# THE CHALLENGE OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN THE AFRICAN REGION: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

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**Abstract:** The welfare of the people is the hallmark of democracy and this is implied in Abraham Lincoln's definition of democracy. Government exists to cater for the citizens and that is democratic governance. The main challenge to welfarism in post colonisation Africa was touted to be the economic challenges faced by most if not all the countries in Africa. This necessitated recourse to borrowing from their former overlords, international agencies such as the Brentwood organizations. These loans or aids came with conditions and conditionalties which necessitated the adoption of such economic programmes as the Structural Adjustment Policy (SAP), austerity measures, deregulation of currencies and other International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditionalities. These programmes or policies became the buzzwords and eventually became (un)popular with African countries since the mid-1980s. In Nigeria for example SAP was introduced in 1986. One of the dictates of SAP is the reduction of welfarism by the state. This generated protests from all segments of the nation as the average citizen questions the justification of his continuous obligation to a state which cannot longer play its role to its citizens. S. 14 (2) (b) of the Constitution of Federal Republic Nigeria 1999 (CFRN'99) provides that the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government. The incessant disturbances, riots, strife, unrests, agitations, insurgencies, terrorism and general insecurity now prevalent in Nigeria can be described as reactions of the average citizen to such perceived injustice. The continued existence of the state is thus threatened by the citizenry. This has in turn forced authoritarian response from the state. Such authoritarian responses pose a great challenge to democratic governance and sustainable development in the country touted as the "giant of Africa" with a teeming population of over 160 Million as at the last census. This paper assesses the responsibilities of the government to its citizens. It examines the level of state participation in provision of basic amenities for the citizenry. It argues that aside from economic challenges, corruption, ignorance and illiteracy remain the major hindrances to welfarism and consequently democratic governance in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. The paper assesses the African Union (AU) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) efforts at ensuring democratic governance in the continent and the sub-region respectively. The paper concludes that the Nigerian state, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) need to take important steps in stabilizing the economy of member states towards promoting democratic governance in the state, sub region of West Africa and the African region. It therefore recommends certain implications for policy implementation.

**Keywords:** Democratic Governance, State Welfarism, Sustainable Development

## INTRODUCTION

The catalogue of problems bedeviling Africa in the 21st century is staggering, ranking in no mean order from poverty, infrastructural, institutional and leadership challenges, disrespect for the rule of law, corruption, insecurity, terrorism, market challenges, political parties without ideologies. The general consensus is that democratic governance is the solution to these problems. To this end a discussion on the challenge to democratic governance is topical at a time like this. The currency and general acceptability of the term democracy as a household word has never been contested though there is no general consensus on what democracy is. The discordance in opinion as to the real and actual components of the term as occasioned by divergent views, aspirations and backgrounds of the key players has continued to pose a great challenge. Howbeit it has been universally accepted that democracy and good governance are intertwined and interwoven.

While good governance may not be limited to democratic government, it is however, its most distinguishing feature. Democracy promotes good governance and good governance consolidates and sustains democracy. Thus, the birth of the Nigerian fourth republic in 1999 was greeted with much enthusiasm as it was hoped that good governance, which had eluded the Nigerian state for almost the entirety of its existence, will become a practical reality.

Out of the 53 years the Nigerian nation had enjoyed as an independent state, about 30 years were spent under military rule with its attendant autocratic and authoritarian norms which make good governance a non possibility. The first republic between 1960 and 1966 was characterized by ethnic politics which culminated into the sacking of the republic in 1966 by the army as a result of mass unrest over the 1965 general elections which were allegedly rigged to favour sectional interests. The second republic (1979-1983) also witnessed an early demise because the civilian leaders were seen to be corrupt and inept. The third abortive republic was truncated by the Babangida regime for reasons not yet made clear to Nigerian masses.

However, fourteen years after, the Nigerian fourth republic continues to flounder in the doldrums. It seems the lessons of the earlier republics have not been learnt as almost the same sets of challenges that plagued these republics continue to reenact themselves in this fourth republic. There is big disconnect between democracy and good governance and welfarism which is the basis of good governance, remains a mirage. This study seeks to identify the challenges that make democratic governance an uphill task in Nigeria with a view of finding solutions to them. It also investigates how Nigeria's membership of the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African state (ECOWAS)  can help her to entrench democratic culture and good governance.

## DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS
### Democratic Governance

The term "Democratic Governance" is a public administration concept derived from two words: "democracy" and "governance". The definition of the term and the concept of "democracy" remains as elusive as ever but various scholars have, at one time or the other, made gallant efforts at decoding the term. For example, Schumpeter (2005) defines democracy as a system in which individuals acquire the power to make political decisions based on a competitive struggle for people's vote. Havir (1979) defines it as popular control or control by the vast majority of the inhabitants of a country. Democracy is viewed by Nzongola-Ntalaja (1997) as a governmental system that involves the widest spectrum of participation mostly through election. Thus, democracy can be described as a form of government in which major decisions of government are hinged on freely given consent of the majority of citizenry.

Aregbesola (2009), quoting Abraham Lincoln, describes democracy as the government of the people, made by the people and for the people. He also mentioned some characteristics of democracy to include meeting the needs of the people, investing in the citizens through education and health, ensuring economic opportunities for all citizens, respect for the rule of law, open and transparent institutions of government, free and fair elections and combating public and private corruption and illicit enrichment by members of government.

For democracy to develop and be sustained there is the need for people to strive and sacrifice to attain it. They must be willing to tolerate opposing views and show respect for the lives of other people. Thus, while the majority must be tolerant, the minority must learn to accept the decisions of the majority. They must also be broad minded and have a liberal disposition alongside an educated sense of political responsibility (Brian, 2000).

### Governance

Bello Imam and Obadan (2004) define governance as the concept which clearly covers all aspects of the complex and myriad relations that exist between a government and a people. Nwabueze (2003) opines that it is a system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its economic, social and political affairs through interaction within the state, civil society and private sector. He also described it as comprising the mechanisms and processes for citizens and groups to articulate their interests to work together mediate their differences, exercise their legal rights and obligations with rules, institutions and practices that set limits and provide incentives for individuals, organizations and firms. The World Bank (1998) defines it as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development. The UNDP (1997) views it as the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of a country's affairs at all levels.

Good governance is characterized by participation; rule of law; transparency; responsiveness; consensus

orientation; equity; effectiveness and efficiency; and accountability (UNDP,1997; Amundsen,2010). Saliu (2010) sees it as the attainment or process of exercising governmental power in a manner consistent with people's wishes and aspirations. Olukoshi (2001) portrays it in terms of transparency in doing government business; the fight against corruption, predictable political system, participatory decision making process, auditing of government transaction, curbing of bureaucratic bottlenecks, decentralization of governance, judicial autonomy, respect for human rights and rule of law. Nwabueze (2003) opines that good governance is the power to manage a nation's affairs so as to secure and promote the welfare of the people or public goods. From the definitions given, good governance can simply be defined as the use of political power to ensure the welfare of the people. Kassahien (2011) quoting Demeke (2000) identified six main indicators of good governance which are; (a) The extent to which the state engages in minimizing the incidence, containing the spread and mitigating the impact of civil strife and communal violence and institutes mechanisms for promoting peace, political stability and security; (b) Among the preventive measures are equitable access to political power and economic opportunities, to all citizens: fair and equitable treatment of all regions and population groups in matter of public concern and the degree of decentralization of authority and devolution of power in the system (c) Establishing and strengthening the legal and institutional foundations of the rule of law and constitutionalism especially to the extent to which the key governance institutions of the judiciary, legislative and executive are functioning effectively and exercise institutional checks and (d) Effectiveness, equity and responsiveness of public agencies to the needs of all citizens, especially to the extent to which the public management system is perceived to be effectively accountable and transparent and have integrity (e) Popular participation in the political, economic and social processes of the society; this includes freedom of association and expression, existence of conducive and enabling environment for citizen's initiatives and activities and encouragement of the development (f) The ready availability and free flow of information to permit informed public discussions on national issues and policies.

Thus "Democratic governance" can therefore be described as the legitimate exercise of power and authority to ensure the development of the state through the promotion of the welfare of the generality of its citizens. Okafor (2004) equates democratic government with good governance and identifies the attributes of democratic government to include: (a) Democratic rule, which provides for constitutional government and legitimizes division of power among the executive, legislature and judiciary; (b) Legislative oversight and independence of the judiciary; (c) Transparent and accountable government and public service; (d) Human right, freedom of expression and association; (e) Rule of law and equality of all citizens before the law; (f) Predictable and transparent framework of rules, and institutions for the conduct of public and private business; (g) Sustainable development; and (h) Active civil society (Organizations) participating in public affairs under the rule of law.

