



State, Governance And Regional Integration In Africa

Editors:

**Aloysius-Michaels Okolie
Hassan Saliu
Gerald Ezirim**

Published by the Nigerian Political Science Association, July 2019

Democratic Governance and Sustainable Development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: Challenges and Prospects

Michael C. Egwu

Department of Political Science
Federal University Lafia, Nasarawa State

Abstract

Democratic governance is characterized by citizens' participation, equality, political tolerance, accountability, transparency, bill of rights, human rights, and multi-party system, among others. These underpinning principles are most germane for a society that is desirous of robust development. Nigeria's current democratization wave commenced on 29th May, 1999, when Chief Olusegun Obasanjo was sworn in as democratically elected civilian president. This was greeted with enthusiasm as Nigerians expected this trend of governance to liberate them from the shackles of military dictatorship and underdevelopment. However, it turned out as total aberrations as people's beliefs of getting improved living conditions were shortchanged. This paper examines the impact of democratic governance on sustainable development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic with a view to highlighting relevant challenges and prospects. It argues that the drawback to sustainable development in Nigeria should be blamed on the political actors; hence, the adoption of elite theoretical framework of analysis to buttress this argument. Relying on documentary approach through with textbooks, journals, and internet materials serving as sources of data, data analysis is premised on qualitative and thematic mode of analysis. Based on the challenges of democratic governance in enhancing sustainable development, the results showed that governance has been abused through massive corruption; ethnic marginalization; electoral partisanship and fraud; patron-client politics; annihilation of local government administration; and press censorship among others. The paper concludes that the reformation of democratic practice in Nigeria towards making it amenable to sustainable democracy and development is of essence. This would entail strengthening democracy through anti-corruption crusade; institution building; and civic re-orientation, among others.

Keywords: Democratic governance, democratization, development, Nigeria's Fourth Republic, political participation.

Introduction

On May 29, 1999, the governance of the Nigerian state returned to civilian rule marking the beginning of the Fourth Republic of our democratic dispensation. This was greeted with optimisms under the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo; though, amidst fears and apprehension regarding the impression that the military often interfere in political affairs of the nation. Ostensibly, there have been democratic revolutions over the past two decades; thereby, making it plausible to assume new looks in global political discourse in spite of contradictions. The

advocacy for democratization circumscribed on popular participation enhances and sustains development. However, popular participation in politics amongst the citizens is predicated on the prevailing democratic practices within the political landscape of a country.

In Nigeria, democratic governance has been in process and the intellectual preoccupation reflects on prevailing democratic practices that tend to engender democratic governance in sustaining development. In democratic setting, the principles of political participation and political pluralism also presuppose the way and manner selection and appointment of cabinet members and heads of government agencies and parastatals are made in democratic governance (Bedeian, 1986).

Anifowose (2004) maintains that political participation of the masses is *sine qua non* to democracy, which calls for participation, competition and liberty of the people. These noble ideals would promote political activism without recourse to gender status, religion, and political affiliations, among others. Going by the citizens' awareness and positive involvement in civic and political matters in any political system, democratic governance calls for their appreciable level of ability and character, rational conduct and active participation in the government to sustaining development (Appadorai, 2004). However, in promoting political activism that could drive democratic good governance, Ake (2001, p.115) insists on three things; "democratization of economic opportunities, social betterment of the people, and a strong social welfare system". These are tantamount to sustainable development within the political and economic milieu.

The essence of democratic governance lies on citizens' participation and contribution to political activities towards overall development of the nation and as such remains one of the fundamental requirements of democratic governance through control of power, acquisition of power and influence on decision making (Falade, 2014; Awolowo & Aluko, 2010). To this end, Lijphart (1999) proposes a set of indicators to compare the quality of democracy as: women's representation, political equality, electoral participation, satisfaction with democracy, government-voter proximity, accountability and corruption; while accountability, representation, and civil liberties are three standards of democracy (Altman & Perez-Linan, 2002). The above propositions invariably translate to citizens' participations in the formulation of policies, guarantee the provision and equal distribution of resources in the federating units and have the propensity of reducing the centrifugal forces that mitigate development. The political leadership is expected to run an-inclusive government where the citizens participate in policy issues so as to lead to development in the country.

Since citizens' participation in governance is of essence, sustainable development therefore is tied to participatory process. It is also a pattern of development where the welfare of future generations are guaranteed because they would live far better than the current generation (Kates, Parris & Leiserowitz, 2016; Todaro & Smith, 2003). Sustainable development through consistent democratic governance practices has been elusive to the nation from the inception of Nigeria's Fourth Republic. In spite of its contemporary drive, democratization is affected and

subjected to contradictions within the framework of sustainable development in Nigeria. It is on this note that Smah (2016) advocates the importance of leadership values in stabilizing institutions and communities across all sections of the country. Nigerian's political leadership seem to personifies anti-citizens' posture in the formulation and implementation of policies. Regrettably, democracy has been characterized by political repression, socio-economic quagmire; provision of the latitude for torture/incarceration and the experience of untold hardship in the form of fundamental human rights abuses and poverty in the nation-state (Ayele, 1992).

