



Open Access Journal Available Online

The Philosophy of Effective Leadership, Good Governance, and Improved Living Conditions in Nigeria

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Abstract: It is obvious that Nigerians are passing through hard times and unfavourable conditions of living, making many psychologically lose their mind and sense of citizenship. The deteriorating situations have been so severe these days making survival very difficult for the masses. It is worrisome that we have leaders who are supposed to ameliorate the suffering of Nigerians through good leadership and Governance, our leaders are supposed to have the desire to promote development as well as provide social and human advancement, however these indications of improved standard of living have eluded us because our leaders are not ready to sacrificed for the people, they only conformed to “Nigeria system” of operation, adversely the country have been struggling with development, advancement, and forwardness ,but unfortunate, no achievement have been made, Nigeria have nothing to show as the giant of Africa; it believe in anything goes. A good leader may be elected but because of our bad system the leader may end up at not thing. Some of the elected leaders just want to make money and exhausted names. leadership in Africa is a means of enrichment, they are selfish, self-centre, shallow rooted and lack focus, they are suppose to provide good Governance and development but unfortunately unable to perform. This paper is focus on the means and panacea to improve citizens living conditions and restored confidence of the people, through improve leadership and Governance, these can be achieved through, good policies; policies that are people oriented; policies that are people focus, and above all, there should be policies “monitoring and evaluation”, immediately policies are established they should be monitored, to make sure they achieved their purpose and evaluate their performance to give feedback report to the people. The method used for collating data is secondary means; data are collated from the media, research work, Government policies and programs, NGOs, commissions, civil society, interviews, public confabs etc. A conclusion is drawn through my recommendations on electing good leaders

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that are ready to sacrifice for the people and not mere names, Leaders that will ameliorate the suffering of the people beyond the philosophy of leadership and good Governance.

Keywords: Leadership, Good Governance, Improve, Philosophy.

Introduction

Leadership is the act of providing enduring solutions to problems confronting the society through conceived gamine ideas and executing policies that impacts the lives of the people, leaders are supposed to motivate, inspires and encourage the followers; Leaders are models to the followers, they conceived ideas, implemented, and direct, public goods, they inspire the followers who also emulate them.

Therefore, good Governance is the function of good leadership. Governance is the ability to convert a conceive ideas, goals and aspirations to reality, it is the realizations of ideas into Substance, this is done through proper planning, formulation, executions, monitoring and evaluation. Good Governance is when people problems are solved and their dreams are realized. For instance, the globe is facing mirage of problems. In Africa we are facing political and socio-economy problems, such as Corruptions, bad leadership, insecurity, high standard of living, engagement in illicit drugs and human trafficking and other social vices. We lack what is takes to be a respected nation, what makes a country to stand tall in a community of nations is to inculcate indices of development and jettison anything that will make it pariah. But we have nothing to show as great nation in the community of nations, as big brother

in Africa let along the world, Nigeria is known to be great, in the first and second republic, what happen now? This is question that all of us must answer, I have thought about this question overtimes, I came to realized that greed, unpatriotic trait, selfishness, self-center and personal aggrandizement are the courses, everybody want to be rich in one day without doing anything, those who are doing something to make Nigeria great, felt they are wasting their times, as one of the musicians sang “get rich quick, time is to short” is exert what is happening. We must take the Bull by the horn to changed things and stop parading ourselves as big brother in Africa, as a sovereign Nation we should be serious and changed this mundane system of doing things as the popular phrase “anything goes”, nobody cares, we are moving in a disastrous situation, everyone is just concerned about himself just as the popular phrase”, I, me and myself “We must change the hand of time if we want to move forward.

Leadership Approach

Effective Leaders and good governance are crucial for the success and capable of achieving their goals while maintaining ethical standard and public trust that enhances sustainability of organization, Communities, and nations, these are very paramount in the development of the society. Leadership is a process by which

a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherence.

