

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA; 1999-2021.

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Abstract

This paper is an overview of “Civil democratic governance and socio-economic development in Nigeria; 1999-2021”. It undertakes a conceptual clarification of democracy, governance, socio-economic development, poverty and insecurity. It explains how democracy stimulates development after the sixteen years of military dictatorship. The specific objectives of this study were to determine if democratic governance has reduced poverty in Nigeria since 1999 and to determine if democratic governance has improved security of lives and properties in Nigeria since 1999. This work adopted Political economic theory as postulated by Adams Smith, Thomas Malthus and David Ricardo. The paper concludes that Nigeria should have good governance that involves adequate delivery of what the people need and require being healthy, to make Nigeria a free corrupt nation, boost her country economy and reposition the Nigeria security apparatus towards facilitating national security and regional integration.

Key words: Socio-Economic Development, Democracy, Governance and Nigeria

Introduction

Nigeria official became a state on January 1, 1914 following the amalgamation of the southern and northern protectorates. After many years of colonial rule, the country became independent on 1st October, 1960. The first republic was short lived, ending with the coup d'état of January 15, 1966. Between this period and October 1, 1979 when civilian rule returned, the country was headed by the military (Ojo, 2012). The return to democratic rule ushered in a federal constitution characterized by multiparty system, independence of judiciary, separation of powers, among other features. This experience was, however, scattered again by the military, precisely on December 31, 1983, which returned the country firmly under military rule until May 29, 1999 when another democratic experiment began (Ajalu, 2003). This time, however, the military did not willingly relinquish power as in 1979, but for so many reasons which included; the crisis generated by the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election believed to have been won by late Chief M.K.O Abiola. This singular issue shook the nation to its foundation. The crisis

mediated by the then military president; Ibrahim Babangida, who ‘dragged’ Nigerians through long elaborate but dubious policies and programs designed mainly for self-perpetuation in power and ended up annulling an election generally agreed to be the freest ever (Ugwu, 2011).

The problem escalated under the tyrannical regime of General Sani Abacha who forced himself into power after Babangida had been coerced to “step aside.” By this time, Nigerians were determined more than ever to chase the military out of power. The deep commitment of the people for the enthronement of democratic rule paid off as the military under the leadership of General Abdulsalam Abubakar, who ascended into power upon the sudden death of Abacha, willingly gave way for democracy. Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, a former military head of state, who had earlier been jailed by Abacha’s regime, was quickly given presidential pardon and included in the presidential race as the candidate of the People Democratic Party (PDP). He emerged as the winner in the general election and was sworn in as the second democratically elected president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on May 29, 1999. At inauguration, Obasanjo appeared ready for the tasks ahead since he was not a stranger to power (Lipman, 2012).

In 1979, he was the military head of state that handed over power to Alhaji Shehu Shagari as the first elected president. Obasanjo bemoaned the situation of the nation, particularly as it related to governance in areas like economy, education, security, infrastructure, and so forth. According to him:

We experienced in the last decade and half, particularly in the last regime but one, persistent deterioration in the quality of our governance, leading to instability and the weakening of all public institutions. Good men were shunned and kept away from government while those who should be kept away were drawn near. Relations between men and women who had been friends for many decades and between communities that had lived together in peace for many generations became very bitter because of the actions or inactions of government. The citizens developed distrust in government, and because promises made for the improvement of the conditions of the people were not kept, all statements by government met with cynicism. The impact of official corruption is so rampant and has earned Nigeria a very bad image at home and abroad. Besides, it has distorted and retrogressed development. Our infrastructures – NEPA, NITEL, Roads, Railways, Education, Housing and other Social Services were allowed to decay and collapse. Our country has thus been through one of its darkest periods. All these have brought the nation to a situation of chaos and near despair. This is the challenge before us. Fellow Nigerians, let us rise as one, to face the tasks ahead and turn this daunting scene into

opportunities in a New Dawn. Let us make this the beginning of a genuine Renaissance (Obasanjo, cited in *The Guardian*, 1999:3).

On balance, President Obasanjo showed commitment towards bringing the country on the right track. As such, he initiated so many policies, programs and reforms which were geared towards economic development of the country. Some of which are: Monetization Policy; National Economic Empowerment Development Strategies (NEEDS); Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC); Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC); Banking Reforms; Policy Towards Poverty Reduction/Alleviation-SMEDAN, PAP, SMSE, etc. Despite the commendable stipulations of these policies and programs, the execution of most of them ended in fiasco, as they ended up making Nigerians more frustrated and impoverished. This was fuelled by some vices such as: corruption, ethnicity, insecurity, political instability, etc (Akaeze, 2011). The return to democratic governance which was supposed to provide an opportunity to overturn widespread developmental and political problems associated with prolonged military rule and at the same time a hope of great expectations of improved quality of wellbeing and governance of Nigerians seems however to be a tool for economic destruction (Onwujeogwu, 2002).