It is against this backdrop, therefore, that this paper seeks to interrogate the impact of democratic governance on sustainable development with a view to establishing its challenges and prospects in the context of Nigeria's Fourth Republic.

The broad objective of the paper is to reflect critically on democratic governance and sustainable development with a view to identifying its impact in Nigeria's democratization process. The understated are the specific objectives of the paper, which is to:

- (i) examine democratic governance and its impact on sustainable development in Nigeria;
- (ii) examine the challenges and prospects of democratic governance and sustainable development in Nigeria; and
- (iii) offer policy recommendations that will entrench democratic governance and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Perspectives on Democratic Governance

Democratic governance is a vital instrument and social condition necessary for the facilitation and enhancement of a democratization process. This provides a veritable platform for a robust atmosphere which allows for political, socio-economic and socio-cultural development of society. This practice provides the citizens with equal opportunity to participate in the political process in any capacity.

Judge, Stoker and Wolman (1995) state that democratic governance is an umbrella concept. This is because it espouses a wide range of theories and conceptual frameworks which exists in the area of urban policy as well as variance content of governance between one theory and the other. He further sees governance as amenable to possible participation and influence for all social actors though, with unequal conditions based on the pluralist theoretical stance whereas on the Marxist theoretical stance; governance is the instrumentation of society in function of the dominant interest as personified by the state. By this position, democratic governance allows for citizens' participation in policy choices and actions dispensed by the political leadership. Citizens' participation is of the essence as one of the dimensions on which democracy vary in quality (Diamond & Morlino, 2004).

Saldomando (1998) opines that democratic governance is the way in which compatibility between the state and the capitalist accumulation regime has been achieved with a view to reproducing not only the social order, but to channel the plurality of interests as well as the reactions against change and conflict management. Implicit in this viewpoint is that the concept of democratic governance presupposes

the collaborative effort of the political leadership and the bourgeois in consolidating their positions in statecraft. The dominant interests of the capitalists with the state's backing, entrenches recycling social order which negates the criteria/indicators of democratic governance like inclusive citizenship, rule of law, political equality, civil liberties, participation among others. Golden (2010) maintains that the capitalists in democratic governance incorporate the exploitative tendencies against the downtrodden in the society. This occurs when the capitalist connives with the political leadership and the latter abuse the supremacy of the law and equality within the political space. The capitalists' collaboration with the political leadership is captured by Ogbu (2008) where a former minister of health (Adenike Grange), a former federal legislator (Iyabo Obasanjo) and their gladiators misappropriated the sum of ₦300 million in the ministry of health. Rule of law and political equality must prevail and cannot be divorced in democratic governance of any society (Kaldor & Vejvoda, 1997; Lijphart, 1999).

George-Genyi (2013) contends that democratic governance espouses those principles that are pliable in a democratic setting like: participation and inclusiveness, responsiveness and accountability, transparency and good governance, regular free and fair elections, respect for human rights and life, adherence to rule of law, among others. The concept of democratic governance evaluated via these principles and sustained by the political leadership would enhance the citizens' wellbeing. Supporting this, Agubamah (2009) maintains that any government that does not toy with the democratic tenets of the country is adjudged to be democratically constituted; whereas those that negate these principles, is undemocratic no matter what it offers to the citizens. Citizens' welfare is amenable to democratic governance. However, this assumption is undermined in Nigeria as Ojatorotu and Allen (2009) have demonstrated that democracy neglects citizens' welfare. However, in an ideal democracy, citizen's welfare is of utmost importance to the political leadership; but, in Nigeria's democracy, the leaders have not performed in this regard. Wealth recycles among the elites and capitalist bourgeoisie leaving the masses to wallow in penury.

In UNDP (2006) democratic governance seeks in common with good governance, efficient institutions and predictable economic and political environment that make economic growth possible and public services effective. A viable political leadership under this context does not compromise the basic nuances of democracy in governance.

Barten, Montiel, Espinoza and Morales (2012) posit that democratic governance is far from being self-explanatory. This is because the concept of democratic governance is incontestable and does not necessarily go together hand-in-hand. Democracy has often been sacrificed in order to ensure governance.

