

Power without Legitimate Authority: An Obstacle to Good Governance in Nigeria, 1959–2019

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Abstract

Power is very crucial in the life of man to effect changes in society for the betterment of the people. However, the method used to achieve such power determines how it works for the people; the same method also demonstrates the integrity and credibility of the person seeking power. Unfortunately, in the context of Nigerian politics, politics seems to be a means of sharing national cake by the few political office holders. Right from the outset, the electoral system has always been grossly abused as contestants strive to ascend to power by all means. The paramount issue in the minds of many politicians in Nigeria is therefore winning at all costs, which is no more than a state of illegitimacy. A stolen mandate becomes a difficult tool for regulating the government's affairs. This affects good governance as the development has sacrificed good governance for ethnicity and religious sentiment in our politics. Without legitimate authority, the players collaborate with parochial sentiments of "turn by turn." They forget that only the deep can call to the deep; once the will and ability to earn people's mandates are lost, chaos becomes inevitable in society. The main thrust of this paper is therefore to examine the way and manner in which political power has always been acquired in Nigeria since independence, vis-à-vis its adverse effects on the art of governance. The paper particularly posits that bad governance results

Introduction

The major aspect of politics appears to be the quest to gain power in order to have access to appropriate national resources. This alone spurs people to adopt all manner of strategies to grab power, with or without observing laid-down rules. This agrees with the popular adage that the end justifies the means. Meanwhile, illegitimately earned power makes men corrupt; it serves as a major obstacle to good governance in any society. Unfortunately, this has been Nigeria's predicament since 1959. The polarized nature of the Nigerian State, among other effects, has given Nigerian leaders the opportunity to perceive politics and power in light of ethnic chauvinism. This negative political mindset has hindered inclusive politics, which democracy requires. In a similar vein, the mindset has disregarded opposition politics, which is a major component of democracy, as well as the principle of separation of powers in any democratic dispensation.

The foregoing political development in the formative years of Nigeria's democratic practice impacted negatively on good governance in our federal system. The phenomenon made democracy very illusive in the country, since those who found themselves at the helm of affairs were not the people's rightful choice but rather ethnic chauvinists, supported by the former colonial master, Britain. This development had much to do with the nature of nationalist movements, which were founded mainly on ethno-religious considerations.

The foregoing negative development may not be totally put at the doorstep of the nationalists because the colonial authority prepared the platform for it; hence, the nature of the struggle for independence through political parties assumed ethnic coloration. For instance, the first political party, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), founded in 1923, and dominated by the Yoruba people, was by a Yoruba man, Herbert Macaulay, from Lagos. Similarly, the formation of subsequent political parties followed the same trend. The National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon

(NCNC) was formed by Dr. Nnamid Azikwe, an Igbo, and was made up of tribal unions, trade unions, and the remnants of the defunct Nigerian National Democratic Party. In fact, the allies of the NCNC were mostly Easterners, the Igbo in particular. Similarly, while the Northern People's Congress (NPC), formed by Ahmadu Bello, had a strong footing among Hausa/Fulani in northern Nigeria, the Action Group (AG) formed by Chief Obafemi Awolowo, a Yoruba, had vested interests, especially among the Yoruba in the Western region. The peculiar interests of the founders of these political parties became a clog in the wheel of cohesive governance at the centre.

This study is segmented into six components as follows: the prologue; analysis of the meanings of relevant words in the study with critical assessment of their relevance to the study; examination of changes in power in Nigeria's politics and attendant challenges from 1959 to 1999 (when Nigeria had the first uninterrupted transition from civilian to civilian for twenty years, 1999–2019); and, lastly, recommendations for a better understanding of the peculiar challenges of good governance in Nigeria.

Meanings of Keywords Relating to the Study

The keywords in this study are politics, authority, power, and good governance. This is due to their uniqueness and relevance to this study. Efforts have therefore been made to shed some light on the meanings of the concepts, as summarized below.

Politics: Politics is a general term that refers to the art or science of directing and administering states or other political units. Politics is man's natural or innate virtue, meaning that politics is a natural endowment of all human beings. This implies that politics starts at the individual, national, and international levels rather than at the level of government alone. Hence, politics could be regarded as life itself.

