

THE IMPACT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Good governance is an indispensable tool for implementation of development policies and accountability of governmental agencies in any nation. This paper examines government approach on implementation of development programmes in Nigeria. Data for this study were sourced via secondary means of data collection through published works, books, journals, magazines, newspapers and unpublished works. Manifestation of unethical behaviour amongst public officials, non-involvement of citizens in the development process, lack of transparency and many other factors are considered the major challenges hindering implementation of development programmes in the country. The paper recommends among others the need for the government to strengthen the existing reforms that give attention to implementation of development policies to enable them enforce proper ethical standard.

Keywords: Governance, Policy, Development.

INTRODUCTION

Improved performance of governmental agencies in every nation largely depends on good governance. It leads to an increase in people's living standards and socio-economic growth. It is through good governance that Development projects and programmes are realized in any nation. In a state where good governance is thrown overboard, accountability of governmental institutions and progress of

such states are likely to be un-realistic; therefore, the Nigeria's developmental challenges are directly linked to the nature of leadership and governance, a governance and leadership style that is marked by inequality, social deprivation, and political turmoil. These vices have to be addressed for the country to prosper in its quest for Development. Good governance is a vital pre-requisite for the improvement of wellbeing of the citizen. A general agreement has been throughout Africa that good governance is indispensable for transforming its socio-economic potentials (Iyaya and Iyaya, 2004).

The problem associated with bad governance in Nigeria, especially as regards to development programmes in the country cannot be separated from the type of elected or appointed officials in place. Ojiefe 2017, noted that lack of integrity by Nigeria appointed or elected leaders has turnout to be one of the biggest problem bedevilling good governance system in Nigeria, reason being that a vast majority of our them have failed the critical integrity test, over the years in Nigeria, some of this officials even paint pictures of what and how they intend to implement various development policy and transform the society if voted or appointed into power, but when they end up being voted for, they do not walk the talk rather they give reasons and make excuses of why it was impossible for them to do the things they had promised to do. In view of the foregoing, the need to have an elected or appointed official who will stand the test of time and able to fulfil various promises made to the electorate is necessary and paramount.

In the light of the foregoing clarifications, the paper seeks to interrogate the Nigeria governance process in respect to their efforts towards institutionalizing good governance and encourage implementation of development policies in Nigeria. It also plans to examine relevance of good governance on state and local community development policies in Nigeria, the constraint negating the implementation of this policies thereby breeding bad governance and to analyze good governance within the context of governmental policies in Nigeria as enshrined in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This paper has been written on the basis of secondary data from library researches, review of relevant literature such as text books and journals. The paper adopts qualitative research method. It is instructive to mention that qualitative research is primarily exploratory research. It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations

LITERATURE REVIEW:

CONCEPT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE:

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines Good governance among other things as being participatory, transparent, and accountable. It is also effective and equitable and promotes the Rule of Law. It ensures that the voices of poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision making over the allocation of development resources, and that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus among the three stakeholders i.e. the states, private sector and civil society

According to African Development Bank (ADB), good governance is one that strengthens the capacity and capability of the state, mobilizes civil societies and energises the private sector

The World Bank named the exercise of power on political authority, and the

management of social and economic resources as governance, and defined good governance as effective administration, trustful legal system and responsible regime (World Bank 1989). The World Bank added the formulation of policies and implementation of them by the government and selected Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, Control of Corruption as the main 6 governance indicators (World Bank 2009).

The United Nations (UN) focuses on democratic and political part of governance. The UN emphasises that decrease of corruption, civil participation and political institution reform through good governance improve the economy (UN 2007). The UN considers democracy as good governance and suggests following 8 characteristics: Consensus Oriented, Participatory, following the Rule of Law, Effective and Efficient, Accountable, Transparent, Responsive, Equitable and Inclusive (UN 2007).

To expand the definition of governance, OECD defines good governance as management of political, economic and administrative authority and it has characteristics of Participation, Transparency, Accountability, Rule of law, Effectiveness and Equity (OECD 1997).

Also, overstressing democratic governance, it added free of abuse and corruption, and it analyse good governance based on various indicators, such as, Regulatory Quality Indicator, Central Government Debt, Citizen Relationship, General Government Account, Ethics Measures in Public Service and Human Resource Management Survey.

Sharma, Sadana and Kaur (2013) observed that, Good governance establishes the rule of law, enforces contracts and agreement between the individuals, maintains law and order, guarantees security to the people, economizes on cost and resources, protects the government and properly delivers services to

the society. It also determines an optimal size of the government and makes best possible use of government resources.