From the foregoing, the concept of democratic governance though, elicited different viewpoints among scholars has however, sufficed to say, presupposes the range of processes through which a society reaches consensus and implements regulations on cognate issues in governance. This depends on how human rights, laws and policies, social welfare and environmental protection among others are given due

priority in governance. Democratic governance answers the questions of how a society organizes itself in pursuit of equality, equity, and justice for all citizens. These put together makes it plausible for any society that is desirous of sustainable development to actualize it owing to its adherence to the democratic principles.

Perspectives on Sustainable Development

What is sustainable development? This concept cannot be discussed without having a cursory look on what development connotes. Development is a process through which people create and recreate themselves and their life circumstances to realize higher levels of civilization in accordance with their own choices and values (Ake, 2001). This implies that people tend to disengage themselves from practices that do not contribute to their well-being, and adopt new ways of life that can add values to their lives in the society they live. Upon charting a new course for development (that meets the people's needs without compromising the ability of future generations), it becomes pertinent to sustain it with a view to balancing people's needs; economic, political, cultural, social and otherwise.

Sustainable development is "pattern of development which allows future generations to live not lesser than the current generation" (Todaro & Smith, 2003, p. 811). Implicitly, whatever the people have at the moment must meet the needs of future generation. This corroborates the position of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987; Elliot, 1994, p. 5) the Brundtland Commission on: 'development' meeting the needs of the present without compromising and undermining the ability of future generations in meeting their own needs.

The UNDP (1997b) argues that sustainable development is linked to good governance. This manifests in the aspects of poverty reduction, job creation and sustainable livelihoods, environments protection and regeneration; and the advancement of women. On the other hand, bad governance is in sharp contrast because it leads to high rate of poverty, unemployment or underemployment. These cannot guarantee sustainable development in whatever guise.

Kates, Parris, and Leiserowitz (2016) are of the view that sustainable development is participatory in orientation. For them, it requires the participation of diverse stakeholders and perspectives, with the propensity of reconciling different and sometimes opposing values and goals toward a new synthesis and subsequent coordination of mutual action to achieve multiple values in a simultaneous and even synergized manner. They further posit that achieving agreement on sustainability values, goals, and actions is often difficult and painful work. This is predicated on the premise that different stakeholders' values are forced to the surface, compared and contrasted, criticized and debated.

Since sustainable development is participatory, it requires the enhanced capacity of the political leadership in enhancing and guaranteeing the needs of the people in the society. To achieve this, general wellbeing of the people, developmental potentialities, and basic government instrument that would facilitate and stimulate

private activity are of essence. The policy actions of the political leadership must guarantee the attainments of citizens' drive for sustainable development.

Impact of Democratic Governance on Sustainable Development in Nigeria

The concepts of democratic governance and sustainable development do not only overlap but are interdependent. They are intertwined both in practice and theory. Both concepts are two-side of a coin. Democratic good governance is central issue to sustainability; and, a prerequisite for achieving sustainability (Sharma, 2001; Bosselmann, Engel, & Taylor, 2008). However, these concepts do not operate in isolation as the policy actions of the state actors are geared towards sustaining development in governance.

Any state that is desirous of sustainable development does not toy with the education of its citizens as government social responsibility. Government has been performing in this regard to promote literacy level in Nigeria. However, in spite of this role, the rate of illiteracy is still high in the country. Adedigba (2017) reveals the concern of the Minister of Education, Adamu Adamu over the country's high rate of illiteracy as 60 million Nigerians (30 percent of the population) cannot read or write. He insists that there can be no sustainable development in Nigeria if this trend is not checked. Successive government in Nigeria's Fourth Republic has made different policies and interventions to promote the quality of education in the country. For instance, in 2006, the Federal Ministry of Education released a report for education reform and intervention -*Vision 2020: The Role of the Nigerian Education Sector* under the supervision of then Minister of Education, Mrs. Obiageli Ezekwesili. This document could not bring about the desired change in the educational system hence, the federal government in order to redeem its image on the social responsibility through the ministry of education has embarked on 'Operation Reach All Primary and Secondary Schools' initiatives to correct the problem (Abdullahi, 2007).

Every responsive government prioritizes the health wellbeing of its citizens. This is why governments through ministries of health and other allied ministries play critical role in guaranteeing effective health care system by strengthening the health sector. There have been cases of mother-child mortality and outbreak of diseases which affect the health conditions of the populace. Therefore, improved health policies bring about drastic change in governance that promotes sustainable development. Government ensures health and environmental protection through the ministry of health by training and re-training of its personnel.