To conceptualize politics in the context being used in this paper, Remi Anifowose's definition is very relevant, especially where he describes:

“Politics as the process of making and executing governmental decisions or policies; it is the authoritative allocation of values, or who gets what, when, and how”³.

Remi's assertion identifies the contentious issue in this study, which has to do with the considerations that usually propel or spur the players in the polity to deploy any unwholesome approach to achieve their political intentions at all costs. In fact, for political actors in Nigerian politics, the phenomenon is a means to an end.

Power: Ordinarily, power could be explained to connote “human strength” or moving force. However, power in this study shall be conceptualized to reflect social interaction, that is, how individuals relate to the society⁴. In view of the above analysis, Max Weber sees power as: “the chance for a man or a number of people to realize their own dream in a communal action, even against the resistance of other people. Dressler also defined power as the ability or potential ability to influence the behavior and/or thoughts of others”⁵.

To Aguwa, power is seen as the ability or capacity to modify the behaviour of other people in a way the holder of the power desires and to the benefit of society. Unfortunately, in the Nigerian context, power is arbitrarily used. This is why, in the Nigerian context, power is used by the government to influence the thoughts of the citizenry against their wishes for the benefit of the elites and their cronies. However, for the essence of good governance, the use of power should be a mutual relationship to effect positive change for the betterment of the citizenry. Invariably, power is not the sole monopoly of any individual or group of individuals for their selfish benefit.

Authority: Authority can be referred to as power assigned to a position for the general performance of the functions of the incumbent. There are two forms of authority: constituted and unconstituted authorities⁷. Authority is said to be constituted when it is derived from the constitution or laws of the state. An individual can also derive his authority from various recognized institutions and established community guidelines, regulations, and

procedures. The Presidency is the Head of Executive Arm of Government; the Senate President is the Head of the National Assembly; and the Chief Justice of Nigeria is the Head of Judiciary. The unconstituted authority is, however, not derived from the law of society.

In our society, there are many people who wield power over others and compel people to obey them without regard for the law. In the context of bad governance, illegitimate authority begets bad governance. When a group of people design a method alien to the system to capture power against the wishes of the overall majority, it becomes difficult for people to submit willingly to the control of such authority. It is only obedience to society's rules and regulations that demonstrates respect for constituted authority, which leads to good governance.

Legitimate Authority: This explains the process through which power is acquired. Simply put, this refers to power acquired through accepted societal or constitutional principles or provisions. Also, legitimate authority is that which is recognised, generally accepted, and justified by both the ruler and the ruled. On the contrary, illegitimate power arises from what Weber refers to as a monopoly over the use of coercive violence in a given territory. This analysis indicates that illegitimate authority connotes when the ruler and ruled are not on the same page in terms of governance. Legitimately earned authority, however, makes the ruler earn respect and trust from the ruled.

Good Governance: This is a subjective term that describes how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in the preferred way. "Good governance" constitutes a set of requirements that conform to the organization's agenda in line with international best practices. Similarly, it is an approach to governance that is committed to creating a system founded on justice and peace that protects human rights and civil liberties. According to the United Nations, good governance is measured by eight factors: participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus-orientedness, equity and inclusiveness,

effectiveness and efficiency, and accountability. What really constitutes good governance is the ability for effective coordination of government businesses for the attainment of objectives for the good of the society.

The Theory of Tragedy of the Commons is chosen to analyse the obstacles to good governance in Nigeria. The theory was propounded in 1968 by a biologist, Garrett Hardin. The theory was meant to focus attention on the lack of technical solutions to arrest overpopulation. The questions raised and the findings are meant to address such issues as to why commonly held resources such as groundwater, grazing land, and fisheries are prone to inevitably degraded conditions and are influenced by environmental and economic policies for resource management.

Hardin used cattle grazing on common property as an example of a situation where the cumulative effects of individual decisions result in degradation ¹⁰. Because each cattleman benefits from increasing the size of his herd on the lot and he feels only a fraction of the negative effects of overgrazing, any rational cattleman would increase the size of his herd. Hence, overgrazing is inevitable, and freedom of the commons in a world that is limited "brings ruin to all."

It should be noted that the theory is relatively simplistic and abstract, and it would be difficult to find any resource, be it fisheries or forests, that is completely unregulated in any part of the world. However, the theory depicts what is likely to happen should regulations fail to control the behavior of irrational individuals who choose to promote their selfish interests.

