

## Challenge of Governance and the Quests for Legitimacy and Development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

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**Abstract.** The quests for legitimacy and development in Nigeria's democratic journey since 1999 have been punctuated by rough governance system, paddled by ethnocentric leadership and ethno-nationalism. The trajectories of governance instrumentality that combines interrelated and interacting artifacts designed to work as an incoherent entity has conditioned and interjected Nigeria's development. Thus, this paper assesses the challenges of governance, legitimacy and development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. The study is anchored on Personal Rule paradigm and uses secondary source of data for analysis. It confirms that undemocratic and unethical practices – prebendal politics and centrifugalism have sparked governance crisis and its attendance consequences of legitimacy and development questions in Nigeria's democratic experience since return to civil rule in 1999. The paper, therefore, recommends among others that government and democratic institutions be strengthened with attitudinal change and character reformation for nation-building.

**Key words:** Prebendalism, Legitimacy, Democracy, Election, Colonialism.

### 1. Introduction

Development depends upon good governance. That is the ingredient which has been missing in far too many places, for far too long. That is the change that will unlock Africa's potentials and that is a responsibility that can only be met by Africans (Obama, 2009: 5).

The term governance is used in discussions on democracy and development. Democracy and governance have become blossoming agenda for individual, civil society and a number of agencies in the national and international arena. The concept of democracy has been utilized in highlighting issues

and idea with predominant concerns – fundamental human rights, rule of law and general accountability of the political leadership among others. The relevance of all this to governing process cannot be overestimated (Umar, 2009).

One of the consequences of the contemporary World in transition is economic and political delineations among nations. Democracy is another dividing line in the manner of viewing the world; the capitalist industrialized countries are not only wealthy but also stable, and well-functioning democracies, communist system with unquestionable dictatorial tendency, and the developing nations were largely authoritarian and militarily oligarchic. In the aftermath of the World War II, United State of America (USA) championed the course of free world and liquidation of colonial rule across the globe. Consequently, countries in the Third World started gaining political independence with its attendant consequences of democratic practice. Post-colonial Africa was, again, entangled in the web of contending two global superpowers of the capitalist West and the communist East. The idea, according to them, is to put these newly independent countries on the path to development using their own paradigm and matrix (Joseph, Kesselman & Krieger, 1996).

At the same time, African countries were overtaken by military regimes. It was decades of authoritarian experience mixed with intermitted democratic transitions that failed to consolidate. Nigeria's struggle for sustainable democracy, good governance and development has been so daunting that attempted democratic transitions were futile. These manifested in the collapse of First Republic (1960-1966), Second Republic (1979-1983) and the aborted Third Republic with the reprehensible cancellation of 12 June, 1993 presidential election. Re-democratization process that ushered in the Fourth Republic from

1999 to date is characterized by wanton violation of democratic principles and culture (Omotola, 2010).

In another word, Attahiru Jega explains that one of the two euphoria produced by the exit of military rule in 1999 was new 'democratic' government would turn around the country's nasty past leadership trajectories and engender peace, unity, good governance and development. One of the challenges of development process in Nigeria as in other African societies is most felt in the area of good governance. This problem is largely the operators of state institutions not the system (in Habu, 2019a).

The problem of Nigeria is basically and fundamentally poor leadership that boils down to governance (Paul, 2011 & Achebe, 1983). Nigeria is the most populous black nation and supposedly giant of Africa. It is unarguable that the putative gigantism of Nigeria has been questioned by economic analysts and political pundits as asserted by Agaba & Daniel (2010), that scholars have committed efforts and time to studying post-colonial Africa, they identified governance as a challenge in leadership across the continent.

It is on this note that this paper attempts to x-ray the challenges of governance and quest for legitimacy and development in the Nigeria's Fourth Republic.

