Governance and Political Leadership in Africa: Focus on Nigeria @ 59

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Abstract: Governance and leadership in Africa a challenge that has continued to shape the success of policies and programmes aimed at promoting development in the region. The leadership selection process in Africa takes the imposition pattern and African leaders have frequently come to their position with limited experience. The failure in Africa came due to frequent leadership change, lack of ideology, policy reversal and weak institutional patterns in tandem with the caliber of leaders and leadership structures. Despite all efforts in recent years, there is need to address corruption, mass poverty, prevalence diseases, sectional and ethnocentric maneuverings, insecurity, electoral violence, poor intergovernmental relationships, and political interference in decision-making. The vision of Africa is peaceful democratic regions that attract foreign trade and investment, as well utilize thousands of talented Africans and billions of flight capital now in safe havens abroad. The paper explores the ineptitude leadership paradox ranging from personal capacity underdevelopment to social psychology, value deficiencies and misunderstandings that need to be addressed for Africa to be repositioned politically using descriptive analysis from secondary data. The paper observes that for Africa to overcome the crises of leadership and governance in the continent, those on whom the burden of leadership must comprehend their responsibilities, duties and obligation, and face the challenges of leadership in Africa. Since the long term salvation of developing countries depends on the quality of its future leaders. The paper concludes that only leadership that has maximum empathy for people to be relevant in qualitative movement of Africa.
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Introduction

The concept of governance and political leadership are like Siamese twins that the condition of one informs the other. In other words, when political leadership is visionary, honest, dedicated, committed and purposeful it brings about good governance. Furthermore, when good governance is entrenched, quality political leadership emanates subsequently from the system (Masciulli, 2009). Governance and leadership in Africa's scenario leaves sour taste in the mouth and depicts abject poverty and misery in the midst of abundance. However, governance is the exercise of power through a country's economic, social and political institutions in which institutions represent the organizational rules and routines that shape the incentives of public policy-makers and providers of public services (UNDP, 2007). Governance in Nigeria dates back to the colonial period, good governance is a recent idea of democratic governance that found expression in the detailed provisions of the 1979 constitution that contained the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy. Good governance is the criteria for assessing government under the 1999 Constitution, due to the negative effect of military rule, the activities of civil society and the pressures of international financial institutions like World Bank, IMF and UNDP (Nwabueze, 2005).

Good governance among other things includes participatory, transparent and accountable, effective and equitable, and it promotes the rule of law. It ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources (UNDP, 2007). These characteristics of good governance were glaringly deficient in governance during the military interregnum, thus making good governance element of constitutional government to be in its infancy in Nigeria. Good governance can be acknowledged as the term that symbolizes the paradigm shift of the role of governments. It is instructive to state that political leadership in the context here refers not only to the government or to the leadership of an organized state, but encapsulate the totality of the political class that has the capacity to exert influence on the apparatus of government even from behind the scene.

Nigeria has existed for nearly fifty-nine years with little or no record of socio-economic development. The ugly trend is not unconnected with poor leadership. According to Ojukwu (2019) Nigeria struggles for sustainable democracy, good governance, and development have been so daunting that all previous attempts at democratic transition have been futile. It is unbelievable that despite the long years of independence, Nigeria in the midst of giant is still battling with the problem of good governance. The crop of leaders that have attained leadership position since independence had in one way or the other lacked vision and sense of commitment to development. The renowned novelist, Chinua Achebe, insisted that the root cause of the Nigerian predicament should be laid squarely at the foot of bad leadership. "The trouble with Nigeria", Achebe (1984) argued:

> Is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian
> character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land, climate, water, air or anything else. The

Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibility, to the challenge of personal example, which is the hallmark of true leadership.

Commitment by political leaders is a necessary condition for reform without which development is impossible. Tanzania, Ghana and South Africa provide outstanding examples where committed leadership has brought about revolutionary changes in the society. The reverse is the case with the nature of Nigerian Political leadership summarized by Adio (2002) thus:

Those that were not misguided and corrupt, were just plain inefficient, or mere replacements for the colonial masters: either in military or civilian garbs, they were of the same hues, more interested in power and wealth than in the emancipation of their people and sustained by neo-colonial and imperialist interest, they cultivated personality cults, repressed their people, pursued bogus policies and grandiose projects and turned the state into personal possession.

With leaders of this nature, it is not surprising that Nigeria is yet to achieve democracy or development. To achieve meaningful development, there must be a complete change of attitude on the part of the Nigerian political leadership class. The need for discipline and honesty on the part of the project implementers cannot be compromised; such officials should show enough discipline, interest, willingness, dedication and honesty. Without these attributes and the will to pursue set economic goals, all other ingredients of development present would amount to nullity. Furthermore, leaders must see themselves as servants and not bosses of the people irrespective of their ethnic or religious backgrounds and carry the people along with the development policies of the state. Furthermore, political and higher bureaucratic appointments must cease to be a means of easy accumulation of illicit wealth and a new political culture that abhors corruption in public life and humiliates corrupt public servant must be encouraged. The paper observes that for Africa to overcome the crises of leadership and governance in the continent, those on whom the burden of leadership will fall in the future must fully comprehend their responsibilities, duties and obligation. They must also be exposed and be prepared to face the challenges of leadership in developing society. Since the long term salvation of developing countries depends on the quality of its future leaders.

