

Centenary Celebrations: The Role of Good Governance and Effective Public Administration towards Achieving Economic Growth and Stability in Fledgling Democracy in Nigeria

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Nigeria, a country endowed with abundant natural, mineral and human resources is grappling with problems of development; a century after her amalgamation and fifty-five years of full-fledged political independence. She has been overtaken in development by some other developing countries notably Indonesia, Malaysia and Venezuela. Today, she is faced with myriad of problems prominent among which are poverty, corruption, insecurity, kidnapping, ethno-religious crises and many more. These problems can be attributed to bad governance. This paper examines the role of good governance and effective public administrative system in ensuring economic growth and stable polity. The paper adopted Elite theory as its analytical tool. The paper contends that good governance is crucial to economic growth because it enhances human development which in turn is the pivot around which other developmental activities revolve. The paper further argues that only an efficient and effective public administrative system can deliver the dividends of democracy. It concludes that adherence to basic tenets of good governance and a combination of well trained and carefully recruited and motivated public servants as well as an enabling environment can ensure economic growth and stable polity.

Keywords: Good governance, public administration, economic growth, democracy, centenary celebration

Introduction

Nigeria and Nigerians have been caught in the frenzy of centenary celebration. This celebration may be easily confused with the political independence anniversary—the centenary celebration has to do with the birth of a political entity following the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates on January 1, 1914 under the watchful eyes of colonial Britain. Two personalities were important in this study – Lord Frederick Lugard the then Governor General, who can be described as the surgeon who performed the merger, and Flora Shaw (later wife of Lugard), former correspondent of the *London Times*, who became the taxonomist that suggested the name-Nigeria. It is the centenary anniversary celebrations, therefore, of the birth of a country variously described as an ‘ethnic mosaic’, ‘geographical

expression’, ‘artificial creation’ among others. As a reminder, Nigeria antedated this birthday as the various nationalities therein existed independently but not in isolation of one another in the pre-colonial era. The making of this 1914 baby started therefore with the Berlin West African Conference from November 1884 to February 1885. The process of acquisition, creation/administration started from trade, to the bombardment and annexation of Lagos in 1851 and 1861 respectively, the Berlin Conference which set the acquisition guidelines, the creation of the Northern Protectorate in 1900, the merger of the colony of Lagos and the Southern Protectorate in 1906, and in 1914 the amalgamation to a single (but inherently disparate groups) administrative unit-Nigeria.

Nigeria thus fell to Britain more as a result of the “diplomacy of imperialism than a matter of choice for any of the peoples that were to be enclosed within this grid that came to be organised and administered as one territorial unit called Nigeria” (Eleagu, 1988: 9). A process completed by Britain in 1914, imposed on and accepted by Nigerians. This unilateral colonial creation, “the artificial boundaries of the states which emerged upon the European imperial expansion have salient implications for political development in these states” (Elaigwu, 1993: 1). Enunciating further, Isawa Elaigwu maintains that these artificial boundaries created culturally diverse states as they brought together strange ethno-cultural groups into one political territory. The problems of integration arising from these have been amply demonstrated by communal instability and secessionist bid in the Sudan Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, Ethiopia Zanzibar, Uganda, Nigeria, the Chad and Angola. Ever since this merger, the polity has been characterised by ethno religious politics which has being the bane to national unity.

In the Nigerian case study, the reconfiguration, formation of political parties, distribution of human and material resources and even crises (coups, civil war and religious impasse) are hinged on ethno-religious politics. Thus providing Nigeria with a chequered history - with political transitions from civilian to military, military to military, military to civilian and civilian to civilian; through a democratic, authoritarian, a combination of both or an innovation of a process too unique to be described only in action by its proponents – the political elites. While the world celebrates the centenary anniversary (1914-2014) of Africa’s most populous country, this paper examines the role of good governance and public administrative system towards achievement of economic growth and stable polity. In this paper, greater attention will be given to civil service as an instrument of public administration. The reason for this is because, it is crucial in the planning and execution of public policies as well as in the making of resource allocations.

As noted by Gboyega and Abubakar (1989), “no part of the public service is beyond the reach of the arm of the Federal Civil Service” (1989: 11). The paper is structured into seven sections.

The first section focuses on conceptual clarification of good governance and public administration. This is closely followed by the role of good governance and public administration in national development. The third discusses the attributes of good governance and the nexus between good governance and public administration, while the fourth segment delves into facts and figures; an insight into corruption among the political leadership class and assessment of governance crisis in Nigeria. The sixth section takes a cursory look at the state of governance in Nigeria and the centenary economy and obstacles to good governance and effective public administration, and the last section gives the concluding remarks and recommendation.

Good Governance and Public Administration: A Conceptual Analysis

According to the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) research project, “Good governance is the process and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised; the process by which governments are selected, held accountable, monitored and replaced; the capacity of governments to manage resources efficiently, and to formulate, implement and enforce sound policies and regulations; and, the respect for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them” (cited in Onigbide, 2007).