Human security is of the essence in the struggle for sustainable development. This is why the federal government is reforming the security architecture of the country with a view to ensure that people-centred reforms are put in place. The government adopts different measure for these reformations through re-orientating and rehabilitating of social miscreants, and addressing hunger and unemployment. In spite of these measures, Nigerian state is plagued with the challenges of livelihood security. This has been an issue of great concern to the nation's citizens. The issue of security has in the recent times, emerged as a key concept in defining Nigeria's stance for good governance, sustainable democracy and development (Omoyibo &

Akpomera, 2012; Emeka, 2015). Democratic governance is expected to be a gate way for sustainable development but reverse is the case in Nigeria due to fact that there are cases of terrorist attacks, kidnapping, poverty, corruption, and unemployment among others (Idris, 2013). Both ‘the rule’ and ‘the ruled’ are key actors that need a collaborative effort to the mitigating factors against human security.

Representative bureaucracy in governance is quintessential to enhancing sustainable development. Njoku (2017) agrees that its application leads to the democratization of personnel management which promote sustainable development as well as promotion of civil servants in the public sector. The principle of democratization makes it plausible for every ethnic nationality to be incorporated in the scheme of governance thereby contributes to development in the country. There is no bureaucracy can enjoy legitimacy without taking into cognizance of the interest of the different socio-cultural groups in that society (Krislov, 1974).

From the foregoing, it is observed that democratic governance has great impact on the wellbeing of the citizens. This is demonstrated in education, health, human security, and public service with which government implement through various policies that are geared towards guaranteeing sustainable development.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

In order to situate the relationship between the variables (democratic governance and sustainable development), the paper relies on secondary data based on textbooks, journals, newspapers and internet sources. The mode of analytical presentation is thematic; whereby, the themes are designed to address the objectives of this paper.

More so, the study employs the elite theory as framework of analyses. Elite theory adapted in (Egwu, 2017) is most germane in the understanding of how the Nigerian society works. It is popularized by scholars like: Vilfred Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, Roberto Michels, and C. Wright Mills. This invariably presupposes the pluralist view on how power is distributed in the society. It assumes that political power is concentrated in the hands of a minority group which Mosca (1939, p. 50), asserts that two classes of people appear in any given society; a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first “performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first” (Mosca, 1939, p.50).

The thrust of elite theory among other things are that: ‘elite owes its power to its internal organization and forms a united and cohesive minority in the face of an unorganized and fragmented mass; major decisions which affect society are taken by the elite, and these decisions usually reflect the interest of the elite rather than the wishes of the majority; the mass of the population is largely controlled and manipulated by the elite, passively accepting the propaganda which justifies elite rule; and major change in society occurs when one elite replaces another’ (Ibietan & Ajayi, 2015, p. 16).

This submission provides a strong support to this paper on the ground that democratic governance has political leadership who are few minorities that owes its

power to the internal organization rule in every society; and as such, can determine the level of sustainable development of that society. By this, it means that the functions of the political leadership of any society are encompassing within the purview of the political, economic, and socio-cultural, among other matters in society.

For Okereke cited in Ugwu (2006), utilization of the elite theoretical framework is not in doubt because, it is in line with the subject of discourse. This can be underscored on the premise that the elites often dominate and determine the course and direction of national development. The masses are just helpless, powerless and voiceless since, policy choices are defined and determined by the elites who are made up of the middle and upper class people in societies as well as having the skills and qualities required for leadership. Bottomore (1966) maintains that the masses cannot be said to be governing in essence through their participation in popular elections and party competition. He opines that policy problems which the people (masses) rarely decide through periodic election are shortchanged. This is because, elections are only important for the elites' symbolic values. The masses are only incorporated into the system by ascribing a role for them to play on Election Day.

Constraints of Democratic Governance: Implications for Sustainable Development

The level of sustainable development of any nation is dependent on the practice of democratic principles in governance. Strict adherences to these principles like accountability, transparency, fairness and equity, among others are the likely parameters to sustainable development. Democratic governance in Nigeria's Fourth Republic has been plagued with a preponderant of issues that undermine development. These include: leadership failures; massive corruption; ethnic marginalization; patron-client politics; interference on local government administration; and press censorship, among others.

Leadership Failures: Political leadership in governance among other factors is pivotal to harnessing and sustaining economic and human resources for national development. Upon assumption of office, leaders have the obligatory roles of attaining to the needs of the citizens through the provision of basic amenities, protection of human rights, maintenance of law and order, and among others. Genyi (2016, p. 43) maintains that: "a genuine political leadership transcends narrow personal ends and constantly pursues public end that is broad and favours the majority." In Nigeria, political leadership has failed in this regard. The primary goal of assuming leadership position has turned to self-enrichment at the detriment of the citizens. Achebe (1983) attributes Nigeria's problem to leadership failures. Nigerian-State's leadership quagmire can be blamed on leaders insensitive and/or non-acceptance of constructive criticism; hence, political repression all for political opponents. In governance, constructive criticism engenders effective and efficient service delivery in statecraft.