Conceptual and Theoretical Clarifications
Governance

The concept governance has been around in both political and academic discourse for a long time, referring in a generic sense to the task of running a government or any other appropriate entity. Most recently, it has gained particular significance in the literature on Africa development as a result, among other things, of the World Bank (1989) identifying the crisis on the continent as one of governance. More specifically, the Bank refers to such phenomena as the extensive personalization of power, the denial of fundamental human rights, widespread of corruption, and the prevalence of unelected and unaccountable government. Governance is a set of values, policies and institutions through which the society manages economic, political as well as social processes at different levels, on the basis of interaction among the government, civil society and private sector. In essence, the concept of governance is not new and probably as old as human civilization. It means the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented. The concept of governance relates to the quality of relationship between the government and citizens whom it serves and protects. Governance could be define as one in which the concerned authority if any, exercises power, exerts influence and manages the country's social as well as economic resources leading to better development. In a precise manner, governance is the way those in power, use the power, it has social, political, and economic dimensions (Sahni, 2003).

Governance is defined as the capacity to establish and sustain workable relations between individual actors in order to promote collective goals (Chazan, 1992). According to Galadima (1998) it is a process of organizing and managing legitimate power structures, entrusted by the people, to provide law and order, protect fundamental human rights, ensure rule of law and due process of law; and provide for the basic needs and welfare of the people and the pursuit of their happiness. Governance is the conscious management of regime structures with a view to enhancing the legitimacy of public realm (Hyden, 1992). Governance consequently, is concerned with the uncovering viable regime forms as well as degree of staleness-the capacity to entrench the authority of the central state and to regularize its relations with society. World Bank (1989) defines governance quite narrowly as "the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs. In the words of Barkan (1992), governance involves less in the way of administrative management and more in the way of political management; with its emphasis on developing networks of reciprocity and exchange, governance increases the possibilities of accomplishing more while spending less.

In view of Sri-latha (2003) governance means the act and manner of managing public affairs. Through the process of governance, the link between the civil society and state is established, giving a shape to the way decisions are made for serving public interest. The constitution provides the legal framework of governance. The institutions embodying the governance process include the executive, legislature, judiciary, army, bureaucracy, political parties and interest groups. It is the moral principles and rules of conduct, having a bearing on both the legal framework and the institutions, which basically determine the government and the governed.

Governance is legitimate in a positive sense when the government is installed by the people through institution arrangements that are put in place by the people and when the performance of the ruler is adjudge good and accepted by the people and when the people have no power to remove the ruler in case of very grievous offence, such a government is legitimate and democratic. Although governance is practiced by political elites, it is manifest in the condition of citizenry. This implies that a strong state is unlikely to emerge in the absence of a vibrant civil society. It concerns the institutionalization of the normative values that can motivate and provide cohesion to the members of the society at large (Hyden, 1992). Efforts to operationalize governance inevitably lead to associate good governance with democratic values and procedures. Hyde's concept is primarily to African polities because of breakdown of governance across the continent (Barkan, 1992). It is no coincidence that the diminution of the governance realm across Africa has accompanied the spread of personal rule.

Leadership

Leadership has been defined as a set of activities, observable to others that occur in a group or organization involving a leader and followers who willingly subscribe to common purposes and work together to achieve them (Sadler, 2003). This definition leaves out various components in leadership such as multidirectional, reciprocal influence (Yukl, 2006) and persuasion or example (Gardner, 1993). Employing this definition within the African context would additionally be folly based on the fact that it focuses on a premise of leadership in a willing population which exists in a fairly successful democracy. According to Bogardus (1934) leadership mean both a personality phenomenon and a social process involving a number of persons in mental contact in which one person assumes dominance over the others and organizes their activities to move in a specific direction, changes their attitudes and beliefs and at every stage the followers exert influence, often a changing counter-influence, upon the leader. More specifically and based on this general background, political leadership is a part of a multi-causal social processes that brings about concrete political outcomes (Greenstein, 2006). In this regard, leaders mobilize a significant number of followers to accept their diagnosis and policy prescriptions for collective problems or crises (Masciulli, 2009) and both leader and followers are in the end affected by what they create (Rousseau, 1987). From the foregoing, the characteristics of political leadership are the existence of a group phenomenon meaning that there are no leaders without followers, the use of influence by the leaders to guide a group of people towards a certain course of action or towards the achievement of certain goals and the assumption of some form of hierarchy within a group (Nahavandi, 2014).