However, many years after democratic rule the huge expectations of most Nigerians have been largely undermined by poor governance, with its attendant socio-economic and political challenges. For example, the Nigerian economy is overwhelmed by the problems of poverty, widening income inequality between the rich and the poor, disinvestment, inflation, de-industrialization, mass unemployment and debt crisis (Egwemi, 2010). Moreover, the crises of widespread collapse of social values, and infrastructure, illiteracy, insecurity of lives and property, political corruption, authoritarianism, electoral malpractices, politically motivated violence, and weak governance institutions continue to undermine the socio-political realm in Nigeria (Seteolu, 2004 and Egwemi&Aliu, 2010). It against this backdrop that the disenchantment and disappointment of most Nigerians with most of the outcomes of the current democratic experience of the fourth republic on their economic wellbeing, as evident in the massive decline in popular trust in democratic institutions, processes and political leadership can be appropriately understood and situated (Aliu, 2014). Tragically, this development seems to have overshadowed some of the successes associated with the democratic experience of the

fourth republic. The uninterrupted character of the democratic transition and improvement in civil and political freedoms and liberties for example, appeared to have been lost to the popular lamentation over the failure of the democratic experience (Omodia, 2013).

Conceptual Definition

1. Democracy

The idea of democracy, or government by the people, is very old, dating back to ancient Greece. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English,(1995) defines democracy as; a system of government in which everyone in the country can vote to elect its members, a country that has a government which has been elected by the people of the country, a situation or system in which everyone is equal and has the right to vote, make decisions, etc. Abraham Lincoln, (1861), defined democracy as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. This is the most popular definition of democracy, and is adopted in this study due to its apt representation of the concept, as related to the subject of study.

2. Governance

The United Nations Development Programme, (1997) views governance as: the totality of the exercise of authority in the management of a country's affairs, comprising of the complex mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, and mediate their differences. It encompasses the political, economic, legal, judicial, social and administrative authority and therefore includes government, the private sector and the civil society. Governance is seen as the process of steering state and society towards the realization of collective goals.

3. Socio-economic Development

According to Radhika, (2018);socio-economic development is referred to improvement within the lifestyles of the individuals through improved education, incomes, skill development and employment. It is the process of economic and social transformation based on cultural and environmental factors. Therefore, it can be understood as the process of social and economic development within the society. It is measured with indicators such as, gross domestic product, life expectancy, literacy and levels of employment. Social development is a process, which

results in the transformation of the social institutions in a manner, which improves the capability of the society to meet the objectives. Economic development is the development of economic wealth and resources of the nations or regions for the well-being of the individuals.

4. Poverty

The World Bank, (2003) provides a comprehensive and graphic description of poverty thus: poverty is hunger, poverty is lack of shelter, poverty is being sick and not able to see a doctor, poverty is not being able to go to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water; poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom. Poverty can be defined narrowly as absolute poverty or broadly as relative poverty. The World Bank defines extreme absolute poverty as living on less than US\$1 (Purchasing Power Parity-PPP) per day, and moderate absolute poverty as living on less than US\$2 a day. In contrast, relative poverty is a measure of income inequality. Usually relative poverty is measured as the percentage of the population with income less than some fixed proportion of median income. Unlike absolute poverty that measures material deprivation or hardship, relative poverty measures inequality. Our concern in this study is more with absolute poverty than relative poverty.

5. Insecurity

To understand insecurity, it is better to conceptualize 'security'. According to Ibidapo-Obe, (2008); security is the situation that exists as a result of the establishment of measures for the protection of persons, information and property against hostile persons, influences and actions. It is a situation where people go about their normal business without any threat to their lives and properties (Ogunleye, 2011). On the other hand, insecurity means the state of being exposed to attacks. It is a state of anxiety and palpable fear. The insecurity situation in the present Nigerian democratic dispensation has intensified since 1999.

Theoretical Framework

This study will be anchored on the Political Economic theory. Proponents of the theory include: Adams Smith, Thomas Malthus and David Richardo. Originally, political economy meant the

study of the conditions under which production or consumption within limited parameters was organized in nation-states. Political economy was thus meant to express the laws of production of wealth at the state level, quite like economics concerns putting home to order.

