity and justice. Consequently, Odunuga (2003) cites the World Bank's observation on the issue of governance as the approach by which power is applied in the national operations of socio-cultural, political and economic development. It notes these important elements below.

i. The form of a political regime;
ii. The procedure by which authority is applied in the administration of a country's social and economic resources and the
iii. Ability to design, formulate and implement of policies.

The UNDP (1999) conceptualizes governance as a multifaceted means through which citizens interests and fundamental human rights are articulated. Eke (2003) identifies sovereignty, power, legitimacy, and authority as four characteristics as an art of government. These basics are the mechanisms of effective governance.

Madhav (2007) looks at good governance as the performance of all the sectors of the economy from the perception of its recognized stakeholders and beneficiaries. Furthermore, Jega (2007) and Madhav (2007), sees good governance as responsibility, responsiveness, accountability and among public officials – both elected and appointed – or the governors, to the electorate – the governed, aspirations of the governed, as well as acting in accordance with their dictates. It must have firm moorings to certain moral values and principles. Good governance, as a concept is applicable to all sections of society such as the government, legislature, judiciary, media, private sector, corporate sector, trade unions and lastly Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). This will bring about commitment and capability in the harnessing, management and allocation of available resources to solve community challenges (UNDP, 1996 in Ogundiya, 2012). This is dependent on the fact that a democratic political culture developed overtime, creates the basis for sustainable processes of good governance in democratic countries of the world (Jega, 2007). Ogundiya (2012) describes good governance with eight major distinctions. These include:

i. Popular participation;
ii. Consensus orientation,
iii. Accountability,
iv. Transparency,
v. Responsiveness,
vi. Effectiveness and efficiency;
vii. Equitability and inclusiveness; and
viii. Prevalence of the rule of law.

It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making (OECD, 2001, quoted by Ogundiya, 2012). The Nigerian situation suggests the overriding importance of creating a democratic culture which is essentially the basis of the foundation for sustaining good governance (Jega, 2007). From the foregoing therefore, we posit governance as the exercise of power,

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management and distribution of resources which determines the existentiality of both good and bad government in any nation. In essence, governance manipulates the available resources.

5. The Lamentation of Leadership, Democratization and Governance in Nigeria

> Most of the public (and political) servants (in Nigeria) are actually public masters who get paid for demanding service rather than rendering service. They hold society captive and disburse the public purse for selfish purposes. They easily subvert their own countries for selfish gains and regularly divert public funds for their private and selfish purposes. Their knowledge of history and the developmental roles played by their counterpart in the development of white nations does not move them. They see development in terms of individual (instead of community collective) development (Akerele, 2000), cited by (PAUL & Edino, 2015).

Nigeria is a land of distinctions, a melting pot of ethnicities, religions and cultures. It is positioned among the foremost of Africa's political and economic power blocks. The new political elites had the duty of not only institutionalizing the democratic process, but developing a political culture which would buttress the inherited institutions. There were high hopes of Nigeria emerging as a fertile and large field for the growth of democracy in Africa during the independence in 1960.

Nonetheless, there is presently a wide gap between the manifestation of leadership, democracy and good governance in Nigeria since political independence. As a matter of fact, the Nigerian people have long yearned for the actualization of democracy which in their thought ought to give birth to good governance. On the other hand, there is of course, a well-built relationship between good governance and democratization. Jega (2007) emphasizes that:

> …the more purposeful, focused and concerted the move towards good governance under the civilian dispensation – defined in terms of transparency and accountability of public officials, responsible conduct, as well as their responsiveness to the demands, needs and aspirations of the governed – the greater the chances of successful democratic transition and consolidation.

