



EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND GOOD GOVERNANCE AS TOOLS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT- A CRITICAL DISCUSSION

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ABSTRACT

Trust of the paper is the importance of effective Leadership and Good governance in the nation, leadership and good governance are among the most important factors in achieving high level of development goals in any society. Therefore, the need for effective leadership and good governance should not be over emphasized. The paper focused on effective leadership and good governance in National Development as prerequisites for sustainable development. In the cause of discussion, concept of leadership was examined; features of leadership, functions of leadership and leadership styles were all discussed. Again, good governance, its elements and the concept of National Development and its problems, were equally highlighted as the paper concludes that the place of effective leadership and good governance in the quest for National Development cannot be ignored. This is showcased by stringent management of the state resources and transparency. Furthermore, the paper concludes among others that, effective leadership and good governance remain the only known panacea for national development and recommends amongst others that anti-corruption campaign should be intensified alongside accountability, again, leadership position in our national life should be based on merit. Secondary source of data collection were mainly used for this work.

Key words: Effective Leadership, Good Governance, and National Development.

Introduction

As nations in Africa grapple with epileptic developmental strides, a clarion call has been made to entrench sound and effective governmental processes aimed at promoting and sustaining development in Africa. In this wise, effective leadership and good governance have been viewed as veritable tools for national development. Leadership has always been an issue of general concern because of the impact of leadership on the led and the society as a whole. According to Njoku (2008), Leadership is a term that describes the act of influencing, inspiring, guiding and encouraging members of an organization to accomplish determines goals. The growth of any nation is dependent upon the quality, integrity and sincerity of her leaders.

The word “Leadership” has received a lot of attention because of its importance in the society and as such; focus shifts from mere leadership to effective leadership.

According to Kalu (2014), effective leadership is a phrase used to imply the

leadership which produces the desired result. It means the kind of leadership that uses the needed resources to achieve the excepted goal. It does not waste, embezzle or siphon but it is accountable, transparent and makes frugal management of resources, it's regrettable today that the impact of this enviable and emblematic leadership is seldomly felt in Nigeria and reverse seem to hold away. That reverses in ineffective leadership.

Leadership and good government are sine qua non to a viable development oriented society: it is the wheel on which any democratic society rides on. The leadership of any society is being measured by its good governance which is demonstrated to meet the challenging needs of the populace. Leadership sees good governance as a yard stick to measure its performance in the theater of any society.

There is no society where democracy is enthroned, that leadership does not see good governance as a priority, in Nigeria as well, leadership has suffered a lot of setback in the

past because it has not provided good governance, translated into ensuring good provision of basic social amenities to the people. Hence, the clarion call for upward review of the development plan initiated by any government at all levels whether it has a genuine intention of national translation of development agenda to the overall well-being of the common man in her words, Waziri outlined the basic concepts of leadership to include the following:

Leadership is concerned with fostering change.

Leadership is a group process: all people are potential leader

The UNDP (2009), defines governance as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interest, exercise their legal right meet their obligations and mediate their differences. Good governance is among other things participatory, transparent and accountable, it is also effective and equitable and it promotes the rule of law. Good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on board consensus in the society and that the voice of the poorest and most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of resources.

THE CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership is one of the most important factors in achieving high level of development goals in any society. Nwachukwu in Njoku (2008) defined leadership as “a social, influencing process for the attainment of goals”. In concurrence to this stated definition, Onwuchekwa (2006), believes that “leadership is the process of influencing group activities towards goal setting and goal achievement”. The concept of leadership has been discussed extensively with numerous

definitions. This prompted Bassy in Okwii (2011) to assert that “many definitions of leadership exist, as theorists have defined the concept of Leadership as the exercise of influence, as particular behaviour, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an instrument to achieve goals, as an effect of interaction, as the focus of groups processes, as a differential roles, as initiation of structure, and as many combinations of these definitions.