The Journal of Economic Literature classification codes associate political economy with three sub-areas: (1) the role of government and or class and power relationships in resource allocation for each type of economic system;(2) international political economy, which studies the economic impacts of international relations, and; (3) economic models of political or exploitative class processes. Much of the political economy approach is derived from public choice theory on the one hand and radical political economics on the other hand, both dating from the 1960s.

Public choice theory is a micro foundations theory closely intertwined with political economy. Both approaches model voters, politicians and bureaucrats as behaving in mainly self-interested ways, in contrast to a view, ascribed to earlier mainstream economists, of government officials trying to maximize individual utilities from some kind of social welfare function (Kulman, 1971). As such, economists and political scientists often associate political economy with approaches using rational-choice assumptions, especially in game theory, and in examining phenomena beyond economics' standard remit, such as government failure and complex decision making in which context the term "positive political economy" is common (Smith, 1961).

Historical materialism, dialectical materialism and class analysis are important tools of analysis intrinsic in the political economy method. This informs their adoption in this research work. Thus, it is strictly held in this study that democratic development is central to economic development. In other words, it is strictly held in the study that the effective interplay of democracy and politics lead to socio-economic development. This study adopted the descriptive and historical research designs. The descriptive method reviews existing conditions of investigating variables while the historical method systematically captures relevant past data that have bearing on the present which fundamentally, conforms to the study's theoretical framework of political economy.

Democratic Governance and Socio-economic Development in Nigeria

From 1999 up until now, Nigeria has not yet transitioned to a legal system or political culture that can be described as fully democratic. A disconnect between the legal and political processes has been a direct consequence of the military's approach to governance (Ojo, 2013). The result has been citizens being subject to arbitrary government decisions. In the absence of effective legal recourse, citizens rely on their personal contacts and networks with elites or influential government officials. One disturbing development undermining the rule of law and building on the old authoritarian patterns, however, is the rise of ethnic-based militias across several sections of the country.

Gangs of armed youths purporting to protect the interests of the Niger-delta, Igbo, Hausa, or other groups have been active in various capacities over the years, and politicians have shown increasing willingness to rely on these militias for political vendettas and election related intimidation tactics (Ogundiya, 2010). The executive often determines the leadership of the National Assembly, as do the state governors in regards to the state legislatures. Neither the civil service nor the judiciary is typically powerful or impartial enough to act as an effective constraint on the power of the executive, although the federal judiciary has shown itself to be an increasingly important check. Likewise, the relations between federal, state, and local governments are also top-down, both in terms of revenues and the authoritative use of force (Aliu, 2013). Politics in Nigeria is still largely an elite game. This closed system is propagated by what Nigerians refer to as the "sit tight syndrome" in which elected officers refuse to relinquish their seats in government despite their poor performance, and utilize any means to stay in office. Not only does this result in an inadequate circulation of elites, but it also perpetuates systematic discrimination against three primary groups: Women, the poor, and non-indigenes (Nwokeke, 2011).

As good governance continues to be found lacking by the majority of Nigerians who live without access to basic public services, other organizations have stepped in to fill the void. Religious organizations, such as the Pentecostal churches, now provide a range of social services that government generally provides, and Islamic religious schools have also sprung up in the north. This has actually provided some promising new means to try to address the potential for inter-communal conflict, whereby inter-faith organizations have been offering means for dialogue

between groups. Similarly, women's groups fighting AIDS, for example, have used faith-based leaders (imams and priests) to try to mobilize communities around public health issues (Jayum&Nwokeke, 2011).

The Effect of Democratic Governance on Socio-economic Development in Nigeria

Socio-economic development is all about development that impacts on the life of people in terms of their economic activities (Ugwu, 2014). Democracy is a basic ingredient for the growth and sustenance of socio-economic development in a nation. It also follows that economic development can be better realized in a condition provided by a democratic government on the path of bringing good governance to her people. In fact, a democracy that is particular about delivering the gains of democracy must embrace good governance which will in turn bring about the economic development of that democracy and her people (Adeniyi&Afolabi, 2019).

