

## Leadership Challenges and Governance Deficit in Nigeria 2009-2019: Implications for National Development

Umoh, Udofia Sunday, PhD

Department of Political Science & Public Administration, Ritman University 10 Umahia Road, 530101,  
Ikot Ekpene, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

**ABSTRACT:** In an atomistic society such as Nigeria, where irreconcilable socio-political forces like religion and ethnicity are parts of the elements of governance, leadership is challenged by a plethora of fundamental socio-political factors such as violence, inequitable democratic culture, poor human rights records, unemployment, high poverty and crime rates as indices of governance deficit which in turn affect national development. This study, therefore, examined leadership challenges and governance deficit in Nigeria between 2009-2019 while elucidating the qualifying issues of bad governance and the prospects for National development. The objective of the study included the examination of the indices of bad leadership and the prospect in which leadership and governance could attain positive trajectories to bring about development in Nigeria. In pursuance of this, the study arrogated the assumptions of the Social Contract Theory by Hobbs, Locke and Rousseau. These three perspectives are in agreement that in a polity, governance is basically a votive treaty between the state and its citizenry. The theoretical minimum and basic assumptions of the theories are relevant and applicable to the study due to its demonstrative ability in explaining that citizens' patriotism and loyalty to the government is a function and consequences of good leadership and governance. Information from Textbooks, Academic Search Engines, and published Journals form the major sources for secondary data collection. While the historicized descriptive technique operates qualitative methods for data collection. The study engaged content analysis to exhume cold facts to support the argument that issues of leadership challenges and governance deficits in Nigeria are tangential to the autocratic character of colonial Nigeria, which operated autonomously from the Nigerian society and discounted from the developmental needs of the citizens. This discountenance has resulted in persistent, reoccurring and widespread bureaucratic corruption in the public sector since independence in 1960. The study suggests that Nigeria's laws against corruption should be strengthened and the economy reorganized in agreement with a revised and amended constitution if the developmental aspirations of Nigerians are to be kept in mind.

**KEYWORD:** Leadership, Governance, and Development.

### Introduction

The etymology of leadership challenges and socioeconomic underdevelopment are often inseparable from corruption and mismanagement of resources in disadvantaged and violence-infested societies. The mentioned are indices of underdevelopment which reveals economic fragility, political instability and poverty. Indeed, corruption precedes violence and fecund underdevelopment. If this is held, then, the core intuition behind arguments of violence and underdevelopment in an atomistic society such as Nigeria would be that the

political system that midwife governance and leadership is yet to pay human capital development priority to those with greater social disadvantage. As a social fact, if a developed and near-zero crisis society is to be kept in mind, this priority in the context of policy formulation and implementation would strongly suggest that greater attention be paid to the utility of the worse off within a development maximization calculus. Therefore, in a social formation where the aggregate of patterned sociopolitical arrangements such as the independence of the electoral umpire is not both emergent from and determinant of the actions of the electorates within the electoral laws, the difficulty to maximize priority for the disadvantaged demography after election is to be expected. This is not helped if the electoral processes that produce the leadership are less participatory, violent and totalitarian. Totalitarian leadership is therefore distal from the participation of disadvantaged groupings. However, with the emergence of participatory governance as a key element in a democracy in many countries, the verisimilitude of the content of leadership such as leadership style, the administrative structure and the processes for the formulation and implantation of policies have been altered to include a network of functional interdependent relationship between the democratic culture and the electioneering processes that are often expected to eventuate good governance.

Indeed, leadership style may sometimes be adjudged totalitarian, anarchic or democratic depending on citizens' perception of the degree of redaction or obscurity of success or failure of such leadership irrespective of the extant political system. In a failing state such as Nigeria, leadership failure is not subject to self-correction as the group whose interest is protected by this failure will embrace social inertia to resist change. Often, in a challenged leadership, the state rewards violence more than peace leading to citizens' rights being gifted in accordance with their degree of participation in and loyalty to the government prevailing. The instance this occurs in a government, then the leadership of such a community or nation has entered into what could be described as a political monologue. Hence, when leadership enters into a political monologue with itself, government policies and their implementation become juxtaposed with class interest instead of national interest. To forestall a scenario such as that described, leadership and followership must askew from parallel functions and be equidistant to each other. As should be expected, good leadership and followership in conjunction with good governance have become indispensable catalysts for the development of society. Extant literature in sociopolitical studies is replete with the interchangeability in the usage of the concept of leadership and good governance resulting in the fusion of their meaning and applicability. The challenges of leadership, therefore, cannot prevaricate from the challenges of governance. In fact, in the context of a developing economy such as Nigeria. the personal disposition of the leader in power and his psychosocial ability to harness emotional intelligence and social intelligence for the benefit of the governed form the bases for the pillars on which good leadership and governance are anchored. It would not be farfetched therefore if simultaneously, leadership, followership and good governance should triangulate the political system, the extant political culture and the character of the economic history of such a particular sociopolitical setting.