## **2. Theoretical Consideration – Personal Rule Paradigm**

Max Weber, German Sociologist developed and applied the paradigm of personal rule in his description of political system as patrimonial in nature. According to Leonard and Straus (2003), the main thrusts of this paradigm are:

- Appointment and position generally depend on loyalty to one's superior and not on adherence to impersonal norms,
- High level of personalization of official engagement and responsibilities, and
- A clear sense of a public interest that transcends private ones does not exist

Rosberg (1990) explains that personal rule describes pervasive culture of favouritism, cronyism and clientelism in public conduct and official capacity. Authoritative allocation of values and statuses are based on personal interest of the public and political office holders. Reward and sanctions are influenced by emotional attachment to the person in question (in Tsuwa, 2010). This underlines self-serving and egoistic disposition that characterize leadership. It negates altruism and patriotism that are hallmarks of a good leader. Many scholars, as mentioned earlier,

have submitted that leadership style of the African and Nigerian leaders is the bane for our quest for good governance, development and by extension, raising the question of legitimacy of leaders by the people. It is therefore relevant to employ personal rule paradigm in the explanation of governance challenges and the quest for development in the Nigeria's fourth republic.

## **3. Conceptual Clarification**

### **3.1 Governance**

The concept of governance is as fluid as democracy. It is variedly conceived by different scholars. Pierre and Peter (2007) in Yunusa (2009) observed that the concept of governance is notoriously slippery, frequently used by social scientists without definitive implication. Governance can be viewed as the process of steering state and society towards the realization of collective goals. It points to the dynamic but problematic and often times contradictory relationship between the state and society. Governance connotes the functioning of the state institutions to drive quantitative and qualitative changes in the well-being of its citizenry through the provision of social service and cultivation and internalization of open, transparent, responsive, responsible and accountable leadership. It can be good or bad. In democracy, governance is two-way traffic – the input of the society and the feedback from the government (Paul, 2011).

In another word, World Bank (2000) understands governance as the management of a country's socio-economic resources. It thus, identifies three major aspects of the management:

- Governance as a form of political regime
- Governance as a process; authority is exercised in the management of the state's socio-economic resources for development.
- Governance as capacity of government to formulate and implement policies, and discharge necessary functions.

### **3.2 Good Governance**

Good governance lacks definitional consensus. It has been conceived from the political, economic, social and administrative perspectives. It is dialectically determined by the governed in their assessment of leadership performance of the state actors. This is influenced by the aspiration, needs, desires and socio-political milieu and values of the people (Habu, 2019b).

Good governance is a function of good leadership. Thus, the leaders must equally be guided by values that are consistent with the expectations and tasks of leading the group towards a sustainable and effective achievement of positive goals, for purpose of improving the general quality of life. In the words of Mohideen (1997), governance becomes ‘good’ when it is operated in accordance with legal and ethical principles as conceived by society. Put differently, good governance is a normative concept by which society seeks to provide a guide and direction to itself through standards and norms embedded in the governance idea.

It was conceived by Otinche (2012) that evaluation of any government as good or bad depends on the stages of human civilization and level of man’s consciousness. The nature of governance varies from one society to another but the end result is the same, that is guaranteeing minimum standard of living for citizens. This view was corroborated by Ukase (2014), the question on what good governance entails would attract endless answers. It is an ethical and moral issue as contends by Madhav. UNDP in Ukase (2014) posits that good governance is the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a nation’s affairs.

It is also defined as sound management of a country’s economic and social resources for development. What is ‘sound’? For the World Bank and others with neoliberal persuasion that ‘democratisation stimulates development’ is a range of management techniques that are believed to work well within a standardized liberal democratic model. Conversely, other scholars conceived good governance as compatible with alternatives to liberal democracy in poor countries with different institutional context (Desai & Plotter, 2008).

Against the background of governance crisis in the poor countries of the World, the United Nation (UN) with its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) placed greater premium on good governance as the cardinal principle of goal attainment by member countries (Habu, 2019a). Former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan succinctly puts that good governance is the most important factor in eradicating poverty in the World (Egwemi, 2006).

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (2004:1) views good governance as:

*The application of rules and processes through which authority and control are exercised in a society, political decisions are made, the rules for the scope*

*of action of state and society are structured, and resources for economic and social development are administered.*

Washington Consensus terms good governance as essentially the political administration of economic policies, the deregulation of exchange, trade and price system, the preferential treatment of individual and corporate investors, and elimination of governmental involvement in credit allocation (Bendana, 2009). As corollary to this, Bendana (2009) explains that good democratic governance encompasses responsive and responsible leadership, strengthening of state institutions, grassroots’ empowerment; neoliberal notion of good governance is virtually “satanising” the state while exalting virtues of the market.