A true democratic regime that incorporates good governance in its activities and plans for the people will definitely achieve tremendous socio-economic development over time. There is no doubt that democracy is a process at all its stages. Democratic governance in the fourth republic to a large extent has failed to guarantee and deliver minimum conditions of governance; democratic dividends; and development (Omodia&Aliu, 2013). The failure of democratic governance in Nigeria is evident in the persistent problems of food insecurity, unemployment, insecurity, lack of well equipped health care centres, bad roads, lack of free and or good education, etc. The ever increasing problem of insecurity in forms of armed robbery, kidnapping, crude oil theft, militancy, Boko Haram insurgency, farmers-herders crises, Fulani terrorism, banditry, corruption, constant ASUU strike, NLU strike, separatist agitation in all regions of the country, just to mention but a few, explain the prevalent state of deterioration in the country which democratic governance has failed to address (Kushie, 2018). Political corruption as a fuel for poverty has assumed an unprecedented dimension in the polity since the return of Nigeria to democratic governance in 1999. Given the revelation by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) that billions of dollars of public funds have been stolen by politicians and government officials since the return of democratic governance, it safe to argue that corruption, to a large extent is official and institutionalized in Nigeria. For example, Lucky Igbinedion, an

ex-governor of Edo State was convicted in 2008 for stealing more than \$25 million of public fund (Human Right Watch, 2011), while James Ibori, a former governor of Delta State was convicted in Britain in 2012 for defrauding the state of nearly £50 million (Asiwaju, 2012).

The masses have been at the receiving end of the poor performance of democratic governance in the fourth republic. With democratic governance, a system in which the elected officials and political leadership lives in opulence and affluence is entrenched, while majority of Nigerians live in poverty. Statistics indicates that over 70 percent of Nigerians live below the poverty line, while the World Bank ranked Nigeria among the poorest countries in the world with seven percent of the 1.2 billion extremely poor people (Transparency International, 2020).

The character of the Nigerian State and the ruling elites are core to the failure of democratic governance of the fourth republic to produce great dividends to the majority of Nigerians. According to Aliyu, 2014:

The 'Nigerian state by virtue of its historical, socio-economic and political conditions is fashioned to perpetuate elite exploitation of the socio-economic and political space and resources, protect foreign interests, promote ethno-regional and religious antagonism, and undermine popular participation in development and governance processes'(Aliu, 2014: 7)

Most of the ruling elites of the fourth republic like most of their predecessors of the previous republics are 'corrupt, self-centred, incompetent, kleptocratic, ideologically and morally bankrupt, visionless, intolerant, autocratic, dishonest, naive, opportunistic, and parochial' (Aliu, 2014).

Democratic Governance and Poverty Reduction among Nigerians

The post-colonial state in Nigeria has been chagrin. Its snail-pace movement towards a sustainable good governance and development is daunting as various measures employed to combat the soaring poverty ratio appears to have failed. Arguably the increased level of poverty in the country have been attributed to long military rule, corruption, fiscal indiscipline of expenditure, mismanagement and over reliance on only oil for export and domestic consumption. The incidence of poverty has been prevalent in Nigeria before and after independence. Against

this background, the Federal Government has in recent years embraced poverty reduction strategy as one of the core objectives of the macro-economic policy (Asuquo, 2011).

Successive governments in Nigeria had collaborated with various international organizations notably the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Organization (UNDO), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), etc to initiate special programmes toward poverty eradication (Adebayo, 2018). The citizens are still disillusioned as it is no longer news today in Nigeria to hear governments or its functionaries talk about “eradicating; alleviating; reducing or eliminating” poverty. These are terms that have been over flogged over the years in seminars, conferences, symposia and as key objectives, yet without any effect.

The post-independence political, economic and social structures are embodiment of disempowerment. At independence Nigeria inherited disarticulated institutions that reinforce asymmetrical relationship. If the consensus among scholars remains that education is a panacea to poverty, the Nigerian condition absolutely remain debatable. Majority of urban dwellers particularly the working class who have acquired Western education are not better than semi-skilled or stark illiterate businessmen, financially. The working class and the unemployed are victims of one circumstance; poverty has eaten deep into the fabric of the society that primordial loyalty, sectional, ethnic and religious affiliations have essentially remained the way out. ‘Good connection’ or ‘god fatherism’ thesis gives a clear picture of this scenario (Burkey, 2012). The inability to meet basic requirements of life is a significant feature in Nigeria. It is a common sight to find beggars almost all over the streets, railway line tarmac, carparks, vehicles terminus, market squares, hospitals, schools etc. Absolute poverty creates a condition of precariousness and hopelessness, which is tantamount to retrogression and underdevelopment (Fagbagdebo, 2011).