But this is moribund in Nigeria because of incompetency, unpatriotic, greed and selfishness, which have characterized Nigerians as a people engendering development and scorning our image in the community of nations. A hungry man can never be rational. He cannot know peace or stability (Ake, 1996). According to Achebe (1998), the problem with Nigeria is bad leadership. Nigeria which is the big brother of Africa the most populated country in Africa is battling with under development and backwardness, it is often said; Positional leaders only influence positional followers whereas real leaders influence everyone.

This is why the World bank (2004) identified some of the indices and guides to Leadership and good governance for sustainable national development in Nigeria,

The form of the political regime

The process by which authority is exercise in the management of a country economic and social resources for development and

The capacity of governments to design, formulate and implement policies and discharge functions.

Leaders are fulcrum of development in any society, therefore if leaders are effective there will be good governance, although it is argued that good governance shape leaders, this is witness in the institutional framework of policies implementations and achievement which is crystallize also by leadership operations and style.

An effective leader should be vision able, have a clear vision of what they want to

achieve and can communicate this vision to inspire and motivate others

Integrity; trust worthiness and honesty are fundamental, leaders must act ethically and set a positive example.

Communication; Good leaders are excellent communication, able to listen actively and convey information clearly. Decision-making; they make informed and timely decision, balance short-term needs with long term goals.

Empathy; understanding and addressing the needs and concerns of others, fosters loyalty and commitment.

Adaptability; leaders need to be flexible and open to change, capable of navigating challenges and uncertainties

Delegation; Effective leaders know how to delegate tasks appropriately, empowering others and fostering a sense of ownership.

Northing (2003) point out, leadership is a process whereby an individual influence a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. It is about working with and guiding people in a new direction, it is about integrity and trust, achieving the most positive interaction between leaders and followers,

Since change is an undeniable part of life the leader has to be ready to accept this. The reality is that life stop when change stop. Burn (1987) suggested that leadership is one of the most observed, but least understood phenomena on earth

leadership is both the adhesive that binds a work group together and the catalyst that trigger employer motivation, thereby, having major influence on organization performance (Ujo, 2001)

Omolayyo (2005) describes leadership as an essential oil that keeps the wheel of government working without any difficulty. According to him, leadership

makes the difference between success and failure in a country, it involves giving direction to citizens who are the critical assets of the country. Osuntokun (1987) defined leadership in terms of direction and example provided by any person or group of persons who are chosen or who by an accident of history find themselves at the helm of affairs. Contrary to ideas of serving, and people-oriented focus. Some scholars argued that leadership is spontaneous and existential, accordingly, a leader to them can be described as anybody that can influence others to perform beyond their formal authority, as a leader they said emerges because the masses cannot lead therefore, there is need to have a few people who will lead. Let look at some theoretical approach to leadership and relating it to Nigeria leadership style.

Theoretical Approach

Servant leadership theory

Proposes that leaders prioritize serving others, including employees, customers, and the community. Servant leaders focus on the growth and well-being of their team members, putting their needs first. Ironically In Nigeria this approach have been neglected, the leaders who are suppose to be servants have become gods and tyrants to the people they lead, making the people to lost hope and confidence on them. Leadership is not commanding respect but attracting respect and confidence. A leader who is greedy, selfish and individualistic cannot said to be a servant.

Trait theory

This theory Suggests that certain individuals possess innate characteristics that make them effective leaders. Traits like intelligent, self-confidence,

determination, integrity and sociability. These traits are viable indices for measuring both professional and competence leadership, they are important, the former is not indispensable to a great leader (Bull 2006)

In Nigeria leaders lacks the capability, intelligent, determinations, integrity and self-confidence, but because of the nature of our backwardness and undeveloped state of our society. Leaders need to Conceived policies that have direct value to the people, implementation, including, monitory and evaluation.