It is worth mentioning that ability of a political system to provide credible mechanism for the conduct of free and fair election and transfer of power from one civilian regime to another is fundamental to good governance. Failure to conduct free and fair election has elicited the question of political legitimacy on the part of public office holders. A condition for democratic good governance needs to be created. It is the basis for legitimacy and development. Although, a popular perspective of good governance, as evangelized by the Bretton Wood Institutions, is a scheme and grand design to spread the frontier of international capitalism and liberal democracy. Attitudinal change of the political elite to conform to sound democratic principle could transcend to rapid development (Habu, 2019a).

Similarly, Chen (2004) recognizes good governance to be protection of citizens’ rights, adequate provision of security, guaranteeing basic freedoms, and satisfying welfare of people maximally. This view is amplified by Odojin & Omojuwa (2007), in their statement, good governance is difficult to achieve in an atmosphere of corruption and poverty. It is about free and fair elections, independent judiciary and the rule of law, press freedom, investing in human capital. Kura (2009) clarifies that good governance can be used as a measuring instrument of regimes performance because existence of government is a question of managing political and economic resources through a contractual agreement between the government and citizens. Government provides basic and mundane needs of the society. The adjective ‘good’ is often used to differentiate between traditional (non-democratic) governance and democratic governance. Thus, any exercise of power by the state and its agencies is

governance. But not all governance is democratic unless it is 'good governance'.

Juxtaposing the scholarly perspectives on good governance, resource management, fundamental human rights and service delivery are common terms. What remains unclear is conception of human rights and mechanism that brings about effective service delivery. It varies from one political system to another. It is affected by the normative value of the definers. Irrespective of the semantic ambiguity associating with the concept of good governance, corruption and poverty threatened its realization as asserted by Odojin & Omojuwa (2007). The question that may come to one's mind is whether corruption and poverty are hindrances to good government or they are manifestations of bad governance?

### 3.3 Challenges of Good Governance in Nigeria

Good governance is associated with challenges, which ranges from inability of government to evolve an efficient model of governance. It has negative implication on political transition, fiscal discipline, government legitimacy, public service delivery, democratic ethos, among others (Otinche, 2012).

Despite the return to civil rule in 1999, Nigeria has not yet attained the status of full-fledged democratic nation. This is because political *dramatis personae* and civil society have not learnt to be governed by democratic norms (Habu, 2009b). Dunmoye (2021) submits that the problem with present Nigeria is traceable to bad governance. Citizens are exasperated and demoralized by the incapacity of successive political leadership to provide lasting solutions to the litany of socio-economic and political decay that challenge the state. These problems range from national disintegration, political instability, social discontent, debilitating poverty and security threat.

Legislature is unarguably one of the vital institutions of democratic practice. Democratic survival is largely dependent on its credible credentials. Baba (2009) clearly posits that the institution of legislature is structured to perform the function of law making and oversight function. These functions are central to the realization of good governance. Jega in (Habu, 2009) corroborates this in his statement that legislature has failed to become robust institution with tradition of accountability. Instead, corruption proved to be the perceived and real threat to the institution, same way transparency and accountability elude executive arm of government. This boils down to the erosion of the principle of rule of law in practice of governance.

### 3.5 Measuring Good Governance

UNESCAP (2008) in Babatunde (2009) identifies eight major characteristic of good governance. These are – participation, consensus-oriented, accountability, transparency, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, equitability and inclusiveness, and rule of law. In their empirical study, Babatunde (2009) and Ayantayo (2009) noted six-item checklist used by the World Bank Institute (WBI) in measuring quality of governance of countries all round the World. The checklist includes; voice and accountability, political stability, government effectiveness regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption. The study glaringly revealed lackluster and inglorious performance of Nigeria on the general assessment of good governance.

