

Assessment of Nigerian State and its unending Governance Crisis

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Abstract: *This paper attempts a critical assessment of Nigerian state and its unending governance crisis. Over the decades, there has been recurrent and sustained argument that the Nigerian state underperforms due to lack of state capacity to deal with the contemporary complexities of governance. The objectives of this paper are to examine the factors responsible for governance crisis in Nigeria, factors that predetermine the character of the Nigerian State and the effects of governance crisis on socio-economic development in Nigeria. Data are drawn secondary sources and the authors' close observations of events in Nigeria. Findings indicate that Nigeria has not fared well in three major areas: security of lives and properties, promotion of the rule of law, and provision of visionary leadership. The paper observed that governance crisis in Nigeria is an institutional problem that would require structural and reorientational approaches to diagnose, it therefore recommended that all enabling laws and enforcement agencies should be operational and faceless, not to identify with sacred cows.*

Keywords: *Assessment, Nigerian State, Unending Crisis, Governance.*

1. Introduction

There has been recurrent and sustained argument that the Nigerian state underperforms due to lack of state capacity to deal with the contemporary complexities of governance. However there is no controversy about the series of symptoms of state failure and state collapse in Nigeria; the point of debate here remains the extent of state's incapacity in promoting viable nationhood and managing governance crisis displayed by the Nigerian state. The "petroleum-rich" Nigerian state, confronted by sociopolitical instability, high degree of corruption, mass hostility to the "public," and poor macroeconomic management, continue to display the attributes of a state in crisis (Akinola, 2008). Successive governments in Nigeria lack the political will to initiate or sustain policy or structural transformation, or to embark on sound economic reform to reposition the state for greatness (World Bank, 1997). No matter the upsurge of globalization and the prospects of the borderless state, the expectation is for states to take a decisive role in economic transformation, growth, and development and jettison every act that is inimical to improved livelihood as well as socioeconomic and political development of the country. With the weakness of the Nigerian state and its ineffectiveness, it has become challenging to eradicate poverty, engage in infrastructural development, and stem the tides of insurgency and terrorism, which have the potency to derail the country's moderate political development. The governance crisis in Nigeria manifests in the declining capacity of political leaders to recognize and resolve systemic risks such as election fraud, terrorist attacks, herder-farmer conflict, armed banditry, kidnapping and police brutality etc.

Achebe wrote that "the trouble with Nigeria 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 or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to take responsibility, to take challenge of personal example which are the hallmark of true leadership" (Achebe, 1984) While unemployment with its attendant poverty increases at one extreme, the number of private jet owners grows in arithmetic progression at the other end. Excruciating poverty exists side by side with obscene opulence. For instance, according to National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS), the maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity rate in Nigeria is one of the highest in the world; with an estimated 545 maternal deaths for every 100,000 live births. 158 of every 1,000 children fewer than five years of age die of preventable diseases yearly (Orude, 2014). Almost 70 percent of the population lives on less than \$170 per day while life expectancy stands at 54 years (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2017). Insecurity is a problem despite the trillions of naira claimed to have been spent on security. The current wave of insecurity can partly be traced to the army of jobless youths. For example, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2017) recently alerted that 54 percent of Nigerian youths are unemployed. There is lack of critical mass of men and women of integrity willing to harness and unleash the various resources in the country for the common good or public interest.

Without doubt, the Nigerian state stood in-between exhibiting attributes of state collapse and state failure. According to Mimiko (2010), the Nigerian state has degenerated to the point where it is unable to provide minimal social security for its vulnerable population.

Statistically speaking, Nigeria has consistently ranked low in the World Governance Index in areas such as government effectiveness, political stability and the presence of violence and terrorism, rule of law, and control of corruption. Nigeria is perceived in the 2020 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index as a highly corrupt country with a score of 25/100 while its corruption ranking increased from 146 in 2019 to 149 in 2020 out of 180 countries surveyed. Many analysts refer to Nigeria as the world poverty and corruption capital. President Muhammadu Buhari won the 2015 and 2019 elections on his promise to fight insecurity and corruption, these promises are yet to be fulfilled; series of security threats are emerging, unleashing unspeakable violence on civilians while the fight against corruption is widely considered a mirage. There is an expectation for political leaders to recognize systemic risks and put in place the necessary infrastructure in place to nip them in the board. But the insufficiency of political savvy required to navigate the challenges that Nigeria faces increased unrest across the nation and exacerbated existing tensions.