The Tragedy of Commons theory is suitable to describe the situation of Nigerians in the hands of bad leadership who could not regulate the affairs of the country as desired as a result of personal aggrandizement. The theory examines an economic problem in which every individual has an incentive to consume a resource at the expense of every other individual, without any way to exclude anyone from consuming it. It results in overconsumption, underinvestment, and ultimately depletion of the

resource.

Overconsumption is the main characteristic of Nigerian leaders at the helm of affairs, which continually results in underinvestment. Most of the foreign loans collected for development are being diverted to private accounts for personal use; the infrastructure that the loans are supposed to provide is not visible. This has created a huge debt for the country, without any means of repayment.

Change of Power in Nigerian Politics and Its Challenges, 1959–1999

The struggle by the nationalists in Nigeria was not to get power for the sake of power but to make life more meaningful to the citizens using the abundant resources the nation is endowed with. A very good example can be traced to 1952 in the Western Region under the Chief Obafemi Awolowo-led regime. Under the regime, the region ran a successful primary health care system between 1952 and 1966, as well as operated an efficient Universal Free Primary Education Scheme, which helped to cross the poverty line¹². Within this period, many children in the children in the south-western region became lawyers, doctors, and professors courtesy of a visionary leader who understood not only the need to take education to the doorstep of every child but also to create a more egalitarian society for the underprivileged.

Notwithstanding the fact that other nationalists claimed to be seeking self-rule in the interest of the generality of Nigerians and all socio-economic classes in the country, ethnicity soon took over the polity. This was particularly close to the independence date. For instance, the issues surrounding the general election scheduled to be held in December 1959 for the purpose of constituting the Federal Government were tainted with ethnic colorations, which adversely affected the transmission of power to indigenous leaders. The northerners, for example, retained their slogan of “One North, One People.” While the north seemed to be more concerned about the northernization projection, the British government had a different agenda that would permanently serve its interest in Nigeria during and after

independence. For British authority in Nigeria to achieve its mission, the permutation of who emerged as the head of government favoured the northern leaders at the expense of other ethnic groups without considering the competence of the one who was really prepared for governance at the centre. Consequently, the October 1958, Constitutional Conference for the attainment of independence, which took place in London from September 29 to October 27, 1958, laid the foundation for illegitimacy in the acquisition of power associated with manipulation of election¹⁴. This analysis shows that the manipulation of the electoral process, which is the biggest challenge to good governance in Nigeria, commenced from that period until now.

During the 1959 General Elections, just as is common practice in Nigerian politics, the rival candidates of the NPC were rounded up and detained on flimsy or no grounds at all on the eve of the polls. This caused the NPC candidates in the north to be returned unopposed. To ensure that this mission was accomplished, a civil servant of northern origin, David Muffet, was appointed by the out-going British administration as the Chief Federal Electoral Officer for the North in 1959, seemingly to ensure smooth manipulation in favour of the ruling party. This constrained Professor John Paden to assert that the Federal Elections in the north in 1959 were a sham as the British, clearly rewarded Tafawa Balewa with a knighthood, the only Nigerian to be so favoured that year and thus ensured his victory in the polls¹⁵. In this light, the daylight robbery of the opponent in the electoral process began in the 1959 General elections.

Apart from the manipulation of the electoral process, the politics of ethnicity was also introduced as the main instrument used by politicians to achieve political ambition. The NCNC's decision to seal a deal with the NPC made Tafawa Balewa the first Prime Minister, while the NCNC's candidate became the ceremonial President. In spite of the obvious manipulation perpetrated in the north during the election, what prevented the Balewa-led government from earning substantial respect across the

party divide was the inability of Tafawa Balewa to accommodate opposition as a legitimate aspect of the parliamentary system of government. The opposition was seen as an enemy of the ruling party. For example, in the early 1960s, the NPC/NCNC Federal Government banned the use of the “palm tree” as an election symbol for the opposition Action Group in subsequent elections. However, the action was rejected by the Federal Electoral Commission as an abuse of the power of incumbency. Interestingly, the ruling party took advantage of the lacuna in the 1958 Constitution against the opposition party after independence¹⁶. For instance, Section 63 of the 1958 Constitution specifically empowers the Parliament to maintain law and order in the country, as well as to declare a state of emergency in a region once backed by a two-thirds vote in the Federal Parliament 17. This was used in the West when a political crisis broke out between Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Chief Ladoke Akintola, the Prime Minister of the Western Region.