### 3.6 Legitimacy

Legitimacy is one of the key concepts in social sciences notably, Political Science, that cannot be separated from the study of state, power, citizens' rights and obligations. It is characterized by definitional fluidity. Badie (2001:706) explains that legitimacy may be seen as the formula by which individuals accept a power and consider their obedience as a just commitment. As a corollary from the Badie's (2001) conception, when rulers wield power illegally, it is said that they exert power without legitimacy. Forceful seizure of power through coup or coup d'état is clear example of illegitimate government.

In modern democracy, leaders draw their legitimacy through seeking consent of the ruled in a credible, free and fair election through popular will of the people (Lipset, 1985:64). Legitimacy is one of the questions that featured in the post-colonial African states. The problem of legitimacy in Africa is much more complicated than in the Western world. Max Weber, a German Sociologist identifies three typologies of legitimacy – rational, traditional and charismatic (Krzyszof, 2020).

Dunmoye (2020) opines that contemporary Nigeria struggles with triple, but mutually reinforcing crises: imperative of development, problematic of legitimacy and pushing the country back from the precipice of failure resulting from perennial insecurity. Desai & Plotter (2008) identify corruption as a feature of society-state relation that determines the legitimacy of the state, leads to wasteful public policies and begs for increased accountability and transparency.

Legitimacy is a term used to express the support enjoyed by any regime in power. Stability of government is dependent on the degree of legitimacy accorded to it by the people. This underscores its relevance and indispensability. Legitimacy is the prerogative of the citizens; hence it cannot be forced down their throat through intimidation, threat and coercion. Individuals, groups and segment of society can grant or withdraw their loyalty from a regime according to their perception and evaluation of the regime's policy choices. Thus, legitimacy is amenable to erosion. It deals with the citizens' acceptance of moral right of the political leader to make binding decision (Katuka, 2013). He further identified advantages of legitimacy to governments that:

- It triggers stability of government.
- It makes government to be lawful and popular.
- It prevents tyranny and abuse of power by the government.
- It gives citizens sense of belonging.
- It reduces the amount of coercion government has to apply to obtain compliance from the citizens.

### 3.7 Development

Development is a very popular concept. It has assumed the status of buzz word in intellectual discourses. It is what every individual, group and nation-state seek and desire. In spite of the desirability of development, it lacks definitional agreement (Egwemi, 2016). Similarly, Niworu (2007) observes that development is a concept that has been subjected to different theoretical interpretations and empirical operationalization. Consequently, it eludes any precise definition. Many students of change believe that development is the process by which continuous increases in a system's efficiency produce the conditions which result in general 'upliftment'. It is that process that is concerned with the improvement of man's living conditions.

Rogers (cited in Obiagbaoso, 2011) establishes that development is 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. Ishola (2001) notes that development is an increase in real output accompanied by changes in the economic structure and institutions i.e. improvement in the social, political and economic lives of the people of a country. Ichima (2000) concludes that,

notwithstanding the divergent views on the conceptualization of the term 'development', the concept generally implies:

- A conscious movement from point A to point B where the point B is the more desired state for the nation;
- An improvement of the society and its people over a period of time;
- Modernizing social, political and economic institutions for the benefit of humanity.

### 4. Governance and Challenges of Legitimacy and Development in Nigeria

Exit of the British colonialists earned Nigeria juridical independence and change in the composition of the state managers. Nonetheless, the character of the state remained much as it was during colonial era. It was totalistic, monopolistic and coercive in nature. Centrifugal forces among the constituent nationalists made the environment hostile to development. They were absorbed in struggle to dominate the political power. Everything, thus, was marginalized, development inclusive. The out-of-power elites strove to force common front to wrestle power from the incumbent forces. While those in power do all they could to strengthen the grip on power (Ake, 1996). Nigerians are overwhelmed by contest for elections and electioneering to the extent that good governance is barely discussed; it has become a political culture in Nigeria democratic practice. Personalised character of bureaucratic setting and political economy of Nigeria de-emphasise the essential responsibility of leaders, and instigate scramble for public responsibility. Election, thus, is given exaggerated attention and common electoral conduct/behaviour of a typical Nigerian are expressed by experts in African and Nigerian politics (Ake, 1996; Mato, 2009; Omotola 2010 & Habu, 2019b).