Rather political elites in Nigeria more often than not exploit poverty and illiteracy to mobilize voters with food items such as rice, seasoning, and money. Rice and other consumables are usually packaged strategically with the image of political candidates and the parties they represent. The assumption is that people are more likely to vote for a politician who influences them with food than one who only brings messages of hope. The practice of using food to mobilize voters is commonly described as “stomach infrastructure” politics. The term “stomach infrastructure” arose from the 2015 election in Ekiti state when gubernatorial candidate Ayodele Fayose mobilized voters with food items and defeated his opponent Kayode Fayemi. It is undeniable that Nigerian political culture rewards incompetent leaders over reform-minded leaders who demonstrate the intellectualism and problem-solving capabilities needed to adequately address systemic issues of poverty and inequality.

Methodology

The paper adopted qualitative research design. In other words, it is an ex-post facto research design which Ibietan, Abasilim and Ebhohimen (2017) explain to essentially mean the textual analysis of secondary data before the conclusion and recommendations of a paper. The work made use of descriptive analysis to examine the issues of governance crisis in Nigeria. The paper which is theoretical in nature draws its argument basically from secondary data which include journal publications, newspapers, textbooks and internet sources. Statistical data were also used where necessary as empirical evidence. To improve on the reliability and validity of the paper, multiple secondary sources were used to minimize risk of error.

2. Conceptual clarifications and theoretical issues

Governance

The term “governance” cannot be pinned down to a universally acceptable definition. This is because it has fallen into semantic predicament to the extent that the literature on it replete with so many definitions by various scholars with different variant and subtype. The concept of “governance” in a generic sense involves the task of running a government or any other appropriate entity, such as a nation. To Oladoyin (2010), governance is the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented. Omotosho (2013) agreed that governance involves political management with emphasis on developing network of reciprocity and exchange, in order to increase the possibilities of accomplishing more while spending less. Governance is about goals and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented. It broadly means ‘the capacity to establish and sustain workable relations between individual actors in order to promote collective goals. World Bank (1989:60) defines governance as “the exercise of political power to manage a nation’s affairs.” Governance in essence, indicates the capacity to entrench the authority of the central state and to regularize its relations with society. In other words, it entails ‘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, provide for the basic needs and welfare of the people and the pursuit of their happiness.

To Adetiba and Rahim (2012) governance can be seen as the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels. Tihamiyu and Olaleye (2011) defined governance as general adherence to rule of law, transparency, productivity and accountability in government decision making that constantly achieve effective and efficient outcome for society. In the realm of public affairs, governance is seen as the range of policies public officials make and means they employ to manage the affairs of society (Ukaegbu, 2010). Governance is all about how the yearning and the aspirations of the people of a state are met. If, for instance, the resources of a state are managed for the benefits of all or the majority, we can talk of good governance. But if it is the few that enjoy the benefits thereof, or if the state is unable to harness her human and material resources to the fullest, as in the case of any country, we have bad governance. According to Adeosun (2012), good governance entails the capacity to manage a country’s resources in a transparent, accountable, equitable manner, in response to the needs of the people. A good aspect of this view is the need to recognise and respond adequately to the aspirations of the citizens. The need for good governance has been emphasized as an ingredient of progress. It is essentially necessary in developed, underdeveloped and developing nations. This is because of its ability to propel positive changes. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making (Akhakpe, 2014). All these factors in the view of Akhakpe (2014) determine the level of development in a given society.