UNDP (1997) described good governance as the totality of the exercise of authority in the management of a country’s affairs, comprising the complex mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights and mediate their differences. It encompasses the political, economic, legal, judicial, social and administrative authority and therefore includes government, the private sector and the civil society. It also includes both a broad strategy and a particular set of initiatives to strengthen the institutions of civil society with the objective of making government more accountable, more open and transparent and more democratic (Minogue, 1997 cited in Abe, 2010).

In the words of Healey and Robinson (1994), it implies “a high level of organizational effectiveness in relation to policy formulation and

the policies actually pursued, especially in the conduct of economic policy and its contribution to growth, stability and public welfare. In addition to participation, accountability and transparency as enunciated by the UNDP report, good governance according to Healey and Robinson also include openness and the rule of rule. The World Bank defined good governance in a more robust manner when it averred that, "it is the means of exercising power in the management of a nation's economic and social resources for sustainable development" (World Bank, 1989). Ladi (2008) calls good governance "sound development management" that is the totality of public sector management, accountability, legal framework for development (reforms), information and technology, the acceptance of government by the people, the capacity of governments to initiate appropriate policies, make far-reaching decision, and implement them effectively for service delivery. Good governance can also be linked to the extent which a government is perceived and accepted as legitimate, committed to improving the public welfare and responsive to the needs of its citizens, competent to assure law and order, and deliver public services, able to create an enabling public environment for productive activities and equitable in its conduct.

According to Balogun (1983), administration is a 'universal phenomenon' which as a concept and as a process can exist in "government, business, churches, mosques, families and other interactions". Adebayo (1982) sees administration as "the organization and direction of persons in order to accomplish specified ends". For Pfiffner and Presthus (1960), administration refers to an activity or process concerned with the means for carrying out prescribed ends. Public administration, by extension has been defined as "the marshaling of human and material resources in order to achieve the objectives of public policy" (Balogun, 1983: 10). White (1955) sees public administration as consisting of all those operations having for their purpose the fulfillment or enforcement of public policy. For Herbert Simon (1960), public administration are the activities of the executive branches of national, state and local government. Dimock and Dimock (1958) see public administration as the area of study and practice where law and policy are recommended and carried out. Therefore, public administration

refers to both the activities concerned with the management of government business as well as the study of those activities.

Theoretical Framework

The need to theorise about the nature of control and the role of leadership in democracy and good governance occasions the study of elites by Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923), and Gaetano Mosca (1858-1941) (Dowse and Hughes, 1989). The elite theory is a philosophical explanation of the role of the leadership in governance as it affects public policy including all socio-economic and political matters. If the formal structures of government are central to explaining 'who gets what, when and how', then the study and relevance of elite in policy process is equally important. Elites dominate the formal institutions of government and are a determining factor in governance and decision making processes.

Elites are the decision makers in the society whose power is not subject to control by any other body in the society. There are varying perceptions on the role of elites in democracy. While some believe that elites are bulwarks of democracy protecting it from the dangers of totalitarianism, the soul source of value and element of democratic consolidation and political stability and constituting integrating force in the society without which it may fall apart; others believe that elites are chief threat to the survival of democracy (Dowse and Hughes, 1983). They have exceptional access to key positions in the society and appear to wield control over crucial policies disproportionate to their number and they, to this extent, can understandably be a living contradiction to the notion of democracy. On this philosophical basis, it is assertive that credit of democratic stability and good governance should be given to the elite. Also, blame of democratic failure and bad governance will also be on the elite, since it is central to governance stability or otherwise. It is scientific to study and analyse governance and democratic process in any country using elite theory.

Elite theory is premised on a number of assumptions:

- i. The society consists of two categories; the selected few, who are capable and, therefore, have the right to supreme leadership and the



- vast masses of people who are desired to be ruled;
- ii. That the majority of human beings are apathetic, indolent and slavishly uninformed about what goes on in the administrative system and permanently incapable of self-government. That is, the elite decide on the structure, the personnel, and the process of public policies of the administrative system;
 - iii. Hence, the structure, substance and output of the administrative system may be viewed as the preferences and values of the governing elite (Dowse and Hughes, 1983).

The elite theory postulates that public policy reflects the values and preferences of the elite rather than demands of the masses. The elites consist of those few individuals who wield powers and hold leading positions in the strategic aspects of society. The majority, the masses, only obeys and are guided, controlled and governed by the few. Many of the elites do not hold formal or legal authoritative powers but are rather behind the scene, tele-guiding and manipulating overt political and policy actions (Ikelegbe, 1994). It is on the basis of presumptions that the masses are contented and are incapable of challenging the authoritative position of the elite that informs elites' reflection of policy and its processes.

The elite theory directs attention to the source of policy flow and whose interests public policies serve. The theory attempts a realistic explanation of the source of policy by predicating it in the elite rather than the masses. It also explains the nature and source of policies in Nigeria. Various policies in the public service can also be viewed as emanating from the Nigerian elite- the political, administrative and economic leaders. This is contradictory to democratic tenets that lend credence to participation, openness, accountability and freedom in all spheres of societal life.

