TOWARDS SUSTAINING DEMOCRACY FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

After being illuded by twenty-nine years of military dictatorship, the return to democratic rule in the fourth republic in 1999 more-than ever before arose the peoples quest for good governance in Nigeria. However, this expectation seems not to have been met. The major objective of this study is to determine how democratic the fourth has been and whether it ushered in accountability and transparency and functional (development - oriented) leadership.

In collecting data for the study, both primary and secondary sources were explored. The secondary sources include books, journals and newspapers / magazine. The primary source is the use of questionnaire administered on Postgraduate Students of Department of Public Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The study revealed that, adherence to rule of law, electoral legitimacy as well as transparency and accountability has been low in the fourth republic. And even though, the fourth republic has been democratic, it did not ensure good governance. In view of the findings it has been suggested that the rule of law need to be strengthened, public institutions need to be reformed to enhance their operational and financial independence. There is also the need for mental revolution, attitudinal change and functional leadership if the fourth republic is to ensure good governance in Nigeria.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Though, democracy is expected to ensure good governance, after eight years into the fourth republic, the rising expectations of the people seems not to have been meet.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

i. How democratic is the fourth republic?

ii. Is the democratic leadership in the fourth republic development oriented?

iii. Has the democratic leadership ensured accountability and transparency in the business of governance?

iv. Has the democratic fourth republic brought about good governance.

v. What can be done to sustain democracy for good governance in the fourth republic in Nigeria.

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this paper is examine how to sustain democratic rule for good governance in the fourth republic in Nigeria.

The objectives of the study are;

i. To determine how democratic the fourth republic has been in Nigeria.

ii. To examine whether the democratic rule has come along with it, development oriented leadership.

iii. To ascertain the level of accountability and transparency in the business of governance in the fourth republic.

iv. To determine whether or not the democratic fourth republic has so far engendered good governance in Nigeria.

v. To make recommendations on how to sustain democratic rule in the fourth republic for good governance in view of (i) – (iv) above.

1.5 HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses postulated in this paper states that;

Ho: Democratic rule in the fourth republic has not so far engendered good governance in Nigeria.

Hi: Democratic rule in the fourth republic has engendered good governance in Nigeria.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This article is committed to the period of the fourth republic. That is from 1999 to August, 2007. Though, the indices of good governance are quite many emphases in laid on development oriented leadership, accountability and transparency. Even though, the title of the paper is framed to have country wide coverage, data to be collected will be on geo-political basis.

1.7 METHODOLOGY

Stancy (1969;89) as reiterated by Abdullahi (1988:102) in Sani (1999;37), methodology simply refers to the procedure by means of which data is collected and analyzed in order to test the hypothesis proposed.

In collecting data for this article, both primary and secondary sources were explored. The secondary sources includes: books, journals, newspapers and government publications. The primary source used is structured questionnaire.

Target population were Postgraduate students of the Department of Public Administration Ahmadu, Bello University, Zaria who are from across the six geo-political zones of the country. The total population for the study is 410 (Registered postgraduate students. Department of Public Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 2007).

The sample size is fifty (50) representing 12:2% of the total population. The sampling frame adopted is simple random sampling.

The data collected was analyzed quantitatively, using frequency tables, and percentages for comparison.

The second part of this paper will dwell on literature review and theoretical framework while part three will discuss the result of findings. The last contains summary of finings, conclusion and recommendations.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Democracy: Defined by its attributes encompassing authority emanating from the people, adherence to the rule of law, electoral legitimacy, freedom of choice and accountability in governance.
2. Development oriented leadership: Functional leadership, political leadership which is committed to the socio-economic transformation of society; reduce poverty, provide basic needs such as qualitative education, health, electricity and water.
3. Electoral Legitimacy: Relatively free and fair elections based on multiple parts systems.
4. Fourth Republic: Reign of government in Nigeria from 1999 – to the present (2007).
5. Good Governance: This refers to adherence to the rule of law, freedom of expression and association, electoral legitimacy, accountability and transparency and development oriented in leadership in managing the affairs of the state.
6. Rule of law: Law maintenance of and order, and security of life and property. An independent judicial system, neutrality and independence of public institutions such police, mass media, legislature and the Judiciary and other public institutions.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

The two major concepts used here are democracy and good governance. Democracy as a concept has no one sentence definition. That is, it defines precise definition. Therefore, scholars and practitioners defines the concept based on their orientation and social melieu. In Greece where it originated from, it means rule by the people.