Crisis

Omotosho (2013) says that crisis is often linked to the concept of stress. Crisis is common in a complex system (family, economy, society, political, social). When the system functions poorly, an immediate decision is necessary, but the causes of the dysfunction are not immediately identified. He speaks about crisis of moral values, an economic or political crisis, but not a motor crisis. The system still functions, but does not break down for instant, an immediate decision is necessary to stop the further disintegration of the system or the causes are so many, or unknown, that it is impossible to take a rational, informed decision to reverse the situation. Crisis has several defining characteristics. Seeger, Sellnow, and Ulmer (1998) say that crises have defining characteristics that are "specific, unexpected, and non-routine events or series of events that create high levels of uncertainty and threat or perceived threat to an organization's high priority goals." Venette (2003) argues that "crisis is a process of transformation where the old system can no longer be maintained." Therefore the fourth defining quality is the need for change. If change is not needed, the event could more accurately be described as a failure. Apart from natural crises that are inherently unpredictable (volcanic eruptions, tsunami etc.) most of the crises that we face are created by man. Hence the requirement of their being 'unexpected' depends upon man failing to note the onset of crisis conditions. Some of our inability to recognise crises before they become dangerous is due to denial and other psychological responses that provide succour and protection for our emotions. Adefarasin (2015) have a different set of reasons for failing to notice the onset of crises is that we allow ourselves to be 'tricked' into believing that we are doing something for reasons that are false. In other words, we are doing the wrong things for the right reasons. Okotoni (2017) in his inaugural lecture on "Governance Crisis and State Failure in Nigeria: Are we all Guilty?" Suggested that a different way of defining crisis as conditions are perceptions held by the highest level decision-makers of the actor concerned, threat to basic values, with a simultaneous or subsequent, high probability of involvement in military in politics, and the awareness of finite time for response to the external value threat.

3. Theoretical framework

This paper adopts elite theory popularized by Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923), and Gaetano Mosca (1858-1941) (Dowse and Hughes, 1989). The 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. There are varying perceptions on the role of elites in nation building. 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 part; others believe that elites are chief threat to the survival of nations (Dowse and Hughes, 1983). 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 issues in any country using elite theory. Elite theory is premised on a number of assumptions:

- 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;
- 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 decides on the structure, personnel, and process of public policies of the administrative system;
- 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).

Many of the elites do not hold formal or legal authoritative powers but are rather behind the scene, teleguiding and manipulating overt political and policy actions (Ikelegbe, 1994). 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 a state such as 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 contributions and activities of elites in these areas.

Governance crisis in Nigeria has a lot to do with state failure. The nature and character of the state and its operators, actors and agencies determine the trajectory and quality of governance. Where and when there are negative turning points in the sequence of the use of power and authority, the nation experiences alienation and instability, and sometimes, it experiences extreme trouble and grave danger (Oyovbire, 2007, p.5). The failure of the Nigerian state as it relates to governance is largely the making of the political elites. Likewise, the prevalence of governance crisis and development in Nigeria has a lot to do with the character and dispositions

of political leaders (Lawal, Imokhuede and Johnson, 2012). As Onanuga (2014, para.1) observes: “We are all victims of Nigeria’s governance crisis, and we all experience its symptoms. Failed schools, failed hospitals, failed roads, failed security, failed power supply, Boko Haram, Asaru Terrorism, Niger Delta militancy, kidnapping, the vanishing opportunities for our youths, the widening gulf between the rich and the poor, and the worst of all, the receding faith in Nigeria by Nigerians.... The point being emphasized in the foregoing is that the opportunistic character of politicking in Nigeria has created a colossal governance deficit in that context.”

The fact that Nigeria is oscillating between democratic stagnancy and governance backwardness are reflective of elites’ pursuit of personal aggrandisement and promotion of egocentricism rather than altruistic policies, that are nationalistic and ‘peoplecentric’ in nature. Peoplecentric policies are policies that are people-centred, whose objective primarily is designed to engage the citizenry and serve the interest of the people and the community.

4. Evidence of governance crisis in Nigeria

Obiozor (2015) opines that Nigeria is a nation born in optimism in 1960 at independence but has its 57 year lived in a state of doubt and uncertainty. Within those years too, all kinds of analysis and conclusions have been assembled on critical issues responsible for what has become a Nigerian dilemma over nation building and national development. This is because all countries compared to Nigeria in 1960 have made astronomical progress, developed relatively stable political and economic systems. When compared with 3rd world countries in the 1960s, such as countries in Asia like Singapore, Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea etc. In an interval of thirty years, the latter became the Asian Tigers.