Good governance in its own right implies collective participation, consensus building, accountability, transparency, responsibility, equitability, inclusiveness, and more especially, it must be built on the rule of law.

## Welfare State

The Britannia Online Encyclopedia defines a welfare state as a "concept of government in which the state plays a key role in the protection and promotion of the economic and social well-being of its citizens". In a welfare state, there is equality of opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth, and public responsibility for those unable to avail themselves of the minimal provisions for a good life. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (2009) defines it as "a social system wherein the state assumes primary responsibility for the welfare of its citizens, as a matter of healthcare, education, employment and social security. The Business Dictionary sees it as "a political system based on the premise that the government (and not the individual, corporations or the local community) has the responsibility for the well-being of its citizens, by ensuring that a minimum standard of living is within everyone's reach. This commitment is translated into provision of universal and free education, universal insurance against disability, sickness and unemployment, family allowances for income supplement and old age pension.

According to Almond, et al (2004), the main duty of the state is to ensure the protection and promotion of the economic and social well-being of its citizens and which further interpreted means that the primary responsibility of the state revolves around welfare of its citizens. To this end, the state is required to organise programmes to make life easier for its citizens. Such programmes include the payments, social housing provision, health provision, social

work and educational services. Axford, et al (2007). They further argue that most democratic societies are welfare states because the tenets of democracy make the leaders to be more responsible and responsive to the needs of the people.

**Sustainable Development**

To Rodney (1972), development is encompassed within the idea of the ability of a society to be able to tap its natural resources in order to cater for the material and social well-being of the generality of the people. The 1987 Brundtland Report of the United Nations defined sustainable development as the "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs". One of the main considerations of the report is the need to the present and future essentials needs of the world's poor. The European Council on Current Sustainable Development Strategy (2006) qualified sustainable development as the quest to ensure a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come.

The United Nations 2005 World Summit Outcome Document sees economic development, social development and environmental protection as the "interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars" of sustainable development. In other words, without developing the economy, ensuring the welfare of the people and protecting the environment for the well-being of the people, development can never be sustained. From these assertions, it becomes obvious that good governance is essential for sustainable development. (UNDP, IMF definitions)

In 2000, 189 States, out of which there were African States, signed the UN millennium declaration. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which the States are expected to achieve by the year 2015 include: (1) Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (2) Achievement of universal primary education (3) Promotion of gender equality and empowerment (4) Reduction of child mortality rate (5) Improvement of maternal health (6) Combat HIV/AIDs, Malaria and diseases (7) Ensure environmental sustainability (8) Development of a global partnership for development (UN:2008) The above is to sustain development and it is also a glaring move to make nations to reintroduce welfare.

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

A discussion on governance and its indicators will of necessity involve the application of some theories which amply analyse and explain the issue. The theories to be employed for this discourse are; (a) Theory of Crisis of Government, (b) Systems Theory, (c) Relative Deprivation, (d) Social Contract Theory.

These are some of the theories which would be called in aid to explain the phenomenon known as governance.

**Theory of Crisis of Government**

Responsibilities of government to citizens include the creation and maintenance of a stable and peaceful community provision, security, maintaining law and order, protecting property and other rights of the citizens, promoting economic efficiency and growth, and ensuring social justice and welfarism. Hence this paper adopts as one of its theories the theory of crisis of government. This theory maintains that when government is seen as not being responsible and responsive to the needs of the people, political instability will be the resultant effect (Akinwale and Aderinto, 2011). With copious examples from the Nigerian state, they established a nexus between bad governance and urban violence with manifestations including ethno-religious violence, electoral violence, youth militancy and civil unrest.

The theory also posits that bad leadership and corruption account for the failure of governance, especially on the African continent. It also asserts that the absence of an adequate opposing force coupled with apathetic civil society organizations create an environment that makes good governance an impossibility (Kassahun, 2011).

**Systems Theory**

Easton (1965) considered the political system as existing within an environment of other systems which affect it and are in turn affected by the political system through continuous transactions and exchanges. The political system functions by getting inputs from its environment which evokes responses from it. The outputs of the political system also affect the environment and in turn excite some form of feedback from the environment.

Nigeria, given her location in Africa, operates within an environment of some regional organization including the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS). Going by the above explanations of the system theory, their organization influence the internal dynamics of politics within Nigeria and are in turn affected by the decisions made by the Nigerian government.