Lastly, the International Monetary fund (IMF) has a focus on economic part of governance and emphasizes on promoting good governance in all its aspects, including the rule of law, improving the efficiency and accountability of the public sector, and tackling corruption.

Meanwhile, important international organisations render the following definitions of good governance.

Governance refers to the various structures and processes that are intended to safeguard accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness empowerment and broad-based participation of all stakeholders including the community at large. For the success of development programmes in Nigeria best governance practices are highly necessary.

ELEMENTS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE:

Good governance entails planned and changing administrative style that brings fast changing political, social and economic arrangements. It also transforms the political, economic and social life of the citizens within the framework of sustainable democracy.

Sharma et al cited in Cimezie, (2016) analyse the elements of good governance to include:

PARTICIPATION:

They see participation as key to good governance. Citizens participate in the organs of government - executive, legislature, and judiciary and regularly exercise their rights to franchise. Participation could be either direct or through the representatives Accountability: The test of a vibrant democracy is the degree of success in ensuring accountability of those who rule, to those from whom they derive their authority.

TRANSPARENCY:

A major premise of good governance is the citizens 'access to information, and a good government must ensure free flow of information to citizens. In a parliamentary democracy, transparency in government becomes a necessity and this becomes possible by the basic doctrine of separation of power, and checks and balances among the executive, legislature, and judicial branches. Transparency requires that the decisions are taken and their enforcement is done in a manner that is in conformity with the rules and regulations.

RULE OF LAW:

This is a framework that is enforced in an impartial manner for protecting human rights, securing social justice and checking abuse of power; it is a prerequisite for good governance. Consensus Oriented: Good governance should aim at reaching broad consensus after mediating different interests in the society for the best interest of the community. It aims at sustainable human development and also to achieve the goals of such development.

EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY:

Good governance also rests upon the fact that the process and institutions should produce results to meet the needs of the society. It also entails proper utilization of resources at their disposal as well as in the government.

RESPONSIVENESS:

Good governance would be possible only when the institution and processes are responsive and serve all stakeholders within a reasonable time-frame.

Inclusiveness and Equity: Good governance advocates that people should not be excluded from the mainstream of the society and the marginalized are able to avail opportunities.

CONCEPTS OF DEVELOPMENT AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES:

The concept development is used to refer to the total transformation of a system: thus when used to describe a nation, describes the transformation of the various aspects of the life of the nation. In fact, development implies a progression from a lower and often undesirable state to a high and preferred one. Development also can be defined in terms of attacking wide-spread absolute poverty, reducing inequalities and removing the spectre of unemployment – all these being achieved within the context of a growing economy. This led to the redefinition of development in terms of both redistribution with growth and meeting the basic needs of the masses of the population.

According to Rodney (1974), development is a many sided process. At the individual level, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material wellbeing. At the level of social groups, development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships.

Rogers (1969), defines development as a type of social change in which new ideas are introduced into a social system in order to produce a high per capita income and levels of living through more modern production methods and improved social organization. Rostow (1960) sees development in terms of modernizing a basically traditional society or a subsistence sector of a developing society with the aim of attaining sustained growth. He also regards four stages as essential in delineating the process of development: the traditional society, the pre-conditions for take-off, the take-off and finally sustained economic progress.

Development policy refers to the desired direction within which the state wishes to

emphasize in order to bring about improvement. It may be an economic, social or even an integrative policy. Whichever policy for development is set, Okereke and Ekpe (2002), outlined the objectives of an effective development policy agenda for all society to: -

1. focus on the people, be people-cantered and for their overall advancement and benefits.
2. Increase the availability and the distribution of basic life sustaining goods such as food, shelter, good health and protection from danger.
3. Raise the level of living, and in addition to higher incomes, the provision of more jobs, better education and better attention to cultural and humanistic values all of which will serve not only to enhance material wellbeing but also generate individual freedom and participation in the decision of issues affecting his society.
4. Expand the range of economic and social choices to individual and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence, not only in relevance to other people and nation - state but also to the process of ignorance and human society.

ROLE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN PROMOTING IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN NIGERIA:

Governing structures in Nigeria are intended to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness empowerment and broad-based participation of all stakeholders including the community at large. In this regard development is regarded as the process of economic and social change that is based on societal factors and their relevant interactions. The link between development and good governance is strong, in fact, there can be no constructive progress or improvement of social, economic or cultural conditions of the members of the community in a given country

without proper and good governance that is set to provide the basis and ingredients for development. Obi and Obikeze (2004) opined that beyond the narrow economic criteria, development must be conceived as of a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structure, popular attitudes and national institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth and reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty. All these are to be ensured by the practice of good governance.

GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT POLIICIES UNDER THE PRESIDENT BUHARI'S DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN NIGERIA:

The concept of governance is not new. It has been around in both political and academic discourse for a long time. In the last decade, however, issues relating to governance have come to occupy the centre stage in developmental literature. More recently, it gained currency in the literature of African development. As a result, among other things, the UNDP (2002) study identifies the crises in the continent as essentially those of governance. By implication this phenomenon can be aptly referred to as the extensive personalization of power, the denial of fundamental human rights, widespread corruption, and the prevalence of unaccountable government.

However, the Nigerian experience of functionalism sees the ideology as soothed for the dominant class in the society whose whims and caprices predominates such democratic institutions. The agenda of governance becomes skewed to one side, hence, Nigeria experiences high level of what can be referred to as elitist hedonism. For instance, from the beginning of the erstwhile Former President Obasanjo's in May, 1999, to the current (2021) President Buhari government, the political climate has been a function of the powers of manipulations of the few elites in the society. Developments in

Nigerian politics shows that several political parties, many of them in number at that time, duly registered by INEC, out of which two: The People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressive Party (APC) held sway as the remaining political parties became silent in the scheme of things. This is a glaring phenomenon of elite politics in Nigeria.

This means that in applying this to the doctrine of good governance in Nigeria, it requires a mutual coordinated links between the rulers and the ruled to ensure effective government policies implementation. Thus differentiation and specialization may occur in any of the parts of society. And this requires that they be integrated with other parts of the civil society so that the entire polity can adapt to its environment. This tendency can be said to be a panacea towards safe-guarding societal dysfunction. Consequently, the parts of Nigerian society are its political and democratic institutions namely, the National Assembly, the court system, the police, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), to mention but a few. Thus, the Nigerian government requires the coordinate working and harmonization of these democratic institutions to ensure good governance in Nigeria. The malfunctioning of one of the above institutions means the corresponding dysfunction of the entire political landscape of Nigeria. This could impede implementation of development policies in Nigeria.

Furthermore, Waldt (2001) posit that good governance in Nigeria cannot be enhanced even if the various arms of government adequately work well considering the high level of collaboration between the executive and legislature by the executive through irregular checks and balance, unpatriotic attitude of political office holder, and constant removal of members of the legislature. This is a common norm right from inception of the Obasanjo's Fourth Republic to the current government,

Nigeria has had not less than seven Senate President in succession. This shows the level of political immaturity and lack of harmony among the various arms of government. Several arguments have also cropped up to criticize the manner of selection of the political appointees and other office holders in Nigeria. Critics said the characters of political office holders and their past records do not come based on merit and were mostly government cronies and sycophants who have got nothing to offer as a way forward for Nigeria.

Nonetheless, three aspects of governance have been identified in the social science literature. These are reciprocity, trust and accountability. When these elements are jointly present, the greater is the likelihood of good governance and the opposite when they are weak. Governance has links with participatory development, human rights and democratization.

According to Boeninger (1991) good governance as a strategic policy framework of the government, in exercise of power and making efficient policy for the society, good governance encompasses of three elements; An effective state, the civil societies, and the private sector community, All the three elements, singularly and in combination, together with sound economic management in Nigeria's current political domination are deemed necessary for sustained implementation of development policies.

THE WAY FORWARD:

It is pointless to argue that the root cause of development policy failure is not a shortage of development capacity, but rather a lack of good governance – the inability or refusal to apply public resources efficiently to produce public goods. These include physical infrastructures – roads, bridges, potable water, telecommunications, public transport to mention but a few. To be sure that the implementation of development policies is

giving a closer attention it requires appropriate government policies which foster savings and investment, but also requires the engagement of public services, civil society organizations and institutions that improve human capital, foster social trust and thereby stimulate production and exchange. All this are critical product of good governance.

Secondly, good government necessitates a contribution to the greater good through charismatic and sterling leadership. This is extracted from a cultural ethics that values, and a system of institutional incentives that favors discipline, commitment to the country, or the general society, over the use of office for personal gain. In every modern society, however, it must be (at a minimum), reinforced by institutions that punish betrayals of the public trust.

Finally, the life of the rule of law is inextricably linked to good governance. Governance will only be fair and successful if it is restrained by statute, if the law is applied fairly to the powerful and the powerless, and if there are competent impartial authorities to administer the law in a neutral and predictable manner. There should be a clear rule between the governing powers and the functioning markets on what constitute an acceptable conduct in the realm of economic, social and political life. These are the only ways Nigeria could move forward in her quest to becoming the world's largest economy in the year 2030.