In the light of this, issues concerning insecurity of life and property, rule of law, leadership failure, quality of followership, Misery Index and Corruption Perception Index Rankings are carefully selected for analysis.

Insecurity of Life and Property

The place of security in the development aspiration and agenda of any country is quite pivotal. Scholars have persistently reinforced the security-development nexus (Akinola, 2011; Shanum, 2003). Without security, other socioeconomic goals are unattainable. Shanum (2013) argues that No nation can enjoy lasting peace if her citizens live in abject poverty particularly if that nation is acknowledged as having the ability and substantial means to provide development and guarantee a good standard of living. Unfortunately, that is the tale of Nigeria. It is a tale of poor governance, insecurity and poverty in the midst of plenty.

Evidently, poor governance led to the categorization of Nigeria among “the 19 poorest, unhappiest, unhealthiest, and most dangerous nations to live in the world” (“National Assembly’s Amendment of CCB Act Cannot Stand,” 2016, p. 24).

Therefore, the unending security concerns explain why every successive government since Nigeria’s independence in 1960, has reiterated the importance of security as the core goal and primary purpose of government. Over the years, different administrations and regimes have always integrated the subject matter of security in their agenda, vision and mission statements.

To this end, public security institutions and agencies saddled with the responsibility of providing security in Nigeria include the “371,000 police personnel; 130,000 in the Army; 18,000 and 15,000 in the Navy and Air Force respectively” (Yagboyaju, 2016a, p. 52). Other prominent institutions controlled by the federal government include the National Intelligence Agency (NIA), Department of State Services (DSS), Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Federal Roads Safety Corps (FRSC), Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), Nigeria Prisons Service (NPS), Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Federal Fire Service and National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), among others.

Although the number of deaths and permanent injuries caused by these violent incidences is quite worrisome, it is more disturbing that “many of the cases are often unresolved several years after” (Yagboyaju, 2016b, pp. 58-59). Aside from the monumental loss of lives and properties, the continued oil insurgency by the Niger Delta militants and Boko Haram terrorism has the potential to threaten the corporate existence of Nigeria as a political entity (Akinola & Uzodike, 2014).

Disregard for Rule of Law

Constitutionalism and sanctity of the rule of law principle is germane to ending governance crisis, and ensuring security of life and property. The rule of law, underpinned by an independent judicial system, implies a functional legal framework that helps to ensure settlement of conflicts between the state and individuals on the one hand and among individuals or groups on the other. It also helps to ensure respect for property rights and contracts, while preventing the government and influential individuals from acting capriciously (Adamolekun, 2016). Also, in its oversight functions, the judiciary serves as a check on the excesses of the other arms of government, especially the executive.

A review of the activities of this arm, since 1960, reveals that it suffered “critical oscillations and dwindling fortunes in development and performance” (Simbine & Oladeji, 2010, p. 819). Disturbingly, the Fourth Republic, so far the longest in the country’s history, has recorded more brazen acts in the judicial arm. They are quite many, but few of the ones in which the National Judicial Council (NJC) itself failed the integrity test are cited for illustration. One of such was between Justice Aloysius Katsina-Ala, then Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN), and Justice Isa Ayo Salami, then President of the Federal Court of Appeal. The latter, with constitutional rights to set up election tribunals, had done so in respect of several cases in the aftermath of the 2011 general elections. For reasons best known to the CJN, he requested that the Sokoto State governorship election petition be disbanded by Ayo-Salami. In view of the latter’s insistence on the need for a convincing explanation, he was suspended from office and the CJN, as chairman of NJC, “arrested the delivery of the tribunal’s judgment” (Opadokun, 2016, p. 15). After many years, during which the tenure of the office in question expired, the judgment is yet to be delivered.