Massive Corruption: This is an inhibiting factor to democratic governance in Nigeria. This has been witnessed in all sectors and no Nigeria leader can be exonerated of corrupt charges. Corruption is the use of public office for private gains either on an individual or collective basis, has assume a new height in every administration, and has permeated every aspect of our national life and considered as a way of life (Nwaobi, 2005; Genyi, 2015; Waziri, 2010). Corruption is a deviation from any form of acceptable social behavior by an individual or social group. It is a pathogen that has ravaged Nigerian's state. It is clear that those seeking for public offices are doing so not to better the living conditions of the citizens, but for self-aggrandizement. This kleptocratic syndrome has been institutionalized in Nigeria's body politics. In 2001, Nigeria was rated by the Transparency International as the most third corrupt countries of the world. The 2006 Global Corruption Ranking by the Transparency International rated Nigeria 142 out of 163 in the rankings (Shehu, 2015). Odeh (2010) opines that corruption breeds inefficiency and lack of professionalism in patriotic services to the Nigerian-State. Without mincing words, this pathogen—corruption has been the bane to governance and development in Nigeria. The resultant effects are the clear manifestation of poverty, unemployment, prostitution, illiteracy, armed robbery, and among others.

Ethnic Marginalization: The Nigerian-State with over 250 ethnic nationalities is characterized with ethnic marginalization rooted in identity politics (Egwemi, Wuam, and Orngu, 2014). This has mitigated the nations drive for development within the context of federalism. Identity politics though closely associated with ethnic solidarity that is engendered by ethnic affinity in a political process presupposes unquenchable commitment to ethnic sympathy and the unapologetic identification with group interest and ambition that is defined within the parameters of ethnic territoriality. Ethnic marginalization encourages clientelistic networks of political patronage and sustained by primordial or parochial attachments to achieve ethnic interest against the tenet of federalism. Federalism presupposes the conglomeration of the component sub-units of a sovereign state that operates independently within statutory or constitutionally defined sphere of functional competence (Egwemi, Wuam & Orngu, 2014). To what extent can we say that the conditionality attached to federal structure in Nigeria's democratization process has been followed? Ethnic marginalization continues to play out in the nation's political affairs. Admission in schools and employment, appointment or election into offices negates the principles of federal character. The Federal Character Commission (FCC) that was intended to be a unifying factor for national unity has been shortchanged due to politics of lack of definitive accepted guidelines. Political actors undermine national interest and enthrone ethnic patronage as personified in the appointment of the present administration of President Muhammad Buhari who favours those of the northern extraction. A Lagos-based lawyer, Mr. Fred Agbaje, observes that a lopsided appointment in the current administration violates the principle of federal character which tends to promote national unity and hegemony contained in the preamble of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Electoral Partisanship: Due to the high-level electoral politicization, elections are not only flawed because of compromised electoral umpire who make the process selective, non-participatory and undemocratic; hence, leadership failures as the mediocrity replaces meritocracy. The conduct of a free and fair election guarantees the legitimacy of government and vice-versa because power belongs to the people. In Nigeria, elections from the inception of the Fourth Republic from 1999 till date show high level of electoral partisanship. Late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua affirmed that the process that brought him to power was faulty. As a result, most of the results of the elections have been contested and judgments reversed by the Judiciary. Electoral partisanship undermines democratic governance in Nigeria. For this, Azinge (2004) cited in Olu-Adeyemi (2012) concludes that the major challenge of democratic governance in Nigeria lies in the process for electing public officers into leadership positions as corruption mars the electoral process and political party system which has circumvented massive participation of the citizens. The problem of partisanship makes the electoral system to lack integrity in the nation's body polity.

Patron-Client Politics: This trend has become a recurring decimal in the nation's party politics. Anyone contesting elective position mostly depends on political godfather to attract voters support and success in an election. These powerful individuals are not only financiers of political campaigns, but they use wealth to deploy violence and corruption to manipulate national, state, and local political systems in support of the protégés they sponsor. According to Edigin (2010), this trend is the cause of conflict and violence which have permeated the political landscape in Nigeria. This do not only portend great dangers to our democratic experiments, but the very essence and validity of our existence as a state. The huge amount of monies expended by godfathers for their godsons' elections have totally monetized the electoral process and also, disqualifies men of integrity and honor from holding any elective offices. This continues to account for human right abuses. The cases of godfather/godson face-off that suffocate governance are that of Nwaobodo vs Nnamani quagmire, Saraki vs Lawal face-off, Adedibu vs Ladoja, Uba vs Ngige saga among other godfather protégés crises. This is preparing grounds for military coups, which would supplant the Fourth Republic. For example, the Chief of Army Staff, Lt. General T. Y. Buratai had expressed worry that politicians are approaching the military for political reasons. An online news blog (Naij. News) reported on 21st May, 2017 that the army has arrested some soldiers for investigation on coup-related allegations.