In Nigeria, leadership challenges and governance deficits are exaggerated not just by the poor judicial system or debauched political culture, but also by the serendipity of the ill-nature of the Nigerian state. Umoh (2021), argued that the ill-nature of Nigeria is a product of colonial politics. The don further asserts that the hereditary government not only operated independently from society but could also be controlled by political figures for their self-serving purposes. In fact, the self-centred motives and inclination to unlawfully usurp the collective resources for personal or collective benefit have ingrained themselves in the cultural conduct of political officials in Nigeria. Umoh, Jaja, and Akpan (2019) support the claim that democracy, culture, and good governance are influenced by social behaviour. They argue that a positive democratic culture and effective governance involve a careful equilibrium between governmental authority and responsiveness, resulting in competent leadership that fosters development in both the public and private sectors. The timeline of 2009 -2019 is apropos to the study particularly as it represents a period in which leadership in

Nigeria witnessed an admixture of successes and failures linked to the leadership style of the president in power. The timeline is further justified by the continuity of democratic governance which offers a model for evaluation of the stewardship and administration of the two political parties; the PDP and the APC. Factors and economic elements such as GDP, GNP, crime and poverty rates and the degree of legitimacy are evaluated as part of the variables in measuring the vertical and horizontal trajectories of Nigeria's development.

In light of the above, good leadership could be said to be the pulsating vessel at the heart of public sector governance, and it is vital to the overall development of a nation as well as the welfare of the citizens. However, the political processes in Nigeria are so divisive and anti-people to the extent that the function of politics has been altered to include a means of production, thereby making the process of producing leaders cumbersome and prone to manipulation. Incidentally, the essence of politics is to meet the desires of the people, the delivering of the dividend of democracy, formulate policies, embark on developmental infrastructural projects, and provide basic necessities of life such as roads, electricity, piped-born water, hospitals and schools. To such end therefore, leadership challenges could be said to be occasioned by a plethora of factors ranging from the inability of the three arms of government to possess some degree of independence to the lack of political will of the elected to act within the stipulations of the constitution. These challenges when metastasized by the parochial focus of the leaders in power would midwife governance deficit. Hence, the degree of legitimacy of governance and the quality of leadership fecund the prospect for development. Paradoxically, leadership challenges can be externally or internally induced by local or international actors and dimensions. As such, the governance crisis in Nigeria is marked by political exclusion, marginalization of a significant portion of the population, and the selfish pursuit of class and sectional interests by influential politicians. This factor has a detrimental impact on the quality of leadership. Adeboye (2011) argued that the rate of growth in any nation is influenced by the quality of leadership. Diamond (2005) maintains that the quality of leadership is dependent on the necessary skills of the leaders and the lead for successful public governance in a society. As such, the leadership issues and governance deficiency in Nigeria are exacerbated by the chronic bureaucratic corruption that has plagued public sector governance since the administration of Obasanjo in 1999, serving as an apposite to the issue of underdevelopment. Indeed, the research period revealed further difficulties in leadership among the executive and legislative branches. For instance, in 2007, the National Assembly successfully prevented the Obasanjo's administration in perpetuating itself in power. In 2008 – 2011, the legislature witnessed a proliferation of accountability as the mandate to deliver constituency programmes became a litmus test for re-election bids. This was because the Umaru Musa Yaradua's administration instilled some legal and institutional frameworks which made the people more participatory in governance especially under his more "democratic regime"

As consequences of leadership challenges, governance deficits such as poor infrastructure, poverty, high levels of unemployment, hunger, youth restiveness and higher crime rates have been made not only signposts of underdevelopment but are also indices expressive of the extent to which a government is perceived and accepted as legitimate. This perception of legitimacy by the citizenry is expected to be proximal to the degree of government commitment to improving the public welfare, and not distal from the speed of responsiveness to citizens' needs especially in situations of national emergencies. The legitimacy too, is to be estimated as a consequence of the competence of the government to assure law and order and deliver public services. This ought to be in addition to the capacity to create an equitable and enabling policy environment for competition in all sectors, specifically in the real sector of the economy.

Cheema & Maguire (2004) shed light on the World Bank's framework for successful leadership and sound governance, which defines governance as "the process through which authority is wielded in the administration of a nation's economic and social assets to promote development." The above statement can be

<b>37</b>	<b>ISSN 2690-9626 (online), Published by "Global Research Network LLC"</b> <b>under Volume: 4 Issue: 11 in Nov-2023 <a href="https://globalresearchnetwork.us/index.php/ajshr">https://globalresearchnetwork.us/index.php/ajshr</a></b>
	<b>Copyright (c) 2023 Author (s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY).To view a copy of this license, visit <a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a></b>

understood as suggesting that the concept of development is equivalent to the biosphere of managing the public sector, ensuring accountability, establishing a legal framework for development, utilizing information and technology, upholding the legitimacy of government, assessing the government's ability to create suitable policies, making proper decisions, efficiently implementing those policies, and providing services. This is another way of looking at the concept of political democracy. Infact, an inference from the Schumpeterian concept of political democracy, would see that these services, policies and frameworks for development must be provided after meeting certain requirements via established processes by those seeking political authority to make and execute decisions. Schumpeter (1947) argued that power and authority can only be obtained once individuals have successfully competed for the support of the people and secured their mandate.