The Leadership Question

Leadership is, no doubt, a key factor in the whole gamut of public administration and the management of societal affairs. In the light of this, Nigeria’s lack of capacity in terms of the attainment of effective governance that addresses the issues of corruption, human rights, and mobilization of human and material resources for sustainable development is generally traced to leadership failure (Achebe, 1988; “Mo Ibrahim’s Sobering Report,” 2013). In Nigeria, democracy has not yielded the expected results due to the character of the political elites who has a limited understanding of what governance requires (Agulanna, 2006). Shanum (2013) maintains that “the progress of any nation rests on the stature or standard of its leadership and how they can bring this to bear on the welfare of people of the nation.” Therefore, the state is expected to perform service-delivery responsibilities, which include the construction of society’s infrastructure, including roads, posts, and telecommunications, and water, sewage, and energy infrastructures. Ironically, the Nigerian state has been unable to live up to these expectations. Indeed, once a political arrangement is dominated by visionless leaders, the country would perpetually struggle to attain peace and development. Furthermore, “many African governments have remained either criminally blind to, or unable to redress, the harsh realities of life for most of their citizens. Basically, no other region of the world has been as poorly led and governed by so many leaders for so long” (Uzodike, 2009, p. 2). In summary, leadership failure is one of the strongest foundations of state incapacity in Nigeria.

In 2016, the country exported an average of 2 million barrels per day; yet it not only was unable to fully account for its earnings, it also could not put its four refineries to “10.4 per cent capacity utilization” (“May 29: Wasted Years of Civil Rule,” 2015, p. 22). Despite the oil wealth, majority of Nigerians still live in penury; this explains the outright hostilities to any form of fuel increases in the country (Akinola, 2014). Nigeria has been referred to as “a rich country of poor people” (Agbaje, Onwudiwe, & Diamond, 2004, p. xx), whereas Suberu believes that Nigeria is the “greatest single developmental tragedy in the world today . . . the metaphor per excellence for a failed developmental experience” (Suberu, 2004, p. 31). Its unsuccessful socioeconomic reform, like the oil sector reform, becomes a point to note. Therefore, the failure to maintain the productivity of the refineries, weakness of oil governance machineries, and inept leadership led to the continued importation of finished petroleum products and a “criminally dubious fuel subsidy regime,” which stopped in 2015 (Akinola, 2014; Akinola & Wissink, 2018; “Swallowing the Bitter Pill of Fuel Deregulation,” 2016, p. 22).

Furthermore, the article raises different questions in relation to the leadership crisis in the country: Why did successive leadership in the country abandon agriculture and agro-allied manufacturing that were not only more reliable but also contributed so immensely to the good living conditions before the discovery of oil, for the latter whose economic values are largely determined by highly volatile factors? Such volatilities include the highly unstable and unpredictable international price of oil as well as the age-long restiveness in Nigeria’s oil producing Niger Delta region (Akinola & Uzodike, 2014). For how long can the country’s economy endure the various excruciating pains it has persistently encountered? For instance, according to the World Bank 2012 report, which had worsened thereafter, “62.6 per cent of the country’s estimated population of 160 million live below the \$1 per day poverty benchmark” (“Mo Ibrahim’s Sobering Report,” 2013, p. 22). In addition, Nigeria is said to have one of the highest global infant and maternal mortality rates, while it also houses “the highest out-of-school children (10.5 million) in the world” (“Mo Ibrahim’s Sobering Report,” 2013, p. 22).

Decrepit conditions of physical infrastructure such as roads, health facilities, transportation, telecommunications, public water supply, and electricity have for long compounded the problem. Yet, contracts for the repair and rehabilitation of most of the existing facilities as well as the construction of new ones have provided opportunities for “self-enrichment for contractors, public officials and consultants” (Abati, 2006, p. 6). This economic landscape, with evident hostile and inclement characteristics, contributed to the contraction in the remnants in Nigeria’s manufacturing sector; with a reported “1,500 factories witnessing partial or full shut-down between 2015 and April 2016” (“2017: Time Is Running Out, Buhari,” 2017, p. 16). Obviously, this is enough discouragement for the much awaited foreign direct investments (FDIs). And, as recommended by the UNDP, Nigeria needs “a minimum of \$20 billion per year for a decade” (“2017: Time Is Running Out, Buhari,” 2017), of such FDIs.