Elaigiwu (2005; 28l) observes that, democracy is the most polemical word in political dictionary. To him, there is no consensus among scholars and statesmen on its precise concept. This is because, it has been subjected to so many interpretations and adaptations in the various parts of the world over time. In essence, it has become value ridden. He however, identified some of the salient characteristics of democracy. These are; people as locus of authority, adherence to rule of law electoral legitimacy, freedom of choice and accountability.

He contends however, that the internal framework for their operation differs from one country to the other.

Ojo (1999; 257) opines that, there is no concept that is so flagrantly used, abused, as well as paraded under all sorts of interests and quises as. He observes that, democracy is an essentially contested concept which does not have a universally acceptable definition "because of the ideological, cultural and historical contextualization that under – pin it at a macro – level". He reiterated the view of Chafe (1994), who sees democracy as "the involvement of the people in the running of the political, socio-economic and cultural affairs of their society". To him the attributes of democracy include

> "the presence of institutional mechanism by which citizens change those holding power, respect for the rule of law, accountable governance and the protection of human and civil rights".

From the foregoing definitions advanced above, it is clear that, though, there is no consensus on the concept of democracy, there is a similarity in it characteristics. These can be summed up as power emanating from the people and used for their socio-economic, political and social prospers, rule of law, and accountable governance.

The concept of good governance as that of democracy does not lend itself to a single definition. Ezeife (2002:36) sees good governance as the careful and guided application of government resources to the upliftment of standard of living of society.

Adamolekun (2002;3, 2006; 231) sees governance as the exercise of political authority in managing the affairs of the state. He identified the indices of good governance as; adherence to the rule of law, freedom of expression and association, electoral legitimacy, accountability and transparency and development oriented leadership. These indices of good governance are in many respects to those of democracy.

Emphasizing the relationship between democracy and governance, Ribadu (2006;10) observes, "... it is governance that helps to abridge the gulf between the abstract process of democratic theory and the practical reality of daily public management. That is, it is through governance that the will of the state is expressed and realized.

From the issues raised, arguments advanced, and point of views asserted, especially those of Ojo (1999:257), Elaigwu (2005;281), Ezeife (2002:36) and Adamolekun (2002:3), the two concepts of democracy and good governance are interrelated, interdependent and mutually self enforcing. They also share common attributes such as rule of law transparency and accountability and leadership inter-alia.

Nigerian's performance in sustaining democracy for good governance using the criteria earlier identified requires scrutiny. Adherence to rule of law has been under constant threat in the fourth republic. The security of lives and property of the citizenry suffered greatly as due to insecurity of lives and property.

The General Elections of 1999, 2003 and particularly 2007 has been adjudged neither free nor fair by both foreign and local observers.

This must have ranked the country among the lowest only ahead of Pakistan out of 24 in countries across the continents in Global Political Risk Index carried out by as United state based research and counseling from, Eurasia Group, (The Punch August 9, 2007 p. 4).

In terms of health and child care, the situation is not better either. Nigerians mostly from the northern states of Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, Kano, Borno and Yobe besieges hospitals in Niger Republic for food and medical attention due to the poor state and high cost of health care in Nigeria (Tell Magazine, August 13, 2007 pp. 20 – 27). It has been demonstrated that, the prices of medicines in the public sector are sometimes more expensive than the private sector which in profit oriented. Medicines are also generally more expensive in Nigeria than international prices while key keep medicines are most often not available in government health institutions (Federal Ministry of Health in the punch, August, 9, 2007, p. 35).

While Nigeria generated about 3,000 megawatts of electricity in 2005, the government targeted generating 10,000 megawatts of electricity in 2007 (FGN; 2005; 3). However, the country is currently generating about 1,700 megawatts after wasting a huge sum of ₦512 billion to boost power supply between 1999 – 2007. (The Sun, 12 July, 2007).

In the area of water supply, access to fresh water in portable quality and adequate quantity has been a mirage. Even for most residents of Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory, water is too precious. And as crystal (August, 2001: 33) puts it, apart form areas like Asakoro, Maitama, Garki and some parts of Wuse where taps are wet, other areas are virtually without this necessity of life.

The situation in other parts of the country and rural areas in particular is more worrisome. Manifested by the outbreak of water borned disease such as guinea worm among others.