For development to be sustained, proponents of political democracy argued that there is a strong connection between democracy and development, particularly in terms of effective leadership. This is because "political democracy" is based on the idea that the decisions made by the majority of people are of utmost importance. Looking back, the potential for growth in a developing economy like Nigeria, as explained by Hicks & Spagat (2008), is that the government's purpose is to meet the needs of the public. However, obstacles such as leadership challenges and a lack of effective governance hinder the overall advancement of the country and contribute to political instability, terrorism, and widespread violence. On the other hand, the quality of governance might vary depending on the level of leadership difficulties and the magnitude of the lack of progress. In collaboration, Oke (2010) said that effective government should prioritize the well-being of the population and aim to provide high-quality infrastructure that enhances the pleasure of the citizens. From the argument of Oyedele (2012) leadership challenges and governance, deficits can be assessed by evaluating the extent and type of infrastructural development undertaken by a leader or government, as well as its ability to fulfil the aspirations of the people in order to promote socioeconomic stability within a democratic system. Within this framework, strong and efficient leadership, together with the absence of governance deficiencies, plays a crucial role in enhancing the process of democracy. It boosts public trust, fosters political stability, stimulates economic growth, nurtures social unity, and diminishes hunger and poverty.

Indeed, a reduction in the challenges of leadership such as corruption, flawed electioneering processes and ethnoreligious preponderance in themes of governance would help reduce governance deficit to the lowest level of its manifestation. Then, the essential compass of government which is to perform effectively for the citizens through service delivery within a functioning rule of law, education and healthcare sector, would equally serve as conducive frameworks for development and economic growth. Leadership can therefore escape the challenges occasioned by the pitfalls of democratic coup, economic crimes and the character of the Nigerian state through its anchorage on the rule of law as effective arteries for development. This can be achieved if the leader is a guarantor of personal and collective freedom, a supporter of the empowerment of civil society and the protector of environmental commons that will lead to economic prosperity for citizens and the state.

In view of the above, many scholars and analysts in the fields of Sociology of Development, Political Economy and Government and politics studies have had to assess the trans-conceptual link between leadership, governance and development. Studies, such as Norris (1999), have identified three primary forms of governance: political or public governance, economic governance, and social governance. These studies emphasize that these forms of governance are closely connected and cannot be separated, especially in the context of Nigeria. The study was limited to the theoretical explication of the concept to fine-tuning that which is best for Nigeria. However, the study was delimited by the difficulty of categorization as expressed in the political dilemma linked to leadership challenges consistent with governance morasses in Nigeria. The objectives of the study included; (a) to distinguish between the impact leadership has on each of the types of governance, and (b) to isolate its effects. Given the analysis of the evidence in the preceding chapters, the current assessment insists that in fact, leadership challenges such as insecurity, low degree of government

legitimacy and other governance deficits are first and foremost a consequence of the electioneering processes. Kemp, Parto, & Gibson (2005) focused their study on the role of political leaders in the development of Nigeria. The study's emphasis was on leadership, governance and infrastructural development in Nigeria by political office holders. Umoh, Jaja and Akpan (2019) extrapolated the democratic culture and the challenges of good governance in Nigeria to interrogate those variables like democratic coup, political prebendalism and godfatherism as consequences of the political economy of a vassal state such as Nigeria. In particular, the current assessment seeks to examine the various challenges that have hindered good leadership resulting in the eventuation of governance deficit and the prospects of development in Nigeria

### Statement of the problem.

An acute analysis of the emergence of Nigeria from the cocoon of colonial politics would reveal a state circumscribed by sociopolitical structures designed by the colonial and post-colonial elites to sustain the economic interests of Britain in postcolonial Nigeria. The sustenance of these foreign interests however nebulous, has eventuated persistent challenges and crises associated with political leadership with the attendant adverse effects as governance deficit which have hindered development. A surgical autopsy of the problem too, would unveil a prism of factors and actors ranging from the character of Nigeria as a nation-state, the nature of the Nigerian democracy, the focus of political parties and the psychosocial implications of psychologically unstable political actors in power. Consequently, leadership challenges and governance deficits such as the implications of corruption, mismanagement of resources, coups and counter coups, have in addition to poverty and ethnoreligious sentiments frustrated and diminished the quality of leadership and the processes and outcomes of governance. Of emphasis here is the prospect of development in the face of bad governance and poor leadership. These constraints according to *Oke (2010)* are apropos to the entrenched implications of the phenomenon in the lives of many Nigerians as evidenced by the limited access to basic health care, quality education, potable water, electricity and other basic necessities of modern life.

As a political consensus by many politically informed electorates in Nigeria, the paradox of periodic elections subsumed in the four-year tenure for elective positions has been construed to mean an opportunity to hold to account politically elected actors or as a means of expressing citizens' discontent by voting ineffective political office holders out of office. To the political juggernauts, the four-year tenure is an opportunity to enrich self and class. In holding political leaders to account, many Human Rights groups and civil societies have had to politically tongue-lash each political dispensation according to its performance. This has resulted in the citizenry's lack of faith in the country's political leadership and the need to resort to demonstrations, civil disobedience, and threats of secession as alternative means of expressing public despondency. Indeed, many Nigerians have been confused by the intricate and ongoing inability of succeeding political leaders to provide administration without deficits. Conversely, when leadership difficulties are restricted, there is a tendency for minimal deficiencies in governance, which is associated with the establishment of long-lasting infrastructure to facilitate the active involvement of people in national growth. The logical extrapolations of McGreal (2008), suggest that well-developed infrastructures play a crucial role in stimulating economic development and also serve as the foundation for the socio-political transition of a country. However, the persistent slow pace of development prospects prompted by leadership challenges and governance deficits in Nigeria since 1999 has constituted a problem which has witnessed a number of attempts in the present study to review and synchronize scholars and analysts' vast perspectives on the phenomena.

