

Leadership Instability, Corruption and Bad Governance the basis for Weak Political Institution: A hindrance for Achieving Developmental Goals in Africa.

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Abstract

Efforts for a well organized and effective optimization of the abundant potential in Africa had for too long been hindered by leadership instability, corruption and bad governance. These infectious diseases have hindered our efforts at rapid development and effective optimization of the abundant potential of our continent. Sustainable socio-economic development has been beclouded by Corruption which has not only slowed down economic growth, but also political instability and national insecurity with kidnapping of persons, ritual murder and armed robbery. The rising threat of instability in Nigeria on the weak political institutions, high level of corruption, differences in the interest of the political class, poverty, total collapse of educational and health care system, politicization of basic human needs, developmental indices and strategies also contributed to the instability in the country. It is annoying to note that about "10.5 million Nigerian children roam the streets as beggars and hawkers and about 45million literate adults do not have job to do, don't we think these people will end up becoming a threat to the stability of the country". This paper, therefore, identifies leadership instability, corruption and bad governance the basis for weak political institution: a hindrance for sustainable development.

Keywords: leadership, Instability, Corruption, Bad governance and weak political institution

Background to the Study

Nigeria as a giant of Africa is boarded in the Gulf of Guinea, by Cameroon and Benin. It is composed of three major ethnic groups; the North is dominated by the Hausas, the west by the Yoruba, while the East by the Ibos. It has a total area of approximately 923,768 sq. km as well as 4,047 km in land boundaries (Udogu, 2001). After independent in 1960, series of military *coup d'état* emerged that brought about lots of political instability in the country. These circumstances have constantly destabilized and jeopardized Nigeria's democracy as well as the political states that border Nigeria. There has been a constant and utter lack of rule of law on the part of the government and the governed. The most urgent issues in Nigeria today are the lack of management of the public funds that brought lack of trust, corruption, government instability,

and the maintenance of decaying simple amenities and infrastructures in the nation. The issue of the upsurge of corruption is endemic and troubling. Transparency International consistently rates the levels of corruption in Nigeria among the highest in the world. Pervasive corruption appears to permeate many levels of the Nigerian society (Eti, Ogaji, & Probert, 2006).

Inefficiency in governance has further deteriorated the Nigerian economy. Political instability and lack of proper accountability in the country have severely impeded the ability of successive governments to implement economic policies for the common good of the people, thus creating a lack of basic amenities for the people in the country. Northouse, (2004), observed that Nigeria's problems and consolidating democratic governance in the federal republic lies in having a government or leadership that works on the principles of good governance and is, most importantly, accountable to the Nigerian people. Good governance in Nigeria is essential to its stability and growth and that of the economies of West African countries in the Sub regions. While corruption, bad governance and abuse of power long have been features of Nigeria's economic and political landscapes, they do not have to remain in the country's future.

In Nigeria, those vested with the responsibility of making decision are considered the political elites, and are generally fewer in numbers with a high level of political influence and control over the economy. They manipulate policies to suit their dubious political agitations. For a government to be politically stable, the principles of democracy and the rule of law must be maintained and strictly followed. But due to the high level of immunity vested on political office holders in the democratic setting, they deliberately do things contrary to the rule of law since they are under the coverage of not being dictated or summonsed to face the wrath of the law. These ills have caused underdevelopment and bad leadership which has drastically hindered sustainable economic development in the country. (Igwe, 2010).

In the present Nigerian situation, the interest of the people and the image of the country are neglected. The lawmakers and some leaders and policy makers with money and power do not appear to have the interest of the common people at heart. Laws are made for the common people and not for the leaders. The decision-making process under the current situation was not based on the analysis of the needs of the people. Instead, it is based on political advantage and exists to favor the rich and the special interests of those in authority in the entire country. This poor leadership condition and other negative practices in the country have led many people to participate in different crimes and illegal activities. Many of the Nigerian citizens are fed up and unhappy with the chaotic situation of administration and leadership in the country. The laws and those who make them are not transparent and honest in doing what they were elected to do for the interest of the common good and the welfare of the country. According to Participant K (January 20, 2010), Rules and decisions relating to the country laws are based on the leaders, for what they can get, it is not actually from what the people's needs are, even though they can present that to the people, but they have a hidden agenda for personal issue in making decisions which they present as decision of the people or for the country. The promotion of rule of law doesn't hold very much because the people that have the money, they believe that they can buy their way through. Unlike the system they have in the United States where nobody is above the law. But I think that that can be accomplished in Nigeria when the right leaders come into power

that respect the rule of law and apply that rule of law to them as well. The laws and rules in the present Nigerian situation are made to represent special interests and the power that matters. Most of the time, the laws are enforced only on the weaker ones and implemented for the common people in the society. The only application to top politicians and government officials is when the image of the high-ranking and powerful leaders is at stake in the eyes of the public. The law under the present condition is not comprehensive, and it is not working well enough to serve the interest of the country due to lack of implementation and enforcement. Most people are sometimes afraid of the system of government, because of insecurity, chaos, and lack of rule of law. (Udogu, 2001).