Political Leadership

Ordinarily, leadership is conceived by Cartwright (1978) as the ability of an individual who leads to get others to do what he wants for their own or for society's good rather than his own. It implies that leadership is altruistic and gears towards harnessing the people and their potentials to achieve their own good and that of society. Okadigbo (1987) explains that it connotes the personality at the helm of affairs and the manner of his exercise of given or appropriated powers with respect to the dispensation of national resources and his approach to the well being of the people. In a related perspective, Ogbeidi (2012) avers that political leadership refers to the ruling class that bears the responsibility of managing the affairs and resources of a political entity by setting and influencing policy priorities affecting the territory through different decision-making structures and institutions created for the orderly development of the territory. It could be described as the human element that operates the machineries of government on behalf of an organized territory. The postulation implies that people who hold decision-making positions in government whether by election, appointment, electoral fraud, conquest, right of inheritance or other means constitute political leadership. It thus presupposes that political leadership goes beyond the ruling elites that directly manage the affairs of a territory; it embraces the totality of the political class that has the capacity to manipulate the machineries of government even from behind the scene.

The centrality of political leadership in governance has been captured vividly by the political economy approach or perspective that emphasizes the interface of the state and economy as well as the dynamics. Thus, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) does not lose sight of the importance of political and public administration dimensions of development with strong emphasis on good governance. It links these dimensions or variables of development to the economic and socio-economic ones (Ottosen, 2010). The pre-eminence of state (political or super structure) in the distribution and allocation of resources (economy or sub structure) as well as moderation in any society stands out. Efforts to build institutional, administrative and other capacities will be wasted if the political context is not favourable (Herbst, 1990). This could explain the nexus between the ruling and governing classes as well as the interplay of their interests on one hand and with that of the citizenry on the other. The greatest problem in Africa is the provision of effective, progressive leadership which seeks not to be served but to serve, a leadership that goes beyond verbal declarations to action (RCIAD, 2004).

The ruling class as used here are the leaders that occupy governance positions, while the governing class refers to the sponsors of those in leadership position, described in most cases as godfathers. It is through political leadership manifested in the manning of the structures of government that the affairs of the state are managed and regulated. The background, orientation, character and perceptions of the leaders that man the governance structures as well as the milieu inform their pattern/style of governance and ultimate aim: good or bad governance. This could go a long way to understanding the diverse nature of

electioneering and other democratic processes in Africa; their fallouts and the concomitant levels of development across countries in the continent. The fore-going explains the import of political leadership and its inevitability in achieving good governance. Hutchful (1991) points out that democracy in Africa should be focused on two critical elements: the political will to uphold the basic principles of democracy, and concerted efforts to create an economically enabling environment for democracy to thrive.

Models of Political Leadership
The models of political leadership generally practiced and relevance to Africa are:

a) Transformational Leadership is an ongoing process by which leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation; it converts followers into leaders and leaders into moral agents (Burns, 1978). The leader's task is raising consciousness on a wide plane and his/her fundamental act is to induce people to be aware or conscious of what they feel, to feel their true needs so strongly, to define their values so meaningfully, that they can be moved to purposeful action (Burns, 1978). Such a leader moves the follower beyond immediate self-interests through idealized influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual stimulation, or individualized consideration (Bass, 1999). This heightening of awareness requires a leader with vision, self-confidence and inner strength to argue successfully for what he sees is right or good not for what is popular or acceptable according to the established wisdom of time (Bass, 1985). Nelson Mandela, the first black president of post-apartheid South Africa is one leader who very easily makes the cut of transformational leadership. Bass puts forward four elements of transformational leadership which are charismatic (idealized) influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual simulation and individualized consideration (Bass and Bass, 2009). All these are mirrored in Mandela's leadership in South Africa, during and after apartheid. Idealized influence as a component of transformational leadership calls for the leader to serve as a role model for high ethical behaviour, instill pride and gain respect and trust of the people (Simić, 1998). Mandela's charisma in this regard was renown, so much so that it was named the 'Madiba magic' (Boehmer, 2009). One only needs to listen to broadcasts from around the globe about Nelson Mandela's example of influence in their individual trajectories. These include citizens of South Africa, political leaders such as Barack Obama (Obama, 2014), spiritual leaders such as the Dalai Lama (Dalai Lama, 2014) and even sporting organizations such as FIFA testament to the broad appeal of the principles he exemplified. Inspirational motivation within the context of transformational leadership means the degree to which the leader articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers in order to elicit a common goal (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Leaders with inspirational motivation challenge followers with high standards, communicate optimism about future goals, and provide meaning for the task at hand. Nelson Mandela had a clear vision of South Africa free from apartheid and was able to portray this vision despite his 27 years of incarceration. He communicated this vision clearly to the people of South Africa and the world over, a vision that was realized as a result of among other things, this inspiration).

