# BAD GOVERNANCE AS THE BANE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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**ABSTRACT**
*The declining capacity of political leadership in Nigeria to recognize systemic risks such as election fraud, terrorist attacks, herder-farmer conflict, armed banditry, and police brutality and put in place the necessary measures to navigate these challenges is a manifestation of governance failure. As a result of this governance failure, socio-economic development in Nigeria has continued to lack remedy. In contrast with the current system in which leadership is attained through bribery, intimidation, and violence, Nigeria needs an epistocratic system of governance that is founded on the pedigree of its political leaders and the education of its voters. It is against the foregoing that this paper beams its searchlight on bad governance and its effects on Nigeria's socio-economic development. Through the use of secondary sources of data, it argues that understanding the influence of government on Nigeria's socio-economic development would offer a meaningful insight into the gap between the enormous national resources that exist and Nigeria's desire for progress. Theoretically, it adopts Structural Functionalism as its theoretical framework to analyse the incidence of bad governance as the bane of socio-economic development in Nigeria. The paper concludes that bad governance breeds high rate of indiscipline in the society, giving rise to a state of "might is right", a state of anomie where normlessness holds sway in the society; where public officials connive with contractors to inflate the value of government contracts, while the cost of governance and administration shoot up, with very little to show in terms of projects and programmes, which impact on the average citizen's wellbeing. It recommends among others that anyone aspiring to lead the nation in whatever capacity must demonstrate the intellectual pedigree to translate knowledge into*

*effective, transparent, and accountable governance with the potential to enhance socio-economic development.*

## Introduction

There is no doubt that there exists synergy between governance and national development due to the fact that there would be no any meaningful development without good governance as well as nation-building. Therefore, governance has been an issue of great concern all over the world because it is pivotal to building human society. This is because governance is the basis for the political, social and economic formation of every society. This accounts for why Essien, (2012:24) opined that the governance issue has arisen as a crucial idea that considers all societies. In addition, he noted that it is a multi-level and wide idea, which is applicable at all levels, including households, towns, municipalities, nations, regions and the world. Nigeria still has a big challenge, however, of creating a government structure that supports, encourages and fosters human growth, particularly for the poor. What should be noted is that the basic anticipation, and recompense for citizens in a social contract agreement between the government and the governed parties is the social and economic growth in terms of improving citizens' living conditions (Ojo, Aworawo, and Elizabeth, 2014:132).

Understanding the influence of governance on Nigeria's socio-economic development would offer a meaningful insight into the gap between the enormous national resources that exist and Nigeria's desire for progress. The coming together of men politically, towards achieving socio-economic success is tied to the significance of governance as a machinery that binds the society together towards actualizing certain important benefits. The overriding goal and objective of governance is to achieve the common good and happiness for all citizens of a State. This implies that governance is as old as man. In other words, governance has been a factor or machinery of holding society together since the pre-historic period.

It is on this premise that Dahida and Akangbe, (2013:76) aver that Nigeria is engulfed with leadership styles that encourage corruption at all levels of government. This is because, in Nigeria, there is virtually absence of accountability, while civil freedoms are as typically restricted to political contests.

The above submission implies that Nigeria is challenged by the scourge of bad governance which manifests in leadership crisis, corruption and political fraud (MO Ibrahim, 2018; UNDP, 2018). Consequently, Okoro, (2014:1) contends that 'bad governance in Nigeria results from, but not limited to the leadership crisis, electoral malpractices, unemployment, low economic growth, ethnic conflict, transnationally sponsored crime, armed banditry, and lots more'. It is against the foregoing background that this chapter interrogated issues that will aid the study to discuss how bad governance is one of the banes of socio-economic development in Nigeria.

## Conceptual Clarification

This section of the paper deals with the clarification of the basic concepts or variables under interrogation. Such concepts include Governance, Good governance, Bad governance and Socio-economic development.

### Governance

The concept of governance conveys, most importantly, a more diverse view of authority and its exercise. In the new governance, the neoliberal quest for a minimal state and the more recent attempts to promote networks are attempts to increase the role of civil society in practices of rule. Likewise, theories of governance generally suggest that patterns of rule arise as contingent products of diverse actions and political struggles informed by the varied beliefs of situated agents. Some of these theories even suggest that the notion of a monolithic state in control of itself and civil

society was always a myth. The myth obscured the reality of diverse state practices that escaped the control of the centre because they arose from the contingent beliefs and actions of diverse actors at the boundaries of the state and civil society. In this view, the state always has to negotiate with others, policy always arises from interactions within networks, the boundaries between the state and civil society are always blurred, and transnational and international links and flows always disrupt national borders.

**Good Governance**

Concerns about democratic governance first arose in discussions of economic development. Economists came to believe that the effectiveness of market reforms was dependent upon the existence of appropriate political institutions. In some ways, then, the quality of governance initially became a hot topic not because of normative democratic concerns but because it impinged on economic efficiency, notably the effectiveness of aid to developing countries. International agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank increasingly made good governance one of the criteria on which they based aid and loans. Other donors followed suit.

According to UNDP (1997, p.34) good governance is participatory, transparent and accountability. And it promotes the rule of law and ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and most vulnerable are heard in decision and policy making over allocation of resources. This definition differentiates governance with good governance and exposed the main attributes of good governance which comprised of transparent, participatory, accountability, respect of rule of law, listening the voices of the poorest and inclusion. Chazzan (1992, p.122) describes good governance as effective process of organizing and managing legitimate power structures, entrusted by the people, to provide law and order, to protect fundamental human rights, ensure rule of law and due process, provide for basic needs and welfare of the people and the pursuit of their happiness. According to this definition the essential features of good governance encompassed obedience to the law and order, respect of rule of law, due process, human dignity, happiness of common man and welfare promotion. Babawale (2007) sees good governance as the exercise of political power to promote the public good and the welfare of the people. He argues that good governance is the absence of accountability in government, corruption, and political repression, suffocation of civil society and denial of fundamental human rights. Also, Brinkerhoff (2005) observes that promoting good governance includes: reforms to increase accountability, transparency and responsiveness. Omona (2010) argued that good governance seeks to improve the capacity of the state, encompassing a variety of strategies to efficiency and effectiveness of government performance (Suleiman, 2010). Therefore, good governance entails transparency, accountability, responsiveness, equity and justice, due process, fairness, check and balance in governance.

**Bad governance**

Bad governance is mainly the relationship between the governing authority and those being governed due to decision-making. Bad governance refers to how decisions are made in government and business. It is also the polar opposite of good leadership. Thus, a society is likely to experience bad governance where good leadership is lacking.

Therefore, as a result of the social contract between the government and the governed, the challenge of bad governance due to bad leadership arises. External circumstances or decisions, such as violations of central or accepted norms, such as liberal democracy, and poor economic policy, generate this unfavourable relationship. Bad governance refers to government-level administration, although lousy and lousy governments are different. A society with high level corruption, deception, and the adoption of unfair policies is said to be experiencing bad governance. Consequently, other expressions of inadequate management have varying degrees of severity and potential influence in their respective settings (Obasesam and MaryAnne 2021).

That is to say, bad governance entails systemic corruption and a lack of openness and accountability, arbitrary policymaking, and the deception of those who are governed.

**Causes of bad governance**

A number of factors are responsible for bad governance, including but not limited to the following:

**a. Absence of accountability and voice**

There would definitely be bad governance when governing elites refuse to listen to the voices of those they govern and are not willing to take responsibility for their actions and inactions. In a situation where the voices of the governed are dismissed by the governing elite, it means that their ideas are no longer considered. It is fundamental to note that democratic governments all over the world emphasise accountability in order to ensure that the public is enlightened and aware of what is going on, whether right or wrong. In the event that there is a lack of accountability, there is the tendency or possibility of distrust between the leaders and the led; capable of leading to instability. What it means is that the relationship between the two parties is not favourable due to doubt and uncertainty.