Contingency theory

Proposes that the effectiveness of leadership style is contingent on the context and situations require different leadership styles example fielders contingency model suggest that leaders are either task oriented or relationship-oriented, and their effectiveness depends on the match between their styles and situation.

This theory explained the exigency of leaders in Nigeria who led according to the situations of the times; often times they are controlled by hands time of internal and external influence, foreign powers influence most of our leaders, sometimes our leaders might have good intension but they are controlled by the whips and caprices of the few who may be indigenous élites or foreign bourgeoisie who detects to our leaders, policies of their will.

Concept of Good Governance

Good governance connote institutional response to vision, ideas, and goals of the leaders by implementing those vision, ideas, and goals which will improve the people living conditions. Good

governance comprises the mechanisms, processes and institution through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal right, meet their obligations and mediate their differences,

Good governance is among other things involving participation, transparency, accountability and rule of law. Good governance ensures that political, social and priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision making over the allocation of development resources. But the absence of these indicates a disaster. According to Daily time (2024) Nigeria is sitting on a ticking time bomb.

According to Common wealth fund (2010) Governance comprises three fundamental functions

i. Priority setting ii. Performance Monitory and iii. Accountability. The mechanism should be aligned with priority setting and monitory process, these processes are summarize with reference to three key components setting priority, monitory, performance and holding to account.

Good Governance involves;

Transparency; there should be transparency in the performing of government function, process and decision are made openly, with information readily accessible to stake holders.

Accountability; leaders and institutions are accountable to those affected by their decision and actions.

Rule of law; laws and policies are fairly and consistently applied, ensuring justice and equality.

Participation; inclusive participation from stalk holders to ensure that diverse perspectives are considered.

Responsiveness; institutions and leader must respond to needs and feedback of the public or stalk holders promptly and effectively.

Equity and inclusiveness; all individuals have opportunity to improve or maintain their wellbeing.

Efficiency and effectiveness; resources are used wisely and processes are designed to achieve the best possible outcome.

Consensus-oriented; mediating different interests to reach broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the community or organization.

Leadership and Governance in Nigeria

In Nigeria effective leadership is mere imagination and a relative obscurity of what the word mean. What we witness in Nigeria ironically, is a shadow of what the term leadership means, it only exist as a nomenclature. Leadership or the term 'lead' connote realizing, achieving, fulfilling, directing, managing, visionary, motivating, etc, a leader is someone who is visionary, realizing, achieving, fulfilling, inspiring, motivating, directing, managing etc. but these qualities have eluded us for long. Let me ask some questions which may help in this discourse. Why are first and second republic leaders better than the recent republic? why do this present time leaders are less patriotic?, why are current leaders only interested in corruptions?, why Nigeria no longer respected by international community?, why Nigeria leaders no longer love their followers?

Nigeria became independent as it called, in 1960. Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe took over the mantle of leadership of the country, at that time the country was still suffering

from the hangover of colonial incursion, but our leaders were not focus and able to coordinate the country by their effort and capability. I remember when I watch Nigeria prime minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa visit to United state of America in 1963, the honor accorded to the prime minister of Nigeria was a thing of reckoned, live was not as difficult as now, the value of naira to Dollar was 1.8 higher than Dollar, unemployment was lower, food productions, exchange rate was encouraging, the standard of living was good, corruption was very low.

Sir, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa regime was terminated by the Military on 16th January 1966. When Aguiyi-ironisi took over, there was enthusiasm of militarization against good governance, although the regime did not last long, there was effort for change but was discouraged by conflicts of interest and regional agitations, shortly General Yakubu Gowon took over the regime 1st August 1966, by coup, although there was a remarkable achievement, and a determination to move the country forward, his regime was not allowed to see the twin light of the day. On 29th July, 1975 General Murtala Muhammed took over the regime it was characterize by quality of independence from foreign influence and determination to change the country to remarkable achievement it was view as one of the best military regime because of the visionary and determination for reform, actualization and radically broke from colonial controlled. The regime was short but with tremendous achievement, thereafter, General Olusegun Obasanjo took over on 13th Februry, 1976 , he ruled for three years and hand over to Alhaji Shehu Shagari on 1st October, 1979 as Democratically elected president, his