Zuofa & Ochieng (2014) examined the problem in terms of the degree of government legitimacy and acceptability by the citizens that are linked to the extent to which infrastructure has aided the development and concluded that poor infrastructure elicited by continued leadership challenges and lack of political will on the part of the political leaders will make citizens to doubt government sincerity regarding development

and security. This, their study argued, has brought about division along ethnoreligious lines and has brought back to life the tenets of revisionist sub-nationalism. According to Okonjo-Iweala (2012), this situation has led to several efforts in the past to restructure the economy and improve the administration of the public sector by implementing reforms in public services. As a result of the preceding claims by Okonjo-Iweala, the government of Nigeria has made efforts to address governance inadequacies by implementing reforms such as privatization and concession of important services and infrastructure to the private sector since 2007. However, Adeboye (2011) contended that the anticipated results of these changes have not been achieved due in part to a multitude of issues stemming from inadequate leadership, resulting in a diminished quality of life, which is one of the consequences of a deficiency in governance.

Norris (1999) interrogated the system of governance by different Nigerian presidents since 1999 and identified three main types of governance and critically examined their implications on Nigeria's development. The study took cognizance of the overwhelming influence and power exercised by the executive tier of government as the major hurdle to progressive leadership and a harbinger of governance and development insufficiencies. It recommended political inclusion, democratic education and participation on the part of the citizenry as the way forward. Umoh (2021) x-rayed the trilemma on governance deficit, the ENSARS protest and political insecurity in Nigeria. The emphasis of the study was on the international dimensions of the problem that has entrenched an undemocratic political system leading to citizen remonstrance and Bellicism. The study pointed scholars' attention to the cumulative police corruption, brutality and citizens' frustration caused by the endemic institutional venality and the frustrated incapacity of the citizens to hold political office holders to account on stewardship and governance. The study equally discovered that citizens' trilemma about governance deficit, protests and political insecurity are catalysts that has somehow increase the rate of unemployment, hunger and zero democratic dividends which, in part at least, represent determinants of governance and development morass.

Umoh, et al. (2019) made an autopsy of the Nigerian democratic culture and the challenges of good governance to discover that the penchant for political office holding as avenue to personal wealth by political gladiator is a major obstacle to good leadership. The study submitted that democratic tenets that are supposed to reform poor democratic culture are more observed in the breach than they are to be carried out in their true essence and admitted that the practice of true democracy will lead to good governance and development. However, these researches, even with their policy recommendations did not link specifically issues such as corruption and the character of the Nigerian state as impediments challenging leadership and hindering good governance, nor did they make an interpolation of ethnoreligious ties and the divisive influence of the political class as variables in the development lacuna of the country. This is the focus of the study. This focus is to be guided by the examination of the factors which bring about leadership challenges and governance deficits and the various ways in which leadership and governance could be improved to bring about development in Nigeria. Based on the above, the study seeks answers to the following questions; What are the factors precipitating leadership challenges and governance deficit and the various ways in which leadership and governance could be improved to bring about development in Nigeria?

## **Conceptual Clarifications**

### **Concept of Leadership.**

Concepts in the study need to be contextualized for the purpose of clarity. For this need therefore, leadership correlates with letting go of individual short-term interests for the communal, group, national and public interest. The execution of a mandate involves validating a group's hopes and goals by taking appropriate actions that benefit both the organization and its members. To have an all-inclusive comprehension of leadership, its functions and operations must symbolize the vital force pulsating the processes of achieving the stated goals of any organization or forum. Therefore, a leadership that cannot prioritize values sensitive to

<b>40</b>	ISSN 2690-9626 (online), Published by "Global Research Network LLC" under Volume: 4 Issue: 11 in Nov-2023 <a href="https://globalresearchnetwork.us/index.php/ajshr">https://globalresearchnetwork.us/index.php/ajshr</a>
	Copyright (c) 2023 Author (s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY).To view a copy of this license, <a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>

development implies the existence of leadership difficulties. As such, leadership entails effective strategy in implementing planned actions in order to accomplish overarching goals. This is achieved through the formulation and execution of a well-development plan. Effective leadership should also deploy the prudent, clear, and commendable use of resources for the purpose of advancing the nation's growth.

### Concept of Governance

Good governance may be seen as the effective management of a country's wealth and the practice of implementing good policies for the well-being of its citizens. Oke (2005) defined good governance as the effective allocation and management of resources to address collective socioeconomic and political issues within a nation. Cheema and Maguire (2004) argued that effective governance should endorse gender equality, uphold environmental sustainability, empower individuals to exercise personal autonomy and provide means to alleviate poverty, deprivation, fear, and violence. Undoubtedly, therefore, in the list of priority calculus for good governance in Nigeria it is expedient that two crucial aspects that are essential for national growth: infrastructural development and the decrease of corruption be fingertip kept. This is one of the reasons Diamond (2005) posited that the progress of a society is contingent upon the presence of infrastructure, but Held and McGrew (2004) interjected that corruption is a significant factor contributing to the failure of infrastructure and projects in several emerging countries, including Nigeria.