The transparency of the NPC-led Federal Government was tested in the March 1961, population census. This was the first litmus test for the NPC-led government. The initial figure showed that the southern part had a higher figure than the north. The federal government was not comfortable with the result, with the hope that the result would justify the allocation of more federal seats to the southern region. The run-up census exercise purported to diffuse the heat generated by the March 1961 census was what exposed the hidden skeletons in the NPC-led Federal Government. In fact, the run-up census exercise has been adjudged to be the worst manipulation in the history of the population census in Nigeria.

Another interesting issue was the maladministration that characterized the Balewa government from 1960 to 1966. The complications and issues arising from maladministration were factors that led to the coup of January 15th, 1966, led by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu. Fortunately or unfortunately, the main actors in the coup could not stay long in government due to their inability to secure total control of Nigeria.

Substantially, the coup succeeded in northern Nigeria, partially in the west, and failed woefully in the east because the coup leaders could not carry out the instructions to the letter. Above all, ethnicity, nepotism, and nativism were the major challenges that characterized the first coup. The insinuation that Igbo military leaders shielded their brothers from being killed during the coup created disharmony among other ethnic groups in Nigeria. For instance, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was accused of running away because he was already in the picture of the coup before he left Nigeria for a medical trip in the USA in December 1965, as captured below:

Nowa Omoigui, a notable scholar of military coups in Nigeria, reports in his study of the January 15 attempt that: “Zik was allegedly tipped off by his cousin, Major Emmanuel Ifeajuna. He went on to wonder why Zik had not notified the Prime Minister, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, of the development. Curiously, he recognized also that the two men had clashed over control of the armed forces during the constitutional crisis following the controversial 1964 federal election Nowa Omoigui, a notable scholar of military coups in Nigeria, reports in his study of the January 15 attempt that “Zik was allegedly tipped off by his cousin, Major Emmanuel Ifeajuna. He went on to wonder why Zik had not notified the Prime Minister, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, of the development. Curiously, he recognized also that the two men had clashed over control of the armed forces during the constitutional crisis following the controversial 1964 federal elections.” Indeed, during the impasse, Zik had called on the service chiefs to take over government, but they declined. In the end, Zik stayed away beyond the originally scheduled date of his return. According to Omoigui, President Azikiwe's personal physician, Dr. Humphrey Idemudia Idehen, abandoned him abroad when he got tired of the health trip¹⁹.

The above assertion authenticates the claim by those leaders in other ethnic groups, particularly the northerners, who believed that the Igbo had perfected the January 1966, coup and orchestrated the termination of the lives of northern leaders for selfish reasons. This further polarized the fragile politics of Nigeria shortly after independence. Interestingly, the ascendance to the position of authority by Major-General Aguyi Ironsi, an Igbo, was another straw that exerted additional energy to break the camel's back. He never shared the ideological viewpoint of the revolutionary leader, Nzeogwu; hence, his emergence brought an end to the mission of Major Nzeogwu²⁰. The action of the military government brought the governance to a halt, since some sections of the country felt that they were being cheated as a result of the decision of the government, which was clearly skewed in favour of the easterners. Ironsi's misadventure led to the countercoup on July 29th, 1966, which swept away almost all senior army officers and men from the East and Igbo-speaking people from the Midwest. This alienation of Igbo persisted mainly in Kaduna, Zaria, and Kano, which ushered in complications that eventually resulted in the outbreak of the Nigerian civil war in 1967.

The power tussle between Lt-Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu and General Yakubu Gowon after the latter emerged Head of State following the July 29, 1966, military coup was a major issue that prepared ground for obstacles in governance for almost the nine years of Gowon's government. Chudi Offodile, however, argues: "Contrary to the popular myth that Biafra was the product of Ojukwu's ambition, the reality is that Biafra was motivated and sustained by the Biafra intelligentsia"²¹

The above assertion buttresses the agitation of Ojukwu against the Nigerian State before the civil war broke out and during the war. However, the vast majority of the ethnic groups in Nigeria were not on the same page with the Biafran warlord (Ojukwu) and his co-travellers. This led to the collapse of the Republic of Biafra, which was declared by Ojukwu. The voice and attitude of the Igbo showed that other non-Igbo ethnic groups were brought into the arrangement of Biafra without adequate consultation. The country

experienced an unwarranted civil war, which cost about two million lives. It created disharmony that laid the foundation for the parochial sentiment of ethnic affiliation.