Amii&Rakodi, (1994) observed that the major impediment to democracy in Africa is poverty. Masses are easily cornered, brain washed and their right of choices manipulated to a point that some of them are susceptible to bribery and can be used as political thugs to cause confusion, harassment or intimidate an opponent during election period. It is against this background that

various strategies of survival are employed by many Nigerians. Sacred places are desecrated and abused in the pretext of entrenching morality. The mass of people are psychologically predisposed to mobilization because they are being displaced, poor, lacking family bonds and protection and because religious organizations propose means of material redemption they are naturally attractive to people in impoverished conditions. No wonder Marx described religion as the opium of the masses (Ibrahim, 1999). Poverty has increased the spate of religious fanaticism in Nigeria. Religious militancy and fundamentalism are not done for the genuine desire to propagate such religion or the tendency of piousness but rather a means of creating a pandemonium that would guarantee intimidation, harassment and looting for the purpose of survival. In this methodology of survival, some of the so-called propagators of religion are so diabolical and cunning in their scheming that they erect or hire structures which they are either the general overseers or founders and continued to claim access to the deity (God) and or their wives are made treasurers (Hussein, 2016).

Poverty Alleviation Programmes Since 1962

Poverty exists in every society in the world, however, the probable advances of it, more often than not attract attention and solution. In Nigeria for example, the frontal attack on poverty dates back to the early period of independence when in 1962, late Chief Obafemi Awolowo; then governor of the Western region, introduced a communist method like organized agricultural scheme by the name Farm Settlement Scheme. This was aimed at establishing farms in rural areas in more organized form as a supplement to subsistence farming. However, lack of evaluation and follow-up measures for the continuity of the scheme made it short lived (Adebayo, 1999). River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA) and Agricultural Development Projects (ADPS) were introduced in the 1960s to eradicate poverty. In 1974 National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) was introduced, this was later modified to Operation Feed the Nation (OFN). In that same year “Green Revolution” was introduced (Akin, 2010). The succeeding years witnessed various policies and programmes aimed at poverty alleviation. The Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) was established in 1986 to reactivate and mobilize the grass root towards organized rural employment opportunities. Other institutions and schemes include: Peoples Banks, Nigerian Agricultural and

Cooperative Bank, National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA), National Agency for Mass Literacy, National Primary Health Care Scheme, National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Better Life for Rural Women, Federal Urban Mass Transit Agency, Family Support Programme, Family Economic Advancement Programme, Petroleum Special Trust Fund (PTF) and National Poverty Alleviation Programme (Carol, 2016). The endemic nature of poverty in Nigeria is so significant that International agencies and institutions like the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Health Organization (WHO); International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), African Regional Agricultural Credit Association (AFRACA), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) etc became enmeshed in the cases of education, health, Transport population and agriculture in Nigeria on the notion to eradicate poverty (Salija, 2017).

Another area that impacted on programme formulation on poverty eradication in Nigeria is the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in March 1995, which highlighted the notion of social development and poverty eradication. The summit brought together 117 heads of state and another 69 ministerial level representatives who committed their government to eradicating poverty, and committed themselves to creation of an economic, political, social-cultural and legal environment that will enable people achieve social development (Chigbo, 2012). In the year 2000 two important UN General Assembly meetings took place: one was the special session in Geneva to review the social summit, and the other was the UN Millennium Summit which led to the formulation of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) as a strategy to reduce poverty and other related elements in the world by the year 2015 (Salija, 2017).

Also, the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) emerged out of a deep concern to finding suitable solution to the sharp decline of economic growth that affect Africa. Eradicating poverty is one of the cardinal goals of this new development strategy. Nigeria as a co-founder has adopted this strategy to address her deepening crisis of development (Orji, 2017). What Ake observed some years back as major problem facing African development strategy is still prevalent till today. Ake, (1981) identifies three key areas as the source of African problem, these include: Absence of identifiable strategies that may reinforce laid down plans; Problem of indigenization; and Incompatible goals. In addition to the above, inconsistency, inappropriate

implementation of programme of action, lack of proper impact assessment measures, imbalance in sectoral distribution and lack of focus on target area are special features of programmes' failure in Nigeria. Some of the programmes failed because of the fire-brigade approach to issue of poverty; they lack feasibility studies such as analysis, statistics, evaluation, and assessment of mode of application of programme, inconsistency among others.

Factors that contribute to poverty in Nigeria

There are certain factors that contribute to poverty in Nigeria. Some key factors contributing to poverty in Nigeria include:

1. Unemployment:

Unemployment is a major factor contributing to poverty in Nigeria. There is a strong correlation between unemployment and poverty. When people are unemployed, their source of livelihood depletes over time. The cost of living becomes high and the standard of living goes down. There are many people in Nigeria who lack the opportunity of being employed. Unemployment-induced poverty tends to increase the crime rate and violence in the country. Most unemployed youths resort to crimes such as armed robbery, kidnapping for ransom, internet fraud and other forms of fraudulent activities. The reservation wage they get from these activities is typically barely enough to take care of their basic necessities. **(2)Corruption:**Transparency International, (2001) defines corruption as "the abuse of entrusted power for private gain". This has become a common act in Nigeria and it has destabilized the political system drastically. Government funds are being misappropriated on a daily basis by the leaders, who only put the interest of their family and friends at heart while ignoring the masses. The corruption has eaten so deeply into the government and economy that everyone seems to be blinded by it. Corruption has almost become an accepted way of life in Nigeria, and this has increased poverty and inequality as well as contributed to high crime rates. **(3)Non Diversification of Economy:**While Nigeria's poverty has been identified to be caused by many factors, Nigeria's sole dependence on oil can be seen as a major factor. Before 1970, the Nigerian economy was driven by the agricultural sector. The oil sector which only constituted 1 percent of the country's export revenue in 1958 rose to 97 percent by 1984 and has since then not gone below 90 percent. In 2008, the oil and gas sector constituted about 97.5 percent of their export revenues, 81 percent of government revenues and

about 17 percent of GDP (Human Development Report, 2011). In Nigeria, those in power have practically ignored other sources of income, and today, Nigeria depends heavily on exporting oil. This dependency on natural resources is often referred to as “Dutch disease”, whereby natural resources make a country less competitive (Ejiofor, 2011). Excluding the few working in the oil sector, the majority of the people have been impoverished as their products have become irrelevant. But for the effort by the current Buhari led administration today, little or no attention is paid to the agricultural sector, which was the major means of income before the discovery of oil. Beyond the Dutch disease, Nigeria’s abundance of a natural resource has led to what is known as a resource curse, which is reflected in the “Niger Delta Crisis. The people in this region are fighting for resource control as they claim the government is not fulfilling their promise of giving them the large part of the oil revenues (Saka, 2010). The wealth from natural resources in Nigeria is supposed to be working with the derivation policy, but this policy is not functional in any way, as the oil producing states are still impoverished and this policy is supposed to work in a way such that these states with these natural resources should be able to get a large part of the countries revenue as they contribute a lot to the national wealth (Saka, 2010). (4) **Illiteracy:** Education play a major role in reducing poverty. According to the World Bank, (2011); education is central to development. It promotes economic growth, national productivity and innovation, and values of democracy and social cohesion. In Nigeria, the population with no education account for the greater percentage of the poor. The education system in Nigeria can be regarded as a failure compared to other countries in the world. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, (1996) states that “everyone has the right to an education.” This right to education has been denied to many Nigerians, which has rendered many Nigerians unemployable.

Democratic Governance and Security of Lives and Properties in Nigeria

The overwhelming role of colonialism in shaping the character of the Nigerian state and the nature of its politics evidently affected the actions of the political leadership and by extension the quality of democratic governance during the first republic. The politicization of ethnicity and religion, prevalence of political corruption and kleptocracy, coupled with the alienated, unaccountable and violent tendencies of the Nigerian state can be understood within this context (Ekeh, 1975; Ogundiya, 2009; and Egwu, 2001). The first republic politicians preoccupied with

'ethno-regionist politics' (Omelle, 2005) consciously mobilised ethnicity as the means to acquire and consolidate political leadership and economic control (Setolu, 2005 and Dudley, 1973). The trend has subsequently assumed frightening dimensions since then, with alarming security implications for the country.

The sacrifice of governance and nation building on the altar of ethnic, parochial and personal interests during the county's experience with parliamentary democracy in the first republic did undermine national security. The resulting ruthless contestations among the major ethnic nationalities for political and economic domination aggravated the existing divisions and mutual distrust among Nigerians. The census crisis of 1962 and 1963, the Action Group crisis of 1962, the 1964 General Election crisis are cases of political conflicts with ethno-regional imprint. The absence of astute political leadership and popular participation contributed to widespread electoral violence during the Western region elections in 1965 (Abdullahi&Saka, 2007); and the subsequent blight to democratic governance in the country; the military coup and counter coup of 1966. The militarization of the politics and worsening ethnic tension culminated in the outbreak of the 1967-1970 civil war with devastating impact on the physical, economic, social and psychological security of the nation. However, issues bordering on fiscal federalism, political marginalization, and minority question, economic development, secularity of the state and citizenship question core to the civil war remain unresolved and have continued to undermine democratic governance in Nigeria (Omodia, 2012).