Transformational leadership style should also have a component of intellectual simulation whereby the leader encourages the followers to challenge the status quo and drive them towards innovation and creativity (Avolio, 2010). Mandela's reconciliatory approach to fighting apartheid was creative in that he sought to have a South Africa that was free from apartheid and saw the equality of all races. This resulted in an effective regime change without causing disharmony among the races. The final component of transformational leadership is individualized consideration in which through the process of transformational leadership, the leader takes on the role of mentor by assigning responsibilities to followers as opportunities for growth and development through a process of self-actualization (Avolio, 2010). Mandela spearheaded the formation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which sought to heal the nation after the nation's long period under the apartheid regime. Through this, the ability of South Africans to live in harmony despite their differences and scarred past. This ideal form of leadership is without a doubt what the African continent needs in order to change the status quo on the continent. Such leadership should be emulated by young people seeking to be leaders.

b) Participative Leadership involves efforts by a leader to encourage and facilitate participation by others in making important decisions (Yukl, 2006). This type of leadership focuses on consultation, consensus building through public forums and even referendums. One example of this leadership style is Kenya's constitutional referendum in 2010 in which the citizens voted in the current constitution in force (McGregor and Ombok, 2010). Many countries in Africa have numerous, even major and critical, constitutional changes brokered without any consultations with the public. The most commonly abused constitutional provision is the extension of presidential term limits. Between 1990 and 2009, 24 African presidents considered changing the provisions for tenure elongation in their constitutions, 15 of them succeeded (Dulani, 2011).

c) Servant Leadership The premise of servant leadership is that the leader is one who seeks to serve, and that this serving is a natural component of the leader (Greenleaf, 1977; Farling, Stone, and Winston, 1999). Being a natural component of the leader, this leadership style is considered virtuous with the leader possessing specific virtues of agape love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and service (Patterson, 2003). The founding president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere is a good example of an intelligent and altruistic leader who practiced participative leadership. Under the auspices of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), Nyerere introduced the ideology of "uhuru na kazi" -freedom and work (1963). The main pillar of "uhuru na kazi" was "ujamaa and kujitegemea" (solidarity and self-reliance). In the pre-colonial era, Tanzania was largely a peasant agriculturalist

society. This had changed markedly in its years under various colonial powers; the Portuguese (1652), the German, (1888) and British (1890) into a largely cash crop cultivating society supplying the industrial revolution in Europe. It was against this background that Nyerere invoked his Ujamma na Kujitegemea policy, aimed at returning Tanzania to a self-sufficient agricultural economy. This was a deliberate strategy by Nyerere to break away from the colonial concept of modernization and dependency. The Village Executive Council established under the Ujamaa Villages Act equally made provision for each village to establish its own village assembly and a Village Executive Council. The VEC had power to initiate their own social, commercial, and economic ventures. According to World Bank Report (1980), between the periods of Ujamaa 1970 and 1979, the indices of food production in Tanzania ranked one of the highest in Africa: 102 percent in 1970, 117 percent in 1975, and an annual average of 101.5 percent through 1979 (Etkepe and Okolo, 2010). The founding President's altruism was evident in his voluntary decision to step down from power.

d) Authoritarian Leadership this is considered the most common and most publicized leadership model in Africa. Authoritarian leadership has greatly contributed to the problems with succession in Africa as well as an attack on democracy. Several factors can be attributed to create this type of leadership style.

i. **Mode of Acquiring Power** For the first 30 years after independence, the number of African presidents who were elected in free and fair democratic elections was few and far between. Only a third of one hundred and two political successions between 1963 and 1998 were regulated (Govea and Holm, 2010). In the first two decades of independence in Africa, there were forty successful coups and countless attempted coups (Meredith, 2006). Power in Africa was acquired by gun, rigging or giving power to handpicked successors. This inadvertently led to paranoia and leaders constantly feared being overthrown. The end result was leaders' undivided focus on consolidating loyalty, scheming longer office tenure and silencing any dissension leading some to pursue violent methods. Idi Amin, for instance, acquired power by a coup, was prone to erratic behaviour and believed that his more educated ministers and military officers were plotting his upheaval (Meredith, 2006; Kaufman, 2003). Such thinking affects the governance of a country seeing that the leader's attention would be on his personal agenda rather than those of the state.

ii. **Sycophancy** is based on a need for self-preservation leading people to do whatever it takes to remain in the good graces of a person. The rule of despotic leaders in Africa has been perpetuated by those close to and around them encouraging and cheering them on. In Nigeria, military generals around General Sani Abacha were key in helping him hold on to power and enabled his authoritarian and corrupt rule to go on for 15 years (Dowden, 2009). For African leaders to break the cycle of dictatorship, they must break the circle of yes men, and women, around them.

iii. **Weak Institutions** *In* countries like Angola, weak institutions have made it possible for leaders to loot public coffers at will with tax payers' money bankrolling lavish lifestyles of top officials (Dowden, 2009). Without clear mechanisms to separate institutions such as the Central Bank, the police force, the judiciary and parliament from the executive, leaders are able to control all areas of governance and are accountable to no one. For instance, the governor and deputy governor of the Bank of Uganda is a presidential appointee in a system that has little, if any, checks on the process (Section 27 Bank of Uganda Act).

An Assessment of Governance and Political Leadership in Some African States

In order to have a clear picture of leadership and governance crises in Africa, the paper examines governance and political leadership in selected African countries. Nigeria, is the "giant of Africa", the country became independent in 1960. Out of 59 years of independence, the country has been under the control of tyrannical and autocratic military dictators for about thirty years. The military employed all sorts of intimidation, aggressive and elimination methods to remain and withhold the political power. Under the new dispensation, the country seems to be experiencing nascent democracy though leadership into public and political office still follow imposition pattern. The political situation in Ghana is similar to that of Nigeria, for instance, since the country's independence in 1957; Kwame Nkurumah ruled the country up to 1969 when his government was toppled. Since then military ruled the country for almost twenty years (1979), Jerry Rawlings ruled the country from 1981 and changed to civilian President after 12 years in power through a series of less-than-legitimate election before he handed over to John Kufor in 2001.