Abrogation/Interference on Local Government Administration: The creation of the local government system stems from the need to bring government closer to the grassroots populace, enhance their participation in governance, hence enhancing sustainable development. The concept of local government presupposes government being run by the local bodies in the provision of citizens' needs as the tier of government closest to the people; with vested powers to exercise control over the affairs of people at grassroots domains. This is achieved through popular participation

of the people both in the choice of decision-makers and in the decision-making process. It is also the government conducted by local bodies; hence, the local government administration remains the cornerstone of people-centred democracy everywhere in the world (Gboyega, 1987; Lawal, 2000; Uya, 2002). Therefore, the importance of local government administration cannot be underestimated in Nigeria's party politics. It is in recognition of this fact that the 1979 Constitution provided for democratization and devolution of powers or functions for local government administration in the country. The autonomy and democratic participation provided in the 1979 constitution has been shortchanged in the 1999 constitution which make the local government council an appendage to the state government pursuant to Sections 7 & 8 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended). The local government systems in Nigeria have been battling on how to enhance and sustain development, but the interferences of state governments mitigate such effort. In short, the stifling of the efforts to involve the grassroots electorate in governance translates to outright abrogation of the local government system as enshrined in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. In the end, the essence of grassroots democracy and development has been defeated.

Press Censorship: The press is the fourth estate of the realm. After the three arms of government, the press remains the locomotive engine that engenders social engineering, shapes public opinion, and enhances development in the society especially, in democratic setting. Through its in-depth investigation, the press identifies the ills of government and reports same to the citizenry. The role of the press is very essential in democratic regimes through the flows of communication (from government to citizens and from citizens to government), and communication is an important ingredient of every democratic society (Oji & Okafor, 2000; Popoola, 2008). Regrettably, press censorship restrains its in-depth reportage on government actions thereby, affecting democratic governance. News in most public media outfits are censored to sooth the interest of government against democratic ethos—freedom of the press in news reportage. Most pressmen are praise-singers that serve the interest of the seating leaders thereby, depriving the citizens the right dosage of information.

From the foregoing, these elaborated challenges tend to undermine the drive for democratic governance and its sustenance of development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. This is why democratic institutional reforms from successive administration have ignored democratic procedures and rules. The repression of political opponents and emasculation of civil societies continue to threaten the civic essence of democratic governance.

Conclusion/Recommendations

Without mincing words, democratic governance has been flawed overtime in Nigeria as its successive leaders have enmeshed the state and subjected the citizens to sycophancy within the political landscape. They have failed in much respect to paying attention to political and economic realities and peculiarities in Nigeria. As

long as democratic tenets are abused, the drive for development would only be mirage. Therefore, being caught up in this quagmire, there is an ardent need to redress the ugly trend to guarantee democratic governance and sustainable development in Nigeria. This is because; the Nigerian citizens have high expectations on the political leadership in governance. However, Nigerian State holds good prospects if the political leaders would demonstrate political will governance

Within the arrays of democratic governance, development which has been elusive in Nigeria has equally subjected the citizens to poverty and hardship. However, on the nexus between democratic governance and sustainable development, the paper posits that governance has been abused through leadership failures; massive corruption; ethnic marginalization; electoral partisanship; patron-client politics; interference on local government administration; and press censorship among others. In line with the above findings and policy implications of the study, the following specific recommendations are proffered:

- (i) The political leadership in governance should constantly pursues public good in harnessing and sustaining economic and human resources for national development;
- (ii) There should be viable anti-corruption institutions in the country;
- (iii) There should be advocacy for civic and value re-orientation to suppressing ethnic marginalization by placing national interest above ethnic leanings;
- (iv) Electoral umpire should be insulated from partisan politics to reduce the high level electoral politicization, elections in the country;
- (v) There should be prohibition of patron-client politics in the nation's body polity so as to reduce monetization of elections
- (vi) Local government administration should be granted autonomy so as not to make them appendage to state government; and
- (vii) There should be press freedom so as to allow them operate freely as the locomotive engine that engenders social engineering and shapes public opinion in the society.