Therefore, the second republic which marked the termination of the military supervised transition to civilian rule in 1979 had to grapple with the problems of structural imbalance in the polity, corruption, ethno-religious tension and politically motivated violence. Specifically, widespread electoral fraud, violence and corruption contributed to the collapse of the republic following the military overthrow of the civilian government on December 31, 1983 (Olaitan, 2005; Ogundiya, 2009 and Lewis, 2011). The third republic democratic architecture was terminated with the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential elections by then Gen. Babangida's military administration. The action of the military government almost led to the country sliding into anarchy and Nigeria considered a pariah in the comity of nations. Basically, governance during the second republic failed to deliver public goods and services and enhance

peace and stability (Moru, 2005). Besides, the military administrations that came to power after the second and third republics, particularly the autocratic regime of Abacha which came to power following the failure of the third republic was characterized by widespread violence, criminalization of dissent, corruption and suppression of political opposition (Lewis, 2011). These events contributed to the loss of faith in the state by most citizens, the attendant seeking of alternative platforms especially those rooted in identity politics by some Nigerians to project and promote their interests, the militarisation of the society and emergence of ethnic based groups and militias which endangered national security and stability in the fourth republic (Aliu&Egwemi, 2011 and Abdullahi&Saka, 2007).

Governance and National Security in the Fourth Republic

With the commencement of the fourth republic on May 29, 1999, most Nigerians were full of great hope that the democratic experiment would enhance and entrench constitutionalism, respect for human rights, the rule of law, accountability, transparency, popular participation, and improve the economic wellbeing of the people (Bello, 2004 and Inokoba&Kumokor, 2011). Implicit in the expectations is the recognition that the country's previous experience with democratic governance failed to respond to the yearnings of majority of Nigerians. However, the fourth republic appears to be a replica of the previous republics in terms of the failure of the state to guarantee minimum conditions of governance, deliver democratic dividends, and development. Therefore, given the existing state of poverty and deprivation, the emergence and prevalence of diverse security threats like armed robbery, kidnappings and abductions, and crude oil theft in the country can be well appreciated (Yagboyaju, 2011). Moreover, high level unemployment among the youth coupled with the proliferation of small arms in the fourth republic appear to have contributed to the terrible state of violence and insecurity of lives and properties in the country (Lewis, 2019).

Drawing from the foregoing analysis, there is a strong link between the failure of governance in Nigeria's fourth republic to deliver democratic dividends and the raging state of instability and insecurity in the nation. Specifically, the absence of strong institutions of accountability and transparency and the penchant for the political leadership to undermine the existing ones has weakened the ability of the state to deliver public goods and services.

The high level profligacy, lawlessness, fraud, blatant looting of the national treasury and miscarriage of justice have constrained economic development, undermined popular trust in government and democratic institutions and subverted accountability and the rule of law (Ogundiya, 2010;Inokoba&Ibegu, 2011). The resulting economic inequality continues to deepen social tensions, violence, and legitimacy crisis, with grave danger to national stability and security (Lewis, 2019). The entrenched social and economic divisions in the country in addition to political rivalry among political parties are plausible explanations for post-election violence in Nigeria (Lewis, 2019).Furthermore, governance in Nigeria's fourth republic has been plagued by what Omatseye, (2012) succinctly captures as 'the stormy waters of ethnic and sectarian malice'. The elevation of identity politics to the level of state craft by the political leadership and their inability to manage properly the diverse socio-economic cleavages has breed resentment and frustration among social groups in the country. The ensuing dangerous competition among various social groups and forces for scarce political and economic resources is crucial to the ethno-religious conflicts that have negatively affected the security, peace and stability of the country since 1999 (Ogbu, 2018).The problematic nature of governance in the fourth republic has contributed to the crisis of legitimacy pervasive in Nigeria. The decline in popular trust in government and widespread mutual distrust among Nigerians provides a favourable environment for 'communal groups to form their own security,creating dangerous competition that can easily erupt into violence' (Lewis, 2019). The proliferation of ethnic militia movements, the problem of militancy and insurgency pervasive in the fourth republic can be located in this context.

The emergence of ethno-regional groups like the O'odua People's Congress (OPC), the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), the Arewa People's Congress (APC), Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), and OhanezeNdi Igbo among others, beside undermining the legitimacy of the state in terms of its monopoly of the instrument of force, contest citizen's loyalty and obedience with the state and exacerbate social divisions and conflicts (Abdullahi&Saka, 2017 and Aliu&Egwemi, 2018). The ethnic conflict between the Yorubas and Hausa/Fulani resident in Sagamu,Ogun State on July 22, 1999, and the YelwanShendam crisis of May 1, 2004 in Plateau state are among the numerous spates of such

violence and conflicts which have resulted in massive loss of lives and property (Abdullahi&Saka, 2007).The Niger Delta crisis is another reference point in the exploration of the numerous security threats that are rooted in the failure of democratic governance in Nigeria since 1999. The persistent failure of the state to ensure equitable distribution of economic resources, coupled with political corruption, marginalization and the sense of neglect and alienation on the part of Niger Delta people culminated into high level militancy in the fourth republic (Akpan, 2010).