**Relative Deprivation**

Relative deprivation is the conscious experience of a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectations and present actualities. It refers to the discontent

people feel when they compare their positions to others and realize that they have less of what they believe themselves to be entitled to. This discontent affects their behaviours and attitudes leading to deviancy and in extreme situations to political violence such as rioting, terrorism, civil wars and other instances of social deviance.

**Social Contract Theory**

For the purpose of this study, John Locke's position on the social contrast theory will be adopted. He posited that men obey the laws of a state in order to enjoy the preservation of their lives, properties, liberty and general well-being. When a government fails to ensure the above, it puts itself into a state of war with the people and they have the right to self defence. Thus, when a government fails to ensure the welfare of the people, they have the right, even the obligation, to resist such a government (Stamford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2012).

**SAP AND THE CHALLENGE OF WELFARISM IN AFRICA**

Pre-colonial African societies were mainly welfare societies where everyone was his brother's keeper. The African continent was colonized by European powers starting from the late 19th century and as analyzed by many scholars, the epochal period of colonialism was characterized by a high degree of exploitation of not only the natural resource of the continent but also its human resources to further develop continental Europe (Adenuga, 2012; Rodney, 1972). Africans were also subjected to a high degree of degradation and humiliation based on the racial discriminatory notion of Caucasian supremacy over the negroid race. Thus, the hope and belief that self determination and independence from the European colonial overlords will not only ensure the rapid development of African states but will also ensure the general welfare of Africans. The stark reality however is that since most of the African states achieved independence in the mid 20th century, development has remained a mirage and Africans continue to wallow in poverty.

While it is true that autocracy which characterized most of the African states since independence can be said to be the reason for Africa's problems as it has been established that there is a strong nexus between autocracy and bad governance and between democracy and good governance, yet the abdication of the state from its responsibility of ensuring the welfare of its citizens lies at the heart of the problem. To further buttress this assertion is the fact that in most pre-colonial African societies, despite being

autocratic, yet the practices of societal welfarism encouraged patriotism and the general well being of citizens. Today, African states practice or have a semblance of practising democracy, yet economic and political crisis continue unabated. This further strengthens the argument that the major challenge to governance in Africa is the withdrawal or drastic reduction of welfare programmes by African states.

The main anti-welfare policy in the continent is the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which the Bretton Wood Institutions (the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank) made compulsory for African nations in need of loans. Mohan (2009) gives the conditionalities of SAP to include "removal of government subsidies, privatization of public sector institutions, market deregulation, currency devaluation, removal of price control, new taxes, high interest rates, the reduction in public servicing and drastic cuts in government expenditure on social services like health care, education and social welfare".

All the African states that took the IMF loan, without a single exception, experienced and still continue to experience the crisis of governance. The conditionalities were too stringent for the people to bear and the legitimacy of African governments got eroded as a result of its withdrawal from its welfare responsibilities. This accords with the theory of social contract which espouses that a state that cannot fulfill its responsibilities to its citizens should also not expect to receive their loyalty. Adenuga (2012) quoting Mimiko (1997) argues that the IMF and World Bank loans conditions eliminated welfare programmes and subsequently stifled economic development in Africa.

In Nigeria and all over Africa, SAP led to layoffs of government workers, wage constraints, higher interest rates, shutdown of domestic industries, the weakening of national economies and the worsening of socio-economic conditions with the attendant increase in cost of living and low standard of life. The resultant effect was increasing political instability all over the continent.

**THE NIGERIAN STATE AND THE HYPOCRISY OF WELFARISM**

It is interesting to note that successive Nigerian constitutions always make security and welfarism the primary duties of governments. In 1989 Nigerian Constitution, provisions were made for a reasonable national minimum wage, old age care and pensions and unemployment and sick benefits for Nigerians. Likewise, Section 14 (2) of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution also made "the security and welfare of

the people the primary purpose of government" (Ayanleye, 2013: 67). Section 13 of the said Constitution also made it binding it on all organs of government, and of all authorities and persons, exercising legislative, executive and judicial powers to conform, observe and apply the provisions of chapter II of the constitution which is basically to ensure the security and welfare of Nigerians. Okeke and Okeke (2013) submitted that Chapter II of the 1999 Nigerian constitution can be referred to as a structural guide line.