Zaire, formerly Congo-Kinshasa is a country in Africa that never experience stable democratic governance as a result of despotic and tyrant leader. In 1960 Mobutu Sese Sekou terminated the government of Patrick Lumumba in a bloody and gruesome manner. Mobutu a self acclaimed life President of Zaire is one of the African leaders that overstayed their glorious day in office until he was chased out of the country, while the present administration in Zaire is not ready to give room for popularly elected leader. Malawi is a small country in Africa where Kamuzu Banda became the head of state in 1966, and proclaimed himself as "Life President" for the country and life Chairman for his party. The human right records of the regime were so bad that Amnesty International (human rights group) alerted the whole world on the frightening repression melted to opposition in the country. In Zambia, President Kenneth Kaunda ruled for 27years, from 1977-1991 when his ambition to become life president was cut short, before President Frederick Chiluba was popularly elected in the general election. In Kenya, after the dearth of President Jomo

Kenytta in 1977, Daniel Arap Moi became their leader ruled for years, autocratically and rejects any reform that can pave way for democracy in the country.

Also in Central African Republic, Emperor Jean Bedel Bokassa toppled the regime of President David Dacko in 1966, since then he refused democracy to operate in the country. The government of the country was nothing but family compound. He was sentenced to death and later reversed to life imprisonment as a result of world leaders and international organizations plea. Liberia was founded in 1847 by Americans for freed slaves. The country was described as the oldest in democracy in Africa until 1980 when Samuel Doe killed William Tolbert who have been in government since 1951 with President Tubmen in a bloody coup. Samuel Doe ruled for ten years and turned Liberia to a personal courtyard, until 1990 when he was brutally murdered by Prince Yormie Johnson version of rebel. Then rebel version of Charles Taylor ruled the country in a tyrannical and despotic manner, until recently when peace returned to Liberia, and the country became the first country in Africa to produce female President in a general election. The foregoing is a pointer to the fact that in Africa, most countries are still been ruled by the tyrants, as a result of this, development is very far from the continent. This menace has dogged almost all African countries since independence that the whole continent is riddled with despots. Most of the leaders have decided to remain in power and aim to retain number one seat of their countries. Most of these despotic leaders have intentionally render democracy useless in their countries simply because they want to remain in power.

Political Leadership and Good Governance in Africa: The Nexus

Governance and effective-ethical leadership are the essential requirements for any country or organization to be considered successful in the eyes of all stakeholders in the 21st century. Botha (n.d) rightly observes that hunger, poverty, diseases and lack of development in Africa are in the first instance political and governance issues. Both economic and corporate governance take their cues from political governance. It would be naive to suggest that the latter could improve within a corrupt and self-serving political system, without ensuring that political governance itself is underpinned by effective-ethical leadership. Many African nations, and others elsewhere in the developing world, are poorly governed. It could be proposed that this is one reason why these countries lag behind the rest of the world in economic growth, in medical and educational achievements, in social and political improvements and in freedom from internal conflict. If governance and leadership were to be improved in Africa, infant mortality and maternal morbidity rates would fall, the struggle to contain malaria, typhoid and other curable diseases would be more effective, civil strife would prove less damaging and democratic transitions would be much smoother. Analyzing one of Africa's Development Strategies – The Lagos Plan of Action, Owusu (2003) rightly notes that it focused exclusively on the external causes of the economic and social crisis and neglected internal causes such as lack of political leadership and good governance.

Hence, good corporate governance is critical for developing countries towards alleviating its problems of governance and leadership, especially concerning housing, health, education, unemployment and low economic growth. Without effective leadership and good governance at all levels in public life especially, it is arguably virtually impossible to achieve and to sustain effective administration, to achieve sustainable collective goals, to sustain quality and deliver first-rate services to the people of the continent. The increasing complexities and requirements arising from the constant change in society, coupled with the constant push for higher levels of productivity, require effective and ethical leadership. Annan cited in Venter (2011) contends that for Africa to prosper, good governance, rule of law and systems of accountability are essential to ensure that resources are subject to public scrutiny and used effectively and efficiently. Political governance thus has an important interrelationship with economic and corporate governance. The relationship between the institutions of political and corporate governance can be recognized through the principal roles the main legislative, regulatory and judicial bodies play in the establishment and ensuring relevance and continuation of many key institutions in public, private and civil societies. The objective of corporate governance is to assist and enhance regulations that govern institutions. The aim is to create a certain degree of order and stability and protect the interests of the public. Governance cannot attain its promised results if it is not supported in an interactive relationship with effective political leadership.