However, in this paper, the focus shall be on political leadership of a democratic society. In this sense, Aguwa and Ehiodo (2004) view leadership as “A term used to describe a person's status or position of authority” they went on to opine that “in modern democracies, leadership emerges through a set of legal procedures”. Such leaders as the President, Governors, Legislators, etc derive their leadership from constitutional procedures e.g. Election” Moreso, Ijewere in Okoye (2006) sees “leadership as service and said there cannot be any noticeable improvement in the governance of any nation until the drivers of economy sees leadership as service. A leader is a man or woman of courage, focus, empathy, vision, wisdom, ability, capacity and dignity. He must be full of endurance, assurance, perseverance, temperance and acumen but above all, a leader should exercise reasonable discretion in decision making. Considering these expectation it becomes paramount to pause and look at what features, leaders should possess in order to perform effectively.

FEATURES OF LEADERSHIP

Aguwa and Ehiodo (2004) postulated that “Good leaders therefore are expected to possess some distinguishing qualities such as high intelligence, which enables him to be able to analyze and understand some issues and take good decision without delay. Such leaders should be hardworking so as to serve as good example to others”. They also emphasized that the “leader should be

tolerant, accommodating, honest, firm and resourceful”. Furthermore, other leadership qualities as identified by Okoye (2006) are:-

1. Commitment (to national goals and aspiration)
2. Selflessness (to serve collective/nation interest rather than self)
3. Integrity: must be able to live above board.
4. Courage (to vigorously pursue set objectives, the political will to take appropriate decision) to implement tough policy decisions.
5. Competence; A leader must be competent in the performance of their duties, leaders should be professionals.
6. Foresight; A leader must have foresight. This will enable him to plan/think ahead.
7. Good listeners; listen to advice, seek wise counsel, and maintain contact with followers.
8. Focus; do first things first, the important things, not easily distracted.

FUNCTIONS OF LEADERSHIP

Krech in Chikere and Okafor (2011) identified the following as functions of a leader;

- a. A leader acts as the coordinator of group activities, acts as the overseer of the executive policies.
- b. A leader as a planter decides the ways and means which the group achieves its ends.
- c. The leader as policy- maker establishes the group goals and policies.
- d. The leader as expert creates the source of available information and skills. There will be reliance on technical expertise and advice.
- e. The leader as a conveyer of rewards and punishment, has the power to

provide rewards and met out punishment.

- f. The leader as example becomes the model of behaviour for members of the group.
- g. The leader as a scapegoat serves as target for aggression and hostility of the group accepting blame in the case of failure.

LEADERSHIP STYLES

According to Njoku (2008), “behaviour exhibited by a leader during supervision of subordinates is known as leadership styles” such leadership styles are:

DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP

The democratic leader practices leadership by consultation. Here, authority is decentralized. They arrived at decision after consultation with followers and participation. Aguwa and Ehiodo (2004) noted that “democratic leadership could be said to exist in a country where those who rule are the elected representative of the people.

AUTOCRATIC LEADERSHIP

Also Aguwa and Ehiodo (2004), succinctly held that this style is depicted by the absence of consultation with the people. The leaders alone determine and implement policies. There is no room for choice. The fundamental rights of the citizen are seriously curtailed” the various military leaderships in Nigeria is good examples of autocratic leadership where citizens have no say whatsoever in the affairs of the country.

LAISSSEZ-FAIRE LEADERSHIP

Aguwa and Ehiodo (2004) admit that ” this is a leadership that allows people to do what they wish”. Such a society is not guided by any known and recognized rules and regulations.

THE NEED FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

The word “effective” simply means producing an intended result. Hence, effective leadership is a result oriented leadership that lives up to people's (the led) expectation.

According to Njoku (2008), any leadership with a mark of success and accomplishment, positive changes realized, value added to human life both within and outside the category, group team or organization are finally met a reasonable percentage of its promises despite any challenges thereof, should be counted effective. Nigerians are yet to see such leaders with prickly-conscience who use abundant resources and turn it into opportunity for national development, leaders that would uphold their manifestos, leaders that would not flout the rule of law without remorse, leaders with the spirit of equity, morality and women in leadership position milking the nation dry at the expense and detriments of ordinary citizen. This accounts for the lamentation of the celebrated liberty icon Late Chinua Achebe in his book, *The Trouble with Nigeria..* The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with Nigerian land or air or anything else. According to Chikere and Okafor (2011), “the Nigeria problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility to the challenge of personal example which is the hallmarks of true leadership” in view of the foregoing, the clamour for effective leadership becomes even more indispensable. We need leaders that will not renege their vows, leaders that will use the yearly national allocation to deliver qualitative and evenly spread social services, leaders will value the life of an ordinary Nigerian, who will put the entire nation above; political party, elite demands, ethnicity, cronyism etc, we urgently need leadership in Nigeria if national development must be attained.