References

- Abdullahi, S. A. (2007). The effects of good governance and education on economic stability and growth in Nigeria. *African Journal Online, Vol 13, No 1*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/epr/article/view/39267/94094> Accessed On: 07/03/2019; 2: 00pm.
- Achebe, C. (1983). *The trouble with Nigeria*. Oxford: Heinemann Publishers.
- Adedigba, A. (2017). 60 million Nigerians are illiterate. *Premium Times, November 23, 2017*. Retrieved from: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/250397-60-million-nigerians-are-illiterates-minister.html> Accessed On 09/03/2019; 4: 23 pm.
- Agubamah, E. (2009). Accountability and good governance: A prerequisite for democratic politics in Nigeria. In Edoh, T & Wuam T. [eds.]. *Democracy, leadership and accountability in post-colonial Africa: Challenges and*

- possibilities. *Essays in honor of Professor Akase Paul Sorkaa*. Makurdi: Aboki Publishers.
- Ake, C. (2001). *Democracy and development in Africa*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited.
- Altman, D. & Perez-Linan, A. (2002). Assessing the quality of democracy: Freedom, competitiveness and participation in eighteen Latin American Countries. *Democratization* 9(2), 85-100.
- Anifowose, R. (2004). *Women political participation in Nigeria*. Lagos: Concept Publications.
- Appadorai, A. (2004). *The substance of politics [Fourth Impression]*. India: Oxford University Press.
- Awolowo, D. & Aluko, F.S. (2010) Women and political participation in Nigeria. *European journal of social sciences* 14 (4), 581-593. Retrieved from https://globaljournals.org/GJHSS_Volume14/3-Political-Participation-in-Nigerian.pdf Accessed On: 17/4/17.
- Ayele, S. O (1992). Human rights in Africa: Implications for democratic transition (1986-1991). Caron, B, Gboyega A & E. Osaghae (EDS, 1992). *Democratic Transition in Africa*. Ibadan: CREU Documents in Social Sciences and Humanities No. 1
- Barten, F., Montiel, R. P., Espinoza, E. & Morales, C. (2012). Democratic governance –fairytale or real perspective? Lessons from Central America. *Environment & urbanization*. Vol 14 No.1. 129-144. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/58a2/d7fbc3a9251c622abdf172adab8f623b9b94.pdf> Accessed On: 19/4/17.
- Bedeian, A. G. (1986). *Management*. Chicago: The Dryden Press.
- Bottomore, T. B. (1966). *Elites and society*. Middlesex: Penguin Books.
- Bosselmann, K., Engel, R., & Taylor, P. (2008). *Governance for sustainability: Issues, challenges, successes*. Gland (Switzerland): International Union for Conservation of Nature.
- Diamond, L. & Morlino, L. (2004). The quality of democracy: An overview. *Journal of Democracy* 15(4), 20-31.
- Edigin, L.U. (2010). Political conflicts and godfatherism in Nigeria: A focus on the Fourth Republic. *In African research*. ISSN: 1994-9057, vol. 4, No. 4.
- Egwemi, V., Wuam, T. & Orngu (2014). Federalism, politics and minorities in Nigeria. *Essays in honour of Professor G.N. Hembe [eds.]*. Lagos: Bahiti and Dalila Publishers.
- Egwu, M. C. (2017). Political leadership: A desideratum for national development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. *South East Political Science Review*. Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 83-97.
- Elliot, J. (1994). *An introduction to sustainable development: The developing world*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Emeka, A. (2015). Unemployment cases worsen as 1.3m lost jobs. *Vanguard Newspaper*, August 4.

- Falade, D. A. (2014). Political participation in Nigerian democracy: A study of some selected local government areas in Ondo State, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: F Political Science, Volume 14 Issue 8*.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999*. Lagos: Federal Government Press.
- Gboyega, A. (1987). *Political values and local government in Nigeria*. Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited.
- Genyi, G. A. (2015). Democratic rule and corruption in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: An appraisal. *VUNA Journal of politics and diplomatic studies, 1 (1)*, 72-79.
- Genyi, G.A. (2016). Leadership crisis and corruption in contemporary Nigeria: Implications for national development. *FULafia Journal of Social Sciences: Maiden Edition. 40-50*.
- George-Genyi, M. E. (2013). Democratic governance and sustainable development in Benue State of Nigeria since 1999. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 3 No.11.155*. Retrieved from: [http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/ Vol 3 No 11 June 2013/18.pdf](http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_3_No_11_June_2013/18.pdf). On: 15/04/2017.
- Golden, P.C. (2010). *Fundamentals of democracy*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Ibietan, J. I. & Ajayi, O. O. (2015). The governing elite and democratic consolidation in Nigeria: An appraisal of the Fourth Republic. *Journal of Human and Social Science Research; Vol. 06 (01)*, pp. 14-21.
- Idris, A. J. (2013). Democracy and development in Nigeria: Is there a link? *Arabia Journal*.
- Judge, D., Stoker, G. & Wolman, H. (1995). *Theories of urban politics [eds.]*. London: Sage Publications.
- Kaldo, M. & Vejvoda, I. (1997). Democratization in Central and East European Countries. *International Affairs* 73(1), 59-82.
- Kates, R. W., Parris, T. M. & Leiserowitz, A. A. (2016). Editorial- what is sustainable development? goals, indicators, values, and practice. *Environment Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*. Retrieved from http://www.cepn-paris13.fr/epog/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/CONSOLO_Kates-et-al.pdf On: 31/05/2018.
- Krislov, S. (1974). *Representative bureaucracy: In classics of public administration [5th ed.]*, edited by Jay M. Shafritz, Albert C. Hyde, and Sandra J. Parkes. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning.
- Lawal, S. (2000). Local government administration in Nigeria: A practical approach in Ajayi, K. [ed]. *Theory and practice of local government*. Ado Ekiti: University of Ado Ekiti Press Limited.
- Lijphart, A. (1999). *Patterns of democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Mosca, G. (1939). *The ruling class*. Arthur Livingstone [ed.]. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Njoku, A. Y., 2017. Sustainable development strategies in a changing world: A road not taken. *Journal of natural resources, 7(5): 137-146*