It is only in Nigeria that politicians would promise the people "heaven on earth" as campaign manifesto and cunningly deny after assumption of office with the peoples vote. Succinctly, how to be accountable has been a hydra-headed challenge facing members of Nigerian political class though there is presence of "Freedom of Information Act" passed by the 7th Senate (2011–2015) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The complaints of citizens aired through the mass and social media, protests and peaceful demonstrations have been relegated to the background by successive governments in Nigeria. The security agents have never helped matters as they are used as tool of intimidations and harassments. Nigerian democracy can only be perceived and seen on paper but the reality denies it thereof. It is civil rule with armed personalities who are recycling with their previous military-mindset. Even the judiciary that is commonly believed as the last hope of the poor has been bedeviled with high level allegation of corruption and politicization by desperate political structure. Accordingly, assumption of leadership responsibility has become a channel and conduit to divert public wealth and development funds at the detriment of the downtrodden (Lawal, 2007).

Also, it is very regrettable that Nigerians are confused of what relates to good governance. Poor governance is the bane of poverty in the centre of prosperity over the years which have

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progressively imprinted a mediocre mentality in the psyche of poor Nigerians. For that reason, any serving political office holder that flings out some "goodies" to the nation as gains of democracy is esteemed and celebrated as a liberator, even though he utilizes the public funds. However, this is not to demean good works, accountability and responsibility in governance. Equally, it is painful when someone is being exceptionally congratulated for doing the work which he is elected and vowed to do. It demonstrates the crisis in the thinking faculty of the citizens' viewpoint in leadership, democracy and good governance. To buttress this, PAUL, Alih & Eri (2015) contend that the dividends of democracy as they often publicized are tokens and far below expectation of the majority of Nigerians. They added that trivialities are presented as proof and special favours being done to the wretched victims of poor governance or lack of governance in replacement for the 'dividends of democracy'. Good governance is concerned with the security, safety and overall wellbeing of the citizenry but the opposite is witnessed in Nigeria democratic context. The current picture of the Nigerian democracy is that good governance is about the good of the political elites at the cost of the street-bound common man.

It draws a serious attention that if not until Nigeria citizens start demanding for accountability from the ruling class, this form of civilian-military government will not desist from impoverishing the people in the auspices of policies that do not work. Until Nigerian electorates come to the consciousness that power resides with them, the political elites will not abstain from dehumanizing inclination of initiating numerous development plans, poverty alleviation and rural development programmes, agencies and commissions for development, etc. amidst which anticipated change is found wanting (PAUL & Ogwu, 2013). Proper democracy is not about the elites' interest but the "commoners". The welfare of the populace is the common denominator for measuring the performance of good government and robust economy (Bakare, 2012).

It is lamentable to note that, years have gone bye but the nation has failed to translate the dreams of its nationalist to reality. It is right now reeling in huge foreign and domestic debts. Some economic analysts said the debt to GDP ratio is low but some other experts are already talking about the huge funds being committed to debt servicing. In 2016, Nigeria committed 35 percent of her total earnings to debt servicing and in the first half of 2017; it has committed N57.4 billion to the same purpose (Ibn-Mohammed, 2015).

With increasing number of bonds being floated, one can only expect the debt profile to go higher. At 57, Nigeria presents a sorry picture especially in the sights of those who have followed her trajectory all these years. In the foundation of Nigeria at independence, both local and international leaders who were present at Geneva World Economic Conference in 1962 perceived abundance potentials and great expectation of a nation amongst China and Brazil as the three developed economies of the world to watch out for by the year 2000 (Maitama, 2010). The aforementioned nations have arrived but Nigeria has backslidded. It can be seen as a nation that could hold its own in the comity of fast growing nation; a young and vibrant nation waiting to be nurtured to a forward looking adult. Nevertheless, the states of the federation are also worse off as none of them is excused from the debt burden (*Tribune, 2017*). Former governor of Anambra State, Peter Obi succinctly depicted the retrogressing rather than progressing movement of Nigeria when he said that:

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> If this country had followed the MDGs guidelines, we won't be where we are today. In the year the MDGs started, China's GDP was $1 trillion. By the time MDGs was completed after 15 years, China's GDP had gone to about $12 trillion because China mainstreamed all the MDGs goals into their agenda and followed them strictly, and was able to pull 439 million people out of poverty.