style of leadership was the contingency type, he was directed by the contingency of time and the situations he found his self, he was caught in the dilemma of fixative; his administration was neither progressive or retrogressive, but there was little or no corruptions,. his tenure was interrupted by the Military regime on 31st December, 1983 by General Mohammadu Buhari whose regime was autocratic and distortion, it did not make any achievement. Shortly, General Ibrahim Babagida assumed the head of state on 27th August, 1985, his tenure was characterize by corruptions, according to Muhammed (2013). Corruption as the “betrayal of public trust for individual or group gain ”the same Obayelu (2007), an efforts to secure wealth or power through illegal means for private nepotism, authoritarianism, aristocratism etc it was during that time that Nigeria became parasitic to foreign country, the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) further impoverished the public, the regime ended when he was not able to make any changes- caught in the dilemma of confusion he hand over to Erness Shunekan on 26th August 1993 the regime was also short reign by General Sani Abacha after staging a coup on 29th may 1993. His regime was also worsened by corruptions, nepotism, authoritarianism, aristocratism, favourism etc. According to John Cambell USA Ambassador to Nigeria, corruption is a clog in the wheel of any nation struggling for the enthronement and consolidation of democracy and good governance (Punch, July 7th, 2005)

The regime ended in 1999 by the advent of democracy. The Administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo made an effort to revived the country but because of severed decayed and collapse of the

country by the Military regime follow by none patriotism and greediness of the politicians including corruption, according to Obayelu (2007) corruption is an effort to secure wealth or power through illegal means for private use. to this end his Administration could not achieved any meaningful progress, he hands over to President Umaru Musa yar- adua on 29th May,2007, He try also to improve the administration of the country but was short-live by death. President Goodluck Jonathan came in 29th May,2010. did his best with no remarkable achievement. He left in 2015 when President Mohammadu Buhari came and spent eight-years with nothing to show, but hyper-corruptions, mismanagement, autocratic, authoritarian, sycophancy and unpatriotic milieu by politicians, the end SARS protest of 2022 was a testament to bad leadership, kechukwu (2024) affirmed that Nigeria leaders have turn Nigeria into criminal enterprise milking it against the public. He also affirmed that leadership only exist in the federal level and not state and local. According Okonji (2024) leaders should stop looting the country treasury

He later handover to President Ahmed Bola Tinubu on the 2022 without any changes. The Ahmed Tinubu administration have just spent one and half year in Office with a lot of promises and hope for the people and maintaining the characteristic of corruptions, foreign influence, elephant projects with little result above all maintaining huge cost of governance, he is said to have the highest Cabinet since democracy, the most embarrassing and unpalatably. the “end bad governance in Nigeria” Protest in August,2024 is testament of bad governance.

Leaders in Nigeria are concerned or crazy to acquired positions at the detriment of good governance and citizens welfare which would ameliorate the suffering of the people, most of them lacks the rudiments to direct the country to progress. Juliet. B (2024) assert that Nigeria leadership style is positional instead of transformational, according to her, positional leaders served position and not to ameliorate the suffering of the people, she said, they are not patriotic, they are greedy and selfish, above all, operate by foreign influence, President Ahmed Tinibu only achievement for instance granting autonomy to local government, and in the process of creating and strengthening of regional government, states and local government have remain silences waiting for handout from federal government. Emmanuel A (2024) argued that monitory and evaluation of policies is a fulcrum for achievement and development most especially at the state and local government in Nigeria.