**b. Political underdevelopment**

One other factor responsible for bad governance is the political underdevelopment that characterizes most of the third world nations, arising mainly from how nations have been formed and political power molded in the global economic and political systems framework through contacts with the advanced nations which is usually referred to as the "North and South" dichotomy. In a nutshell, political underdevelopment arises as a result of the political leaders' lack of reliance and confidence on their populace. There is similarity in the aspect of formal organisational traits amongst the developing nations and the variation in state functioning is largely due to the wide gap in the pattern of state-society relationship.

**c. Corruption**

There exists significant relationship between corruption and bad governance as both are often thought to go hand in hand. Therefore, corruption can be seen in various settings, from governmental to economic. Thus, it can occur in different forms. For instance, when there is presence of crime within a governing elite, poor and bad governance become inevitable due to the fact that officials prioritise their personal interests over collective interest. And in a society where there is high level of corruption, crime impacts social services, such as health care and education, and law enforcement authorities, such as the police (Obasesam and MaryAnne 2021).

In summary, bad governance has a wide range of consequences and repercussions that are not limited to the situations in which it occurs. Some of the effects of bad governance include failed state, poor economic growth and corruption.

**Socio-Economic Development**

The concept of socio-economic development is a process that seeks to identify both the social and the economic needs within a community, and seek to create strategies that will address those needs in ways that are practical and in the best interests of the community over the long run. The general idea is to find ways to improve the standard of living within the area while also making sure the local economy is healthy and capable of sustaining the population present in the area. Socio-economic development occurs in neighborhoods in metropolitan areas, sections of smaller cities and towns, and even in rural settings (Malcolm 2024).

There are a number of factors that must be considered as part of any socio-economic development effort. Understanding the current circumstances that prevail in the area is the first step toward regional development. By assessing the potential of human capital in the area, allowing for the current unemployment rate and when laws and regulations are currently in place that may be impeding the introduction of new industry into the area, it is possible to begin

developing a plan that will ultimately mean more jobs, stable employment for more households, and more money flowing through the local economy (Malcolm 2024).

Typically, socio-economic development involves making changes in current laws and regulations in order to attract new growth and enhance the standard of living for local residents. Changes in laws can make it easier for new industry to move into the area and offer employment at equitable wages. This, in turn, can aid in motivating the creation of more services that citizens can enjoy, allowing the area to prosper. With the right type of motivation and improvements in infrastructure, residents are not tempted to move away in order to earn a living or enjoy desirable services, and there is a high probability that more people will move into the area and provide further stimulation for the local economy. While there is no one right way to pursue socio-economic development, the process is essential to preventing decline and eventual extinction of a community.

## Theoretical Framework

For the purpose of this study, Structural functionalism was adopted as a theoretical framework to analyze the incidence of bad governance as the bane of socio-economic development in Nigeria. Functionalism is closely associated with the work of Talcott Parsons (Schneewind, 2015). Crossman (2020), highlights that Emile Durkheim, Herbert Spencer and Robert K. Merton were also linked to the development of structural functionalism.

Structural functionalism is the theoretical perspective that seeks to understand the function that each aspect of culture plays in supporting the structure of a society. It seeks to establish the relationship among members of the society because every member has a role to play either as an individual or member of a group. The various parts of the society are seen to be interrelated and taken together; they form a complete system. In seeking to do this, one of its main premises is the idea that individuals and culture function in order to support the structure of their society. In simple terms, everyone has a role to play or a function to perform, and they perform it in order to support the structure of their society, hence the name 'structural functionalism.'

Schneewind, (2001) in his work, *Socialization and education*: Theoretical perspectives, addressed how individuals become members of a given society in order to guarantee the survival and stability of the social system. He saw society as a global social system based on an integrated value system. The individual person then participates in the social system by interacting with the other members in line with the various roles and positions such individuals hold in that system. The individuals make demand on the social system and the social system spells out what the systems require of the citizens in support of its operations by being loyal and committed in the execution of government policies, programs and projects. The global social system itself then consists of hierarchically ordered subsystems, characterized by corresponding institutionalized norms. These norms are supposed to be congruent with society's integrated value system on one hand and on the other hand, they determine the expectations and rules attached to specific positions and roles (Schneewind, 2001).

Structural functionalism then holds that society is more than the sum of its parts, as each aspect of it works for the system's stability. It accordingly emphasizes consensus and order, social stability and shared public values in the society. Functionalism emphasizes the systematic features of the social wholes by treating them as characterized by differentiated but independent units (Cohen ,1968). The major parts of society are its institutions or various sectors such as the economy, the family, the educational and political system, which are important components of the social structure that are in significant relationships. These institutions are made up of interconnected roles or interrelated norms which must be active in the developmental process for the attainment of developmental goals. In view of the above the effectiveness of a system and the degree of its sustenance as well as its survival depends largely on the level of the compatibility of the parts with themselves in their relationship with the whole.

It is in view of this that Marshal (1994) asserted that the system concept is applicable to any scientific inquiry where researchers are concerned with understanding the pattern or structure between any set of parts or units. Consequently, dysfunctionalism in the system leads to change because societal components must adjust to achieve stability. Thus, when one part of the system is dysfunctional, it affects all the other parts, creating social problems, and prompting social change (Crossman, 2020). But functionalism is criticized for ignoring the negative implications of social order, as it actually justifies the status quo and the process of (cultural) domination that maintains it. It therefore does not encourage people to take an active role in changing their social conditions, even when doing so may be beneficial to them. The understanding of the various parts and its roles are important because societies have certain basic needs or requirements which must be met if they are to survive. Functionalism's critics thus accuse it of seeing the agitation for social change as undesirable because the various parts of society will compensate in a seemingly organic way for any problems that may arise (Crossman, 2020). Nevertheless, in the application of structural functionalism to this work, it is suggested that a dysfunctional administration breeds bad governance with the consequences on the overall socio-economic development of Nigeria.

## Elements of Bad Governance in Nigeria

There are elements or indices to use in measuring bad governance essentially in a democratic setting like Nigeria. Pertinent among these elements are corruption, weak law enforcement mechanisms, lack of transparency and accountability, high cost of governance, rate of unemployment and under-development, lack of adherence to the rule of law, and absence of economic stability, etc.

Worthy of note is that at the end of the Cold War, African civil society movements striving for more democratic governance began to challenge authoritarian regimes on the continent. Declining living conditions within African countries and the failure of authoritarian African leaders to deliver the promises of economic prosperity they made to encourage the acceptance of development aid fueled the push for change. International donors' insistence on democratic reform as preconditions for aid gave impetus for Nigerian civil society to push for domestic accountability. Thus, domestic pressure for political pluralism and external pressure for representative governance have both played a role in the call for democratic reform in Nigeria.

But despite some successes, corruption and socioeconomic disparities within the Nigerian democratic space, are still rampant. Since 1999, the democratic space has been dominated by political elites who consistently violate fundamental principles associated with a liberal democratic system, such as competitive elections, the rule of law, political freedom, and respect for human rights. This challenge is an indicator of the systemic failure in Nigeria's governance system. A continuation of the current system will only accelerate the erosion of public trust and democratic institutions. In contrast with the current system in which votes are attained through empty promises, bribery, voter intimidation, and violence, Nigeria needs a governance system that will enhance the education of its voters and the capability of its leaders (Obasesam and MaryAnne 2021).

However, the following are the elements of bad governance and how they affect socio-economic development in Nigeria.

### Corruption

The rating of Nigeria by different statistical organizations implies that corruption is a political problem of the country that is on high prevalence (Transparency International, 1999; UNDP 2018; MO Ibrahim, 2018). This suggests that corruption is no doubt, one of the factors retarding Nigeria's socio-economic development. It is against this backdrop that Adagba Okpapa argues that:

The prolonged military rule in Nigeria surreptitiously inculcated corrupt culture in public and cooperate governance in the country. This primitive culture strived vehemently

because the military administrators and other civilian allies in the public service were untouchable and seen to be above the law. Thus, the institutionalisation of corrupt practices under the military regimes which lasted for thirty-two years deepen the trend and make it looked as if it is an accepted and popular norm. And as such, the entrenchment of democratic rule in 1999 has not erased this unhealthy culture rather, the political class has maintained and sustained the practice (Okpaga, 2020).