THE CONCEPT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

The concept of good governance is examined in the context of a broad vision of development and globalization and its facts include, efficient functioning of these arms of government – the executive, legislative, and judiciary, (Onichakwe, 2016). The expectation is that each of these arms should carry their individual task with dedication and integrity with the active participation of the citizens with the government in policy making, planning, implementation and monitoring. Through the instrumentality of the rule of law, the mal-governance can be eliminated, this is an aspect of good governance. The central, state and local governments in Nigeria ought to discharge their duties as to showcase accountability, transparency, responsiveness, decentralization and people - friendly administration.

ELEMENTS OF GOVERNANCE

According to Aguwa (2005), the following are the elements of good governance:

i) Credible Election: In a democratic society like ours, leadership derives its power from the mandate of the people who ideally set the task and points an elected few to implement the set task on their behalf, therefore making the elected few countable to people who selected them. The leadership transparency and accountability must of a truth begin from very credible electoral system and process that ensures that the will of the people is respected and their popular choice of leaders are rightly enthroned.

ii) Participation: Good governance encourages inclusion in all aspects and bridges the gap between the leader and the led; it breaks the dichotomy that has long characterized governance. The citizenry must be carried along, in the various stages of policy planning, decision-making and implementation processes simply because a

people oriented project is more likely to succeed as against an imposed project. People especially, the down trodden of society (the poor and the youth) will always identify with what they are a part of than they have no hand in or are not a part of conception.

iii) Effective Service Delivery: Access to such basic service as education, primary health care, electricity and motor- able roads are prerequisite for effective human development with a whole lot of wide reaching effect on the citizenry. Effective leadership is one that puts together and pursues programmes that are sustainable and avoid disjointed mode of planning. When sustainability is in focus it helps check elephant projects that are mostly monetary and designed to fail, so that only a few are reached and target population unreached.

iv) Employment: Nigeria as a nation, pride itself in the fact that it's the most populous country in Africa with every 1 in 6 black people on the continent being counted as Nigerian, the population of the country is presently estimated at about 140 million people based on 2006 NPC, and of this lot it is estimated that the whopping 70% comprises of the youths however, population growth itself does not equal prosperity unless young people are educated and job opportunity created we will only be raising a population that is fast becoming a liability rather than assets. Leadership must be productive and innovative in the provision of viable alternatives programmes and policies that would see to the effective accommodation of this impressionable population.

v) Corruption: Corruption fuels bad governance, erodes public confidence, undermines public service delivery and entrenches square pegs in round holes in leadership positions, it is a major impediment to governance. While insatiable wants and human greed are obviously drivers of

corruption, inability to hand out prompt penalties to corrupt leadership and individuals dues to prolonged court cases.

vi) Rule of Law: Legal framework should be fair and enforced impartiality, particularly the laws on human rights.

vii) Transparency: Transparency is built on the free flow of information processes, institution and information are directly accessible to concerned with them and enough information is provided to understand and monitor them.

viii) Effectiveness and Efficiency: Processes and institutions produce results that meet needs while making the best interests of the group and where possible, on policies and procedures. Equity-All men and women have opportunities to improve or maintain their well- being.

ix) Accountability: Decision makers in government, the private sector and civil society organization are accountable to the public as well as to institutional stake holders

x) Strategic Vision: Leaders and the public have a broad and long term perspective on good governance and human development, along with a sense of what is needed for such development there is an understanding of the historical culture and social complexities in which that perspective is grounded.

The Concept of National Development

National Development is a term that describes government plan to improve the social and economic status of her nation. Development on one hand according to the former UN Secretary in Ubani (2012) is Growth plus change; it includes changes in institutional, social and administrative structure as well as behaviour and attitudes of people including sometimes the people's custom and beliefs. On the other hand, the word "nation" is defined by Okereke in Kalu

(2014) “as community of people who feel that they belong together in the double sense that they share deeply significant elements of a common heritage and they have a destiny for the future”. As he proceeded, he noted that national development involves an activity that affects the nation; a people of common heritage as a whole, of all and not a part. As a matter of fact, national development is usually not segregated from any part of a nation but encompasses plans or programmes targeted at achieving sustainable improvement in both material and spiritual life of a nation, which must be realized in ways consistent with the protection of human dignity. Nigeria soon after independence intensified the struggle for development by initiating the First National Development plan. President Jonathan christened his administration's national development as “Transformation Agenda” (2011-2015).