**Governance deficits:** These are antonyms of good governance that can be categorized as indices of underdevelopment such as high crime rate, high poverty rate, high level of hunger, corruption, decaying infrastructures, poor human rights profile, insecurity, poor GDP, GNP and low personal income

### Indices of Good Governance

Good governance may be seen as the administrative agility that encompasses rapid changes in political, social, and economic structures within any political system. Indeed, good governance is a political concept that refers to an effective administration aimed at improving the political, economic, and social well-being of people. It operates within the context of a political system, particularly within the framework of parliamentary democracy. Thus, in a parliamentary democracy such as assumed to be practised in Nigeria, there are specific elements which can be evaluated or analysed as measurers of good governance. The elements to include:

**Political Participation:** a government is adjudged good when the degree of citizens' participation in governance can be felt in policy formulation and implementation. Active involvement of citizens in the political process is crucial for effective governance in the branches of government - executive, legislative, judiciary - since people are expected to consistently utilize their voting rights. Certainly, citizens' post-election participation in promoting effective governance may occur either directly or indirectly via elected representatives.

**Accountability:** The test of governance is said to be good in a vibrant democracy where there exist institutions and mechanisms to evaluate and monitor the degree of accountability of those who rule, to those from whom they derive their authority.

**Transparency:** A government may be considered good if and when the major theme of the leadership is premised on the citizens' easy access to how those in authority run everyday administration. Transparency therefore is a function of the access to government information by the citizenry. Therefore, an effective government must provide unrestricted dissemination of knowledge to the governed. This means that transparency through citizens' access to information about government activities and policies is an essential need in a parliamentary democracy. This should be facilitated by the fundamental principle of the separation of powers and the application of the system of checks and balances between the executive, legislature, and

judiciary. Indeed, government transparency should necessitate governmental choices and guide the public's demand in accordance with the principles of the rule of law.

**Rule of Law:** This is a framework designed to ensure fair implementation of laws and regulations that safeguard human rights, promote social justice, and prevent the misuse of power by those in positions of authority. This ought to be a brainchild of good governance.

**Consensus:** This is a decision-making process that embraces widespread involvement and agreement amongst the citizenry. It may be accomplished either by direct public involvement or via elected or appointed representatives who are responsible for conveying the broader input of individuals in the governmental decision-making process. Agreed, the objective of good governance is to achieve a wide-ranging agreement by reconciling diverse interests within society which ought to ultimately benefit the community as a whole. The objective of consensus, therefore, is to promote sustainable human development and effectively attain the associated objectives.

**Effectiveness and Efficiency:** Governance effectiveness and efficiency mean the degree of independence of governmental institutions in decision-making, and the administration of such decisions to achieve the institutional aim and objective for the benefit of the citizens. Good governance is achieved upon the fact that government administrative processes and institutions have produced results that meet the needs of the society. It also entails proper utilization of resources at the government's disposal for better societal socioeconomic engineering and development.

**Responsiveness:** Given that governance should be proactive, hence, government responsiveness refers to the promptness with which a government addresses the pressing and immediate demands of its citizens. Good governance is determined by the responsiveness of government institutions and decision-making processes, which should effectively serve all stakeholders within an acceptable timeframe.

**Inclusiveness and Equity:** This is a governance index that elucidates the equitable treatment, inclusion safeguarding, and of the people within the government. excellent inclusiveness and equality are indicators of the degree to which a government operates not too independently from its citizens in fulfilling its role as a guardian of life and property. As a consequence, a principle of inclusiveness and equality in governance should be mindful and insist that individuals must not be excluded from the dominant aspects of society and that disadvantaged groups should have access to opportunities.

## Theoretical Framework

The logic of the Social Contract Theory as propounded by Thomas Hobbs, John Locke and Jean Rousseau has been appropriated by the study to underpin the argument that irrespective of the nature and character of the state, the expectation of the citizens from the state is a function of a contract explicitly or implicitly expressed in the constitution and whose breached could lead to a withdrawal of loyalty by the citizens. The three perspectives of the theory as expressed by the three promulgators assume that the relationship between the state and the citizens is occasioned by the surrendering of citizens' rights and privileges to form a body polity for the protection of lives, property and the guarantee of liberty, justice and fairness. The justification for the adoption of the key assumptions of the three theories is informed by the logical proximity they possess in explaining the relationship between issues of governance, leadership and citizens' rights. This is boosted by the centrality of the basic assumptions of the three perspectives regarding authority and legitimacy. In addition, and by inference, the theories assume that governance is a contract between the citizenry and the state. However, since the state is an abstract entity, the representatives of the state as extracted from the bulk of the citizenry owe their alliance to the detects of the constitution as guidelines in the contract. It is vital to note that the different intellectual predecessors of the idea have differing views on the nature of the agreement between people and the state. Hobbes argued that the social contract between

people and the state is absolute, meaning that the state should have unrestricted authority over its subjects. Conversely, Locke and Rousseau stressed the concept of restricting the authority of the government. However, they contended that a contract is legally enforceable only if all parties comply with its terms and only if individual rights and freedoms are upheld. For Locke (1952), if the governing authorities were not acting in accordance with the will of the people, they would essentially be engaging in a state of conflict with the people. As a result, the people would be released from any need to obey the governing authorities. The primary point of Locke and Rousseau's arguments is that people should maintain the authority to change the government if it fails to fulfil its obligations to the citizens. As a result, Locke and Rousseau argue that the people should be safeguarded by the legislature, and if the legislature fails, the government and administration should be changed.