Elites are capable of setting the tone of society by coming out with policies of their choice. The level of stability and progress achieved in any society is a function of elites' initiatives. The civil unrest experienced in Africa and the advancement of Europe cannot be divorced from the inclusion and activities of elites in these areas. The fact that Nigeria since her amalgamation in 1914, is still oscillating between democratic stagnancy and

governance backwardness is reflexive of elites' pursuit of personal aggrandizement and promotion of ego-centrism rather than altruistic policies that are nationalistic and 'people-centric' in nature. People-centric policies are policies that are people-centered, whose objective primarily is designed to engage the citizenry and serve the interest of the people and the community.

The Role of Good Governance and Public Administration in National Development

Good governance plays an important role in the advancement of sustainable development of a nation. It promotes accountability, transparency, efficiency and rule of law. Besides, it allows for sound and efficient management of human resources for equitable and sustainable development. According to former United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan (1998), "Good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development". Good governance enhances human development and human development is the pivot around which other developmental activities revolve. Human development is the channel through which other forms of development are achieved. Similarly, Kayode, Oyejide and Soyode (1994) contend that a successful development effort requires good governance, managed by an enlightened political leadership operating in a stable political system that creates an enabling environment in which capable people have the incentive to work effectively. In the same vein, Diamond (2004: 222) contends that the root cause of development failure is not a lack of resources or international isolation. Rather, it is lack of good governance. Good governance promotes development by generating and defending broad commitment to the public welfare. Public administration lies at the heart of modern state. It is a recognised fact that it plays crucial role in all societies-developed or developing. In modern state, public administration has become so important that our development, continuity and progress depend mainly upon the efficient functioning of it. It serves as the basis of government. A government can exist without other arms of government such as legislature and judiciary. But no government can exist without administrative machinery. All countries,

irrespective of their system of government, need some sort of administrative machinery for implementing public policies.

Public administration is also responsible for implementing the law and policies of government. By implementing laws, it regulates the behaviour of the people in the society. By executing policies and programmes, it delivers the promised goods and services to the intended beneficiaries. The importance of an efficient public administration is underscored by the fact that policies and programmes of government may not be realised without an efficient public administration.

Put differently, the best policies and laws of government may remain as mere paper declaration of intent, if the administrative machinery does not function efficiently. An efficient public administration avoids waste, correct errors; limits the consequences of incompetence, while executing laws and public policies. In modern state, public administrators participate in policy making by giving advice to ministers and providing them with necessary information which will assist them in formulation of policies. It also acts as a great stabilizing force in the society. It settles social tension and conflicts and thus creates social unity and harmony in a country. In addition, it provides continuity in government. In other words, it carries on government when rulers change every now and then owing to elections or coups. It protects the lives and property of the people by maintaining law and order. The survival and progress of the people depend on the proper enforcement of laws against violators. This is the primary responsibility of public administration.

Attributes of Good Governance and the Nexus between Good Governance and Public Administration

The World Bank (1989) identified the following as the features of good governance:

- An efficient public service
- An independent judicial system and legal framework to enforce contract
- The accountable administration of public funds
- An independent public auditor, responsible to a representative legislature
- Respect for the law and human rights at all levels of government

- A pluralistic institutional structure and
- A free press

In the same vein, Sir Kenneth Stove (cf Faradaus and Khan, 2006: 92), identified the following as features of good governance:

- Political freedom including free speech and a freely elected parliament
- Constitutional and judicial protection for the rights of the individual
- Maintenance of the rule of law by an independent judiciary
- Maintenance of stable currency
- Development of a society as a whole by education and health care and
- Executive accountability to freely elected legislature.

According to Faradaus and Khan (2006), good governance is characterised by the following:

Participation: This involves the participation of all and sundry in decision making either directly or through their elected representatives. Such broad participation is built on freedom of association and speech as well as capacities to participate constructively.

Accountability: It requires not only government institutions but also both private sector and civil society organisations to be accountable to the public. Accountability is guaranteed by the process by which public decision-making processes and the results they produce are held up to public scrutiny and feedback.

Management Effectiveness and Efficiency: Effectiveness concerns the ability of public bureaucracies to skillfully and efficiently transform public resources into services and infrastructure that correspond to public determined priorities. The concept of efficiency covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of environment.

Equity and inclusiveness: This attribute requires all groups particularly the less privileged ones to have opportunities to improve or maintain their wellbeing. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Transparency: This built on the free flow of information, process, institutions and information and are directly accessible to those concerned with



them and enough information is provided to understand and monitor them.

Consensus Orientation: It requires mediation of different interests in society to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the country and the way this can be achieved.

Responsiveness: It requires that institutions and processes serve all stakeholders within a reasonable time frame.

Having examined the attributes of good governance, it is important to examine the relationship between good governance and public administration. As we all know, public administration does not exist in a vacuum, it is influenced by a number of factors among which is the political values (Adeosun, 2010). By political values, it means basic beliefs and assumptions not only about politics and the political system but also about appropriate government relationship to private activity, especially economic activity (Gordon, 1992).

Good governance and administration demand that citizens be able to contribute their views on issues of importance to them. Put differently, good governance and public administration ensure citizen participation in governance. Another element of good governance is responsiveness. The public officials are expected to be responsive to the yearning and aspirations of the people. Their ability to do this depends on several factors present in governmental processes. The first is the people assumption of what is and what should be the conduct of government and public policy making; secondly, responsiveness requires access to right decision makers and a legitimate opportunity to be heard; government and its agencies have to be able to respond to policy and programme demand.