In spite of the government policy based on the 3 Rs: Reconciliation, Reconstruction, and Rehabilitation, towards the victims of Civil War²², the problems that Nigeria as a State encountered before and during the coup made it difficult for the Gowon-led administration to have seamless governance, as captured below:

The Gowon administration's program of the three Rs (Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration) was an imaginative and unprecedented development in Africa. The 1972 Indigenization Decree, which aimed to put Nigeria's resources in the hands of Nigerians, was commendable. Unfortunately, these policies could not be carried through with success because there was no firm basis for establishing the kind of framework that was required²³.

The main obstacle Gowon faced was precipitated mainly by the discord sown by the previous leaders based on parochial sentiments to use shortcut to ascend to power. Consequently, the government was toppled by Major-General Muritala Ramat Muhammad in 1976. The new regime's aim was to make the country great by the adoption of the socialist system. Unfortunately, the regime came to a sudden collapse just after six months. General Murtala's reign came to such an abrupt end that it was not possible for the regime to consolidate some of the policies he had conceptualized.

The death of Murtala brought in Major-General Olusegun Obasanjo in 1976. By whatever considerations, Obasanjo was unprepared for governance when the mantle fell on him. His government lasted for three years with guess mated work throughout his tenure. The inclusion of Lt. Colonel Godwin Kanu and the appointment of Col. Paul Kanu as the

Governor of South East sent good signal to the Easterners. Unfortunately, the coup of 1976 and subsequent retrial and execution of those allegedly involved in the coup that led to the death of Murtala created new wounds in the heart of the Middle Belt who felt cheated. The success of good governance was eroded with this singular act because the minority regarded the era as the period that would help to project the cause of the minority²⁴.

The transition that followed ushered in Alhaji Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari as the President after the Presidential election of 1979. His administration was marred with serious corruption and nepotism at all levels. While the government was toppled by a military junta in 1983, the rhetoric of maladministration was the major excuse adduced by Major General Muhammad Buhari led junta as a major issue which precipitated them to truncate a democratic administration with the claim of providing the desired development which had remained elusive in Nigeria²⁵.

Even though the Buhari regime tried to tackle corruption to a reasonable extent, the few elites who were used to free money began a campaign of calumny, which eventually ousted the regime to bring General Ibrahim Babangida on board on 27th August, 1985, as the first Military President. The Maradonic style of his government made him to create endless unfruitful transitions which eventually ended up with an Interim National Government (ING) headed by Chief Earnest Shonekan. By whatever democratic standards, the government lacked constitutional backing. The regime was brought to an abrupt end by General Sani Abacha who staged a palace coup that gave him opportunity to emerge as the Head of Military Government in November, 1993. In view of this, Matthew Hassan Kukah in his book, "Witness to Justice" says: "Clearly, what we see is a tragic situation in which a greedy military has cleverly turned the pain and suffering of Nigerians into the oxygen of legitimacy for their coups."²⁶

The sudden death of General Sani Abacha ushered in a General Abdulsalami Abubakar-led military government in 1998. His

administration set up democratic institutions, which finally laid the foundation for unbroken democratic dispensation in Nigeria from 1999 until today. This is the first in the history of Nigeria to have had and had an uninterrupted democratic government for over two decades. Similarly, since then, Nigeria has witnessed a seamless transition from one political party to another. This singular political development has made Nigeria receive acclaim from developed nations for their remarks that democratic institutions in Nigeria are growing as expected. The country may have grown in terms of transition by changing the nomenclature of its regime and political parties, but the question is, has Nigeria's system of government grown or developed to make the vast majority benefit from its policies? The answer is obviously no, since what we have been experiencing is just a mere change of political party in power with the same people with retrogressive ideology. This singular act has made good governance a difficult task. To have a clear-cut understanding of the system with the people that run or operate it, it is pertinent to analyze the government's operational system from 1999 until 2019.