The incessant religious conflicts situated in the North represents another major threat to security of lives and properties in Nigeria. The manipulation of religion by politicians in the North for their own political survival and the tendency for such actions to fuel social tensions and violence reflect the norm at the national level. This explains the agitation by politicians for the expansion of the Sharia legal codes in some Northern states after the return to democracy in 1999. Besides, the development fuelled by the desire to safeguard religious values, also bore the hallmark of ‘populist frustration and regional assertion’ (Aliu, 2017).Since 1999 till date, Nigeria has been witnessing security challenges, such as: Ethno-religious strife, political violence, kidnapping, Boko Haram insurgency, Fulani herder terrorism, farmers-herders clashes, etc.

Conclusion and Recommendations

United States of America have been successfully practicing democracy for more than two hundred years now, and have attained a remarkable level of socio-economic development through good governance. Nigeria’s democracy is relatively an ‘infant’ one , and if it has to leap to greater height, it must begin to entrench good governance, which involves: adequate delivery of what the people need and require to be healthy; well educated, safe, free , respectable and most importantly happy with themselves and their government. It can be seen from the foregoing that, the major problem with the Nigeria kind of democratic leadership is in its failure to adopt good governance.

This study therefore recommends the following:

1. To begin with, good governance has been seen as an antidote to poverty and insecurity in Nigeria. Oluwa, (2010) noted that “good governance is the primary function of an efficient,

visionary, transparent, trustworthy and credible leadership whose driving force is an improvement in the collective wellbeing of the citizens through well drafted and effectively implemented economic policies and human development programmes. Hence, the Nigerian government must adopt good governance in every sphere of leadership, if they are interested in improving security of lives and properties, and reducing poverty among the masses. (2) The government should change its strategies in tackling Boko Haram. The present counter terrorism strategy is not working which has given Boko Haram an edge of the Nigerian military. Reports from the front-lines indicate soldiers battling the insurgency are not motivated with regard to delay in allowances, poor fighting equipment and lack of operational modalities from their commandants. The menace of insecurity no doubt calls for a new approach that will be founded on “credible intelligence gathering”. Government must not only continue to engage the security personnel, it must, more than ever before, recognize the need to embrace the magnanimity of artificial intelligence, capacity building to meet the global best practice standard, and acquisition of modern technologies in their fight against insecurity. (3). Sustainable solutions to communal violence require not only a heightened and effective security response, but also a comprehensive approach that addresses the underlying causes of violence, particularly good governance deficits, failure to hold perpetrators to account and low socio-economic status of certain vulnerable groups. (4). The distinction between indigenes and settlers is damaging to intergroup relations and peaceful coexistence. It has opened and reinforced ethnic and religious cleavages and contributed to tensions and conflict. Some groups regard indigene status as a safeguard of their rights in the light of the growing numbers, influence and economic dominance of other groups, while others consider it a breach of the right to equality and non-discrimination. To manage this conflict, further legal clarity is required to regulate the “indigene-ship status” and guarantee that no person is unfairly discriminated against denied access to resources, land, or right to participate fully in the economic, social, cultural and political life. (5). There is need to modernize the security agencies with training, intelligence sharing, advanced technology, logistics, motivation and change of orientation. This effort will enhance the operational capabilities of the Nigeria security agencies by identifying avenues that would enable them respond appropriately to both internal and external security challenges. (6). Government at all levels should desist from compromise in enforcing the law. Cases of corruption are not meant to be adjourned endlessly.

The judiciary ought to have, at this stage in our development, evolved time scales for cases. There should be a time to determine a case; time to close that case; and time to judge and pass sentences. Our law enforcement agencies must therefore be incorruptible and fair. Incentives, good conditions of service and social security should be provided to effect this. Finally, there is a need to reorder priorities and seek better understanding of the underlying causes and dynamics of the insecurity in the country with the aim of providing effective conflict prevention and management strategies. The formulation and effective implementation of policies and programmes capable of addressing the root causes of insecurity in Nigeria are crucial, especially with regard to poverty; unemployment, environmental degradation, injustice, corruption, porous borders and small arms proliferation. Therefore, efforts to tackle insecurity can only be effective if there is a robust combination of legislative and judicial interventions with government reforms that address some of the acute human and national security challenges confronting a vast majority of the population.

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