Civil societies should endeavour to reduce their over dependency on foreign aid to limit the suspicion of governments justifying their perception of establishment, agendas and intentions; they should endeavour to strengthen transparency and accountability in financial matters; strengthen internal democracy; and increase their capacity to monitor public policy management so as to check actual or potential abuse of power by governments.

Nigerian society and the citizens should be more patriotic and self-less, despite problems in African countries, including some shortcomings on the part of the leaders; work very hard/ avoid laziness – instead of hoping that “government will do everything for them”, [adopt a culture of systematic saving for the future; learn to participate actively in the affairs of their countries through debating the issues of the day and voting when elections are due; refuse to be bought by prospective representatives to legislative bodies; challenge representatives to deliver or quit; avoid making unrealistic demands on the government (such as, for public servants, demanding remuneration similar to that payable in developed countries)].

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION:

In the light of the issues raised and discussed in the paper, it is obvious that a lot still needs to be done in Nigeria and Africa as a whole in terms of instituting a mechanism for good governance that will eliminate corruption in the high places and facilitate effective implementation of development policies.

In a world already searching for improved implementation of sustainable development policies options, good governance has always been recognised as a vital mechanism for promoting such initiatives and a critical component to be integrated in sustainable growth strategies to meet the sustainability development policy agenda. Sustaining the continuous implementation of the Nigeria government development policies, the current use of resources should minimize the level of harm to the future use of resources by being patriotic.

Deliberate efforts must be made to embark on capacity building of all the institutions of governance, especially to the current President Buhari Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary. There is also the

urgent need to mobilize and motivate the civil society to collaborate with government in the process of pursuing Nigeria’s development policy goals.

Secondly, the diverse ways to meet these needs are the involvement of citizens in decision making, adhering the democratic principles; good government for community development depend on appropriate institutions to facilitate good governance, so therefore if appropriate institutions together with democratic principles in an era of governance, then good governance will be achieved and the impact will be seen in the development of the communities which in turn enhance national development.

Thirdly, good governance means transparency, the openness of the state business and conduct to the scrutiny of other state actors and of the public. As a result, democratic administrations should manifest the spirit of accountability, responsibility and responsiveness to ensure good governance in Nigeria. Not forgetting that, to foster good governance and effective development policies agenda an inclusive democratization process is urgently required. i.e. This process must enshrine all stakeholders; civil society, the organized labor, youth movement, women’s groups, professional bodies, the media etc. There should also be a continued dialogue between government and this critical mass of the population is the needed driver to push for a regime of good governance. As this positive collaboration would create the unity of purpose to confront manifest and potential obstacles to good governance (obstacles such as official corruption, widespread insecurity, youth restiveness, social inequality, gender discrimination etc.). The increasing support being given to the government by many of these mass organizations is a step in the right direction.

When growth strategies aim to fulfil expectations, the incorporation of good

governance will undoubtedly catapult it to the forefront. There is a desire for modern civic administration. This means that there need to be a system-wide reform and reappraisal of the public service. There is convincing evidence that the gains of the reform have been lost due largely to policy inconsistency and a lack of commitment.

Balanced governance involves a conducive and continuous interaction between the government and civil society as an involved player. The challenge of good governance requires government activities to be reinvented, bureaucracy to be repositioned, civil society activities to be re-energized with a social motive. Re-invented governance should be visionary, egalitarian and energized in a manner with less machine-like and less hierarchical structure and procedure.

It remains an acceptable fact the place and application of various stream of elements of good governance in the implementation of development policies will enable Nigeria government to yield its citizens expectation. The three arms of government should be allowed to efficiently perform their functions without influences. Administrators (political appointees and bureaucrats) should be trained and equipped with administrative tools to realize efficiency, government should strengthen the necessary legal and institutional framework for the implementation of economic policies that seek to integrate the private sector in the development process. Issues of property rights, tax administration and a predictable justice administration system should be emphasized. This will contribute to the creation of a favourable environment for private investment and a strong public-private relationship, especially in infrastructure growth. There is an immediate need to implement functional education and human resource policies that represent national goals and address sustainability challenges.

Implementing a blueprint or implementing a sustainability agenda on a people-oriented development strategy by the subsequent government, through differing political will, is an aspect of good governance. Instead of considering legislation implemented by an opposing faction, elected office holders often abandon the execution and fulfilment of those policies. This accounts for a high rate of abandoned projects scattered in all the nooks and crannies of the Nigerian nation, it is advisable that such move be avoided.

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