The above contention implies that in Nigeria, people who work in the government sector take advantage of their offices to maximize their private gains. No wonder, Garner (2004:370) notes that corruption constitutes a move that seeks to give some advantage incompatible with official obligations and with the right of others, to use a station or an office by the trustee to obtain certain advantages personally or for someone else, which are contrary to others' rights. To that effect, the CBN (2006) postulated that;

Corruption in Nigeria is divided into seven distinct types: autogenic, defensive, extortive, investive, nepotistic, supportive, and transactive. Autogenic corruption is self-generating and typically involves only the perpetrator. A good example would be what happens in cases of insider trading. A person learns of some vital information that may influence stocks in a company and either quickly buys or gets rid of large amounts of stocks before the consequences arising from this information come to pass. Defensive corruption involves situations where a person needing a critical service is compelled to bribe in order to prevent unpleasant consequences being inflicted on his interests. For instance, a person who wants to travel abroad within a certain time frame needs a passport in order to undertake the journey but he is made to pay bribes or forfeit the trip. This personal corruption is in self-defence. Extortive corruption is the behaviour of a person demanding personal compensation in exchange for services. Investive corruption entails the offer of goods or services without a direct link to any particular favour at the present, but in anticipation of future situations when the favour may be required. Nepotistic corruption refers to the preferential treatment of, or unjustified appointment of friends or relations to public office, in violation of the accepted guidelines. The supportive type usually does not involve money or immediate gains but involves actions taken to protect or strengthen the existing corruption. For example, a corrupt regime or official may try to prevent the election or appointment of an honest person or government for fear that the individual or the regime might be probed by the successor(s). Finally, transactive corruption refers to situations where the two parties are mutual and willing participants in the corrupt practice to the advantage of both parties. For example, a corrupt business person may willingly bribe a corrupt government official in order to win a tender for a certain contract, (Girling Cited in (Alege, Mohammed, and Muhammad, 2014:210).

The above submission implies that corruption in Nigeria manifests in different forms. In whatever form as Alege, Mohammed, and Muhammad, (2014), highlighted above, it is one of the elements of bad governance that is hindering the socio-economic advancement of the country. Since 1999 to date, the Nigerian state has been bedevilled by the monster of corruption and its negative impact has been unimaginable. Based on the socio-economic data presented in the preceding chapter, the act of corruption has put the future of Nigeria at stake.

It is on this note that Chris Orngu asserts that:

> *One of the greatest scourges of bad governance in Nigeria is corruption. The introduction of the two principal anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria in the year 2000 generated the optimism that corruption will end with the military era. Unfortunately, neither the agencies which are creations of democratic governance are able to fight corruption with utmost sincerity, nor the political class is able to inculcate the culture of corrupt free-political system (Orngu, 2020).*

Deducing from the above submission, most Nigerians in the public service have the desire to become rich economically through corruption not minding its effect on the socio-economic development of the country. This dilemma is what Ochoga and Lukpata, (2018:56) referred to as 'the inverted pyramid of Nigeria's democratic rule'. This study agrees with the argument of Ochoga and Lukpata, (2018) because outside the global rating, corrupt practices in Nigeria are by no means declining even with the return to civil rule in 1999 (Transparency International,1999; UNDP2018; MO Ibrahim, 2018). What comes to mind with this pyramidal ascendency of corruption in Nigeria is that the spirit of patriotism among the Nigerian political class is gradually becoming almost impossible, as the Nigerian political class no longer values selfless service to the State.

The general perception about corruption across the Nigerian society is that it hinders all aspects of national development ranging from political, economic to social growth. (Adamu, 2017:71). Suffice it to say that, corruption has greatly robbed Nigeria of socio-economic development. No wonder, Ogundiya, (2009:281) avers that the impact of corruption on Nigeria's democracy has laid a weak economic foundation, frail political institutions and insufficient regulatory mechanisms, and is definitely more serious and catastrophic. He also opposes the country's serious economic, social and political development dilemma, which is not unrelated to chronic corruption. Again, the above opinion is in line with Adamu's (2017:72) contention that 'corruption which is a result of bad governance has become a cancer in Nigeria which has been destroying various sectors of her economy'. Since the economy is the basis that determines the superstructure, the social indicators in Table 4.3a leaves no one in doubt that the presence of corruption in the Nigerian political system is gravely lowering the impact of the democratic rule on socio-economic development. These social indicators as shown in Table 4.3a imply that socio-economic development in Nigeria since 1999 is retarded because of pervasive corruption.

To sum-up, corruption which has become a significant source of accumulated private property in Nigeria, as bad administration, has deeply affected the Nigerian society. It impacts both the public and private sectors (Mustapha 2008). No wonder, the Table1 below, showed a list of abandoned federal and State projects across the Nigerian state. A report in *The Nation* (12, May 2018) revealed that these projects were simply abandoned because of corruption as the budget for the various years made provision for them and the funds were released as well. These projects were meant to add value to Nigerians' socio-economic life.

**Table 1: List of Abandoned Projects in Nigeria**

| Geopolitical Zone | States Projects (1999-2018) | Federal Projects (1999-2018) |
|---|---|---|
| North-East | 23 | |
| North-West | 12 | 98 |
| North-Central | 123 | 244 |
| South-East | 87 | 76 |
| South-West | 27 | 74 |
| South-South | 45 | 65 |

**Source**: Extracted from The Nation (12, May 2018)

To advance further, corruption goes beyond economic (financial) terms. According to Ayoola (2005), bribery is the most frequent type of corruption in Nigeria, although this has been overcome in recent years in terms of the frequency of public resources being stolen indiscriminately. (as discovered to be the course of the abandoned projects in table 4.1), abuse of discretion, extortion, misuse of private authority, conflict of interest, favouritism and nepotism, unlawful financing of political parties and voting abuses. This finding is confirmed by Adamu, (2017) who observes that, corruption includes moral behaviour, electoral malpractice and disobedience to the rule of law and so on and in any democratic society where there is a

high rate of corruption, there is every tendency that there will be an absence of socio-economic development and Nigeria is not an exception to the above fact. With the pyramidal trends of corruption in Nigeria, sustainable socio-economic development in the country will continue to remain an illusion.

Statistically speaking, Nigeria has consistently ranked low in the World Governance Index in areas such as government effectiveness, political stability and the presence of violence and terrorism, rule of law, and control of corruption. Nigeria is perceived in the 2020 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index as a highly corrupt country with a score of 25/100 while its corruption ranking increased from 146 in 2019 to 149 in 2020 out of 180 countries surveyed. While President Muhammadu Buhari won the 2015 election on his promise to fight insecurity and corruption, his promises went unfulfilled; Boko Haram continues to unleash unspeakable violence on civilians while the fight against corruption is counterproductive.

**Weak Law Enforcement Mechanism**

Another element of bad governance in Nigeria is the country's weak law enforcement mechanism. Nigeria is one of the countries (if not only) that offenders often go unpunished in spite of the gravity of any crime committed. This finding is in line with Ogbeidi's (2012) assertion that:

Thirteen years after, Buhari's regime saw no serious attempt to stop corruption, that corruption reached an alarming rate and became institutionalized during Babangida's regime, leaders found guilty by tribunals under Murtala Muhammed's and Muhammadu Buhari's regimes found their way back to public life and recovered their seized properties. This led to the rate of crimes and civil rebellion to increase in Nigeria. The law enforcement agencies are themselves corrupt as many of them had been found wanting in the course of discharging their duties especially those responsible for the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

In spite of the return to civil rule, punishing those that commit crime especially members of the political class seems to be problematic. This validates the argument of Fada Samson who maintained that:

Nigerian political system is like a kingdom where members of the royal family have royal immunities from prosecution over a crime they commit. Even when they are alleged to have misused our commonwealth, it is one thing to institute legal action against them, and another thing entirely for the law enforcement agencies to prosecute the case to a logical conclusion in fairness. The experiences in the last twenty years have shown that political interest and influence have weakened the Nigerian judicial system. Prosecution of alleged corrupt public officers is not only politically determined but the anti-graft agencies are politically selective in their operations and prosecution (Samson, 2020).