Corruption and Bad Governance

The word "CORRUPTION" was first used by Aristoteles and later by Cicero who added the terms bribe and abandonment of good habits. According to Morris (1991) corruption is described as the illegitimate use of public power to benefit a private interest. an action to secretly provide a good or a service to a third party so that he or she can influence certain actions which benefit the corrupt, a third party, or both in which the corrupt agent has authority. Corruption is a serious plague to sustainable economic and political development of any nation. Therefore, the challenges of corruption remain a major overwhelming issue facing Nigeria since independence in 1960, although, this phenomena has become a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of our system. Nevertheless, its solution rests in our hands and cannot be put off to another day. That is why many countries have put in place different mechanisms for checkmating the spate of corruption. In Nigeria for example, the menace of corruption has been discussed at different levels, yet this ugly incidence keeps surviving with us at all facets of our endeavours. In the private sector, corruption increases the cost of business through the price of illicit payments themselves, the management cost of negotiating with officials and the risk of breached agreements or detection. Although some claim corruption reduces costs by cutting bureaucracy, the availability of bribes can also induce officials to contrive new rules and delays. Openly removing costly and lengthy regulations are better than covertly allowing them to be bypassed by using bribes. Where corruption inflates the cost of business, it also distorts the playing field, shielding firms with connections from competition and thereby sustaining inefficient firms. (Klitgaard, 1998).

Corruption also generates economic distortions in the public sector by diverting public investment into capital projects where bribes and kickbacks are more plentiful. Officials may increase the technical complexity of public sector projects to conceal or pave the way for such dealings, thus further distorting investment.^[5] Corruption also lowers compliance with construction, environmental, or other regulations, reduces the quality of government services and infrastructure, and increases budgetary pressures on government. Corruption is often most evident in countries with the smallest per capita incomes, relying on foreign aid for health services. However, political exploitation of these funds have been noted to occur in the past, especially in the sub-Saharan African nations, where it was reported in the 2006 World Bank Report that about half of the funds that were donated for health usages, were never invested into the health sectors or given to those needing medical attention. Instead, they were expended through "counterfeit drugs, siphoning off of drugs to the black market, and payments to ghost

employees”. Ultimately, there is a sufficient amount of money for health in developing countries, but this cash is given to the wrong hands, which leads to political and governmental corruption that takes away medical attention necessary for the citizens of these regions, and rather, used for personal gain. (Johann, 2007).

Corruption facilitates environmental destruction. Corrupt countries may formally have legislation to protect the environment; it cannot be enforced if officials can easily be bribed. The same applies to social rights worker protection, unionization prevention, and child labor. Violation of these laws rights enables corrupt countries to gain illegitimate economic advantage in the international market.

Ways of Preventing Political Instability in Governance

Political stability fascinates the growth of the economy which in turns facilitates the good governance. To prevent political instability and bad governance, the following measures should be strictly adhered to the following reasons:

1. Establish collective effort in decision making in which every part is duly represented and mutually beneficial decisions are made. Any leader that emerges to lead Nigeria must be totally free from any form of tribalism. All decisions must be made bearing one Nigeria in mind and be completely unbiased, filled with objectivity and free of sentiments. Nigeria is made up of different tribes, cultures and religions; no one tribe or religion should be marginalized.
2. Maintain the principles of separation of powers and rule of law as top priority of any elected leader in Nigeria from the federal to the local government level.
3. Encourage the understanding of the people's culture and history in the country.
4. Nigerian leaders should be able to understand the diversity tribes, tradition, customs, and languages of the different people in Nigeria to enhance a better and comprehensive leadership style and effectiveness in governance of the people.
5. Develop a decision-making process that starts from the community, involves the people, and represents the interest of the general public.
6. Divide the nation into three different sovereign regions, namely, the Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba regions. Nigerians need leadership that harmonizes and maintains the geopolitical systems.
7. Implementing an efficient decentralization process would empower local entities and ensure that local resources benefit rural communities and their economies. Political authority: Effective legislative and judicial laws and executive policies should reinforce political freedoms of speech and participation. Adjusting political officials' salaries to competitive civil service levels is likely to restore confidence in the government. Economic authority: Nigerians must ensure territorial integrity, develop infrastructure, and combat inequality by investing in human capital.