Transitions of Governments and Their Challenges, 1999–2019

As far back as 1983, military regimes were the common enemies of the Nigerian people. We all know that military regimes are usually institutionalized through the barrel of the gun. It is common knowledge that the second phase of military rule started after the 1983 military coup that toppled the democratically elected government headed by Alhaji Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari. Major-General Muhammad Buhari became Head of Government in 1983. General Ibrahim Babangida took over Buhari's military government in 1985. This was an illegitimate transition from a military regime to another. The Maradonic style of Babangida's regime, characterized by false promises beclouded with unpopular gimmicks, resulted in the buildup of a united front against the military government [27]. Nigerians began mass mobilization against the military government. To buttress this point, Bamgbose Adele says:

Mobilization culminated in party formation; at that time, both politicians and activities were united to fight the common enemy, that is, the military government. But immediately this aim had been achieved, that is, when the politicians and activities had sent the military packing, they started to fight each other. The orientation of party politics changed, i.e., from national to regional. As a result, regions became the privileged domain of each of the political parties' leaders. With party politics using the regional platform, the minorities within each of these regions were relegated to the background. The minorities also borrowed heavily from the major ethnic groups by devising ways to assert themselves in Nigerian party politics. While this schism became noticeable between the majorities and the minorities, such division was compounded by the struggle over the recognition of the status of the traditional rulers, who are not recognized in the current political system or arrangement²⁸.

The foregoing remark reveals disturbing issues in Nigerian politics: one, the politicians rose up to resist military rule due to its illegitimacy, and two, the politicians themselves were not united to sustain the mantle of leadership; they wrestled away from the military through a democratic process. Similarly, traditional leadership also did not have its role in the art of governance clearly spelled out in the Constitution, unlike in a country such as Britain, which specified the role of the Queen in her Constitution. Countries like Japan and Thailand have also enshrined the roles of traditional institutions or rulers in their Constitutions²⁹. On the contrary, in the case of Nigeria, the roles being played by traditional rulers seem to lack legitimacy in the Constitution. The lack of proper incorporation of the role of traditional institutions is one of the complications that have created a clog in the delivery of good governance by the traditional rulers.

It is imperative to state at this juncture, by way of explanation, that

legitimacy in access to power is when power is acquired through an acceptable process by the majority, especially in a democratic dispensation. There are so many features that usually make people earn this acceptability, prominent among which are: character, selflessness, endurance, coordination, willingness to help, wisdom, and many other acceptable qualities that can be associated with good character. Unfortunately, the cabals or elites in politics do not look at or believe in these qualities upheld by the majority; hence, the leader is being measured on who serves their own personal or selfish interests and those of their cronies. In this light, once interest is fully protected, the deal is sealed. By this arrangement, good governance is measured in line with how best the interests of their businesses are protected within and outside the country. Consequently, this has made the period of uninterrupted civilian rule in the country produce inconsequential dividends as far as good governance is concerned³⁰. These result from two factors identified in the light of internal and external factors, as discussed below:

Internal Factors

These factors are those propelled by politicians and businessmen and women. Their negative role has to do with their selfish partnership to ensure that their personal interests are best served against the laid-down principles of democratic institutions³¹. Meanwhile, the only best regulator of democracy is total adherence to the rule of law, and the moment this principle is jettisoned, governance suffers greatly.

External Factor

The external factor is the collaboration of Nigerian politicians, businessmen, and women with international actors to subvert the principle of good governance for selfish interests. Since Africa has been regarded as a market and producer of raw materials for the benefit of developed nations, the interests of the developed nations are being covertly or overtly protected through the institutions established by politicians in Nigeria to subvert good governance for selfish gains.

It is important to note that organized conspiracies ensure that the country's economic growth benefits only a small portion of the population at the expense of the majority. This development, whether directly or indirectly, translates to bad governance. Unfortunately, this has remained the dominant leadership style in the country since 1999. This contravenes the idea that economic growth benefits humankind and that the greater the growth, the more widespread the benefits³². As a result of these unpopular and selfish attributes manifested by the Nigerian rulers, a greater proportion of Nigerians have continued to suffer greatly at the hands of their leaders' selfish aggrandizement.