The above submission reveals that the Nigerian political class has failed to use democracy to entrench good governance when institutions would not be given the liberty to operate freely in accordance with their statutory mandates. The weak nature of Nigeria's law enforcement agencies is a product of the culture of bad governance, and it is in a way, encouraging corruption among public office holders, adverse effects on the development of Nigeria.

## The Crisis of Governance

At the core of Nigeria's systemic failure is the crisis of governance, which manifests in the declining capacity of the state to cope with a range of internal political and social upheavals. There is an expectation for political leaders to recognize systemic risks such as terrorist attacks, herder-farmer conflict, and police brutality and put in place the necessary infrastructure to gather relevant data for problem solving. But the insufficiency of political savvy required to navigate the challenges that Nigeria faces has unleashed unrest across the nation and exacerbated existing tensions. The #ENDSARS Protests against police brutality in 2020 is one of

the manifestations of bad governance (Obasesam and MaryAnne 2021).

The spiral of violence in northern Nigeria in which armed bandits engage in deadly planned attacks on communities, leading to widespread population displacement, has become another grave security challenge that has sharpened regional polarization. Because some public servants are usually unaware of the level of insecurity faced by ordinary Nigerians, they lack the frame of reference to make laws that address the priorities of citizens. The crisis of governance is accentuated by a democratic culture that accords less importance to the knowledge and competence that political leaders can bring to public office. These systemic challenges have bred an atmosphere of cynicism and mistrust between citizens and political leaders at all levels of government (Obasesam and MaryAnne 2021).

Political elites in Nigeria also exploit poverty and illiteracy to mobilize voters with food items such as rice, seasoning, and money. The rice is usually packaged strategically with the image of political candidates and the parties they represent. The assumption is that people are more likely to vote for a politician who influences them with food than one who only brings messages of hope. The practice of using food to mobilize voters is commonly described as politics of "stomach infrastructure". The term "stomach infrastructure" arose from the 2015 election in Ekiti State when gubernatorial candidate of the PDP, Ayodele Fayosi mobilized voters with food items and defeated his opponent, Kayode Fayemi. It is undeniable that Nigerian political culture rewards incompetent leaders over reform-minded leaders who demonstrate the intellectualism and problem-solving capabilities needed to adequately address systemic issues of poverty and inequality (Obasesam and MaryAnne 2021).

Jason Brennan describes the practice of incentivizing people to get their votes as irrational with dire consequences on democracy. Brennan believes that specific expertise is required to tackle socio-economic issues, so political power should be apportioned based on expert knowledge. As Brennan notes, Nigeria lacks a system of governance in which leadership is based on capability. Rather, the political system in Nigeria is dominated by individuals who gain power through nepotism rather than competence, influence voters with food rather than vision, and consolidate power through intimidation or by incentivizing constituents with material gifts which they frame as "empowerment" to keep them subservient and loyal political followers. By implication, the failure of governance in Nigeria is arguably the result of incompetent leadership.

Nigeria needs a new model of governance in which political leadership is based on the knowledge and competence of both political leaders and the electorate. One solution is to establish what Brennan refers to as epistocracy, which is a system of governance in which the votes of politically informed citizens should count more than the less informed. For Justin Klocksiem, epistocracy represents a political system in which political power rests exclusively on highly educated citizens. This idea drew its philosophical influence from John Stuart Mill, who believed that the eligibility to vote should be accorded to individuals who satisfy certain educational criteria. The notion that educational attainment should be the prerequisite for the electorate to choose their leaders as proposed by Brennan, Klocksiem, and Mill is an important proposition that should be taken seriously (Obasesam and MaryAnne 2021).

It is important to mention that Nigeria's political elites have exploited illiteracy to reinforce ethnic, religious, and political divisions between groups that impede democratic ideals. Since the resultant effect of epistocracy is to instil knowledge, raise consciousness and self-awareness within a polity anchored on the failed system of democracy, decisions that promote the education of uninformed voters are the rationale for an epistocratic system of governance. The Constitution must ensure that only citizens who can formulate policies and make informed decisions in the public's best interest can run for public office. When the Constitution dictates the standard of epistocratic governance, informed citizens will be better equipped to champion political leadership or

determine the qualifications of their leaders. Epistocratic governance will be the alternative to Nigeria's current dysfunctional democratic system while retaining the aspects of liberal democracy that maintain checks and balances (Obasesam and MaryAnne 2021).

**Lack of Transparency and Accountability**

One of the effects of bad governance in Nigeria is the lack of transparency and accountability on the side of both political and bureaucratic leaders of the country. Nigeria, practicing a representative system of government, it is expected that those elected or appointed to represent the electorate are accountable to the people. This could be the reason why Pita Agbese contends that:

The mentality is still quite strong, very rife, actually, that in Nigeria, the only thing in public service is the word, public. Public service is public in name only. It is actually purely private service in terms of the benefits and prerequisites that accrue privately to public servants. The mentality is that the holders of public positions don't hold such positions in service and in trust on behalf of the public. Those positions are not held in trust and selflessly on behalf of the public. No, those who hold the positions hold them in trust for themselves and at the expense of the public. Public service in Nigeria is seen as a dairy cow. If you get the position, you have been given the cow. This cow produces cash, raw cash, in Naira and in foreign currencies. You milk this cow to your heart's contents. With the cow, you can now build mansions, rice factories, sack factories, fish farms, and table water factories. Your spouse can buy up all the petrol stations in the state capital and you can appropriate as much land as you want. Your private businesses will expand exponentially even as the public economy stalls or in a comatose state. Public service is simply an instrument for private capital accumulation. This is how most Nigerians see it. They see it that way because that is the way it has always been (Agbese, 2020).

Unfortunately, the political class in Nigeria is selfish, corrupt, not accountable, milking the nation's treasury dry and leaving the masses to suffer what they must. All these are shreds of evidence of bad governance and the implications are political instability, poor socio-economic infrastructure, unemployment, underdevelopment and under-industrialization, and general insecurity. To this end, Samson Fada averred that:

Transparency and accountability are one probity culture that is seriously lacking in the Nigerian political system. The clamour to conduct government affairs in openness and in a transparent manner made the civil society and the international system to pressurise the federal government of Nigeria to enact the access to public information Act. In spite of this law, the conduct of government affairs is still shrouded in secrecy. Especially, the processes of awarding contracts are often done with administrative secrecy against the provisions of the public procurement Act; the Nigerian general public mostly gets to know about the award of contracts only in the media; and the release of the funds to execute contracts is even more secretive.

These findings suggest that the culture of bad governance in the Nigerian political system is undoubtedly eroding the accountability and transparency principles in the management of authoritative resources in Nigeria. No wonder, MO Ibrahim (2018) scored Nigeria low in its rating of accountability and transparency in the management of public funds in Africa. Thus, the long list of abandoned projects in table 4.1 was attributed to the lack of probity culture in the Nigerian public service (The Nation, 12, May 2018). This is why Ochoga and Shishi (2018:56) concluded that 'development will remain an illusion in any political system where probity culture is a daydream'

## Cost of Governance

One of the major factors militating against governance in Nigeria is the high cost of running government. For Nigeria to be able to thrive, it must run a government according to its resources. This would enable the government contribute to the maintenance of the social agreement between all members of the State. The pride of every state is for it to have a wealthy

and well-established government which implements the social contract agreement. The members of a well-ordered society, termed a state, have to pay enough taxes to perform the tasks allocated to the state and in return government provides welfare and security. In Nigeria, government expenses have risen substantially over the years, resulting in an overwhelming increase in cost of governance (CBN, 2018).