Holding government officials accountable for their actions is crucial to good governance, more so, when responsibility is entrusted to non-elected personnel. Governmental openness to public scrutiny is a key to accountability for official conduct.

In the same vein, Adamolekun (2002) contends that a public administrative system that functions in an environment of transparency, with officials fully aware that they would be held accountable for their actions, is likely to perform

more efficiently and effectively than one that operates in an opaque environment where the rulers are not accountable to the ruled.

Facts and Figures: An Insight into Corruption among the Political Leadership Class and Assessment of Governance Crisis in Nigeria

At this point, a few of the many cases of corruption in Nigeria perpetrated by the top echelon of the political leadership class will be the focus of discussion. As mentioned earlier, corruption by the political leadership class can be traced back to the colonial era. The culture of corruption had become entrenched in the Nigerian polity since the creation of modern public service administration in the country. In 1956, the Foster-Sutton Tribunal of Inquiry investigated the Premier of the defunct Eastern Region, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, for his involvement in the affairs of the defunct African Continental Bank (ACB). The code of conduct for government officials stipulates that a government officer shall relinquish his holdings in private business when he assumes public office. The Foster-Sutton Tribunal discovered that Azikiwe did not sever his connections to the bank when he became a Premier. The Tribunal reported that Azikiwe continued to use his influence to promote the interests of the bank (Report of the Foster-Sutton Tribunal of Inquiry, 1956: 42; Sklar, 2004: 185).

Moreover, Azikiwe, his family, and the Zik Group of Companies were the principal shareholders of the African Continental Bank. As indicated in the report of the tribunal of inquiry, the bank loaned over £163,000 to the Zik Group of Companies at a lower interest rate and over an extended period, which meant that the Zik Group did not have to repay the loans until 1971. Consequently, the African Continental Bank became a distressed bank. In 1952, the Registrar of Banks refused to grant a license of operation to the bank. Attempts to find partners for the bank in Britain failed because of its level of insolvency. According to a colonial government official, "Were a UK minister to be involved in a series of transactions the result of which public funds were used to support an otherwise shaky institution in which he was directly interested, he would be forced to leave public life" (Okonkwo, 2007). The question now is, why did the colonial government

not prosecute Azikiwe for his failure to observe the code of conduct for government officers? A colonial correspondence revealed that the colonial government supported the NCNC because it was seen as the only party organised on a platform of national unity. Without Azikiwe, the NCNC would collapse. The national interest of the country demanded that Azikiwe continue as the leader of the party (Okonkwo, 2007; Sklar, 2004: 186). Again, in 1962, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the first Premier of the Western Region, was also investigated and found guilty of corruption by the Coker Commission of Inquiry. In 1954, the Western Region Marketing Board could boast of £6.2 million. However, by May 1962, the corporation had to 13 exists on overdrafts amounting to over £2.5 million. A loan of £6.7 million was made to the Western Region government-owned National Investment and Properties Co., Ltd. for building projects out of which only £500,000 was repaid. The Western Region Finance Corporation and the Western Nigeria Development Corporation also received loans of millions of pounds. None of these loans were ever repaid. The Coker Commission of Inquiry found Chief Awolowo culpable for the ills of the Western Region Marketing Board, due to his failure to adhere to the standards of conduct, which were required of persons holding public office (Coker Commission, 1962; Magid, 1976: 73).

It is common knowledge that the Shagari administration that governed Nigeria between 1979 and 1983 had many of its state governors sentenced to ridiculous jail terms of a minimum of 100 years and a maximum period of 340 years by the Buhari/Idiagbon military regime that seized power from it. However, the Buhari/Idiagbon regime was short-lived because it was replaced by the General Ibrahim Babangida military regime after a palace coup on August 27, 1985. The corrupt nature and financial recklessness of the Babangida regime was detailed in the Okigbo Panel Report of 1994. The 1994 Okigbo Panel Report on the Reorganisation and Reform of the Central Bank of Nigeria indicted former Military President, General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, former Head of State, late General Sani Abacha, and former Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, the late Alhaji Abdulkadir Ahmed, for mismanaging about \$12.4 billion oil windfall

between 1988 and 1994. A summary of the panel's report submitted to the Federal Government revealed that General Ibrahim Babangida's regime conspired with top officials of the Central Bank of Nigeria to squander the entire fortune on unproductive or dubious projects (Okigbo Panel Report, 1994). Even after Babangida had stepped down from power in August 1993, the pillaging of the country's coffer by his successors through operations of secret accounts and other means continued. As indicated in the Okigbo report, in 1988, General Babangida authorised the dedication of crude oil of 65,000 barrels per day (bpd) for the finance of special priority projects including Ajaokuta Iron & Steel, Itakpe Iron Mining, and Shiroro Hydro-electric projects. The account was also to be used for external debt buy-back and the build-up of reserves. The quantity was subsequently increased to 105,000 barrels per day and in early 1994, to 150,000 barrels per day.