- Nwaobi, C. (2005). *Corruption and bribery in the Nigerian economy*. Abuja: Quantitative Economic Bureau.
- Odeh, L.E. (2010). Analysis of factors inhibiting democracy and democratization in Nigeria, 1999-2007. Talla, N.S & Terhemba, W. [eds.]. *The Fourth Republic in Nigeria: A decade of democratization reviewed*. Lapai: Department of History and Archaeology, IBB University.
- Ogbu, O. N. (2008). Combating corruption in Nigeria: A critical appraisal of the laws, institutions, and the political will. *Annual Survey of International and Comparative Law: Vol. 14: Iss. 1, Article 6*. Available at: <http://digitalcommons.law.ggu.edu/annlsurvey/vol14/iss1/6>. (Accessed 29/04/2014).
- Ojakorotu, V.& Allen, F. (2009). From authoritarian rule to democracy in Nigeria: Citizens' welfare a myth or reality. *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences* 1(2) 152-192.
- Oji, O. R. & Okafor, C. (2000). *Political parties, pressure groups & public opinion in the political process*. Enugu: John Jacob's Classic Publishers Ltd.
- Olu-Adeyemi, L. (2012). The challenges of democratic governance in Nigeria. *International Journal of Business and Social Science* Vol. 3 No. 5, 167. Retrieved from http://ijbssnet.com/journals/Vol_3_No_5_March_2012/19.pdf. On: 25/4/17.
- Okpata, F. O. & Nwali, T. B. (2013). Security and the rule of law in Nigeria. Review of Omoyibo, K.U. & Akpomera, E. (2013). Insecurity mantra: The paradox of Nigerian growth and development. *European Scientific Journal*, 8(6), 132-142.
- Popoola, I. (2008). Political communication as a mechanism of conflict management in a democratic dispensation. In Ralph A. Akinfeleye [Ed.]. *Mass media and society*. pp. 122–139. Lagos: Department of Mass Communication, UNILAG.
- Saldomando, A. (1998). Construcción del orden y gobernabilidad. In Cuadra Lira, E, A. Perez Baltodano and A. Saldomando. *Orden social y gobernabilidad en Nicaragua 1990-1996*, CRIES Managua, pages 33-69.
- Sharma, S. K. (2001). Governance for realising a sustainable society. *SAGE Publications: Social Change, Vol. 31(1/2), p. 165-173*.
- Shehu, A. Y. (2015). *Nigeria: The way through corruption to the well-being of a people*. Lagos: National Open University of Nigeria.
- Smah, S. O. (2016). Pitfalls of youth dislocations in Nigeria's national development: The imperatives of responsive leadership. *FULafia Journal of Social Sciences: Maiden Edition. 1-14*. A Publication of Faculty of Social Sciences, Federal University Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.
- Todaro, M. P. & Smith, S. C. (2003). *Economic development* [Eight Ed.]. Delhi: Pearson Education [Singapore] Pte. Ltd, Indian Branch.
- Ugwu, S. C. (2006). *Public policy analysis: Issues, principles, theories and applications*. Enugu:Chiezugo Ventures.

- United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] (1997b). *Reconceptualising governance. Discussion Paper 2*. New York: Management Development and Governance Division, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, United Nations Development Programme [UNDP].
- UNDP (2006). *Governance for the future: Democracy and development in the least developed countries. UN office of the book representative for the least developed countries*.
- Uya, O.E. (2002). *Local government administration and grassroots democracy in Nigeria [eds.]*. Calabar: University Press.
- Waziri, F. (2010). Chairman's opening remarks. In CLEEN Foundation [ed.]. *Corruption and governance challenges in Nigeria*. Monograph Series, No. 7.
- World Commission on Environment and Development [WCED]. (1987). *Our Common Future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.