Problems of National Development

According to Achebe (1983), national development has been hindered by a lot of factors. These factors are those things we see as problems, he presented the factors as;

1. Poor Data Base

In Nigeria, our Administrators deal with unrealistic facts and figure. They have to contain with insufficient information. The statistical data they use in planning for national development is misleading and does not show a true picture of issues and events.

2. Corruption

This is a very big problem to national development. It is like a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of Nigerians society. Today, an average Nigerian is corrupt and there is corruption in virtually every aspect of our life. Things are not done based on merits, rather it is based on ascription. Our administrators change their minds on important national issues, whenever they are enticed or bribed. There is no due process in

most of what we do in this country. Contracts will be awarded and the contractors will collect money and abandon the projects, and claim to be “untouchables” because they have political god-father.

3. Poor Plan Implementation

In Nigeria our problem in most cases is not the issue of proper planning, but the case poor implementation. There have been various useful and people oriented plans, but due to poor implementation in the hands of the authorities, the plans never achieved its stated goals and objectives. Successive administrations in Nigeria have always petitioned the predecessor's development plan, hence uncompleted projects litter every work and crany in Nigeria.

4. External Manipulations

Those are dictations from outside. Nigeria is a country that got political independence without economic independence, and this has really manifested in the way and manner our leaders do things. Our economy relies on foreign economy for survival, and as a result of this fact e must abide by whatever conditions that are being presented to use. It is said that “He who pays the piper dictates the tune”.

5. Illiteracy

This is a very big problem facing the third world countries. More than 70 percents of the citizen of the Third World Countries are illiterates. This ugly development does not allow the seed of development to germinate.

6. Military in Government

Apparently, military in government remains a very big threat to national development not only in Nigeria, but to anywhere else in the world. Democracy is seen as the best form of government and not militarism. It is said that the “worst civilian government is better than the best military government”. In this respect, we see military rule as an aberration.

The purpose of military establishment is security. It emphasizes more on professionalism. The military is set up to protect and defend the Nation against any external attack or aggression. That is why we say that it is for security tending. No matter how righteous and real a military junta looks like, he is still a military man. Assisting from there myriads of problems military against national development, it is individual that the prance a for national development is effective leadership and good governances. These tools when efficiency applied in a nation will reduce if not erase the vices that hinder national development.

Conclusion

A good leadership in government affairs is justified on how effective national resources have been utilized to forge or speed development. Nigeria is so much tainted with image of bad leadership which speaks volume to national development and unity. Effective leadership through good governance is the only known panacea to solve the problem of poverty, lack of employment opportunity, low quality education, inequality, inadequate and non-functional infrastructures, high maternal-death, low level of human capital, high propensity to engage into crime, insecurity etc, it helps to foster prosperity of the people.

Recommendation

At the end of this investigation, the following recommendations are made:

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1. Public accountability which is a known feature in democratic rule should be grasped by Nigerian leaders. Being accountable to the people helps in building their confidence and reduces aggression, lampooning and casting of aspersions against the leader.
2. Anti-corruption campaign should be intensified. Regulatory agencies and law enforcement agencies should help step up to their responsibilities, prosecuting public servants who are guilty of corruption charges.
3. Project, policies and programmes should be equitably and evenly distributed across the entire nation to avoid neglect and marginalization.
4. There should be strong ties between the presidency and the arms of government in order to build peace and secure country against terrorist and other enemies of peace.
5. Political culture should be given priority attention. There should be national re-orientation whereby the citizen will uphold, respect the dignity, integrity of Nigeria and paint Nigeria's image with good virtues.
6. Leadership position in Nigeria should be on merit not on ethnic or religious sentiment. As such, only proven and tested leaders are to be given the mandate to provide good governance irrespective of the ethnic origin.

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