Paradoxically, in a flawed political system such as that which is obtainable in Nigeria, the presence of legislative institutions ought to signal the first hope that the people could be a hallmark of a performing and democratic government different from non-democratic ones. In practice, the Nigerian citizens being largely apolitical, do not fully utilize this aspect of the theory that links changes in governance through democratic processes or revolution as a right which the citizens should exercise if the guarantor of liberty reneged in the contract. As a litmus, this has been experimented with through several coups, civil wars, elections, threats of secession and the #Endsars protests. This theory is relevant to this study since it captures the interplay between leadership and good governance which is the trademark of the social contract between the citizens and the state. In addition, the theory submitted that leadership and good governance, a stable political system, structures and culture are key variables for sustainable development. The theory further elucidates the relationship between the democratic culture or system and how the political structures should operate by showing that within the orbit of governance, the relationship between the citizenry and the state should be anchored on the functionality and operational quality of leadership as a focus in the elastic connexion between the different structures and their respective role in the society. The capacity of the structures, therefore, is a concern for the overall health of the system. Good governance is the result of the interconnected interactions between the branches of government that influence the democratic culture inside a political system. In the context of Nigeria, good governance is determined by the extent to which the democratic culture is widespread, well-established, and functioning well within the political system. This, in turn, serves as an indicator of Nigeria's growth.

### Methodology.

The study employs a descriptive qualitative research methodology. It is worth noting that qualitative research is mostly focused on exploration and discovery. It is used to acquire a comprehension of the fundamental causes, viewpoints, and drives. The variables; leadership challenges governance deficit and development that are essential to the advancement and development of Nigeria are therefore considered through the application of content analysis.

### Factors precipitating leadership challenges in Nigeria.

**Leadership vacuity:** The vacuity in the Nigerian political landscape from independence seems to run on a continuum from excellent to poor. Political actors immediately after independence were engaged in regional compartmentalization of the polity leading to the sowing of seed for ethnoreligious politics that has characterized contemporary political engineering in the country. Leadership vacuity is located in the parochial actions and rudderless focus of political actors in policy formation and implementation. These challenges sometimes emanate from actions and policies formed on the basis of party, personal or ethnic affiliations. About the above, Ake (2008) avowed that in Nigeria, leaders are not subject but object, controlled in the public interest in an infinite variety of ways, that even at the top, power and dominance become very paradoxical and exclusive. Leadership vacuity is expressive of situations where a leader is

preoccupied with the pursuit of personal, elitist class or ethnic interest above and over the interest of the citizens.

**Cognitive Dissonance:** A typical political leader in Nigeria sees himself as a leviathan or a demigod whose policy initiative should be admitted as infallible. Cognitive dissonance thus is a leadership challenge in Nigeria where the psychosocial capacity of the leader is cloaked in uncertainties arising from the conflict between national and group or party interest in the formative and implementation phases of policies. This can be likened to the cognitive dilemma with the tendency of the leader's decision to be competitive and autonomous in relation to citizens' expectations.

**Stomach infrastructure;** this particular leadership challenge is of peculiar interest to political analysts in Nigeria. Stomach infrastructure or stomach politics refers to the decision of a leader to be loyal to the party while being not circumspective to the public good. Such a leader delivers a democratic mandate only after his stomach has been filled or his interest has been met. Stomach politics therefore is hunger politics where political leaders have no manifestoes, no focus or policy objective, but personal aggrandizement and penchant for appropriation of the common wealth to personal wealth. This has stifled leadership leading to a governance deficit in the polity.

**Character deficit.** Leadership in Nigeria has suffered inestimable ethical, moral and character deficits occasioned by either personal moral deficiency or political party's lack of ethical norms. Political leaders in Nigeria see political office holding as a means of production and the state's apparatus and institutions as opportunities and springboard to immersed personal, group or ethnic wealth. Character deficit is expressed sometimes as corruption and at other times, as primordial sentiment and ethnoreligious ties.

**Tribal pitfall;** tribal pitfall is recognized in ethnic identity as tangent to the evolutionary stages of the state, political parties, law and military organisations. In the historicized context, the political theorist, Samuel Huntington would want to interpolate all other challenges such as tribal pitfalls as minuscule in the framework of nation-building that is facing developing countries such as Nigeria. Tribal pitfall describes the evolution of a state from a conglomeration of different independent kingdoms fused as one by circumstances with etymology in coercion and whose attempt to embrace modernisation is beset by an avalanche of parochial interests. What Huntington failed to take into consideration while analysing factors in the emergence of nation-states is the fact that nations are encumbered according to Fukuyama (2012) by contingent forces such as colonialism, war and religion that brought them into being. It is these "contingent forces" that create tribal pitfall, a social dichotomy in the context of we versus them that has constituted leadership challenges as cosine to Nigeria's national development

### **Leadership challenges and governance deficit in Nigeria's National Assembly**

The major challenges in the obit of leadership in Nigeria are mostly within the core and magnetic waves evident among the three levels of government. Instances of corruption and the institutional distortion of the intensity of magnetic coherence in governance via the purposive misallocation of public resources by political figures have become prevalent, if not ingrained, in the lives of those in positions of political power. This, undoubtedly, has witnessed governance quagmire in the national parliament. The national assembly has equally been plagued by a multitude of corruption scandals and allegations since its establishment. The cankerworm too, has been prevalent in every political administration from the first Republic to the present. In the fourth Republic, two Speakers of the House of Representatives, Salisu Buhari and Patricia Etteh, along with her deputy Babangida Nguroje, were compelled to step down due to corruption allegations. These charges included certificate forgery, specifically the Toronto certificate scandal in 2000, as well as the misuse of funds allocated for renovating the speaker's official residence and purchasing official cars for House of Representatives members. The total amount involved in the car purchase was N628 million in 2007.