Nigeria was rated the most corrupt country in the world in 1997 and 2000 and the second most corrupt in 1999 and 2001 (Ogiri; 2004;13).

In spite of the impressive array of institutions put in place to combat corruption between 1999 to date, Transparency International in its Corruption Perception Index for 2005, rated Nigeria as the sixth most corrupt in the world (The punch November 13th, 2006, 28).

This has forced 60% of country's population to live below poverty line as at the end of 2006. (Financial standard August 6, 2007; 1). Corruption is therefore, antithetical to good governance.

Inspite of an increase in per-capital income from $847.4 in 2005 to $1,036.2 in 2006. (The Punch 9, August, 2007:20) Life expectance in Nigeria is still as low as 46.5 and 47.7 for males and females respectively. In comparison, it is 74.5 and 79.0 for Libya and 51.9 and 54.2 for Benin (Financial standard, Monday October 9, 2006).

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

THEORY OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT; A THIRD WORLD APPROACH

Verma, (1975) sees political development as development through the instrumentality of the state, of the whole society, including its socio-cultural and economic system. To him, political development must include both increase capability and responsiveness of the political system.

Almond (1960), as reiterated by Verma (1975,357) identifies five conditions for political development, these are, successiveness in the stages of development , availability of resource, congruent development of other social systems, sufficient capability to the political system, and adequate response to challenges by the political leadership. This views show the importance of political stability, strong economy to support the political system, development of the entire social system, maintenance of law and order as well as meeting other societal needs. From the foregoing, the main features of political development are adherence to the rule of law, electoral legitimacy, autonomy and neutrality of public institutions, increase capacity, development oriented leadership and accountability and transparency.

3.0 RESULTS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSION.

3.1 RATE OF RETURN OF QUESTIONAIRE.

A total of fifty (50) questionnaires were administration but only forty (40) were returned. This represents 80%. Analysis of data is therefore based on the forty (40) questionnaires returned.

3.2 CLASSSIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO GEO-POLITICAL REGIONS AND SEX

As contained in Table one below, 27.5% of the responds were from the North West, 10.0% from North – East, 30% form North – Central, 2.5% from South – West, 12.5% from South – East, and 17.5% from the South – South geo-political zones. This indicates that, the sample consist of respondents from all the six geo-political zones of the country even though, the North – Central and North – West had a greater share. This could be attributed to the geographical location of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Twenty-one (21) out of the forty (40) respondents were males representing 52.5% while 47.5% were females. That is both males and females were represented.

TABLE 1: GEO-POLITICAL ZONES AND SEX DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

GEO-POLITICAL ZONE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
North – West	11	27.5	Male	21	52.5
North – East	4	10.0	Female	19	47.5
North – Central	12	30.00	-	-	-
North – West	1	2.5	-	-	-
North – East	5	12.5	-	-	-
South – South	7	17.5	-	-	-
Total	40	100	-	40	100

Source: Research Survey, August, 2007

3.3 RATE OF ADHERENCE TO RULE OF LAW, ELECTORAL LEGITIMACY AND LEVEL OF DEMOCRACY IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

The respondents rated adherence to rule of law 17.5% high, 50% low and 32.5 very low. This means that, adherence to rule of law was low during the period. This is indicated in Table two below.

In terms of electoral legitimacy, 30% describes it as legitimate, 35% illegitimate and another 35% very illegitimate. None opines it to be very legitimate. The electoral process therefore, suffers from legitimacy crises in the fourth republic in Nigeria. This is indicated in detail in the table below.

Going by the view of the sample respondents 55% were of the view that, the fourth republic was actually democratic, 22.5% undemocratic and 17.5% very undemocratic. None of them was of the opinion that, the fourth republic was very democratic. The responses of the sample respondents are as in table two below.

TABLE 2: RATE OF RULE OF LAW, ELECTORAL LEGITIMACY AND STATE OF DEMOCRACY IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

Rule of Law	Frequency	%	Electoral legitimacy	Frequency	%	Stage of democracy	Frequency	%
Very High	0	0	Very legitimate	0	0	Very democratic	0	0
High	7	17.5	Legitimate	12	30	Democratic	22	55
Low	20	50.0	Illegitimate	14	35	Undemocratic	11	27.5
Very low	13	32.5	Very illegitimate	14	35	Very undemocratic	7	17.5
Total	40	100		40	100		40	100.0

Source: Research Survey, August, 2007

3.4 RATE OF SERVICE DELIVERY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC.

The respondents rated the government 72.5% low, 22.5% of very low and 5% high in terms of providing the basic socio-economic needs such as health, education, water and electricity supply. The overall performance of the government in service

delivery for the period has been low. A government that cannot provide the citizenry with these basic services cannot be said to be development oriented.