However, in 1960 after the achievement of Nigeria's independence from the UK, the developments strides were very well accomplished. The current governance structure was made up of three levels: Local government, states and federal government with 36 states, 774 local government and Abuja as federal capital territory.

It should be noted that essence of government is to provide social services that can enhance the general well-being of its citizens, and that, in order to reach this objective, certain measures are required to ensure the effective production of revenue and the judicious use of the resources at its disposal. History has it that until some years ago, misrepresentation has caused a spiraling decrease and systemic and institutional decay in Nigerian public service with its long-esteemed history of engagement, devotion, and valued services. The service today is marked by lack of professionalism, overbearing party leadership influence, corruption, ineffectiveness, slowness and overwhelming egoism and avarice (Hamid cited in Agu, 2013).

Unfortunately, not just personnel, but also the political office holders were degraded in terms of public service principles, including probity, honesty, responsibility, integrity, loyalty, transparency, impartiality, discipline, dedication, diligence, knowledge and competence among others. This development, without doubt, has paved the way for the enrichment of the few who are privileged to be at the helm of affairs, thereby impoverishing the majority of the populace who are subjected to violence, squalor, insecurity and pervasive poverty.

In the previous 12 years of democracy, several investigations have shown diverse areas of waste and funding leakage at government levels in Nigeria (Adeolu and Evans, 2007; Hamid, 2007; Nurudeen and Usman, 2010; Hamid, 2011; Kalama, Etebu, Charles and John, 2012; and Nzeshi, 2012). It has become apparent from their points of view that the much-feared public sector corruption, as illustrated by public money plundering, begins with the budget planning process.

Senior government officials cannot match their enormous assets with their lawful income. As such they are among the richest in Nigeria despite their inability to explain their sources of wealth. In all levels of government in Nigeria, audit reports reveal gross violation of the financial norms and processes established by treasuries, leading to the jettisoning of financial indiscipline such as transparency, probity and accountability.

However, it is worth noting that professional ethical abuses include over-assessment of contracts, duplication of contracts, payment of fake contracts, the internal auditor's non-certification of payment vouchers, etc. Such other financial fraud may involve overpaying for current employees, salary payments and allowances for deceased or retired employees and fantasy personnel. They show the breakdown of standardized policies and procedures in treasury departments and hence most governments are unable to attain their stated goals. In order to avoid a continual lack of effectiveness and professionalism, which impaired financial activities within the Nigerian public sector as a consequence of pervasive corruption, Nigeria's standardized treasury management policies are therefore necessary to administer the state.

Public expenditure deals with government spending in carrying out its duties. With sophistication in modern accounting procedure, it may be simple to determine the share of public expenditures that may be allocated to the sustainment of the government itself, which share goes to the society and in the economy. In particular with the increasingly high rate of State operations, public spending is often split in two

primary categories: recurrent expenditure and capital investment. Recurrent spending is the sort of expenditure that might occur on annual, monthly, weakly or daily basis. This may covers pensions and payments, the overhead administration, salaries, car maintenance, energy and telephone bills payments, water prices and insurance charges. In contrast, capital spending refers to capital projects. The capital expenditure comprises investments in housing, schools, clinics, the development of human capital (education and health spending), procurement of official automobiles, boreholes, electricity projects etc (Adamu & Rasheed 2016:48).

The provisions of the constitution that were aimed at regulating Nigeria's cost of governance have made progress for treasury thieves. The government is constitutionally required to draw up and implement the budgets with the revenue and expenditure statement which is an indication of state expenditure is always a priority for the year. The second most significant national policy and program tool after the Constitution, the budget is therefore labelled as being capable of either deepening or alleviating poverty. In addition, the basis for assessing governance cost in constitutional democracy and Nigeria inclusive is budgetary allocations and actual expenditure. It represents government's vision of the economic and social growth and of policy and program decisions in the translation into yearly budgetary objectives of the long-term development plans. In the interim a budget may help not just to achieve traditional development goals such as economic growth, equitably earned and distributed wealth, economic stability and internal and external equilibrium, but also institutional objectives of democratic culture and good governance if properly formulated and effectively implemented (Ladan, 2012).

Regrettably, the most disturbing blow in Nigeria is the role played by key political actors with constitutional authority to implement the budget for the common welfare of the people. In Nigeria, the National Assembly has raised the budget projections much above what the President had initially submitted on budgetary issues from the commencement of this Fourth Republic to date (Adamu & Tukur 2018). The purpose for such enormous increment by the national assembly was not to raise the efficiency and the recurring administrative effectiveness of capital development, but to enrich themselves and their supporters.

Inequality of income is another major concern. In 2010, 65 percent of Nigeria's wealth was owned by only 20 per cent of Nigerians (i.e. 32 million out of 160 million), according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS quoted in Ladan 2012). Thus, just approximately (1/3) of the nation's wealth was shared among 80% of the people.

Nigeria is certainly abundantly blessed, especially with oil and natural resources and 34 solid minerals, such as gold, coal and sulphur. Nigeria is the second largest economy in Africa, the six fastest growing economy in Africa with a GDP growth rate of 6.9 per cent in 2021, the leading oil producer in Africa and the seventh biggest in the world in 2011, with a nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP), of $280 in 2021. Nigeria is by far the most populous nation in Africa with a population of around 215 million, representing 50% and 2% of West Africa and the world's population respectively (NBS, 2024).

Nigeria's per capita GDP is just $1,200, average life expectancy of 51.9%, average school years is 5.0% and the poverty rate is common, with about 70% of the population living below the poverty line in 2022. Despite her abundant human and natural resources. Nigeria is listed among the world's least human-developed countries in terms of income, education and life expectancy by the UN Quality of Life/Human Development Index (UNDP 2022) report, as 156 out of 187, (UNDP 2022).

Apart from all of these, infrastructural development is a major sector influenced by corruption. Though Nigerians were promised during the election campaigns that the new democratic administration would deal with all these infrastructural deficits, health, water, power, roads, quality education, among others, these promises are but a miracle in the fourth republic. Twenty (20 years) later, the history has remained the same or even worse. This is

evident in insufficient roads, water and health and workforce at government hospitals which explains why Nigerian leaders usually run to India for health tourism.

Consequently, the fulfilment of useful tasks of the government was impeded. A starting point is to consider the tight split between recurrent and capital spending of the budget of the federal government. While recurrent expenditure in the beginning of the 1990s as a proportion of overall government spending was 79,22%, by the end of the 1990s it fell by 43,03%. (CBN, 2018). At the end of the 90's, it increased to 49.30%, while at the end of 2010, it increased to 63.36%. The substantial increase in export profits caused by the oil boom in the early 2000s led to a decrease in recurrent spending allocations. The dramatic drop in 2014 in crude oil prices also increased the share of the budget allocated to recurring CBN spending, in 2018. Despite a decrease in the share of recurrent budget spending, it has now increased to 80.29% in 2018, from 60.10% in 2015 to 36.56% in 2016.

Recurrent spending as a proportion of the overall budget as an essential measure of management costs is justified by the notion that capital expenditure has a greater favourable effect on the economy in terms of jobs, investment and other growth-inducing activities. Where a growing share of government budgets are needed to sustain the government's administrative structure, poverty is sure to be prevalent as economic development slows down or even stagnates.

As a share of overall government expense, total administrative expenditures in 2017 were 32.04%, up to 38% in 2018. (CBN, 2018). It means that sustaining government institutions is at enormous expense to the economy, since the money available is not enough to support socio-economic initiatives in key economic areas. In addition to the very vast, inefficient and corrupt civil service workers, huge administrative costs are being spent, and also more than the ideal executive and ineffectual legislative branches. As a proportion of the GDP, total administrative spending was 8.72 per cent (CBN, 2018).