Election is central to democratic practice. Since the birth of Nigeria, transition process has always been turbulent, chaotic and tortuous. This is connected to poor electoral governance in Nigeria (Omotola, 2010). Character and political behaviour of Nigerian politicians, as earlier asserted by Ake (1996), affect conduct and outcomes of elections in Nigeria. Habu (2019b) buttresses on this that Nigeria has never experienced any peaceful elections largely due to patterns of party politics and unhealthy competition for power, and the tendency of the political class to infringe laid down electoral rules. The nature of electoral competition has over the years resulted in either violence in the course of the preparation for elections or after their conduct, with the electoral

umpire heavily blamed for condoning and abetting misconduct. Mato (2009) and Habu (2019a) add weight to this, that the outcomes of many elections have been so fiercely contested that the survival of the country and democracy are threatened. The implication of this is obvious; illegitimate regimes are enthroned through fraudulently conducted elections. Thus, accountability, good governance and political legitimacy provided by effected management of election are eroded.

Suffice it to say that pervasive culture of *kleptocracy* and corruption inhibit development and good governance in Nigeria's democratic experience, particularly since the return to civil rule after many years of military interregnum. Joseph et al (1996) lament that corruption and authoritarian structures hinder economic development. Nigeria is more of an interventionist and clientelist state right from its colonial experience. Clientelism is the practice by which a particular group receives disproportionate policy benefits or political favour from a political patron, usually at the expense of the larger society. The ruling elite uses state power to redistribute wealth in their favour rather than towards creation of new wealth and investment. This factor makes Nigeria a country with low level of popular legitimacy and accountability.

Civil society is acclaimed to be oil that lubricates the wheel of democratic governance and development. It played significant role in the return to democracy with its dogged criticism of the then military junta. However, after the battle is won, the military dictatorial regimes were sent to barrack, interaction of primordial sentiment and ethnic nationalism has fragmented the civil society in Nigeria. Oyadare (2004) contends that the problem in Nigeria is traceable to the heterogeneity and the adversarial nature of the civil society itself. Nigeria is relatively weak, parochial in outlook and divided different cleavages. If the civil society is divided, it is obvious that it will have some adverse effects on democratic consolidation and good governance. Corroborating the above, Ake (2006) observes that the civil society in Africa is so undeveloped that political society is not constituted as a "public", a unity of theoretical legal subjects and a unity of complementarities and reciprocities arising from their self-seeking. Instead of political society being single, it is fragmented into a plurality of competing and alienated primary publics, because people are alienated from the state and tend to give their primary loyalty to ethnic, sub-national or communal groups rather than the state. In this perspective, a typical Nigerian thinks about his/her community at the detriment of national development. The fact that the problem of ethnic

nationalism continues to stare us in the face is an indication that something is wrong somewhere with the Nigerian state. The lack of national accord has affected democratic culture as well as development of the economy. Nnonyelu (2013) confirms that the division of the citizenry and their resort to self-help under the canopy of different ethno-religious cum sectarian persuasions has a colonial origin. This is not surprising given the weakness of the African elite in the face of poverty of ideas, to manipulate ethnic and religious identities, to feather their nests and gain unmerited advantage in the elite scramble for the national cake.

Nigeria democratic governance, just like in other African countries, is characterized by strong individuals rather than strong institutions; unsettled political culture, fragile political parties with no clear cut philosophy and ideology, only authoritarian individuals with egocentric and selfish intention to ride on the back of the citizens for personal gains as against the development of Nigerian state and its people. These are qualities, principles and behaviours which selfish people held in high esteem for intensive self desire. Scholarly literatures attest to the fact that Nigerian state is configured for the interest of few individual elites, ethnic group, and friends and not for the populace. Philosophically, the entity wallows in a shallow memory that no leader is ready to give up his life to develop the country instead they loot the country's resources for self-enrichment (Odeh, Nnamani and Illoh, 2014).