Challenges of Governance and Leadership in Africa Referencing Nigeria

The problem which troubles Africans most is the failure of political leadership. There are of course failures in other domains, but these are traceable in the consciousness to political leadership deficiencies. Seteolu (2004) summarizes the challenge from Nigerian perspective the political elites is not a productive class, but rely on the control of state structures to access economic rewards. The over politicization of the Nigerian state is understood in the context of the unmediated struggle for power, influence and patronage. The nature of political contest ensured the emergence of a local governing class without ideological commitment. Rather than pursue political contests within ideological frameworks, politics became a contested terrain for shallow, self-centered political gains.

The ideology of African politics means that aspirant political leaders do not see a pressing need to state their macro-vision for the continent. There is no explicit formulation of any systems values. The nature of Nigerian state evolved a predatory political class that was concerned with power struggle, consolidation, alignment and realignment in the context of hegemonic control. This could be linked to lack of ideology in the political space, monetization of the political process, expand the basis of political participation and canvass alternative policy agenda (Seteolu, 2004; Obi, 2000). Ake and Onoge (1995) pointed out that political leadership is parochial rather than national; and corruptly converts national resources into its project of primitive accumulation. Ethnic diversity is manipulated to stay afloat to the detriment of national cohesion due to lack of national heroes. The failure was usually explained either by the easy manipulability of the cultural pluralist background, or by the "two publics" antagonism. The personalize nature of rule in so many African countries means not only that public policy making lacks the logic and empirical content that typically characterizes such an activity in order contexts but also that governance structures are largely informal and subject to arbitrary change (Hyden,1992). Following the widespread abuses of civil and political rights by such rulers as Idi Amin, Emperor Bokassa, and Macias Nguema in the late 1970's, however, Africans gradually began to recognize their significance. One of the most important messages coming out in literatures is that African government can no longer at will, by invoking the demand for national unity; violate civil and political rights of their citizens.

Nigeria, which is the largest country in the continent of Africa, has a dearth of genuine leaders. Also equally relevant and important is the absence of political will. A political will is the compelling force for sound leadership quality, the ability to do what is right, what is relevant and what is attainable within the context of patriotic nationalism. Political will very often means personal or group sacrifices. It implies the ability to implement policies that have a nationalistic important and relevant without allowing pockets of interest to detract from what should naturally be of national benefit. In contemporary Africa, Nelson Mandela represents that model of leadership by personal sacrifice to redeem his people from servitude (Isekhure, 1995). In light of this, Eze (1995) states that leadership in Nigeria situation requires experimental investigations. For instance, it has been asserted that Nigerian management is marked by authoritarian leadership characteristics and practices. They maintain rigid dictatorial approach, as well as master-servant, rider-horse relationship with subordinates.

In fact, it is been said that a Nigerian man is by nature and training an autocrat who demands nothing but respect and obedience from his subordinates, and those younger and lower in status than him. Also in public sector, the leadership has been associated with certain undesirable traits such as double- standards, pursuance of selfish goals, lack of seriousness and indiscipline. Most African leaders assumed their role with limited experience and training in the art and science of directing and effectively managing the affairs of a modern state (Kamuntu, 1993). The challenge to African leaders is thus to develop the capacity that would enable us to strike a balance between the values of African societies and the governance that our nations must follow. However, the concern must be to blend the two rather than to treat them as if they were mutually exclusive.

The political power in Africa became concentrated in one political party and finally in hand of one leader. Making the rise of the supremacy of the office of the President over all organs of government, most African Presidents enjoyed re-election in perpetuity without any competition. Kamuntu (1993) observes that consequent resistant to the concentration of power to the hands of one man, the President was brutally suppressed with greater violations of human rights, resulting in massacres and millions of Africans becoming refugees or becoming displaced persons and many qualified African's seeking employment opportunities in foreign countries in search of personal security. Africa's continuing crisis presents a tremendous challenge to the continent and its leadership. It is unfortunate that political leadership aspirants in Africa do not see a pressing need to state their macro vision for the continent. There is no explicit formulation of any systematic values. Political leadership in Africa is parochial rather than national; it corruptly converts national resources into its project of primitive accumulation. Agbaje and Roberts (2002) pointed out that post independence leaders in Africa not only personalized power but also privatized the state for the purpose of primitive accumulation, clientelism, repression and all forms of opposition. Instead of using the state for initiating development, African leaders utilized it as a vehicle for terrorizing the citizenry, thereby leading to the disengagement of the populace from the public realm.

The above statement shows that leadership and their cohorts in Africa have simply privatized the state for their selfish interest. Leadership in Africa is characterized by primordial parochial, personalized and selfish tendencies, political brigandage, ethnic rivalry and cleavages, clientelism and privatized state apparatuses. Indeed, respected, visionary leaders that are of proven integrity are needed to captain the ship of the nations of Africa; such a leader of the people must have vision and mission. He should incarnate all ideals, for which his party stands and be able to actualize the promises of the party to the electorate (Adeola, 2007). Leadership has been a major bane of Africa. Africans have all agree that the fundamental problem militating development in Africa is the poverty of leadership making it the key issue even in the process of democratization. Thus, Adeola (2007) argues that the history of great nation have been linked to visionary and purposeful leadership, be it in the advanced industrialized countries or developing nations. Such leaders have played significant roles in the socio-economic development and political emancipation of their countries. Closely linked to leadership is ideology. In the absence of visionary leadership to give a clear-cut ideology, a nation continues to lack orientation and commitment. Consequently, leadership has failed to harness the resources and the ingenuity of the people for national development.