Governance's efficiency is a matter of ensuring that every quantity of government money is used wisely. Each penny of public monies must be used so as to enhance the benefit of everybody in society rather than private space. The lower costs of governance might occur only in the absence of robust political institutions if a benign number of public officials had the rule. Because it is very improbable, institutional restrictions on government officials and technocrats must be imposed in a way that reduces the rental extraction from the State. This is the best way to decrease dramatically Nigeria's governance costs. That perhaps explained why Ochoga Edwin Ochoga opined that;

Nigeria in the fourth republic has a political culture in which recurrent expenditure takes a large proportion in annual budgetary allocation. Even the sub-national governments are not exonerated from these practices. The salaries and allowances of the members of the executive, legislature and even the judicial arms of the government are not only sky-scraping but unnecessary. In spite of the agitations by the civil society for the downward review of the salaries and allowances of the legislature at all levels of government, the practice has remained the same. As a result, the continuous increase of cost of governance in Nigeria is not only a recipe for primitive accumulation of our commonwealth, but the political class is using the instrumentality of the State to undermine sustainable socio-economic development of the country, (Ochoga, 2020).

## Elections and electoral related violence

In Nigeria's Fourth Republic, the emergence of democratic government was welcomed with great hopes both internally and outside because of the historical background of the country's efforts to democracy in the former dissolved republics (the first, second and third republics). Note that many Nigerians felt politically emancipated, and as such, the newly established polyarchy regime anticipates fast socio-economic and political growth.

However, the residents' hopes and ambitions remain sensible since the wave of democracy in Nigeria does not develop as quickly as it should have done so far on the democratic path. This scenario made Yagboyaju (2011) to identify some areas where the rule of democracy and democracy is severely absent, including failure to respect the rule of law or constitutional rule, thereby stifling criticisms and opposition from other political parties in the first place, preventing effective multiparty elections, controversial and fraudulent elections, as well as political corruption.

The reluctance or absence of the speedy development in Nigerian democracy has raised and still raising doubts among the people who are confused, for example, that 20 years into the beginning of the Fourth Republic such basic aspects of democracy as elections and legislative obligations are still lacking in meaningful purpose. Further dishearteningly, at different levels of government across Nigeria, both executive and legal weapons have failed abysmally, as discerning Nigerians and outsiders now question how long Nigerian democracy would take to mature.

Ojo (2007) opines that elections and successions are ways by which political authority may be transferred peacefully from one party or group to another without friction. Orderliness is also utilized in order to determine the state's maturity level in the power transfer procedure. It also functions as a gauge to evaluate at any given time both the consolidation and quality of democracy in a political community.

Similarly, Egwemi (2010) believes democracy to be about free choice, it is about giving people the ability to select their leaders without any hurdle, but when there is a barrier, they cannot easily exercise the freedom of choice. The strength of democracy depends in people's involvement in their governing premise. Thus, due to regular changes in governments, the democratic system tends to respond to the collective demands of society (Hameso cited in Kamal and Bello, 2014).

In accordance with the ideas mentioned above, Ojo (2007) said that democracy has educational value and that there is no better method to educate the public than by allowing them directly to participate in representative elections. And to be democratic under the representative government, universal freedom to vote, elections, short-term periods of office and freedom for individuals must go hand in hand.

However, the transition of administration via democratic methods has been discussed by scientists and different stakeholders in the democratic experience of Nigeria. There have always been irregularity in changing government. Procedures are flawed in a way that create legitimacy crises for the government. For this reason, Diamond quoted in Kamal and Bello (2014); agreed that orderly succession is free, fair, participative, competitive and lawful, but also democratic. He quoted them as follows;

...when there are administered by neutral authority; when electoral administration is sufficiently competent and resourceful to take specific precautions against fraud; when the police, military, and courts treat competing candidates and parties impartially; when contenders all have access to public media; when electoral districts and rules do not grossly handicap opposition... when the secret of the voting system is safeguarded; when almost everyone is allowed to vote; when voting methods are generally recognized and when voting is organized and counted; and when the election plea and dispute resolution procedures are transparent and unbiased.

At this point, it is noteworthy that if the aforementioned essential requirements are met, then it is possible to say that succession is orderly. Elections in a liberal democracy are one means of ensuring orderly leadership. Deduced from their viewpoint, elections serve as fora for popular political involvement, making the government more responsive and accountable. But if the government does not react and be accountable and obstruct the pacific transition mechanism, it can lead people to acts of violence that distort the peaceful coexistence of society.

It is vividly recorded that a so-called (2/3) disagreement arose during Nigeria's the

transition program of 1979. As there was not much violence under the military's supervision of the transition program, but the elections led to criticisms, as a contentious decision was given by the Supreme Court (Iyayi, 2007). The second stage of the crisis came in 1983 when the election results in several regions of the nation were skewed during the civil to the civil transition. The party disputed the results of the elections, leading to a military coup on 31 December 1983.

Furthermore, in 1999 a Military's coordinated transition elections brought Chef Olusegun Obasanjo to power on 29 May 1999 with no bloodshed in spite of irregularities. This is because both the people and politicians were determined to end military rule in Nigeria. Fraud however characterized previous general elections conducted by the civilian administration. The Transition Monitoring Group (2003) observed that the political elite and political parties had differing thoughts as voters were waiting to vote in polling booths.

The electorate sought to decide the winner of the elections through the power of ballots, but the political elites were determined to corrupt the process by manipulating the electoral bureau and rules. According to the Transitional Monitoring Group (TMG) referred to in Kamal and Bello 2014, elections were threatened by the killing of many political opponents at the federal and state and local government levels. Strangely enough, as they remarked, candidates from certain political parties who did not contest for elections were returned winners.

Multi-party and minority voting, violence, intimidation and harassment, snatching of ballot boxes, purchases of votes, disruptions of voting, absence of election officers, and so on, accompanied these anomalies. Since the democratic journey began again in 1999, the elections have not been devoid of conflict, bloodshed and controversy. For example, before the general election of 2015 there was great tension, from 14 February 2015 to 28 March 2015, thus forcing the electoral umpire, INEC to reschedule the elections. However, with the exception of Rivers and Akwa Ibom States, the general elections in 2015 and 2019 saw few incidences of violence.

Iyayi (2007) also notes that before, during and after elections, all elections held in 1999 were not tension-free and controversial. In 2007, the public had hoped for better elections, which saw the president serving his two terms and that the incumbency factor would be much diminished. But the president and the ruling party saw elections as they were or do-or die affairs. However, until 2003 it was executed by party thugs. Meanwhile, the character of the electoral violence had altered. But, since 2003, notably in 2007, governors and presidents of the local government as well as legislative candidates have recruited and exposed followers, external and domestic thugs and assassins armed with sophisticated arms (Omotola, 2010). All these discomforts and quagmires tend to hamper Nigerian socio-economic growth.

## Institutional Deficiencies

Majority of Nigeria's governmental institutions are weak and depend heavily on weak leadership structure. These institutions have remained victims of gullible Nigerian political leaders who take advantage of them to manipulate or influence the laws and principles of how things should be done in the society, they try as much as possible to influence projects for selfish gains.

The 'social closure and state capture' are considered as these institutional inadequacies in the words of the Yagboyaju (2011),

The social collective process aims to optimize benefits by limiting resource and opportunity access to a restricted qualifying circle. This implies the identification and a justification for exclusion of specific physical features. Practically all groups' qualities, including race, language, socioeconomic origin and religion, may be taken into account if they are capable of monopolizing certain generally economic possibilities....

This statement suggests that in modern Nigeria this social closure technique continues with little or no restrictions, since the players

have grabbed the state's machinery for their own purpose more than ever before. The State Capture stands for the actions of individuals, groups or companies, in the public or private fields, in order to influence it to their own advantage, through the illicit and non-transparent provision of private benefits for public officials, the formation of laws, regulations, decrees and other government policies. Whilst the structures controlled by such institutions as lawmakers, executives, judicial and regulatory authorities, they are usually seen as private companies, political leaders, political parties and any other limited group interests (World Bank, 2011).