## 5. Major Discussion and Analysis

The task of promoting good governance rests on the government, private sector organizations, civil societies, pressure groups, non-governmental organizations, traditional and religious institutions. There must be meaningful inputs from all stakeholders. Whichever way good governance is viewed, whether from the neoliberal or different perspective, provision of infrastructures, accountability and the overall development are central and essential to all ideological leanings.

Using the parameter (governance voice and accountability, political stability, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, control of corruption) identified by the World Bank for measuring good governance, it can be argued that development and underdevelopment are functions of good or bad governance. Governance could be good or crisis driven. It turns out to be good when those at the helm of affairs abide sternly by the law of the land in dispensing the state's resources, allowing

themselves be held accountable and shunning selfish interest for national interests as well as exhibiting an exemplary leadership style. In the same vein, governance is good, when citizens' interest is the priority of leaders and not theirs or their associates. It becomes crisis driven, when distribution of common political good to the people prevailed by the urge and desire for primordial values. In this wise, governance crisis refers to the apparent and obvious inability of public institutions to deliver on infrastructural development like the provision of water, roads, power, healthcare, food, employment and security. It is important to note that, governance is prone to crisis in Africa and particularly Nigeria because of the tendency of leaders' quest to satisfy their selfish interests and that of their cronies over general interest.

Good governance is not a luxury; it is labored for, and it is a basic prerequisite for development and central to building and sustaining an environment, which fosters a strong and equitable growth. While democratic governance is not absolutely synonymous with good governance, good governance implies accommodation of the yearnings and aspirations of the minority and discordant groups; strict adherence to the rule of law at all levels of society; adherence to the practice of accountability and transparency by leadership among others. Governance in the real sense connotes service to the people in a bid to satisfy national interests over primordial values.

Democratic governance highlights the rule in the interest of the entire populace that transcends classes to improving the societal status. Studies show that well established democracies in Europe and America are less prone to political variances and challenges because of the level of political maturity and legitimate avenues of dispute resolution which consequently pave ways for development across the sectors of the economy. Conversely, Nigerian democracy is significantly unstable as a result of ethnic nature of the society, poor dispute resolution institutions, and weak democratic institutions. Nigerian politics is racked by war and burdened by distress vis-à-vis failing to grip with the socio-economic, political and technological revolutions required to effectively compete with the world. Today, Nigeria appears to be slipping out of the control of political leaders who claim to govern it, and beyond the reach of international institutions that seek to rescue it. For instance, the trending national insecurity that ravages the component states of the federation, that is, banditry, kidnapping and Boko Haram in the North and fissiparous voices from the South-east by the Biafran secessionists and militant

ethnic nationalism in the South-west shock the foundation of Nigerian state. This manifestly indicates inability of the State to sustain its status as monopolist of violence. Sequel to that, legitimacy crisis ensues as Buhari led administration fails to prevail over the violence by the non-state actors. At the background of this, there have been calls, particularly from the Southern part of Nigeria, for the resignation of President Buhari from different quarters on **#buharimustgo** protest. Prior to that, in the October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 youths took to the streets following a more recent ordeal by a Niger Delta youth harassed by the SARS (Special Anti-Robbery Squad) demanding complete disbandment of the unit. The **#EndSars** protest caused wanton destruction of lives and property.

Judiciary is said to be the last hope of the common man where he seeks redress from perceived injustice by individuals, groups and institutions. Judiciary independence is *sine quo non* to democratic governance. In Nigeria, practically, promotion, appointment and termination and remuneration of judges are largely under the purview of the central government. By implication, judiciary is dependent on the executive branch, a situation that does not allow for objective dispensation of justice. It is therefore, one of the limitations of democratic consolidation and good governance in Nigeria. How can a dependent judiciary rule against influential political figures who might be found wanting of corrupt practices at the expense of his job security?