Following extensive lobbying efforts, the House of Representatives exonerated Patricia, the Speaker, from all allegations. Subsequently, there was another bribery case of 6.2 billion naira involving the Elumelu led House Committee on power reform in 2008 (Zero Tolerance, 2009b).

Additional leadership obstacles include instances of corruption scandals including many MPs, such as the bribery incident involving Farouk Lawan, the head of the Oil Subsidy Investigative Committee (OSIC) in 2012. The chairman was shown in a viral video, depositing cash into both his Agbada and pants pockets. Through camera analysis and several investigation methods, it was determined that he purportedly obtained a sum of 620,000 dollars. Again, In 2011, Dimeji Bankole, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, was involved in a scandal of 10 billion naira. However, he was eventually exonerated of any wrongdoing, despite allegations of corruption by political experts Yusuf (2011) and Ethelbert (2016). In 2012, a thorough inquiry revealed a bribery accusation of 44 million naira, resulting in the dissolution of the Capital Market Investigative Committee headed by Herman Hambe. The situation was further exacerbated by Chief Esai Dangabar's accusation, made during his prosecution for embezzling N32.8 billion from the police pension fund, that several senators had accepted a N8 billion bribe from him (Ethelbert, 2016).

In a study conducted by Mudashiru (2016), it was shown that there was a case of inflated pricing for 108 Land Cruiser Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs) intended for members of the Senate. The vehicles were priced at around N3.8 billion, with each vehicle costing N35 million, which is much more than their initial worth of N17 million. Ethelbert, published this in 2016. The study also highlighted that the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation, Abubakar Malami, initiated a legal dispute against the Senate President, Bukola Saraki, and his Deputy, Ike Ekweremadu. The allegations were related to the modification of the Senate's standing rule to support their re-election campaigns in 2015. This act was deemed illegal, and hence, led to legal proceedings in court. Additional instances involve the accusation of budget padding in the amounts of N285 billion and N400 billion in the 2016 budget, made by Abdulumumin Jibrin, the former chairman of the House committee on appropriation. The allegations were directed towards the principal officers of the House of Representatives, including the speaker Mr. Yakubu Dogara, the Deputy Speaker Yusuf Lasun, the Chief Whip Alhassan Ado Doguwa, and the minority leader Mr. Leo Ogor. The situation intensified on July 21, 2016 as a result of Jibrin's expulsion from the House of Representatives as Chairman of the Appropriation Committee. It was reported that he may have lost his portion of the hand-out, which is estimated to be N4 billion in the inflated budget. As a result of losing his portion of the loot, he became a whistle-blower in order to thwart others from enjoying in their the ill-gotten money. (Akinnaaso, 2016; Ethelbert, 2016). Subsequently, Jubrin was deliberately suspended by members of the lower house, particularly the ethics committee, for his effort to uncover corruption inside the National Assembly. Observation indicates that the accusations or instances of corruption involving members of the National Assembly are limited to the provisions outlined in sections 98, 98a, and 98b of the penal code.

**Table 1: Incidents of Corruption Allegations in the National Assembly (Senate)**

S/N	Case	Amount involved	Year	Legislator
1	Oil subsidy scan	620,000 dollars	2012	Senator Farouk Lawal
2	SUV Cars	N3.8 billion	2016	Senator Ibrahim Gobir Senate Committee on services
3	Altering of senate rule		2015	Sentaor Bukola Saraki & Ike Ekweremadu
4	Falsification of Name and Purchase of furniture	N25 million and N6million	1999	Evans Ekwerem

5	Inflation and unauthorized payment approved	N173.2 million N57.2 million N25 million	2000	Chuba Okadigbo and Haruna Abubarka
6	Multiple award of contract and inflation of contract	N15.9 million N4.8 million N917.82 million N10.29 million	2003	Senator Anyim Pius Anyim
7	Bribe to facilitate the passage of education budget	N50 million	2005	Senator Adolphus Wabara
<b>HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE</b>				
1	Certificate scandal		2007	Salisu Buhari,
2	Purchase of Official cars	N628million	2007	Patricia, Etteh
3	Misappropriation capital votes of house of representative	N9 billion	2009	Dimeji Bankole
4	Mismanagement & collection of an overdraft	N20 million N22.9 million	2003	Ghali Umar Na'abba
5	Budget Padding	N285 billion and N400 billion	2016	Involving the leadership of the House of Representative
6	Bribery allegation that led to disbandment of capital market committee	N44 million	2012	Herman Hambe
7	Bribery scandal on power reform	N6.2 billion		Elumelu
8	Fraud on Police Pension fund	N86 billion	2016	Chief, Esai Dangabar

**Source: Author's Compilation, 2022.**

However, the legitimate benefits and entitlements of the members of the National Assembly are enshrined in the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RAFC), the body established by law to fix salaries and allowances of government parastatals and institutions. Every member of the National Assembly is entitled to benefits and opportuneness that comes with his occupation of such office, sometimes referred to as the cost of running or managing the National Assembly. These members are entitled to monthly salaries and allowances. These salaries and allowances are detailed below.