Finally, leadership as a supreme political virtue theoretically, “signifies the ability of a person or group of persons to persuade others to act by inspiring” (Robertson, 1985, p. 180). However, this hardly impacted on the respect for human rights during the period under review. Both under the country’s long experience with military rule (known for its autocratic character and general lack of respect for human rights and freedoms), and the Fourth Republic, Nigerians have been deprived of social justice, equity, and widespread political participation.

The Role of Followership:

There are no leaders without followers. In both theory and practice in a democracy, leaders lead with the consent of their followers, which is obtained through the instrumentality of the ballot paper. It follows therefore, that the followers deserve the leaders they get because they are or supposed to be instrumental to the emergence of the leaders. It is however, tempting to hold a leader entirely responsible when things go wrong but such temptation needs to be moderated by the fact that the followership have critical role to play in the success or failure of their nation. One of the critical roles the followership play is the right to act as the watch dog of the leadership. The followership abdicates that role by its uncritical acceptance of whatever the leader does. A critical followership is alive to its watch dog responsibility, which creates an atmosphere that prevents a democratic leader from turning himself into an autocratic leader and even an autocratic from turning himself into a god. Docile followership, on the other hand, is passive and has no stomach to question the leadership or hold him accountable for his deeds. As Agbese (2010) asserted, docile followership is a fertile ground for poor and failed leadership. Generally, enlightened societies have critical followership, hence on the average; have better and more committed leadership. For many people in Nigeria, politics is a dirty game and those who are involved in it are often viewed as liars and dishonest people (Ajayi & Ogoma; 2012). People of high integrity fear to be viewed in this manner and politics is left for the immoral, debauched and corrupt politicians who are not bothered about integrity. The implication of this on governance is maladministration and poor management.

Nigeria as world’s sixth most miserable

A recent report on ranking of nations using the Misery Index on the state of living standards appears quite worrisome, particularly to the ordinary Nigerian.

According to the latest Misery Index Report released by one Steve Hanke, an economist from the John Hopkins University, Baltimore, United States of America, Nigeria was ranked as the sixth most miserable country to live in.

Conceptually, the Misery Index which was first conceived and designed in the United States of America to give President Lyndon Johnson a snapshot indicator of the state of the economic wellbeing of the ordinary American during his tenure as President of the United States of America, has come to be relied on by many as a useful guide on the performance of economic policy across the world, particularly as it affects the poor.

The latest computation of the index considers the state of three critical economic indicators such as inflation, unemployment and bank lending rate with adjustments made for the percentage change in the growth rate of the country’s per capita income. Putting all these together gives an indication of the quality of life in the concerned society as well as the level of impoverishment or otherwise of the generality of the populace.

Issues of inflation, one of the criteria used in arriving at the misery index, are very critical in the design of monetary policy across the world.

For Nigeria, the level of inflation has deteriorated from the single digit that prevailed in 2015, rising to as high as over 18 per cent in January 2017, at the height of the economic recession recently experienced in the country.

Besides, poverty in the past few years in the country has been exacerbated by the high rate of unemployment in the country, another factor considered in the computation of the misery index.

The current unpalatable growth of unemployment in the country is indeed a time bomb that is already exploding with unpleasant consequences for the state of insecurity and the growth of organised economic activity in the country. We see this already in reports on banditry, kidnapping and insurgency. The consequences are staring us in the face already.