The said Chapter II of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution provides in part that; (a) The security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government, (b) The participation by the people in their government shall be ensured in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, (c) There would be the promotion of a planned and balanced economic development, (d) The material resources of the nation will be harnessed and distributed as best as possible to serve the common good, (e) The economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group, that suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, reasonable national minimum living wage, old age care and pensions, and unemployment, sick benefits and welfare of the disabled are provided for all citizens, (f) There are adequate medical and health facilities for all persons, (g) There is equal pay for equal work without discrimination on account of sex, or on any other ground whatsoever (h) Children, young persons and the age are protected against any exploitation whatsoever, and against moral and material neglect, that provision is made for public assistance in deserving cases or other conditions of need, (i) Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels , (j) Government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy; and to this end Government shall as and when practicable provide(a) free, compulsory and universal primary education;(b) free secondary education(c) free university education; and(d) free adult literacy programme. ((See generally Sections 13-18, 1999 Constitution).

This researcher submits that it is lamentable that Nigeria is still plagued by poverty, corruption, underdevelopment, insecurity, large scale unemployment, kidnapping, terrorism and virtually every indication of a disgruntled populace, a fallout of a regime that pays lip service to welfare. This is

because these provisions only remain in the realm of promises as Section. 6(6)(c) the Nigerian 1999 Constitution provides that the judicial powers vested in accordance with the foregoing provisions of this section -shall not except as otherwise provided by this Constitution, extend to any issue or question as to whether any act of omission by any authority or person or as to whether any law or any judicial decision is in conformity with the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy set out in Chapter II of this Constitution.

The non justiciability of Chapter II of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution has received judicial confirmation in a long line of cases for example in *Okogie v. A.G. Lagos State* (1981 2NCLR, 337), *Adewole v. Jakande* (1981 1NCLR, 262), *Ehimare v. Governor of Lagos State* (1981 2NCLR, 166). The Nigerian courts have been consistent in holding that no court has judicial power or jurisdiction to make any declaration as to whether any organ or government has acted or is acting in conformity with the directive principle of state policy. The implication being that the citizen has no enforceable right that entitles him to any redress where government fails to provide even basic amenities and attend to the welfare of the citizen. This again calls to question the nature of democracy being practiced in Nigeria

**Challenge of Democratic Governance: the Nigerian Experience**

In Nigeria, bad governance has become a culture that is hard to do away with. As Jega (2007) noted, the fourth republic, despite the lessons to be learnt from the failure of the earlier republics, is also characterized by "reckless misrule by elected officials, corrupt practices by public officials, insensitivity and intolerance of opposing views and perspectives".

Using the indicators of good governance aforementioned, it becomes very obvious that the fourth republic is far from achieving good governance. A day does not go by in Nigeria without groups, usually based along tribal/ ethnic lines, complaining of being politically marginalized. The judiciary is yet to achieve the desired autonomy and the executive and legislature are always engaging in unhealthy power struggles. The citizens have lost faith in governmental institutions and apathy, as against popular participation, has become the order of the day.

At this juncture, the question that needs to be answered is what are the peculiar challenges bedeviling democratic governance in Nigeria? These include:

## Leadership

The bane of Nigeria's inability to ensure good governance is closely tied to the issue of governance. As Adenuga (2012) observed, without good leadership, the human and mineral resources of a society remain mere potentials for development. This is because the leadership of a state gives direction to the citizenry and the quality of the leadership determines the quality of the followership.

One of the major challenges of the leadership and by extension, democracy is the process of electing political office holders. Elections in this fourth republic have not been free or fair. As Amundsen (2010) noted, the quality of elections has deteriorated over the years to the extent that the elected government is hardly legitimate. Adenuga and Aborisade (2012) averred that the 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 general elections were flawed and engineered to favour some candidates. The winner of the 2007 Presidential election, Late Umaru Yar'Adua even agreed that the election that brought him into office was not perfect (European Union Election Observers' Report, 2007).

The implication of the flawed process of choosing leaders in Nigeria is that the elected leaders are more responsive and responsible to their 'political god fathers' who rigged them into office than to the electorates. This has made the citizens to lose faith in the leaders as they are not considered to be men of integrity.