Absence of an Institutional Framework in Nigerian Politics as an Obstacle to Good Governance

The main issues that have continued to aid both internal and external factors mentioned above could be narrowed down to a lack of institutional framework in our body politics. The politics of individualism and godfatherism seem to have become the order of the day at the expense of collective institutional arrangements. The second coming of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as a democratically elected president would have helped Nigeria achieve good governance if the institutions were allowed to thrive right from 1999, when we regarded our democracy as nascent.

The most unfortunate thing about our nascent democracy is that most institutions created by the country's leadership always seem to revolve around one person, the President. For instance, critical institutions such as the Economic and Finance Crime Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practice Commission (ICPC) are clear examples of institutions seemingly created to curb corrupt activities in Nigeria. However, almost right from their inception, these institutions overtly or covertly became tools in the hands of the incumbent to use against political opponents to settle scores and guarantee victory in elections. Thus, improper use and manipulation of these institutions have been the major reasons why they could not operate at optimal capacity³³.

At this juncture, it is imperative to state that the government's inability to establish a formidable legal instrument that will clearly protect these institutions from politics has ruined even the successes they recorded at the beginning. Similarly, the lack of an institutional framework has created loopholes for Nigerian leaders to engage in unwholesome practices that deny Nigerians the benefits of good governance. For instance, in 2016, the Minister of Budget and Planning declared that the total amount of tax collected from 170 million Nigerians stood at fifty billion naira only (₦50,000,000,000), while the money appropriated and approved for the National Assembly alone in the 2016 budget was sixty billion naira only (₦60,000,000,000)³⁴. This clearly depicts a situation in which the political elite, or politicians, openly and without conscience use government resources to cater for themselves, thereby making life less meaningful to the majority of Nigerians. In fact, in any sane society, it is unthinkable for the wellbeing of the generality of the citizenry to be mortgaged for the selfish interests of those who call themselves leaders.

Inadequate planning is another disturbing multiplier effect of bad governance, which has reduced the purchasing power of the lower class in Nigeria. This has impoverished a large proportion of the population. For instance, in the 2018 budget, per capita income of each Nigerian stood at \$130, whereas in the USA, per capita income per person based on the 2018 budget was at \$13,000, while that of the United Kingdom was \$16,000 per person³⁵. Generally, inadequacies in budgetary allocation in Nigeria and massive corruption are major obstacles to governance, which prevents the actualization of the required development the citizens are yearning for.

The major adverse consequences of the above negative development include the adoption of criminal ways by our youths as a means of survival; the movement of many Nigerians abroad to seek greener pastures; and the dehumanisation of Nigerians by the international community, which has lessened the integrity of Nigerians in the international community. It will be interesting to compare the way nationals of five countries, namely, India, China, Malaysia, Singapore, and Nigeria, are treated in the issuance

of visas by members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. Singaporean nationals generally do not need visas to go to any of the western countries³⁶. Similarly, Malaysians are exempt from the rigours of visa applications. Presently, Chinese are courted and pampered at the entry borders when large numbers of their students arrive to study in foreign countries. Sadly enough, Nigerians would be lumped together for special and humiliating treatment, as they are counted among people who do not return home after visiting the advanced western countries. Although the condescending treatment of Nigerians is rooted in racism, in actual fact, bad governance is a major driving force that is chasing a large number of people out of the country.

The Effects of Bad Governance in Nigeria

In Nigeria, bad governance has been the source of many unpleasant socio-economic and political developments. Politically, bad governance has not only ushered in the phenomenon of money politics, but has continued to reinforce itself at a very disturbing scale. In other words, the two reinforce one another; that is, monetized politics begets bad governance, and vice versa. Money serves politics, and the latter serves the former in return whenever it controls power. The case in our country is so glaring that politics is now largely controlled by the rich, who have nothing to offer when in government. For instance, to pick a nomination form to contest any election costs between ₦5 million and ₦10³⁷. This has kept many honest and competent people out of power, thereby leaving the scene for the few selfish moneybags whose agenda for taking power is not to offer dividends of democracy to the people but only to their bank accounts.