Evidence from 2020 report of Transparency International

Actual	Previous	Highest	Lowest	Dates	Unit	Frequency
149.00	146.00	152.00	52.00	1996 - 2020		Yearly

Nigeria Business	Last	Previous	Highest	Lowest	Unit
Business Confidence	-15.20	-1.50	41.10	-66.20	points[+]
Industrial Production	1.60	-10.30	25.10	-20.40	Percent [+]
Manufacturing Production	-1.30	-10.30	24.60	-10.30	Percent [+]
Internet Speed	3853.93	4129.28	4129.28	348.64	KBps [+]
IP Addresses	209207.00	194830.00	244394.00	29604.00	IP [+]
Services PMI	47.30	47.90	62.30	25.30	points
Leading Economic Index	45.90	45.50	53.00	45.50	percent
Manufacturing PMI	49.00	48.80	61.10	41.10	points
Mining Production	9.20	-17.30	48.20	-34.10	percent
Crude Oil Rigs	5.00	6.00	23.00	3.00	
Ease of Doing Business	131.00	146.00	170.00	120.00	
Changes In Inventories	133483.38	72265.70	178909.34	32488.05	NGN Million
Competitiveness Index	48.33	47.53	48.33	3.37	Points
Competitiveness Rank	116.00	115.00	127.00	94.00	
Composite PMI	53.60	54.40	59.10	37.10	Points
Capacity Utilization	45.40	43.80	60.50	40.10	Percent
Corruption Index	25.00	26.00	28.00	6.90	Points
Corruption Rank	149.00	146.00	152.00	52.00	

Markets	Last	Reference	Previous	Range	Frequency
Currency	411	Aug/21	411	73.1 : 411	Daily
Stock Market (points)	37947	Jul/21	37867	4792 : 66371	Daily
Government Bond 10y (%)	12.65	Jul/21	12.47	4.05 : 17.31	Daily

Overview	Last	Ref	Previous	Range	Freq
GDP Growth Rate (%)	-13.9	Mar/21	9.68	-14.27 : 12.12	Quarterly
GDP Annual Growth Rate (%)	0.51	Mar/21	0.11	-6.1 : 6.88	Quarterly
Unemployment Rate (%)	33.3	Dec/20	27.1	5.1 : 33.3	Quarterly
Coronavirus Vaccination Rate (doses per 100 people)	1.91	Jul/21	1.91	0 : 1.91	Daily
Inflation Rate (%)	17.75	Jun/21	17.93	-2.49 : 47.56	Monthly
Coronavirus Vaccination Total (doses)	3938945	Jul/21	3938945	0 : 3938945	Daily
Interest Rate (%)	11.5	Jul/21	11.5	6 : 14	Daily
Cash Reserve Ratio (%)	27.5	Jul/21	27.5	1 : 31	Monthly
Balance of Trade (NGN Millions)	-1123290	Mar/21	-1507543	-1507543 : 2177553	Monthly
Current Account (USD Million)	-1751	Mar/21	-5265	-6676 : 10384	Quarterly
Current Account to GDP (% of GDP)	-4.2	Dec/20	-3.3	-18.7 : 32.8	Yearly
Government Debt to GDP (% of GDP)	34.98	Dec/20	29.1	7.3 : 75	Yearly
Government Budget (% of GDP)	-3.8	Dec/20	-4.2	-6 : 0.8	Yearly
Business Confidence (points)	-15.2	Dec/20	-1.5	-66.2 : 41.1	Monthly
Consumer Confidence (points)	-14.8	Dec/20	-21.2	-29.8 : 9.7	Quarterly
Corporate Tax Rate (%)	30	Dec/21	30	30 : 30	Yearly
Personal Income Tax Rate (%)	24	Dec/21	24	24 : 24	Yearly
Coronavirus Cases (Persons)	172821	Jul/21	172263	0 : 172821	Daily
Coronavirus Deaths (Persons)	2141	Jul/21	2139	0 : 2141	Daily
Coronavirus Recovered (Persons)	163984	Jul/21	163933	0 : 164037	Daily

Personal Income Tax Rate (%)	24	Dec/21	24	24 : 24	Yearly
Coronavirus Cases (Persons)	172821	Jul/21	172263	0 : 172821	Daily
Coronavirus Deaths (Persons)	2141	Jul/21	2139	0 : 2141	Daily
Coronavirus Recovered (Persons)	163984	Jul/21	163933	0 : 164037	Daily

Source: Transparency International, 2020 report

On corruption, Transparency International, TI, disclosed that Nigeria ranked 149 on Corruption Perception Index, CPI, 2020, out of 183 countries as well scored 25 out of 100 points globally. According to the report, Nigeria is the 2nd most corrupt country in West Africa with Guinea-Bissau the only country more corrupt than Nigeria in the sub-region. It can be recalled that in the 2019 report, Nigeria was ranked 146th out of the 180 countries surveyed, scoring 26 points out of 100 points. This was contained in a publication by Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre, CISLAC, indicating that Nigeria again recorded a decline in the CPI in 2020.