Ideally, the essence of leadership should be formulation and implementation of policies to solve societal problems and ensure better welfare for the citizens. This is not the case in the Nigerian state. As Achebe (1983) noted, Nigerian leaders lack the passion, vision and character to deal with myriad of problems facing the country. They often inflict more hardship on the citizenry by reducing the responsibility of government to the citizens while asking the citizens to be more dutiful in their obligation to the state. A case in point is the unilateral announcement made by President Goodluck Jonathan in January 2012 deregulating the downstream sector of oil industry, thereby increasing the pump price of petrol and despite public outcry from all quarter that the policy will increase the cost of living and increase the already high poverty rate, he still went ahead to implement it (The Punch: 2012). As Jega (2007) noted, sheer insensitivity seems to be the main character of Nigerian governments. The reason for this is not farfetched. Dike (2003) aptly described Nigerian leaders as "instrumental leaders" who are only concerned with how to use their offices to achieve private and selfish goals as against societal leaders who subordinate private and narrow goals to broader national objectives. This fact is corroborated by Derin (2007) who points out that Nigerian elites see the acquisition of political leadership as means of gaining influence and affluence and are not concerned about the lot of the masses.

## Corruption

The Black's law Dictionary defines corruption as impairment of integrity, virtue or moral principle; especially the impairment of a public officer's duties by bribery. The World Bank (1997) sees it as abuse of public power for private gain. Kassahun (2011) described it to be acts which are perceived it to be against public interest or violate certain legal or moral laws and principles. There are many faces to corruption, most related to issue under discussion is political corruption which comprises of abuse of political power, abuse of public offices and abuse of public resources by elected government officials for personal gain. It involves also the use of power by government officials for illegitimate private gain. From the above, it is safe to infer that corruption is using power or position entrusted on a person whether public or private for selfish or personal gain to achieve a purpose not envisaged by such power. Corrupt practices manifest itself in varying forms like bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, fraud, extortion, favouritism, amongst a host of other names (Akinrinmade et al, 2013).

Corruption has become the rule rather than the exception. Political corruption is not a recent phenomenon. Official misuse of resources for personal enrichment is rife. Most African States run political systems that favour the elite and the wealthy. Economic Mismanagement is evident in the plundering of public money and has been referred to as the scavage of the century. Corruption is, perhaps, the greatest manifestation of bad governance in Nigeria because it diverts resources away from activities that are vital to good governance. Chukwuemeka, et al (2012) established the pervasive nature of corruption in Nigeria through the Corruption Perception Index of the Transparency International. They stated that in 2009, Nigeria was ranked 130th out of the 180 countries surveyed. For the year 2010, Nigeria was ranked 134th out of 178 countries surveyed. They also reported that over 500 billion dollars had been stolen from the Nigerian treasury through corruption between 1960 and 2009.

Apart from posing serious challenge to development, undermining democracy and good governance and reducing the quality of government services and infrastructure, causing severe hardship and suffering

for citizens, inflation and recourse to external borrowing and poverty other major implications of corruption in Nigeria include the diversion of resources away from the activities that are vital to poverty eradication economic and sustainable development (Derin, 2007). It is therefore not surprising that Nigeria's poverty level had risen up to 71.5% (The Tribune, 2012). Corruption also incapacitates good governance and hinders development and consolidation of democratic practices as it often leads to erosion of government's legitimacy and democratic destabilization (Abiodun, 2012). Dike (2001) succinctly captures the above when he observes that "corruption diverts scare resources into private pockets, literally undermines effective governance, endangers democracy and erodes the social and moral fabric of a nation".

Despite the much hyped anti-corruption crusade embarked on by successive governments in the fourth republic which include the establishment of ant-corruption agencies and enactment of laws including the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) in 2000, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) in 2004, Fiscal Responsibility Act in 2010, the Money Laundering Prohibition Act in 2011, etc, corruption still continues unabated in Nigeria. Indeed, as Derin (2007) notes, those in the vanguard of the anti-corruption crusade have often been found engaging in corrupt practices or culpable in corruption cases. Corruption thrives in Nigeria despite the fact that Nigeria is one of the countries that have signed, ratified and domesticated the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption.

## Education
Qualitative education has become too expensive for millions of Nigerians to afford. Akinnaso (2012) noted that educational institutions are supposed to train human resources that would propel national development. He however noted that the education sector in Nigeria is incapable of training the needed manpower for national development and leadership positions. This trend portends grave danger, not only to the present but also to the future as democracy cannot be entrenched and sustained without quality education. He attributed the poor state of education in Nigeria to "funding shortages and the negative influence of corruptive and valueless political system".
Igbuzor (2003) also notes that the funding of education in Nigeria is often at a single digit percentile of national and state budgets as against the UNESCO's recommendation of 26%. For many

months now, the Academic Staff Union of Universities in Nigeria has been on strike over the issue of inadequate funding of university education.