The trouble with Africa is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the African character or political system in operation. The character of political leadership became a problem as most of them lost or lacked control of effective leadership. This led to the scramble and partition of state resources to suit their purpose.

An Assessment of Governance and Political Leadership in Nigeria Fourth Republic

May 29, 1999 marked a watershed in Nigeria's political annals. It was the dawn of the fourth Republic, a return to democracy after years under the yoke of military misrule which was marked by much suffering, infrastructure decay, and institutionalized corruption. The hope of common man for a just and an egalitarian society became rekindled with the institution of a democratic government. Nigerians greeted the return to democratic rule with widespread jubilation and optimism for a new era of stability, peace, and prosperity. However, twenty years after, Nigerians are still anxious to see and enjoy social welfare, justice, equity, and equal access to resources and power. A reflection on the above calls for issues that stands as challenge(s) to governance in Nigeria.

Nigeria's fundamental approach to leadership is troubling. In Nigeria, the primary goal of assuming leadership position is self-enrichment. Whereas Nigerian Leaders have the power to educate, inspire, and provide the people with the resources to advocate for the causes they believe in, but like bad parents, they have failed in their responsibilities to lead by good examples. Some people however seem to disagree that leadership is not Nigeria's problem. Certainly it is leaders and not the poor rural dwellers that are responsible for Nigeria's underdevelopment. In every country, it is the responsibility of the leader to protect the political, social, and economic interests of the citizens. Leading a country involves making policies and finding solutions to problems, ensuring stability of the polity, and guiding the society to prosperity. But a large number of the political leaders of Nigeria lack the vision, the passion, and the character to effectively govern the state and deal with the crumbling economy. They do not have a clear understanding of their responsibilities, as some of them are insensitive to the people's sufferings. Nigerians are tired of complaining to those who are leading without listening to them.

As Bell and Smith (2002) opined "leaders can point to many reasons why they aren't good listeners, but none of these reasons excuses them from the obligation to listen." Leaders who listen are, however, known to respond well to criticism and crisis, build more loyalty, and increase the morale of the followers. Listening is a way of showing that a leader cares about others. Due to the fact that power belongs to the people, no political leader in the advanced democracies would function effectively without the support of the people. Thus they constantly have their ears on the ground for information (signs of shift in public opinion) that often guides them in policy formulations and implementations. The world's leading democracies are what they are today because their leaders are innovative and always searching for solutions to their social, political and economic problems. But that is not the case with Nigeria; evidence of bad leadership is all over the landscape as the leaders have not gone beyond a promise for change.

They are only good at drumming the country's problems without finding their solutions. The institutions and infrastructure that are the bedrock of the economy are allowed to rot away leading to weak economy, rising unemployment and inflation, poverty and crime. The major challenge of democratic governance in Nigeria lies in the process for electing public officers into leadership positions. The President and Vice President at the federal level; the Governor and Deputy Governor at State level; and the Chairman and Councilors at the local government level; and all the members of the legislative Houses- National Assembly, Senate and House of Representatives) at the Federal level, State Houses of Assembly, and legislative Councils of the local governments are all by elections.

However, the electoral process and political party system are all corruption ridden and not sufficiently participatory (Azinge, 2004). The elections are not only flawed but warped, the political parties are dominated by godfathers, money bags and ex-military leaders, and their party primaries are mostly selective, non-participatory and undemocratic, thus resulting in the corruption of the leadership, loyalty to god-fathers and patrons, and indifference to the electorate and citizens in their style of governance. The issues of legitimacy and representative nature of the leadership in the country, is reflected in their lack of accountability to the constitution, the political party and the electorate. Thus the root of corruption can be traced to the problem of leadership, thereby necessitating the call for the reform of the electoral and Party systems.

The greater challenge facing Nigeria is corruption, this has been act of requesting, offering, giving or accepting directly or indirectly a bribe or any other undue advantage or the prospect thereof, which distorts the proper performance of any behavior required of the recipient of the bribe, the undue advantage of the prospect thereof (Kofele-Kale 2006). In line with the above, Olu-Adeyemi (2004) argued that in Nigeria, an understanding of what constitutes corruption transcends officialdom and discussing corruption broadly as a perversion or a change from good to bad will not be inappropriate. Also, citizens thrill at the non-enforcement of the rules that define the institutional basis of social, political and economic exchange, as corruption has become the dominant social norm and reflections on the first four decades of political independence no doubt indicate that citizens themselves are instrumental to the national decay, however, they are receptive to corrupt friendly regimes, thus, celebrating the potent force of mal-governance and underdevelopment (Olu-Adeyemi, 2004).