In addition, a Stabilisation Account to receive the windfall of oil proceeds of the Gulf War and a Special Account for Mining Rights and Signature Bonus were opened. Altogether, \$12.4 billion was received into these accounts 14 from 1988 to June 1994, all of which were frittered away dubiously leaving only a balance of \$206 million as of 30th June 1994 (Executive Summary of Okigbo Panel Report, 1994, item 0.38). The Okigbo Panel's appraisal of the operations of these accounts indicated that the use of the Dedication Account was stretched far beyond its original scope just as the utilisation of the Stabilisation Account completely undermined its fiscal objectives. It was further observed that the list of projects to be serviced from the Dedication and other Special Accounts did indeed contain some projects of importance to the rest of the economy, although there were many large projects of doubtful viability and many more of clearly misplaced priority. Better described, the Dedication and Special Accounts became a parallel budget for the Presidency. Decisions regarding what expenditure items to finance out of these dedicated accounts were the exclusive preserve of the President, depending on the pressures brought to bear on him by the sponsors of the items.

Overall, neither the Dedication Account nor the Stabilisation Account was applied for the purpose for which it was originally designed. Thus, the Dedication Account was used for many

non-priority projects and the Stabilisation Account was not, in practice, used to sterilise revenues in excess of projected earnings. Instead, after a short delay, the monies in the accounts were spent virtually as fast as they accumulated. In addition, the operation of such accounts was not subject to the normal budgetary processes, and therefore lacked transparency. Thus, by limiting the authorisation process for its operation to the approval of the President or Head of State, which was communicated directly to the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, it created considerable room for abuse of procedures, abuse of application and reduced accountability (Okigbo Panel Report, 1994: item 7.149 and 7.150). Besides, the balances kept in these accounts were not included in the Federation Account, a practice that violated the fundamental precepts of federal fiscal relations in Nigeria. By excluding these incomes from the Federation Account, the respective shares of the State and Local Governments were more or less confiscated by the Federal Government, thereby unilaterally violating the revenue allocation formula (Okigbo Panel Report, 1994: item 7.151).

The economic impact of the corruption perpetrated with these accounts on the country's micro-economy was enormous. The gross takings on these accounts from their inception in 1988 to June 1994 totalled \$12.4 billion, which was held totally outside the country's external reserves. What is more, if the funds were counted as part of the external reserves and were held as such, the impact on the exchange rate in the years under review would have been so significant that the Naira would have been stronger in 1994, in relation to the dollar, than it was in 1985 when it stood at N1 to \$1.004. More so, the burden of external debt to the Paris and London Clubs and the pressure on the exchange rate would have been substantially mitigated if not eliminated (Okigbo Panel Report, 1994: item 7.153). The above facts and figures, therefore, calls into question the wisdom and prudence of the Nigerian political leadership class in the management of the affairs and wealth of the country. The injury the country sustained through the exceedingly harmful corruption of the Babangida and the Abacha regimes massively sets the country back on the path of socio-economic advancement and other forms of development i.e. investments in

infrastructure development and social services, such as electricity, roads, education, security, healthcare, water supply, to mention but a few. Saddening enough, the Okigbo Panel Report was kept away from the prying eyes of the Nigerian press and the public for eleven years. It is noteworthy to mention here that up till date, the Federal Government neither is yet to officially release the Okigbo Panel Report nor issued a White Paper on it. This is so because the report indicted 16 many highly placed Nigerians. The contents of the report were only published serially by a national newspaper that got hold of it from an undisclosed source. The implication of the non-release of such sensitive panel report has been grave on governance. For instance, while the document was kept secret, more terrible corrupt practices that virtually collapsed the economy and impoverished several millions of Nigerians continued unabated. In addition, it encouraged leaders, whether military or civilian, to engage in the looting of public treasury and amassing wealth illegally with arrogance and impunity.

Incontrovertibly, corruption became endemic in the 1990s during the military regimes of Babangida and Abacha, but a culture of impunity spread throughout the political class when democracy returned to Nigeria in 1999. In fact, corruption took over as the engine of the Nigerian society and replaced the rule of law (Mallam N. Ribadu, interviewed by Reuters, December 17, 2004). Obviously, this was to the disadvantage of the country. The civilian politicians, their allies in public institutions and collaborators in the private sector, particularly the financial institutions were not any better in corruption ratings than former Military President, Ibrahim Babangida, and ex-Head of State, late General Sani Abacha. A survey on the level of corruption in Nigeria carried out in 2003 by the Institute of Development Research of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria ranked political parties in the country third in the list of thirty most corrupt public institutions in Nigeria (Adekeye, 2003: 29).

This is a sad development for Nigeria because political parties are the ideological powerhouse of civilian administration. On the contrary, political parties in Nigeria have been the main avenues for promoting corrupt practices in the country through godfatherism, extortion, to mention but a few. At

the 2003 Special Convention of the ruling People Democratic Party (PDP), where the presidential flag bearer was chosen, more than N1 billion bribe was allegedly shared to delegates by the Obasanjo group on the ninth floor of the Nicon Hilton Hotel, Abuja (Adekeye, 2003: 29). A corrupt ruling party undoubtedly would always produce a corrupt government; it is difficult to separate the legislators and the executives at the federal, state, and local councils from the cardinal ideology of their political parties. If corruption in the 1990s was endemic, corruption since the return of democracy in 1999 has been legendary. Throughout the eight years presidency of President Olusegun Obasanjo, he was fully in-charge of the petroleum ministry, where high-level corrupt practices took place with impunity. The over \$400 million invested on the Turn-Around Maintenance (TAM) and repairs of the refineries failed to yield any positive result, and the contractors awarded the contracts were never brought to book 17 (Adekeye, 2003: 30). Records have also shown that the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) is at the centre of major corrupt practices in the industry with regards to the operation of its finances, especially in respect of actual revenue realised from the sale of crude oil, and other petroleum resources, such as natural gas.