## Insecurity
Threatening the continued existence of Nigeria presently is insecurity which has become a major challenge to the democratization process in Nigeria, especially in this fourth republic. Armed insurgencies and violent ethnic and religious crises have resulted into colossal loss of lives and properties. In Nassarawa, Benue, Plateau, and so many states of the federation, ethnic conflicts rage unabated. In the Niger-Delta region, militants, for almost a decade, made governance almost impossible through bombings, kidnapping, arsons and others violent means. The Boko Haram menace and escapades which has claimed several hundreds of lives started in the Northern parts of the country. The problems became so pervasive that the federal government had to declare a state of emergency in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states. George-Genyi (2013) affirmed that virtually all the states of the federation, including the FCT, have had their fair share of violent conflicts which have seriously contributed to the crisis of governance. Usman (2013) stated the obvious that the Boko Haram, Niger-Delta militants, the Odua People's Congress (OPC) and others despite their varied approaches, provide platforms for those disillusioned with Nigeria's narrow political system to express their grievances, albeit violently. She concluded that these groups cannot just be understood in terms of the security risk they pose or the criminal elements they harbour, but must also be read in political terms, and seen as platforms for the assertion of authority by sections of Nigerian.

## Policy Discontinuity and Weakening Institutions of the State
The culture of discrediting the policies of predecessors and abandoning the projects embarked upon by these predecessors by successive Nigerian governments is a big challenge to the sustenance of our democratic experience (Adenuga, 2012). In developed polities of the world, elected officials keep faith with the policies of their predecessors and this helps to entrench and strengthen democratic cultures. Otorofami (2006) ascribes the failure to achieve national development and strengthen democratic governance to "an unenviable history of policy somersaults, policy discontinuity and project abandonment midstream".
In another vein, Olanipekun, (2012) ascribes the inability to establish good governance in Nigeria to the lack of enduring institutions. He points out that in

Nigeria, institutions are ruled by egoistic leaders who personalize these institutions and turn them into private fiefdoms for experimenting every infertile imagination and more often than not, their influence and policies only last as long as their tenure in office. The resultant effect is that all the traditional institutions which ordinarily should be meant for sustaining democracy have become weakened and made almost nonexistent through decades of being used as ego boosting instruments by transient leaders.

## ROLE OF THE AU, ECOWAS IN QUEST FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA
### The African Union (AU)

The AU conveniently boasts of 54 members with their different backgrounds and aspirations. Among the several objectives of the AU are the promotion of democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies. The AU aims to facilitate conducive environment for the emergence of democracy in Africa and some of the measures taken so far in this regard include (a) OAU Declaration on the political and socio-Economic situation in Africa and the fundamental changes taking place in World (1990) which underscored Africa's resolve to seize the initiative, to determine its destiny and to address the challenges to peace, democracy and security (b) The 2000 solemn Declaration on the conference on security, stability, development and cooperation which establishes the fundamental principles for the promotion of democracy and good governance in the continent. (c) The African governance architecture which is a set of legal instruments and institutions with the objective to complement, encourage and coordinate effects by member states towards democracy building and consolidation. (d)The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) of 2001 which have defined new parameters for governance and provided benchmarks for a new governance culture in Africa. (e) The African charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) of 2007 which is aimed at better governance in the African continent. It presents what it considers globally acceptable standards of good governance and democracy which includes the observance of rule of law, free and fair elections, and insistence on changes in government according to each nation's constitution. The Charter is peculiar and mirrors the determination of the AU to entrench democratic governance in Africa as it contains

enforcement procedure on members states that fail to comply with general principles set forth in the charter. It also contains provisions which allows the AU sanction and to also determine the appropriate measures to be imposed on erring members. It also made cogent provisions at addressing foreseeable impediments to democracy including malafide amendment of the constitution to perpetuate power. (f) The African convention on prevention and combating corruption which addresses corruption both in the public and private sector. It covers virtually every area of corrupt practices such as bribery, diversion of property by public officials, trading in influence, illicit enrichment, money laundering and concealment of property. The convention makes provision for prevention, criminalization, regional cooperation, mutual legal assistance and most importantly, the recovery of assets. Member states are monitored and mandated to submit regular progress report of compliance to the executive council.