In the current Fourth Republic Nigeria, many democratic institutions appear to be democratic yet lack the essential ingredients of democracy. It is vital to understand that one of the biggest challenges in Nigeria's Fourth Republic is constitutional prejudice. This partiality has made politicians more powerful than ordinary citizens in the country, due to the attitude of institutional manipulators and operators (such as politicians, judges, attorneys, etc.).

The constitution seems to have handed or given excessive authority to the Nigerian political leaders which has become a major obstacle to a virile democracy. These over-powers are known as 'Prebendal Politics,' according to Bassey quoted in Kamal and Bello (2014). The political office holders had to scheme for their personal advantage and that of their followers via prebendal politics.

The conduct of such leaders shows Bassey's stance plainly. In addition to awarding contracts and manoeuvring security agencies, election management body's control is another problem preventing the enthronement of true democracy and fostering socio-economic progress in the Fourth Republic Nigeria.

The process of a seamless transition from one government to another is also hindered. The Constitution entrusts the President with the appointment of major election officers. This has made it possible for the governing party to manipulate the electoral bodies. Therefore the succession problem in the Fourth Republic is complicated by a 'win' at all costs or a do or die attitude which is the only language Nigerian politicians understand most (Baffour cited in Kamal and Bello, 2014). For example, after the exit of Professor Attahiru Jega in June 2015 when Hajia Amina Zakari was appointed as Acting Chairman of INEC by President Muhammadu Buhari, Nigeria's opposition party-the PDP accused the president and his party of being partial in nominating her as the Acting chairman of INEC. The President being a major stakeholder in his party in all potential ramifications, particularly on election matters, made the opposition parties not to be at ease until the appointment of Professor Mahmood Yakubu as INEC's substantial chairman by the president.

The reverse effect is that, once the electoral regimes and the Commission's roles are successfully manipulated, manipulators become operators of the manipulated rules and principles which, through manipulated electoral laws and principles, create mediocrity in public institutions such as the national parliament. The failure of the INEC to respect certain norms also demonstrates that it can hardly give guidance on national growth and realization of itself, but the pace of progress relies on the institutional operators and society (Ghali in Kamel and Bello, 2014). By citing Anifowose, they further observe that:

Free elections depend on candidates, electoral representatives and the government's views rather than the preparation of electoral legislation... Elections function simply because we think that they will work as long as it is acknowledged that maintaining legitimacy through electoral tactics is a fundamental priority for all administrations.

Analysis of the Fourth Republic problems cannot be completed without revealing the National Assembly's (the legislators') attitude. The National Assembly remains the necessary foundation for any democratic nation's growth. In a democratic nation such as Nigeria, the composition of its members, the vision of the people holding seats in the Assembly, the commitment of the legislators and the readiness to operate in accordance with the rules and regulations. However, the Nigerian legislators in

the National Assembly since 1999 have constantly battled for personal advantages rather than making legislations that would have beneficial outcomes for the population they promised to serve.

Another problem that immobilized some aspects of democracy in Nigeria's Fourth Republic is the shortcoming faced by the National Assembly. In the current democratic regime in Nigeria, concern is raised over the failure of the legislature as one of the public authorities to rise above self-service for two decades now. It is the most crucial characteristic that separates democracy from other systems of governance in Nigeria. Critical reviews of its work from 1999 will improve a profound grasp of the scenario on certain essential parts of its duties, such as policy development and supervisory roles.

Deplorable road network conditions; growing insecurity from robbery, kidnapping, pipeline vandalism; thuggery; murders; the Boko Haram sects bombing public or private spaces with polymorphic violence; scarcity of potable water; and the collapse of manufacturing sectors are parts of the effects of bad governance as the bane socio-economic development.

In policy formulations, it should be noted that the quality of life and standard of living of the entire citizens can be easily reflected in the types of policies that the legislature formulates, while the supervisory functions of the same body require that the executive branch monitor and ensure the efficient and effective execution of these policies (Yagboyaju, 2011:99).

For these reasons, numerous cases in this chapter will be mentioned to encourage clear comprehension and avoid any question about the illustration of the parliamentary performance of the Fourth Republic. Firstly, the legislative branch has regularly engaged the executive in disputing their sitting allowances and other similar boring questions at different times since 1999. The demands of lawmakers are sometimes not in keeping with the economic reality of the country at national and regional levels. As an example, legislative responsibilities were halted in the National Assembly for many weeks in 1999 before the resolution that N14, 000 to N21, 000 ($156-234) may be earned as a day allowance by every legislature. Even before the conclusion of their first office year, the furniture hoop in which the lawmakers requested to furnish their new official quarters by granting them the contract. More than 10 years later, unrealistic and unreasonable demands from legislators are still being strongly demonstrated.

For example, in May 2010, a new quarterly allocation of 42 million (USD277, 000) was called for by the majority of MPs in the Lower Chamber of the national assembly. Obviously, in a nation where the great majority of the population make less than $2 or N300 a day, the request of the Upper Chamber of the same Assembly should be higher and most inflammatory. Incidentally, given that the budget of the National Assembly did not contemplate such allowances, a capital vote in the Chambers may collapse as the most likely method to accommodate it. Surprisingly, all of this does not seem sufficient to discourage lawmakers from different forms of malpractices such as contract scams, sloppy scanning in connection with monitoring functions, and sundry actions which led, between 1999 and 2010, to the elimination of most of the main officers of different legislative chambers. In a similar vein, Hon. Dimeji Bankole, then Speaker of the House of Representatives, was arrested in June 2011 on severe allegations of abuse and financial maladministration, shortly upon the end of his term (Yagboyaju, 2011:100).

Secondly, one of the legislative procedures that has been most discouraging since 1999, is that the yearly budget has been unduly delayed by the lawmakers at the national, state and municipal levels during the statutory approval process. Since 1999, in any given year such a budget has been intended for no national budget was in operation before the end of March. By the way, most of these delays have been caused by the constant demands by lawmakers to upgrade their allowances and other benefits directly through their political offices.

The Anambra State case is a good example of this depiction at national level. Governor Peter Obi submitted N84.2million ($706million)

budget to the State House of Assembly in 2008 but the Committee of Finance and Appropriation cut that budget to N57.6b ($483m). Such decrease may have been for altruistic motives in other cultures; however in this case, it seems to be different in some States after 1999.

While the reduction affected recurrent expenditure from N 24,2b ($ 203 million) to N 21,9b ($ 184m) and N60million ($ 503 billion) to N35, 7 million ($ 299 million), it was strange that the allocation of N284million ($ 2.4 million) to N1, 235b ($ 10.4 m) to the State House of Assembly Members was more than four-fold (Yagboyaju, 2011:100).

Like every other weak government arm in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, the Executive arm was likewise captured to fail. The insensitivity of the governors, ministers and chairmen of local governments has recalled the military's unfavourable, remembering that the executive was the most appealing branch of government with a large vote. Up to this point the chairmen and governors still have access to a certain amount of money, which is referred to as security votes. Late President Umar Musa Yar' Adua once demanded a reduction in the pay and benefits of politicians but it was not carried out till and after his death. President Muhammadu Buhari and his vice-president Professor Yemi Osinbajo, just after taking oath of office in 2015, declared a 50% decrease in their official salary.

## Effects of Bad Governance on Nigeria's Socio-Economic Development

There is no gainsaying that Nigeria as a country has remained underdeveloped and under-industrialized as a result of bad governance. In 2004, Ezekwesili observed that the country's low economic performance was responsible for its maladministration, as demonstrated by corruption... In order to enhance the living conditions of its inhabitants, Nigeria was unable to transform vast natural resources available (Chux Chan & Chukwudi Akasike, 2014).

Owoye and Bissessar (2009) expressly "observed that long list of dictatorial leading figures, free press and undemocratic elections," terrible governance are consequences of institutional and leadership failures. The Nigerian State has found itself in such a situation with the institutional legislative, executive and judicial failures and the exercise of veto powers. In Owoye & Bissessar (2009:1), the United Nations Asia Pacific Economic and Social Commission (UNESCAP) agreed as follows:

Poor governance includes administrations that are ineffective and inefficient, not transparent, not people-receptive, unjust, elite-free, non-party; fail to respect the rule of law, and lack consensus-driven policies.