Finding

The research was carried in Nigeria spanning from 1960 to date, the method of data collected was secondary. The main finding; shows that leaders in Nigeria are corrupt, greedy, selfish and unpatriotic, they are control by foreign influence others outcome are poor leadership knowledge, followership influence and under-development of Nigeria. In the first and second republic leaders were not corrupt, greedy and selfish, in the third republic they were less corrupt, greedy and selfish. In the forth republic they were more corrupt, greedy and selfish, in the recent republic they become worst, unpatriotic, proud and unrepentant. For instance, the resent

protest Endsars and End bad government 2022/2024 respectively during president Mohammadu Buhari administration and President Bola Tinubu administration are proved.

Conclusion

In conclusion leaders in Nigeria are unpatriotic, corrupt, greedy and selfish but leaders in the first and second republic were less or not corrupt, greedy and selfish because their focus were their followers, more patriotic and protect their integrity, they are not money mongers and not self-centered, have respect for the country and committed to its progress. But in the recent republic they are unpatriotic, corrupt, greedy and selfish, they are not concern of their followers, do not care if the country progress or not, they lead according to their god father over sea, they lead by the directive of foreign leaders bringing us to neo-colonialism and imperialism, they are only concern in winning elections, making money, becoming fame, wielding power to intimidated people

Recommendations

The absence of effective leadership in Nigeria is as a result of greediness, selfishness, unpatriotic will, individualism and self-centeredness. Any leader who has respect, integrity, honor and love for his followers will be sacrificed for his people and ameliorate their suffering. A leader that is greedy, unpatriotic, selfish, self-centered will be corrupt, absent minded, proud, and wicked, what causes these vices? Why is it that is escalating in recent times? Because everyone wants to be over rich one night, everyone wants to be worship, everyone wants to be a god father, everyone wants to be champion in

Nigeria without involving in any effort to improve the people wellbeing.

Leadership in Nigeria is a means of affluence and acquiring prominence, especially political leaders; this is why political office should be made non-attractive, by reducing the monetary benefit attached to it. In Nigeria everyone does everything to be a leader. If one succeeded in getting any political appointment the person has succeeded in getting rich and ticket for control of power and public affluence which would end him favor and privileged.

Leaders should focus on their Followers; therefore, policies should be people-oriented policies: their people should be their priority, they may be the most intelligent people in the society, but if they do not love their followers they may not achieve much.

We should elect leaders and not politicians who are only concern in winning elections

The followers are also infected by the same virus of corruptions and unpatriotic zeal which the country are suffering from, the systematic corruptions and greediness from the leaders of the country which the followers sometime emulated, they have been encouraging ineffective leaders making them to lost their sense of accountability and responsibility.

Leaders should also be concern with monitoring and evaluation, there should be policies monetary and evaluation; One of the reasons why there are little achievement in Nigeria is the inability of policies to be check and assert their achievement. Policies may be good and result focus but because they are not follow up to access their achievement they end up achieving little.

Leaders in Nigeria must be independent, most leaders in third world countries are

tools in the hands of developed nations, neo-colonialism still hold grip to us, this is why it is difficult for us to move headlong, Africa leaders should be independent to lead, their styles of lead should not be foreign type of ruled and directive such as the IMF, WORLD BANK, WTO, WHO etc which are alien to us.

Leaders in Nigeria lacks the rudiment of leadership, they do not have skill for effective leadership, they need training, intelligence, knowledge and understanding to be leaders, a popular adage that say wisdom is profitable to direct. So there is need for leaders to have these qualities.

There should be security of lives and properties, most leaders in Nigeria are bedeviled by insecurity, where there is no peace and stability there will be no development, most leaders in Nigeria have been challenge by violent conflicts such as the BOKO HARAM, Independent people of Biafara (IPOB) the Niger Delta Emancipations struggle, the farmers herders' conflicts etc. Dauda and Avidince (2007) argued that the security situation in the country is a major obstacle to our socio-economic and political development, according to them the tense security situation in all parts of the country makes nonsense of whatever effort that has been made to justify the sustenance of human and economic development.

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