Abaribe (2017) says that the crisis of underdevelopment squarely rests on the question of leadership thereby giving two clear crises of underdevelopment scenarios to make illustration. He says:

> I think we missed it at the level of leadership and let me explain what I mean; at the level of both leadership recruitment and leadership application to duty. Our leadership recruitment mechanism has been faulty. It throws up people who do not put Nigeria first. It tends to throw up people who use Nigeria as their own personal fiefdom and when it throws them up that way, what we now see is a Nigeria that is serially abused by those put in charge and in trust for Nigeria.

One of the two examples of bad leadership he said is the troubles that befell the Nigerian Airways, which is now defunct. At a point, he said Ethiopian Airlines had three aircraft while Nigeria had 28. Today Nigerian Airways is defunct while Ethiopian Airlines is blossoming. The same also happened to the Nigerian Shipping Line which at a point had 26 ships. Today it is no more. Abaribe further submitts that it is purely and squarely what Chinua Achebe refers to "failure of leadership."

To situate democratization as a fore-runner of good governance has posed a scholastic challenge over the years. Nonetheless, Omotola (2008) describes the concept from a general point of view as the deviation from authoritarianism to the people's government through a stabilized democratization, which should perfectly change various sectors of national life for better. He further cites Osaghe (1999) who defines the concept as the process of creating, strengthening, or broadens the principles, machinery and fundamentals that characterizes a democratic government. Therefore, there is no simple relationship between the levels of democracy and corruption as the both currently appear "synonymous" in Nigeria. It is not an automatic struggle against corruption, but democracy establishes more potent institutions that challenge corruption. For instance in Nigeria, during the Obasanjo's presidency (1999-2007) there was establishment of anti-corruption commissions that will sustain and consolidate democratic governance like Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Economic Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), and Nigerian Legislative Institute (PAUL, Alih & Eri, K. 2014). A system with regular elections, political contest, an independent legislative and judicial structures, active opposition, freedom of the press, and liberty of expression serves as "road blocks" that restricts the movement of corrupt practices.

The history of Nigerian democracy started at the termination of colonialism due to high rate of nationalist activities in the pre-independence period. The Nigerian independence on 1st October, 1960 marked a significant threshold – a transition from colonial diarchy in the late 1950's to civilian rule in 1960, with democratic bodies patterned on the British West Minister Parliamentary System. The British colonialists bequeathed the young nation at independence and successive

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Nigerian governments with the question of unbalanced federalism, regionalism, sectionalism and alienation of the populace from the institution of governance and other major apparatus of state. In the research of Tshiyoyo (2015); PAUL, Audu & Eri (2017), the colonial masters should receive the blame for the formation of systemic anomalies, administrative apparatus which inhibit the growth of the system into a development-oriented apparatus which has created a national unity question. They quoted Suberu (2001:126) who remarks that there are serious challenges and dilemmas associated with amalgamating multiple identity communities within the framework of a single, integrated and national political system without the consciousness of their differences.

However, the struggle for durable democracy which span over five decades of our country's existence as independent nation before 1999 has been marked by discontinuities. Indeed, political instability occasioned among others by anti-democratic activities had led to a series of military intrigue which have continuously subverted the evolution of a truly abiding democracy. According to Kirk-Greene & Rimmer (1981); Omo-Bare (1996); Mayer et al., (1996); Joseph et al., (1996); Mundt & Aborisade (2005); in Fagbadebon (2007) cited by PAUL & Edino (2015), the leadership challenge in the Nigerian political composition resulted from the dysfunctional model of long standing military rule. Nonetheless, Abioye (2011) argues that they themselves were not any better as experience in Africa has shown. Elaigwu (2011) posits that by 1965, it had become evident that the ballot box that guarantees choice of leadership and the future plebiscetarian democracy had become dreary. Some factors as he notes in the system gave these indications. They include:

   i.   Democratic rules and regulations break-down which polluted the system of the game.
  ii.   Gross power misuse by the political leaders,
 iii.   Embezzlement and divertion of the common wealth by the elements of the political class,
  iv.   Reckless socio-political and economic decisions in distribution of meager resources,
   v.   Infringement of the citizen's fundamental human rights.
  vi.   Disenfranchisement through electoral malpractices.
 vii.   Extravagances and waste of resources by the politicians even in amidst of hunger and underdevelopment.

In a nutshell, this is not peculiar to Nigeria alone. He further asserts that by 1965, the first attempt to conduct a credible election was interrupted by political crisis particularly in the western region. Nigeria's democratic experience had been chequred by the centrifugal force in all trends and not quite long, military coup d'état relegated democratic polity to the backstage. In addition was the second republican ugly experience, 1979-1983. By 1999 at Nigeria's thirty-nine years of existence, the military had ruled Nigeria for twenty-nine years. In essence, many Nigerians believe and remain conscious that the military is a political power opponent in Nigeria's political contest. Comparatively, it can be argued that the bullet box held a far superior sway in the polity than the ballot box thereby making the elites to refer the military to ''the alternate political party''.

In the Nigerian context, democracy is something much talked about, greatly aspired and strenuously struggled for and a set objective pursued with apparent vigor and manifested through the stepping down of power to a democratically elected president in Chief Olusegun Obasanjo on May 29, 1999 (Jega, 2007; Aremu & Omotola 2006, in Omotola, 2008). Nigerians waited anxiously for this day which glow with hope to usher in an era of democratic practice where prosperity will flourish in the country unabated and unhindered. This is based on the words of Alexander Madiebo in Umez (2000) that:

> A military government is a major setback for any nation and should be avoided
> at all costs. This is because military men are unqualified for the task of
> government and either lean too heavily on advice which may not always be in
> the best interest of their people or, worse still, attempt to rule without it.

Obasanjo (1999), in Akinkugbe & Joda (2013) notes that instead of progress and development, which citizens are entitled to expect from those who govern, the decades that preceded 1999 was characterized with deterioration in the quality of governance, leading to instability and the weakening of all public institutions. Although Nigeria seems to have broken free from the firm and pernicious grip of military dictatorship, a democratic process that could yield the desired dividends of democracy is yet to be entrenched (Galadima, 2000).

In retrospect, the democratic quest which started with the experiment of the first and second republic 1960-66, 1979-83 and later 1999 – date were rather disappointing as a result of the "winner takes all" approach to governance, intense ethnic and sectional selfish-interest, political intolerance and violence, massive electoral frauds and the failure of the political class to forge consensus on several critical and national issues. In the perception of Akinwumi (2004, 2005); Adebawanwi (2005) cited by Omotola (2008), one frightening dimension is the extraordinary rate of the identities struggle, predominantly ethno-religious and communal bent, resulting in ethnic and religious violence across the length and breadth of Nigeria. This situation is ugly and worrisome because the history of Nigeria from the first republic to date has shown repeated occurrence of events which seem to be very peculiar to Nigerian politics in both civilian and military rule. The problem is partly corruption and leadership crisis which explains why good governance has continued to elude the nation even in the seemingly practice of democracy. To this end, Obasanjo (1999) in Akinkugbe & Joda (2013) emphasizes that:

> Government officials *(are)* progressively indifferent to prosperity of conduct
> and showed little commitment to promoting the general welfare of the people
> and the public good. Government and all its agencies became thoroughly
> corrupt and reckless members of the public had to bribe their way through in
> ministries and parastatals to get attention and one government agency had to
> bribe another government agency to obtain the release of their statutory
> allocation of funds.