Furthermore, the report by the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) indicated that 445,000 barrels of crude oil sold by the NNPC between January and July 2002 was not accounted for in its financial report. The report further indicated that within the seven-month period, there was a shortfall of N302 billion as undeclared revenue. The request by Haman Tukur, Chairman of RMAFC, to the Presidency to compel Jackson Gaius-Obaseki, former Group Managing Director of NNPC, to refund the remaining money into government's coffer was never heeded. More so, the joint panel of the National Assembly set up to probe the matter was also hindered by the Presidency and top hierarchy officials of the People Democratic Party on the ground that the probe would send negative signals abroad about corruption in Nigeria, particularly because the Presidency directly oversees the petroleum ministry (Adekeye, 2003: 30 – 31; Shettima, 2009).

Again, during the first four years of the Olusegun Obasanjo administration, federal

ministers allegedly stole more than N23 billion from the public coffers. An audit report released by Vincent Azie, acting Auditor-General of the Federation, showed that the amount represented financial frauds ranging from embezzlement, payments for jobs not done, over-invoicing, double-debiting, inflation of contract figures to release of money without the consent of the approving authority in ten major ministries. Rather than cautioning the ministers whose ministries were named in the fraud or invite the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) to further investigate the veracity of the alleged fraud, Vincent Azie was hastily retired by the Presidency for procedural offences (Adekeye, 2003: 31; Haruna, 2009). What a country whose political leaders have opted to loot the public treasury with arrogance and impunity. The National Identity Card scandal is another case of high profile corruption perpetrated by the top echelon of the nation's political leadership class. In 2001, the administration of Olusegun Obasanjo awarded the \$214 million National Identity Card project to SAGEM S.A., a French company, under controversial circumstances because the Nigerian Security Printing and Minting Company (NSPMC), which bided for the same contract at a lower rate, was not obliged. It was alleged that seven prominent public servants collaborated with SAGEM S.A. to scuttle the \$214million project. Records of the 18 investigation into the matter indicted Hussaini Akwanga, who until December 4, 2003 was Nigeria's Minister for Labour and Productivity, Chief Sunday Michael Afolabi and Mahmud Shata, former Minister of Internal Affairs and Minister of State in the same Ministry respectively, R.O. Akerele, Permanent Secretary of the same Ministry of Internal Affairs, Okwesilieze Nwodo, former Governor of Enugu State and erstwhile secretary of the ruling People Democratic Party, Niyi Adelagun, a business partner of SAGEM S.A. in Nigeria and Jean-Pierre Delarue, the Regional Area Manager, Identification Systems of SAGEM S.A. It is now on the pages of history books that the huge sum released for the project that was not fully executed was divided among the suspected culprits (Asaju, 2003: 38-41).

The current republics are a semblance of the previous republics in terms of leadership and governance. It becomes difficult for one to

distinguish military leadership from civilian leadership in Nigeria. Though, Nigeria has been ruled by the military for a longer period since independence than by civilians, yet, there is no evidence of effective public administration and good governance to differentiate civilian leaders from military rulers.

The State of Governance in Nigeria and the Centenary Economy

After over a hundred years of Colonial rule (the great amalgamation of 1914) and three decades of military rule, from 1966-1999 (with the exception of 1979-1983 and eighty-two (82) days in 1993 when the Interim National Government held sway), Nigeria transitioned to democratic civil regime on May, 29, 1999, with several shortcomings of public administration and governance crisis, fortunately, however, Nigerians are closer to the realization of the ideals of good governance. The current emerging economic and socio-political indices and trends are pointing to the facts that the centenary is worthy of celebration. Nigeria is also classified as a mixed economy emerging market, and has already reached middle income status according to the World Bank, with its abundant supply of natural resources, well-developed financial, legal, communications, transport sectors and stock exchange which is the second largest in Africa. Nigeria is ranked 31st in the world in terms of GDP (PPP) as of 2011 (IMF, 2008).

Nigeria is the United States' largest trading partner in sub-Saharan Africa and supplies a fifth of its oil (11% of oil imports). It has the seventh-largest trade surplus with the U.S. of any country worldwide. Nigeria is the 50th-largest export market for U.S. goods and the 14th-largest exporter of goods to the U.S. The United States is the country's largest foreign investor. The International Monetary Fund also projected economic growth of 9% in 2008 and 8.3% in 2009. The IMF further projected an 8% growth in the Nigerian economy in 2011.