Legislature is a key institution in democratic consolidation. It is tasked with essential function of law making and watchdog to executive and other institutions and departments of government in a presidential democracy as coded in the 1999 Nigerian Constitution. It entrenches accountability, transparency and prudence in the governing process. It is an independent arm whose members are periodically elected by members of various constituencies. Executive-Legislature relation in the Nigeria's Fourth Republic has been self serving and counter-productive. The first eight years were characterized by rancorous relationship among the legislative members and between the legislature and the executive. This resulted in serial impeachment of speakers of the House of Representative and the Senate Presidents. The impeachments were alleged to have been orchestrated by the democratically autocratic President, Olusegun Obasanjo. There were cases of 'Ghana Must Go' clandestinely given to the parliamentarians by the executive head to seek favour and easy passage of controversial third time agenda that was vehemently rejected by the majority of

National Assembly members. The story did not change during the Goodluck Jonathan as well Muhammadu Buhari's administrations. The first four years of the President Muhammadu Buhari, precisely from 2015 to 2019 were troubled by fierce intra-party conflict and souring executive-legislature relationship that hindered passage of appropriation bill and stagnated day-to-day running of government activities. During this period, the two institutions were more of hostile rivals than partners in national development. From 2019 to date, 8<sup>th</sup> Assembly leadership has been on the same page with the executive arms. The executive-legislature relation is so affable that many political commentators described it as rubberstamp. It is believed to have compromised critical oversight duties with its consistent agreement with executive proposals, and failure to call a spade a spade in spite of insecurity that continues to ravage every nook and cranny of the Nigerian state.

Nigeria is unarguably, one of the most corrupt nations on earth. This was proven severally by the Amnesty International and other recognised international institutes charged with corruption perception index. Billions of dollars are stolen and wired in foreign accounts the entrusted public officials. Cases abound of executive and legislative corruptions. Farouk's gate is still fresh in the memories of Nigerians, though he is being prosecuted and sentenced for four years. Many cases are swept under the carpet for political reason and primordial attachment. For President Olesgun Obasanjo is yet to be litigated for alleged power scam involving billions of dollars of unexecuted contract. Former Nigerian Central Bank governor, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi cried out on unconstitutional withdrawal of billions of naira by President Goodluck Jonathan, this declaration precipitated his untimely resignation as CBN governor to avert disgraceful termination of his appointment by the President. There was insignificant effort to reverse the trend of corrupt practice despite the anti-corruption rhetoric of Muhammadu Buhari's administration. Corruption impedes good governance and national development in Nigeria.

As a corollary to the above, those who control the state in Nigeria control the major access to wealth. Competition for the control of the state, therefore, is predictably intense and unrelenting. The next general election, 2023 is still far away and the politicians have started their shenanigans and configuration that have begun to generate heat along religious, ethnic and regional lines. At the backdrop of this, elite members of these groups become conflict generators

rather than conflict managers. This practice is otherwise referred to as prebendalism. As long as prebendalism remains the norm of Nigerian politics, a stable democracy, good governance, political legitimacy and development will be elusive.

It is clear, at this point, that there is a causal effect between cultural identities, personalisation of public offices and democratic fragility. The Personal rule paradigm that this article adopts is premised on the self centric and egoistic character of public officials. Their loyalty is to divisive cleavages not national interest. Everyone promotes his personal interest at the expense of the common good as typified by the Nigerian political actors. The essentials of democracy that ensure good governance, political legitimacy and development are grossly underdeveloped in Nigerian democratic experience. The institutions are glaringly weakened by the inner and the outer characters of Nigerians, both the leaders and the led. General attitude of Nigerians is not conformed to the ethos of democracy. The paper, therefore, concludes that legitimacy and development questions in Nigeria are evil manifestations of bad governance. To foster good governance, popular legitimacy and national development, the paper recommends the following:

- Strengthening of government and democratic institutions; independent judiciary and electoral umpire that would enable electoral governance, and legislative detachment from the executive arm among others.
- Effective anti-corruption policies where no one is seen as a sacred cow.
- Practical measures to reduce inequality through revolutionary development programme.
- Provision of basic necessities, e.g security, health, portable water, good road network.
- Attitudinal change and character reformation of the political class and the commoners alike.
- Adequate political education and consciousness through quality education.
- Developing active and unbiased civil society organization whose watchword transcends centrifugal consideration to national interest.

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