The sample respondents rated the level of accountability and transparency in governance in the fourth Republic as 10% high, 57.5% low and 32.5% very low. None of them rated accountability and transparency very high. This is shown in the table below.

TABLE 3: RATE OF SERVICE DELIVERY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN THE FORTH REPUBLIC.

RATE OF SERVICE DELIVERY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	ACCOUNTABILITY & TRANSPARENCY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Very High	0	0	Very High	0	0
High	2	5	High	4	10
Low	29	72.5	Low	23	57.5
Very low	9	22.5	Very low	13	32.5
Total	**40**	**100.0**	**Total**	**40**	**100**

Source: Research Survey, August, 2007

3.5 TEST OF HYPOTHESES

Two hypotheses were postulated in this paper. One is alternate and the other a null – hypothesis. The alternate hypothesis states that, "democracy has ensured good governance in the fourth republic in Nigeria". The null hypothesis on the other hand, states that, democracy has not ensured good governance in the fourth republic in Nigeria.

The responses of the sample respondents showed that, 2.5 strongly agreed that, democracy has ensured good governance in the fourth republic in Nigeria while 25% agreed. However, 50% and 22.5% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that democracy has ensured good governance in the fourth republic in Nigeria. This is indicated in the table Ten (1) below.

TABLE 4, DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC IN NIGERIA.

DEMOCRACY ENSURED GOOD GOVERNANCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE.
Strongly Agreed	1	2.5
Agreed	10	25
Disagree	20	50
Strongly Disagree	9	22.5
Total.	**40**	**100.0**

Source, Field Survey, August, 2007.

With the above result, the alternate hypothesis is rejected and null – hypothesis accepted. That is, democracy has not ensured good governance in Nigeria in the fourth republic.

4.0 SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study examined how democratic the fourth republic has been and whether the fourth democratic engendered good governance in the forth republic. Indices used are adherence to rule of law, electoral legitimacy accountability and transparency as well as development oriented leadership.

The study revealed that adherence to the rule of law has been low while the electoral process suffers from legitimacy crises. In terms of accountability and transparency as well as responsiveness of the government in meeting the needs of the people, it has been confirmed to be low. In spite of all these, the respondents were of the view that, the fourth republic was actually democratic. They however, agreed that, the democratic fourth republic has not engendered good governance in Nigeria.

It can therefore, be concluded that, though the fourth republic has been democratic, it is lacking in ideals of democracy; rule of law, electoral legitimacy, accountability and transparency and functional leadership. It is for this reason that, the fourth republic has not been capable of ushering – in good governance in Nigeria.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings in (4.1) above, there is the need to strengthen the rule of law in Nigeria. The sanctity of human life and the protection of property should be jealously guided. The judiciary in Nigeria can be said to be operationally independent of recent, the same cannot be said of financial independence in spite of the constitutional provisions.

Closely related to this, is the need for independence and neutrality of other state institutions such as the police, the independent National Electoral Commission, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and other anti-corruption agencies. This will insulate them from being used as tools of political oppression.

There is the need to reform the police, and the electoral process because non-transparent electoral process cannot produce transparent leadership.

The act establishing the code of. Conduct Bureau need to be reviewed to include compulsory public declaration of assets by certain categories of public officials. This will enable the public petition in case of inconsistencies.

The crackdown on political office holders especially State Governors by EFCC should be extended to other levels of government. Not only that, the EFCC's search light should equally be beamed on top civil servants who aids the chief executives in looting public funds. This will also go long way in combating corruption and sustaining democracy in the fourth republic.

In spite of the present trend towards privatization, certain core services need to be largely provided by government in view of our level of development and yawing inequality. Such services include, water, health, education and electricity supply. Even in instances of partnership with the private sector in the provision of these services, a healthy and enlightened workforce is needed. Power supply is also critical to the socio-economic development of the country. It is by so doing that good governance can be ushered – in and maintained in the fourth republic.

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