More worrisomely, bad governance has resulted in the politicization of security issues in the country. While insecurity has become a major concern for the generality of Nigerians, those in power tend to turn security agencies such as the Police, Immigration, Department of State Security (DSS), Customs, and Army, which are saddled with the responsibility of defending the territorial integrity of the nation, into culpable for breaching

the security protocol. Through the tacit approval of those in power, security operatives always turn blind eyes to disturbing security challenges engulfing some groups or parts of the country in the name of political opponents or of being "disloyal." Even the insane person in the country knows the glaringly disturbing level at which security issues have been politicised, which is why the country, daily, experiences one form of security problems or the other ³⁸. Unfortunately, bad governance has continued to be a major contributing factor to the growing insecurity in the country.

Yet another very disturbing effect of bad governance in Nigeria is the alarming decay in the judiciary, which is supposed to be the only hope and justice for the common man. The judiciary has seemingly turned the justice ministry into a supermarket for the wealthy and for mischief makers to circumvent justice using legal practitioners who patronise injustice in the judiciary. Unfortunately, successive governments have continued to deliberately turn their eyes away from the misdeeds of judges. It was only in this country that a judge gave judgement in the wee hour of 1:00 a.m., and the Nigeria Judicial Council (NJC) did not raise any issue about such an ugly incident ³⁹. This has snowballed into anarchy in the country because when people feel that there will not be justice for them in the hands of judges, they result in self-help, which is a clear manifestation of the various crises we are experiencing in different places in Nigeria.

The institutional failure arising from bad governance has also brought about infrastructural decay. It is common knowledge that some of the external loans collected for infrastructural development are not used for such purposes. For instance, the Minna Hydro Irrigation Pump, which was to be executed with the sum of \$70,250,000 obtained as a loan by the General Ibrahim Babangida regime, was not executed ³¹. This raised fundamental socio-economic issues. One, the benefits of the project to the host communities were denied. Secondly, the vibrant youths that were supposed to be engaged after the completion of the project were deprived of the opportunity. Similarly, the repayment of the loan has become another

burden to the economy today since no investment came out of it. All these are negative effects bad governance has brought to the country. The development has indeed slowed down the pace of economic growth, which has the tendency to subject generations, yet unborn, to terrible economic hardship.

Lastly, the educational system is facing serious challenges as a result of bad governance in the country. There is no clear-cut policy to adequately fund the educational sector with the goal of making education a tool for socioeconomic advancement. Successive regimes have continued to abysmally neglect the funding of education. Even the 26% budgetary allocation advocated by UNICEF has always been given a blind eye, not to mention the inadequate funding of research in our institutions of learning. Worse of all, even the theoretical aspect is not taken care of; schools are grossly neglected in terms of infrastructure and teachers. These, put together, result in our institutions of learning producing even half-baked graduates in the theoretical aspect. Most glaring is also the fact that moral training is not considered important; hence, our schools produce more or less social deviants who engage in untold social vices, including the worst acts of criminality such as cultism and kidnapping, among others. Needless to say, our educational institutions contribute very essentially to producing and sustaining criminality and other forms of social vices due largely to bad governance.

Conclusion

The foregoing analysis clearly explains that, since independence, the process of ascension to power in Nigeria has been beclouded by irregularities as well as undemocratic approaches. This has hindered the enthronement of what could be termed legitimate authority. This has been the case with both civilian and military dispensations in the country since independence. The end product of this development is the enthronement of illegitimacy and leaders whose major concern is their parochial individual and collective selfish interests.

The foregoing development has remained the major cause of bad governance in the country. It is not arguable to state that since independence, our leaders have seemingly deviated from promoting the interests of the entire nation to promoting their own, as well as those of their regions, particularly their kinsmen. The major consequences of this development are not only general underdevelopment and widespread corruption in the country, but equally worrisome phenomena of inter-ethnic and regional crises as well as a general state of insecurity in the country. The phenomenon has, indeed, affected all facets of society. The following recommendations are proffered as the means for taming the tides of bad governance and its attendant negative consequences.

Recommendations

Reconstruction of our electoral system to check its attendant illegitimate or unapproved approaches.

Total ban on politicians convicted of promoting electoral malpractices as well as politically induced violence.

Corrupt leaders should be prosecuted and punished appropriately, and they should be banned from active participation in politics.

All political parties must be nationally based, as opposed to ethno-regional cleavages.

The number of political parties should be reduced to a maximum of five in order to give meaning to the entire political process.

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