Promoting leadership stability and good governance for sustainable development

Adejimi (2005) defines a leader as “one who guide, direct the activities of others called followers. He asserts that a leader must be a good manager as well as an individual who is able to effectively coordinate the activities of defined objectives within the limits of available resources. A leader

must possess the ability to create in the followers the necessary enthusiasm/motivation to put in every necessary effort to deliver on set goals. Thus the ability not only to conceive but also to communicate a vision or idea is of utmost importance as an attribute of leadership. Above all, a leader must first and foremost be a member of his own team, internalize their feelings and galvanize their potentials towards reaching the goal.” (Ibid) In his conceptualization of leadership, Eze (2002) posits that “all over the world, leadership is the most important number one factor that determines whether a nation can develop”. He argued further that “a leadership that is free, brave, patriotic, people oriented, destination bound; the leadership that understands the psychology of leading and applies it to the development of the people must be at the affairs of men” (Ibid). Anybody in a position of authority as a leader must provide good leadership for his followers. Leadership has to do with the management of people with clearly defined goals or objectives. “It involves mobilizing and motivating people for greater prod activity.” It is the ability to operate effectively through other people making them accept the goals of the leader while the leader still has the freedom to do things their way. Leadership is one of the essential determinants of development and a core ingredient in organizing, mobilizing and inspiring societal resources for the attainment of goals. One of the most important things about leadership is the ability to inspire.

Sound governance is considered one of the most crucial components of sustainable economic development. Good governance implies competent management of a country's resources and affairs in a manner that is open, accountable, equitable, and responsive to the present and future needs of society. The use of this authority political, economic, and administrative is meant to facilitate a process through which citizens and groups can articulate their interests, meet their obligations, exercise their legal rights, and mediate differences. Although the government is a key factor in this process, it is one of many. Other actors include associations of farmers, cooperatives, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), religious leaders, financial institutions, political parties, media, lobbyists, international donors, and multinational corporations. Thus, if good governance is a precursor to sustainable economic development in Nigeria, every actor in society must meet challenges to governance and contribute to improving it (Thompson, 1995).

Sustainable development

This is an organizing principle for human life on a finite planet. It posits a desirable future state for human societies in which living conditions and resource-use meet human needs without undermining the sustainability of natural systems and the environment, so that future generations may also have their needs met. Sustainable development online (2012) refers to the term as the type of economic growth pattern where the use of resources meets the needs of the human population while conserving the environment at the same time. Sustainable development means resources are used in such a way that both current and future human needs can be met.

The sustainable development guide online (2012) also describes the term as the development that meet the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. According to Ukaga (2010) ask a sample of people about the term “sustainability” and you are likely to get a variety of answers representing diverse perspectives,

experiences and circumstances. This confirms that a “one size fits all” approach to sustainable development is inappropriate, ineffective and unnecessary. Sustainable development constantly seeks to achieve social and economic progress in ways that will not exhaust the earth's finite natural resources. The needs of the world today are real and immediate, yet it's necessary to develop ways to meet these needs that do not disregard the future. The capacity of our ecosystem is not limitless, meaning that future generations may not be able to meet their needs the way we are able to now.

Adebayo (2010) also maintains that the concept of sustainable development is the efforts at improving the environment or natural resources for the purpose of improving the quality of human life in such a way that the needs of the future generation are not jeopardized. To this end, sustainable development is the ability to preserve the existing resources of the state for the collective use of the citizens while conscious efforts are made to conserve the resources for the use of future generations.

Conclusion

Leadership style plays a key role in promoting educational goal and for Achieving Developmental Goals in Africa. In any human society Leadership Instability, Corruption and Bad Governance may cause Weak Political Institution with great dangers on the economy as a whole. In Nigeria today, leadership across the board from local to national level is all about the well-being of the leaders and their associates and the entrenchment of their rules by criminal means. Their mischief is also manifested in the spate of onslaughts against perceived opponents while in this process, the interests and well-being of the society is undermined or even ignored. This ought not to be so, as the purpose of leadership is about the well-being of the society who planted you in the herm of affairs. It evidently seen today that the most profitable profession is politics. It is also the easiest means of making money, as politicians do away with our lump sum of money and go free. This is seem in our weekly magazines talking about large-scale looting of the country treasury by those entrusted with the leadership of this country, past and present. It is necessary for our public officers to take a cue from this and re-dedicate themselves as God fearing leaders with a sole responsibility of serving the nation.

Recommendations

Corruption is the sole hindrance to good governance and involves all aspect of the society. All individual must put hands together to see that this “octopus” be curbed out from our political system. Some few measures are adopted by this paper as a way forward:

1. Parents / Guardians' first duty is to give birth to children whom they can guide properly. Early & unplanned marriages should be avoided. Parents / Guardians should have spiritual qualities and inherit them to their children. They should ensure that their children become good human beings with spiritual qualities while providing higher education. They should not encourage children to any kind of corrupted dealings. Morality is above money.
2. Problem with the police force is the misuse of force on common people while overlooking injustice of the high commands. Police is meant for social security, for punishing the guilty & protecting the innocent people. Corruption of police at all levels has to stop immediately.
3. Army is meant for defending the country against foreign invasions not for harassing the

innocent citizens. Navy & Air force personals are not supposed to live in luxury in the name of water & air defense.

4. All the three defense wings should do social work while there is no war else it is a waste of public money to maintain them. Corruption in gun deal or boats/ships/aircraft carrier or fighter jets etc. are to be stopped at all levels.
5. Bribery in all kinds of appointments. Appoint only qualified & merited people. Justice should rule not influence or quota please.

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