The government has recently begun expanding this infrastructure to space based communications. Nigeria has a space satellite which is monitored at the Nigerian National Space Research and Development Agency Headquarters in Abuja. Four satellites have been launched by the Nigerian government into outer space. The Nigergiasat-1 was

the first satellite to be built under the Nigerian government sponsorship. The satellite was launched from Russia on 27 September 2003. Nigergiasat-1 was part of the world-wide Disaster Monitoring Constellation System. The primary objectives of the Nigergiasat-1 were: to give early warning signals of environmental disaster, to help detect and control desertification in the northern part of Nigeria, to assist in demographic planning, to establish the relationship between malaria vectors and the environment that breeds malaria and to give early warning signals on future outbreaks of meningitis using remote sensing technology, to provide the technology needed to bring education to all parts of the country through distant learning, and to aid in conflict resolution and border disputes by mapping out state and International borders (Adekeye, 2003).

Furthermore, two thousand and fourteen is becoming somewhat of a landmark year for Nigeria. Not only is it celebrating the centenary of its birth, after being founded by the British Empire in 1914 it has just overtaken South Africa as the largest economy on the African continent. According to data issued by Nigeria's Bureau of Statistics, a long-overdue recalculation of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) had resulted in the previous value almost doubling. In 2013, the OPEC Member Country's GDP was calculated at 80.3 trillion naira, or \$509.9 billion, up from the 42.3tr naira estimate before the rebasing. This, said the Bureau, compared with South Africa's 2013 GDP of \$370.3bn. (Yemi, 2012), Statistician General at the Bureau, told reporters in Abuja that the new GDP figure had also greatly reduced Nigeria's debt-to-GDP ratio to 11 per cent for last year, compared with 19 per cent in 2012. He noted that Nigeria had not carried out a rebasing of its GDP since 1990, which meant that such high growth areas as e-commerce, mobile phones, airlines and the country's fast developing film industry 'Nollywood' needed to be taken into account to get a truer value. The film industry alone was said to be worth 1.4 per cent of GDP. Kale said Nigeria's annual GDP growth for 2013 was expected to amount to 7.41 per cent after the rebasing, compared with about 6.5 per cent in 2012. He disclosed that the new calculation meant that Nigeria, Africa's most populous country with 168 million people, had advanced up the GDP

table of global nations - rising from 33rd position to 26th. The new GDP figure puts Nigeria ahead on the list of countries like Austria (\$394.7bn), Venezuela (\$385.5bn) and Switzerland (365.2bn) (Ayodele, 2015).

In the area of rule of law, Nigeria has embarked on massive reformation of the judicial arm of government which is the one saddled with the responsibility of protecting the rights of the people with the aim of purging it from abuse of rule of law and corruption inherited from the colonial administration. In realization of this, Federal government of Nigeria recently appointed about 30 judges considered to be corrupt-free, for all the 36 Federal High Courts in the country, towards effective and efficient administration of justice and achieving good governance in Nigeria (Ayodele, 2015). Conversely, the National Assembly is exercising enormous power to ease the economic and social hardship confronting the people of this country. This is vividly exemplified in the express approval and passage of various bills that bordered on social welfare of the citizenry. A case in point is the approval of the payment of #5000, 000 monthly payments for 25 million unemployed graduates in the country, which is billed to commence from 2016. Thus, this will astronomically reduce the rate of poverty which provides the main catalyst for heightened conflicts and communal unrest in the country.

Fundamentally, the country inherent state of insecurity since the colonial period evident in the incessant kidnapping, armed robbery and bombings of some parts of the country by members of Boko Haram and resurgence and proliferation of political motivated violence; such as assassinations, increased importation of arms and ammunition, and upsurge in ethnic and communal conflicts are currently dealt with through the collaborations of international bodies and instruments (Tyoden, 2015). Presently, most of the communities and towns formerly under the control of the terrorists in the country had been re-claimed by the Nigerian military and Nigerians seems to be enjoying relative peace.

Obstacles to Good Governance and Effective Public Administration in Nigeria

In contemporary Nigeria social system, good governance and public administration are facing some obstacles. These obstacles are examined

critically in this segment. One of the obstacles standing in the way of good governance in the country is corruption. According to Ologbenla (2007), corruption is one of the three-monsters the country is grappling with. Others are bad leadership and bad governance. Nigeria continues to feature prominently amongst the most corrupt countries in the past three decades. According to a survey result on corruption index, conducted by the Transparency International, Nigeria is ranked 2.4 same as the Philippines, Sierra-Leone, Togo, Ukraine and Zimbabwe, out of possible 10.0 (occupied by Denmark), the world's No 1 ranked less corrupt nation (Daily Trust, 2010: 31). The effects of corruption on the nation's development cannot be overemphasized. It prevents a fair distribution of national resources and broadened the gap between the 'haves' and the 'have not'.

The inefficiency of the bureaucracy is another obstacle in the way of good governance. Bureaucracy is inevitable in any country and inseparable part of an organised society. But Nigeria bureaucracy is not efficient in management and administration. Put differently, Nigeria bureaucracy is no longer the engine room for governance. It is an ineffective institution for checks and balances as well as continuity. Bureaucrats are not accountable, responsive and transparent to the people. Lack of bureaucratic accountability can be attributed to bureaucratic corruption. But there is no effective mechanism to make them accountable, responsive and transparent.