Manifestations of bad governance in Nigeria include poor power supply, poor health care, absence of quality and affordable education, lack of adequate infrastructural facilities, poverty, poor policy implementation strategies, insecurity, mismanagement of public resources and lots more.

**Table 2: A List of some bad Roads in Nigeria**

| Location of Roads | Kilometer | Transport fair As at 1999 | Hours spent on the road as of 1999 | Transport fair As at 2019 | Hours spent on the road in 2019 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Makurdi – Otukpo | **100** | N400 | 45 minutes | N 700 | 2 hours |
| Makurdi- Ankpa | 120 | N 500 | 1hour | N 1,500 | 3 hours |
| Itobe – Okene | 55 | N500 | 45munites | N 1,500 | 2 hours |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Zaria-Saminaka | 201 | N 600 | 1 hours | N 2,000 | 2hours |
| Makudi- Jalingo | *550* | N1,500 | *5 hours* | N 6,000 | 7 hours |

**Source: Authors' Compilation (2024) using data from the Sun (2019)**

Road construction and rehabilitation are critical for socio-economic development in Nigeria. Thus, table 4.2 shows a list of some bad roads in Nigeria with deteriorating status. Deducing from the table, these roads were better off at the return to civil rule in 1999 than the present deteriorating condition. In consequence, their deteriorating nature made motorists to increase the cost of transportation which imposes a financial burden on Nigerians. Also, the hours that Nigerians spend on traveling by roads have increased due to the bad nature of the roads. The list of deteriorating federal roads is by no means limited to the ones mentioned in the table alone. There is virtually no state in Nigeria that does not have one or more deteriorating federal roads which are badly affecting the socio-economic improvement of Nigerians on a daily basis (The Sun, 14/10/2019). The States' owned roads are not exonerated from the deteriorating condition. Therefore, if the faces of roads in Nigeria are deteriorating now than in 1999, then, the impact of democracy on road infrastructure as part of socio-economic development is insignificant.

From the findings as indicated in 4.2 in as much as Nigerian government under the current democratic rule has provided certain socio-economic facilities in some communities in Nigeria, the opportunities created by the facilities were only translated into micro socio-economic empowerment as the social indicators in table 4.2 have by no means shown significant improvement. This makes the research to believe that bad governance is responsible for it; hence there was budgetary allocation to them. This premise collaborates with Ochoga and Shishi's (2018:98) argument that 'democracy in Nigeria and all that accompanied it are primitive accumulation strategies to deceive Nigeria into the trap of circuiting our commonwealth by using the instrumentality of civil rule''

It is on this note that the study is of the view that democracy in Nigeria has not guaranteed equitable distribution of wealth and it cannot reduce poverty and other socio-economic challenges in the country. Even though democracy has not yielded a significant impact on the socio-economic development of the country as expected, the fact is that it cannot do it due to the culture of bad governance in Nigeria's political system.

The declining social indicators in Nigeria are evidence of bad governance (Agbese, 2019). Unwillingness of the political class to be patriotic is another obstacle to the successful utilisation of public funds to course sustainable socio-economic development (Ogaba, 2018). This problem prompted the Youth Agenda for Good Governance (2019:1) to call on the anti-corruption agencies:

To probe past presidents and Governors in Nigeria from 1999 that in spite of the huge amount of money budgeted for socio-economic infrastructures in the last twenty years, not much is on the ground. "There is nothing to celebrate in the twenty years of democracy, as such a huge amount of money budgeted for these years by governments at every level was enough if judiciously used to improve the socio-economic lives of Nigerians rather than merry-making as is the case now.

There is no single sector in Nigeria that is corrupt free. This makes Igbaekemen, Abbah, and Geidam, (2014:154) to assert that;

Aside from the destabilizing effects of corruption on the economy of this country, the following are still the major effects of corruption in the society: It not only gives a bad image to Nigeria, but it also discourages genuine foreign investors from coming in to run business in the country.

This study agrees with the above contention because the social indicators presented in the study have evidently proven it. In the midst of the startling opulence of the few, misrules have impeded Nigerian socioeconomic developments, as manifested in severe poverty. The failure of the health care and education system, the erosion of values and culture, evidenced by huge corruption and indecency, the decline in the morale, the regeneration of the hazardous dimension of ethnicity, life and goods insecurity and political violence have become just as unachievable. These quagmires emerged as a response to political economic decline and the emergence of Nigeria as a quasi-state in the committee of nations.

It is unfortunate to see that attempts have been made severally by Nigerian authorities to gradually remove subsidy from education. This has led to students paying high tuition and accommodation fees. Furthermore, the educational institutions in Nigeria are ill-equipped when looking at the libraries, laboratories, and good teaching facilities (Yamah, 2015:75). The governments are not doing enough to boost the morale or motivate the teachers.

Bad governance did not only give a poor picture it also discourages foreign direct and local investment. To this end, (Igbaekemen, Abbah, and Geidam, 2014) assert that:

It breeds a high rate of indiscipline in the society, giving rise to a state of "mighty is right", a state of anomie where normlessness holds away in the society; where public officials connive with contractors to inflate the value of government contracts, the cost of governance and administration shoot up, with very little to show in terms of projects and programmes which impact on the average citizen's wellbeing; When Government officials collect bribes to issue clean bills of health for the poor quality of contract jobs and services rendered to the government, the public has to contend with poor quality projects with short life span, e.g. roads, public buildings, office equipment, electricity transformer, etc.; Political corruption is rape on democracy because the popular will of the people is subverted; Corruption discourages honest endeavours, hard work, and merit; Miscarriage of justice when judicial officers give judgment to the highest bidder.

Bad governance has increased insecurity, poverty, widened the gap between the rich and the poor, making Nigeria to become a lawless society where brigands violate the laws of the society and go scot-free, unemployment is at its peak and poor attitude of political leaders in discharging their duties and responsibilities. All these have further worsened.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has established that the relationship between the ruling elites and the public concerning decision-making is bad governance arising from bad leadership. It also established that a number of factors are responsible for bad governance in Nigeria and demonstrated how they retard the socio-economic development of the country. Such factors include both external and internal issues within the governing populace. For example, corruption, implementation of unfair policies, and deception are all features or characteristics of bad governance. The study also revealed that the effects of bad governance are a failed state, poor economic growth, and an increased corruption rate. The solutions to bad governance are to induce transparency in all decision-making and deal with corruption to make the governance good. In addition, it was revealed that Nigeria's political elites have exploited illiteracy to reinforce ethnic, religious, and political divisions between groups that impede democratic ideals.

It is based on the above premises that this study recommends three policies to promote good governance in Nigeria.

(a) It is recommended that anyone aspiring to lead the nation in whatever capacity must demonstrate the intellectual pedigree to translate knowledge into effective, transparent, and accountable governance that enhances socio-economic development. This accounts for why Rotimi Fawole rightly noted that

the bar should be higher for those aspiring to executive or legislative office "to improve the ideas that are put forward and the intellectual rigor applied to the discussions that underpin our statehood."

(b) The study further recommends that government must increase access to education through government-sponsored initiatives that integrate civic education into the school curricular. It is pertinent to note that in present-day Nigeria, there exists little opportunity for young Nigerians especially those in underfunded public education systems, to learn about their civic roles at the local, state, national, and international levels, including how to emerge as participating citizens through the academic curriculum.

(c) Furthermore, there is the need for the Nigerian government to enlist the support of local Non-Governmental Organizations for the purpose of promoting civic education across the country in culturally appropriate ways.

(d) Finally, this study recognizes the fact that Nigeria is facing enormous challenges of governance occasioned by over two decades of a failed democratic experiment. Therefore, it requires knowledgeable leaders and an equally informed electorate to overcome these challenges. However, good governance is achievable in Nigeria only when the right people are saddled with the responsibility to govern the affairs of men in the right direction. By so doing, socio-economic development can be guaranteed.

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