For over seventeen years, opportunities have given been given to political leaders to demonstrate how they can move the nation forward but failed woefully notwithstanding the fact that in any political system, the need for the entrenchment of development is essential and inevitable (Umez, 2000; Ali, Orokpo & PAUL, 2012). Even the challenge of implementation of rural development policies in Nigeria can be blamed upon poor leadership, selfish interests, and gross corruption among the political class (PAUL, Agba & Chukwura, 2014). Consequently, Anger (2011) states that the absence of good governance which is clearly seen in the inability of the Nigerian state to live up to its obligation in the social contract, partly explains the lack of unity among the federating units and also why credible elections seem to be impossible even in this democratic periods (1999 – date) exception of the 2015 general elections. It further accounts for the perpetual fear of military intervention in Nigerian politics among the citizenry due to what Lewis (1994) refers to as increasingly predatory self-interested character of military officers. As Jega (2007) insinuates,

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> …the more public and elected officials exhibit irresponsibility, seem unaccountable and unresponsive to popular needs and aspirations, and the more poorly they conduct themselves in governance and state-craft, the greater the threats to democratic consolidation and sustainability.

The concept of good governance has always been linked to democratic governance by scholars and most especially by international financial institutions like the World Bank and the IMF by which they refer to the exercise of political power to promote the public good or welfare of the people (Babawale, 2003). Other donor agencies like the Ford Foundation, the Carter Centre, International Human Rights Law Group, the George Soros Foundation – OSIWA, etc also shared the same conviction on good governance. The public good to Nwabueze (2008) embraces within its ambits the norms and values of a free, just, ordered and law-governed society as well as those of happiness and the good life.

In essence, good governance deals with how those who have the authority of the state make efforts to achieve the goals or the ends of the state –the maintenance of law and order, the provision of welfare for its citizens and the pursuit of national interest. In the global arena, it refers to the process and quality of governance and the role of the civil society and the private sector. Western democracy insists that good governance entails institutions and values. Also, socialist democracy sought to prove that a critical element of democracy is mass, popular participation and notions of equity in the distribution of societal resources (Jega, 2007). Good governance depicts an ideal situation where the citizens enjoy their complete fundamental human rights as enshrined in the constitution. Conversely, this cannot be forthcoming if the principles, values, and norms of mass participation, transparency, open-door policies, equity and the supremacy of the law are not guide as well as the delivery of public services.

The concept of leadership, democracy and good governance are not only interlinked, both demand accountability as a principle. In real meaning, Ekot (2010) reaffirms the notion that the development and political re-arrangement of Nigeria must presuppose a focus on national political leadership. This according to Democracy-lead-to-Economic-growth perspective by Umez (2000) situates democracy as a means of achieving good governance due to popular participation. In accordance with this statement, Jega (2007) opines that modern notions of democracy evolved from several attempts to address the question of absolutism and the assumptions of sovereign power of monarchs over their people. He sampled the 17th century mass rebellion of Oliver Cromwell (1642) against the monarchy of England which popularized sovereignty and representative government. Reinforcing democracy and good governance, Sambo (1994) conceives that any democratic government that part ways with good governance is not '*StrictoSensu*' a democratic government. According to Jega (2007), meaning of democracy has several scopes such as:

  i.   contestation over policy and political competition for office;
  ii.   participation of the citizenry through partisan, associational and other forms of collective actions;
  iii. accountability of rulers to the ruled through the mechanisms of representations and the rule of law; and
  iv.   civilian control over the military.

The attributes of democracy are presumed to be facilitative of good governance whose abiding parameters are accountability of government officials, transparency in governmental procedures, predictability in government behaviour and expectation of rational decisions, openness in government transactions, free flow of information, freedom of the press, decentralization of power structure and decision making. The expectation is that when these attributes are in a democratic system of government, that system will be conducive to development (Anger, 2011). Thus for democracy to strive, the World Bank (1992) discusses four basics of good governance. These include:

i. Public sector human and financial resources management;
ii. Accountability among the public and civil servants;
iii. An independent judiciary, law enforcement systems and conventional legal framework; and
iv. Availability of public sector information and transparency for enhancement of public policy analysis, promotion of debate and reduction in the risk of corruption.