The report maintained there is high prevalence of bribery and extortion in the Nigerian Police; the year 2020 witnessed the #EndSARS protests which saw young people across the nation demanding an end to police brutality and corruption. A factor that led to this protest was widespread bribery and extortion by law enforcement officials especially the police. The continuous opaqueness in the utilization of security votes contributes to corruption perception in the country and this process must be reformed especially when we have security agencies living and working in very poor conditions. Multiple reports of police officers protesting non-payment of allowances for election duties are now seen. The result of this is the widespread kidnappings, banditry and terrorism ravaging different parts of the country.

Equally the first and second national corruption surveys conducted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in partnership with the government’s National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and released in 2017 and 2019 both showed the Nigerian Police is the institution with the highest prevalence of bribery amongst the institutions measured. While there have been commendable efforts by the Police Complaints Response Unit (CRU) in reducing police abuses, there is a need to scale up the efforts of the unit to meet the demands of citizens as contained in the Police Act 2020.

From violent extremism and insurgency to piracy, kidnapping for ransom, attacks on oil infrastructure, drug trafficking, and organised crime, Nigeria faces a host of complex security challenges. These threats typically involve irregular forces and are largely societally based. According to the TI 2020 report, they are most prevalent and persistent in marginalised areas where communities feel high levels of distrust toward the government—often built up over many years. At their root, these security challenges are symptoms of larger failures in governance.

According to the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) which is an independent think tank organisation, Nigeria witnessed a total of 2,860 kidnappings in 2020 which was up from 1,386 in 2019.

The picture is further gloomy when taking into consideration the Unemployment Data for the second quarter of 2020 released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). This survey by the NBS which is the government’s statistical agency shows that one in two Nigerian is either unemployed (27.1%) or underemployed (28.6%). While releasing its report on ‘Rising to the Challenge: Nigeria’s COVID Response’ in December 2020 the World Bank warned that “In the next three years, an average Nigerian could see a reversal of decades of economic growth and the country could enter its deepest recession since the 1980s.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

The paper has been able to assess critically the Nigerian state vis-a-vis governance crises in proper context. The evidence of governance failure have been analyzed as it relates to security of lives and properties, rule of law reports from reputable organization etc. Nigerian governance crisis was actually compounded by the lop-sided federal arrangements and institutional weaknesses. The followership, who had vociferously fought for the enthronement of democracy, subsequently succumbed to the antics of the ruling elites. The citizens were divided into many layers: some benefited from the militarization of the electoral processes as more unemployed youths became engaged by party leadership as political thugs; many are able to offer their votes for sale; many became desperate to join the ruling elites because of the political rewards; while the majority of the masses prefer to display political apathy. The ruling elites have consistently demonstrated their lack of respect for the rules and regulations governing the state. With structural and institutional decay, corruption and impunity evident in Nigeria’s sociopolitical and economic environment, the capacity of the state to uphold rule of law is greatly undermined. All these alongside nepotism and favouritism have continued to plague the Nigerian state and Nigerians in modern times leading to governance crisis.

The Paper hereby recommend that: public servants should be appointed, appraised and promoted on merit to reduce the level of nepotism and favouritism.

There should be utmost respect and regard for rule of law and the citizens of Nigeria should participate actively in politics.

The National Assembly should speed up the deliberation and passage of relevant anti-corruption related laws or amendments to strengthen the anti-corruption efforts in the interest of Nigerians and the Presidency should assent to these laws once they are passed.

The government should commit to police reform by ensuring the full implementation of the Police Act 2020 and put in place a transparent monitoring framework for security votes.

The government must ensure democratic and free civic space for engagement with the citizenry and the media.

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