Unfortunately, after years of independence, Nigerians still harbor the mentality that public money belongs to no one and that any person who has access to it should convert it into his or her personal use. Corruption permeates every sector of the Nigerian society, from millions of scam e-mail messages sent each year by people claiming to be Nigerian officials seeking help with transferring large sums of money out of the country, to the police officers who routinely set up roadblocks, sometimes every few hundred yards, to extract bribes of 20 naira, about 15 cents, from drivers (Polgreen, 2005). However, the most disturbing and damaging form of corruption is made manifest in the succession of kleptocratic governments, which has produced extremely wealthy generals and political leaders. Similarly, Electoral corruption is prevalent. This is a situation that includes the purchase of votes with money, promises of office or special favors, coercion, intimidation, and interference with freedom of election, sale of votes, killing and maiming of people in the name of election, and a situation where losers" end up as the winners in elections, and votes turn up in areas where votes were not cast. Apart from the above, Nigeria manifests the prevalence of prebendalism and all of these have undermined democratic governance in the country.

Prior the return to civilian rule in May 1999, the human rights situation in Nigeria was very poor. The esteemed Nobel laureate, Prof. Wole Soyinka remarked that he smell the sperm of tyranny before the rape of the nation (CDHR, 2001), in a bid to describe the excruciating human rights situation in Nigeria during the dark days of military rule. At present, the situation has improved but the drawbacks and ineptitude of the long military interregnum still affects the human rights situation. This is because democracy has only succeeded in revealing the rot of human rights situation. At present, fundamental rights of citizens still come under attack despite the advent of democracy. For instance, the protection and enjoyment of the right to life and respect for human dignity is hampered by the non-availability of the necessary socio-economic infrastructures that can guarantee the realization and fulfillment of such rights.

According to the CDHR report on Human Rights, "the traditional means by which the Nigerian rights to life and respect for human dignity were abused are: death penalty, extra-judicial killings including assassinations; arbitrary arrests and detention; disappearances; avoidable disaster and the poor administration of our prison system." Apart from this a new dimension has emerged and this have to do with the individuals and groups who were dissatisfied with the ineptitude of the state functionaries and the brazen killings and maiming of Nigerians by unconventional security organizations who hijacked the duty of maintaining laws and order from the Nigerian police and assumed the business of protecting lives and properties in various parts of Nigeria. Extra-judicial killings have also increased in the land against one of the twin pillars of natural justice, which requires that a person must be heard before any punitive measure can be taken against him. The Nigerian police and the numerous ethnic militia groups in Nigeria took unenviable lead in the killings and brutalities that took place across Nigeria and the truth in most case is that the rights of Nigerians were violated. Police and military task force brutality have also increased and the rights of innocent Nigerians are trampled upon whether in their homes, highways, offices or public places. Although the military has gone back to the barracks for well over ten years, the human right situation has not really improved. It still presents the recurrent anomalies of extra-judicial killings, arbitrary arrest and detention without trial, torture and degrading treatment, which are perpetually perpetrated on a daily basis.

After years of military dictatorship, Nigeria found herself again in the mainstream of civil governance. While this development was seen by some people as an avenue to explore dividends and goodies of democracy, others saw it as an opportunity to express grievances. This had re-affirmed the poser that over the past several decades, Nigerians have sought to build a stable multiethnic nation. However, nation building has been complicated by Nigeria's tremendous diversities, thus, making the management of diversities to be more central than ever as a problem in Nigeria's political process. The interactions within the State have led to the formation of innumerable structures of sub-nationalism and recurrent skirmishes which have greatly increased since the return to civil rule in 1999. Since the re-emergence of democracy in May 1999, not less than one hundred political, ethnic and religious motivated conflicts have occurred in Nigeria. The democratic opening presented by Nigeria's successful transition to civil rule in May 1999 unleashed dormant political forces. It has become difficult to differentiate between genuine demands by these forces on the state and outright criminality and mayhem. Post-transition Nigeria is experiencing the rise of conflicts borne out of various agitations by a plethora of movements purportedly representing, and seeking to protect, their ethnic, political or religious interests in a country which appears incapable of providing the basic welfare needs of its citizens. Some of the reasons are the weak character of the Nigerian State and the inability of its equally weak institutions to engender order and security (Ayodele, 2004); poverty, military intervention in politics, citizen's apathy to the State, elitist greed and manipulation (Olu-Adeyemi, 2008) and Land, space and resource availability, Jurisdictional disputes between Monarchs, disregard for cultural symbols and pollution of cultural practices (Adeniji, 2003).

Conclusion

There is no gainsaying the fact that the quest for leadership is an undeniable fact in human history, especially in matters relating to the management of both human and material resources. Therefore, it should be noted that the success or otherwise of any country depends on the effectiveness or otherwise of its leaders. This shows that leadership is of essence in any human setup and it is tantamount to a stable polity and development. It is our belief that democracy has a role to play in helping to salvage

Africa from the nagging problem of leadership. The quality of leadership in Africa leaves much to be desired. There is urgent need for true and efficient leadership. Such leadership must be in the hands of qualified, competent, enlightened and honest persons for the overall development of Africa. That search may not end until we get principled followership and principled leadership resulting into principled governance of Africa.

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