Comparatively, Bakare (2012) challenges that the practice of democracy in Nigeria with other country that practices an ideal democracy would make an individual wonders whether there is democracy in Nigeria. From the framework of Abraham Lincoln's standpoint on democracy, it recommends that democracy should uphold responsibility and responsiveness in a given society. It can be sufficient to conclude that accountability, responsiveness in governance, electoral sovereignty, open-door and people-centred policies are hallmarks of good governance. In another development, any of the elected politicians who dole out "dividends of democracy" is exceptionally distinguished as if the individual is using his personal resources for the so-called good gesture. As PAUL, Alih & Eri, (2014) observes, the dividends of democracy as they often publicize are tokens and far below expectation of the majority of Nigerians. They added that trivialities are presented as evidence and favoritism being done to the hapless victims of poor governance or lack of governance in the name of 'dividends of democracy'.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United State of America once said that "only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment". The "dark realities" of Nigeria as a country hinged on the fact that it is in dire need of a true political leadership that will bridge the gap between poverty and prosperity, development and underdevelopment, and bad and good governance.

Consequently, Deakaa (2006) opines that good governance could thrive when the leadership spares no efforts in tackling corruption and inefficiency and enhancing accountability in government. This according to her will also mean a drastic reduction in the scope of distortionary rent-seeking activities; eliminating wasteful or unproductive uses of public funds and indeed the provision of desired domestic security within the polity.

Good governance is therefore imperative for a durable and viable democratic polity like Nigeria. The height of corruption signifies the level of good or bad governance in any nation. In particular, due to divertion of public funds into private coffers, there have been incessant military coups which have gone a long way to politicize the cardinal security organization like Nigerian army and other agencies. The absence of good governance in Nigeria is no doubt responsible for the abysmal level

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of poverty and underdevelopment experienced in Nigeria. This is because Nigerian leaders have not been able to deliver to the people the dividends of democracy as promised during electioneering campaigns. Thus, over seventeen years of the nation's sojourn in the path of democracy have witnessed blood-bath, wanton destruction, disregard for the rule of law, low level of legitimacy and highly demonstrable lack of accountability and corruption. These call for the need to correctly evaluate our past, boldly asses the present, so that we can make useful contributions to the glorious tomorrow for generations yet unborn. From the foregoing, it is apparent to conclude that for a responsive leadership and government to be democratic, and for governance to be qualified as good, the repositories of power and managers of resources must be:

   i.   selfless;
  ii.   accountable to the governed;
 iii.   extol institutions above personality;
 iv.   responsive to the demands of the people; and
  v.   guided by the principles of rule of law.

In essence, there can be no meaningful development in Nigeria and other Africa countries amidst of this high rate of leadership rascality, unresponsiveness and irresponsibility. By and large, effective and strong political leadership is the mother of good governance. On this basis, it is robustly recommended that:

   i.   There should be the strengthening and creation of more democratic institutions. This is essential because anti-corruption struggle which is Nigeria's hydra-headed challenge should be institutionally, organically and structurally-based and not personality-oriented as it is currently. Corruption is a product of absence of curtailing establishments.
  ii.   There should be a deviation from emergence of accidental leadership. There should be an earnest sought to investing energies towards the propagation of strong leadership values of consultation, selflessness, transparency and accountability. An unprepared personality and circumstantial leadership should henceforth be jettisoned by the electorates in any electioneering.
 iii.   Good governance must be considered as a right and not a privilege by all! It must be demanded for and any failure should not be excused in any way at the poll with religion, ethnicity and regional biases.

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