The Assembly of Head of states and Government at the thirty-sixth ordinary session noted with concern that despite the drastic structural adjustment and policy reforms carried out by most African states, the poverty level continue to rise and the member of countries in Africa n continent classified in the category of Least Developed countries (LDCs) has not decreased. They however concluded that development of these states is the responsibility of their governments and peoples. At the thirty-eight ordinary session of the assembly in 2002, the following principles governing democratic elections in Africa were also upheld: (a) Democratic elections are the basis of the authority of any representative government; (b) Regular elections constitute a key element of the democratization process and therefore, are essential ingredients for good governance, the rule of law, the maintenance and promotion of peace, security, stability and development; (c) The holding of democratic elections is an important dimension in conflict prevention, management and resolution;

Democratic elections should be conducted (i) Freely and fairly (ii) Under democratic constitutions and in compliance with supportive legal instruments (iii) Under a system of separation of powers that ensures in particular, the independence of the judiciary (iv) At the regular intervals, as provided for in national constitution (v) By impartial, all-inclusive competent accountable electoral institutions staffed by well-trained personnel

**The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

ECOWAS aims at promoting co-operation and integration in economic, social and cultural activity by integrating the national economies of member states. It also aims at raising the living standard of its peoples, maintain and enhance economic stability, foster relations among member states and contribute to the progress and development of the African continent. Some of the measures taken by ECOWAS in achieving these objectives include (a) The Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, peace Keeping and Security in 1999 (b) Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good governance of 2001 (c) ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) of 2008

ECOWAS also provides electoral assistance to member states through capacity building for electoral management bodies, observation and monitoring of elections. It also promotes and consolidates good governance through capacity building for political parties, legislative bodies, the judiciary and the media, as well as human right and anti-corruption institutions.

However, despite the lofty objectives of the AU and ECOWAS, they lack the institutional machinery to fully ensure good governance in member states. They often focus more attention and energy on monitoring elections, peace keeping activities and discouraging illegal overflow of governments, especially through coup d'état than at fostering a culture of good governance.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**
**Conclusion**

Provision of welfare is a basic right of the citizen as welfare invariably translates into development as the people are primary and ultimate reason for any proposed development. The disgruntle and demonstration of non satisfaction with government decision to withdraw welfare have negative effect on development in Africa while whatever little development achieved is dissipated via strikes, corruption, economic mismanagement and unnecessary grandiose show of affluence by African leaders. The people want to identify with leaders who have their interest at heart by caring for their welfare so that Africa's case will not be like that of taking a step forward and three steps backward. While the Nigerian constitution makes provision for the welfare of the people, the actual practice of governance ignores it and what obtains is a crisis of governance made more virulent through other challenges such as

bad leadership, corruption, insecurity and weak political institutions.

Despite the fact that the Constitutive Act of the AU and the Protocol of ECOWAS emphasize the significance and entrenchment of good governance in the region and sub-region, the two organizations have in practice, been better at discouraging the illegal overthrow of government, especially, through coup d'état than at fostering a culture of good governance.

**Recommendations**

(1) Welfarism should be watchword in governance. African nations must cease to pay lip service to welfare issues, and should devote attention to welfarism, not only in terms of policy formulation and implementation but also in term of financial commitment.

(2) The strong commitment should be given to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). If the goals are achieved, the welfare of citizen will be assured and development will be sustained.

(3) The leadership of African nations should also be re-orientated on the need to see themselves as "servant leaders" and not as "rulers. Instead of being instrumental leaders, they should act as societal leaders. To this end, the electoral process should be designed to discourage undesirable elements and people of questionable character from contesting elections,

(4) Electioneering campaigns must not be based nor be predicated on the social/financial status or the ethnic affiliations of candidates.

(5) Governments also need to educate and enlighten the masses on how to use their votes to secure good governance.

(6) The anti-corruption crusade in African states should also be prosecuted without fear or favour. Corruption must be given zero tolerance.

(7) Anticorruption modules should also be incorporated into the curriculum at every level of education so that, from a tender age, citizens will be taught about the ills of corruption on the society.

(8) The judiciary in African states should also be empowered and strengthened to indeed be "the last defence of the common man". The judiciary as the custodian of constitutions should always be ready to interpret, defend and uphold the provision of the constitutions, especially with regard to welfarism.

(9) The AU and ECOWAS should also establish institutional frameworks to ensure that member states adhere strictly to the guidelines for good governance as enshrined in the constitutive Act of the AU and the Protocol of ECOWAS.

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