Neotism is another stumbling block in the realization of good governance in Nigeria. The rulers in this country pursue nepotism. They give privileges and undue advantage to their family members, friends and associates, kiths and kins in the distribution of public resources. Similarly, Ekpo (2009: 11) identified non-legitimacy of government due to election malpractice, corruption, violence, tribalism, poverty, illiteracy, impunity and oath-taking as impediments to good governance in Nigeria. At this juncture, it is imperative to examine the impediments to effective public or civil service in Nigeria. Following Okafor (2005), the structural problems confronting the Civil Service in Nigeria can be categorised as personnel regulations, personnel qualifications, organisational structure and work environment.

The personnel regulations state requirements for entry into the bureaucracy as well as the procedure for promotion and dismissal. Public Service rules in Nigeria state a long list of requirements for entry, including federal character (Nnoli, 1980). In theory, positions are supposed to be filled based on merit but in practice, political, family, ethnic and religious considerations are important factors in Civil Service appointment (Mohr, 1987; Adebayo, 2001; Yesufu, 1992).

Promotion in Nigeria Civil Service is based on seniority. Rules for promotion fail to differentiate between productive and non-productive workers. Dismissal is uncommon except during the mass purge of Murtala-Obasanjo Administration in 1975-1976. As regards personnel qualifications, workers entering the Civil Service through the use of political or family influence may lack the required technical skills for their positions. Besides, on-the-job training programmes are weak and ineffective (Otobo, 1992). Also, compounding the skills problem is the emphasis on filling slots rather than matching workers skills with the need of the position. Thus, many of the skills that public servants have are wasted (Okafor, 2005). The Civil Service tends to be overstaffed with workers who lack the requisite skills for their positions (Jike, 2003; Otobo, 1992; Nwachukwu, 1998).

Moreover, Public Servants are poorly paid. Most of them earn just a little in the face of rising inflation brought about by deregulation policies of government (Onyeonoru, 2005). Because of this state of affairs many have resorted to multiple job-holding in the informal sector, thereby impacting negatively on their attitude and commitment to work.

Furthermore, poor and outdated equipment, lack of office space and poor filing systems in the work place act as impediments to the effectiveness of the civil service in Nigeria (Okoh, 1998). The problem of Public Service in Nigeria is worsened by the difficulties of gaining the confidence of the general people. Public Servants tend to be objects of doubt and suspicion.

According to Okafor (2005), much of the doubt and suspicion directed at public servants also reflects age-long traditions of ethno-religious hostilities in Nigeria. Public servants regardless of their dedication to national goals and the norms of professionalism, tend to be seen as biased and self-

serving by the masses (Soleye, 1989). The people tend to assume that public servants are influenced by religious, ethnic and other parochial considerations and act accordingly (Nnoli, 1980). Besides, most people because of ignorance and poor orientation see government jobs as 'nobody's job' which must provide for 'everyone' (Soleye, 1989).

Concluding Remarks

In this paper, attempts were made to explain concepts such as good governance and public administration, their importance, the nexus between them as well as the attributes of good governance. The state of governance in the country was critically examined and some of the issues raised were the inability of those at the helm of affairs to adhere strictly to the tenets of good governance, namely, rule of law, inefficient institutions, insecurity, etc. The evolution of Nigeria Civil Service was also discussed and obstacles to good governance as well as effective public administrative system were critically examined. The paper identified such factors as corruption, inefficient bureaucracy and nepotism as obstacles that stand in the way of good governance in Nigeria. Also, personnel regulations, personnel qualifications, organisational structure, work environment, and so on, as impediments to effective public administrative system were thoroughly analysed. The question that readily comes to mind is what is the way forward? This forms the recommendation of this paper.

Recommendations

The government should as a matter of urgency, address the issue of corruption in the country. The existing institutions saddled with the responsibility should be strengthened and any public official found to have corruptly enriched himself or herself should be dealt with seriously. In this regard, I will suggest the confiscation of the property of such a person and in addition, he or she should be banned for life from holding any political position. One of the cornerstones of good governance is accountability. Government should be made accountable to the people through free and fair election. A government not well constituted through the provision of the law of the land should

not be recognised by the people. Besides, those at the helm of affairs should carry the people along in their major decisions especially those that affect all of us. There is need for attitudinal change on the part of the ruler and the ruled. We need to do away with nepotism in our public life and embrace excellence. For the effectiveness of the Public Service, far reaching measures must be taken. First, the recruitment process must be looked into. Recruiting personnel on the basis of federal character is to sacrifice efficiency and effectiveness.

Therefore, recruitments should be based on merits, competence etc. Secondly, the Civil Servants and other categories of staff must be well motivated in order for them to discharge their duties without fear or favour. Thirdly, the behaviour of the civil servants must change. It must not be business as usual. They must be trained and re-trained to imbibe the spirit of innovation, ingenuity, efficiency, achievement, prudent use of scarce resources and to do away with all forms of wastes that have characterised Nigeria public administrative system over the years. There should also be public enlightenment in order for the masses to appreciate what the public servants are doing.

In the final analysis, if the above recommendations are implemented by those at the helm of affairs, they would go a long way in solving some of the problems confronting our public service and also improve the quality of governance in the country.

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