**Table 2: Approved Salaries and Allowances for each Senator**

<b>S/No.</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Approved Remuneration</b>
1.	Basic Salary	2,484,245.50
2.	Hardship allowance at 50% Basic Salary	1,242,122.50
3.	Constituency allowance at 200% of Basic Salary	4,968,509.00
4.	Furniture allowance at 300% of Basic Salary	7,452,736.50
5.	Newspaper allowance at 50% of Basic Salary	1,242,122.50
6.	Wardrobe Allowance at 25% of Basic salary	621,061.37

7.	Recess allowance at 10% basic salary	248,424.55
8.	Accommodation at 200% of basic salary	4,986,509.00
9.	Unity at 30% of basic salary	828,081.83
10.	Domestic staff at 75% of basic salary	621,061.37
11.	Entertainment at 30% of basic salary	828,081.83
12.	Personal assistance at 25% of basic salary	1,863,184.12
13.	Vehicle maintenance at 75% of basic salary	248,424.55
14.	Leave allowance at 10% of basic salary	248,424.55
	Total Per Annum	29,479,749.00
	A Senator Legitimate salary per month	N2,456,647,70

**Source: Authors adaptation from Muhammed, Aluaigba & Kabir (2012).**

Inferentially, Muhammed & Kabir (2012) stated that the legitimate total earning for a senator in a month, as initially determined by RMAFC, is N2,456,647,70. Therefore, the total emolument for a Senator per Annum is N29,479,749,00. And for a member in the House of Representative, the annual earnings are N15,186,875.38, which translates into N1,265,572,95 per month. Furthermore, Muhammed & Kabir (2012), opined that the National Assembly members have always felt dissatisfied by the allowances fixed by RMAFC and in response to the perceived dissatisfaction, fixed its allowances. These include car loan for each Senator at N8.1million, while N7.94million is for each member of the House of Representative. Severance packages, duty tour allowances (DTA) within Nigeria for a Senator is N23,000, while the House of Representative member is N21,000. Travel inconveniences allowance outside Nigeria for a Senator is N120,000 per day, while a House of Representative member is entitled to N82,000. These allowances in addition to sitting and services allowances are not included in those determined by RMAFC. These are instances, where the National Assembly members seek to determine their pay and allowances leading to excessive accumulation of wealth and a deficit in governance.

This is not helped when in 2004 and 2005, the Legislature demanded a generous budget to cover National Assembly salaries and other expenses. Such demands prompted negotiations that led to a National Assembly budget of about N44 billion (\$333 million at the then prevailing exchange rates). The negotiation resulted to an agreement that allowed them about N66 billion (\$500m) allocated to cover what was termed “constituency project” (Okonjo-Iweala, 2018)

Incidentally, the corruption charges in the political system were exacerbated by the instances of lawmakers receiving dual pensions after previously serving as governors of their respective states. In order to prevent these developments from escalating into blatant theft of public resources, the Code of Conduct Bureau was formed to collect asset declarations from public officials. The terms of reference that were included were:

1. To maintain possession of these statements and allow any Nigerian citizen to examine them, subject to the terms and circumstances set by the National Assembly.
2. To scrutinize the declaration and verify its adherence to the provisions of the code of conduct and any applicable legislation.

Despite the terms of reference, it is constraining to note that the expectation of citizens about government transparency and the vital role of the Code of Conduct Bureau in mitigating looting of government resource. the National Assembly has refused to ensure compliance regarding public officers' declaration of assets. The oversight functions of the legislators are knowingly circumvented for group benefit. According to Obi (2016) as cited in Ethelbert (2016), only Senator Shehu Sani openly reported his assets in the 8th Assembly, while

no other member of the National Assembly did so in accordance with the principles of the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB).

### Leadership and Governance in Nigeria: Implications for National Development

In an ideal democratic government, leadership is expected to derive its authority from the mandates of the people. The citizens, who have elected or selected a few individuals, are responsible for setting tasks and appointing the elected few to carry out these tasks on their behalf. As a result, the elected few are accountable to the people who chose them. However, these expectations work in the opposite way and violate their intended operational purposes. In Nigeria, the electoral procedures are marred by flaws, which result in situations where leaders are chosen and imposed on the people by influential or self-appointed power brokers, also known as kingmakers or godfathers. The inference is that these leaders are disconnected from and independent of the society, its people, and the mandate from which their leadership emerged. This is due to the fact that democracy is a system for majoritarian governance in which there exists a greater possibility for those with character deficit and mental destitution to rule over the intelligent and the informed.

Another grave implication from such leaders would be the challenges of governance. In fact, Umoh (2019) gave an adumbration when he reported that leadership challenges made policy makers in post-colonial Nigeria to be unaware of the future developmental demands even in the heydays when Nigeria's foreign exchange was better from 1979 -1983 than the United States currency. The scholar added that, because of such cognitive dissonance regarding leadership as expressed in the foreign policy at the time, the Nigerian state in error entente with some fossilized African and European states through aids and liberalized foreign trade with no legal means for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) or Strategic Foreign Assistance (SFA), like in the case of South Africa during the apartheid regime.

The source further added that some of these countries through Multinationals Companies like the Niger Company, Lever Brothers, Unilever, Shell Petroleum, Agip oil and British oil interfered in Nigeria's political system and exploited her leaders' political naivety, jaundiced foreign economic policies and self-destructive domestic development strategies. The implementation challenges of policies and development strategies such as Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) during the Obasanjo military regime, Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) under Ibrahim Babangida, National Emergency Economic Development Strategy (NEEDS) under Obasanjo, Green Revolution (GR), and Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) have consistently correlated with their failures.

These failures together with several other policies and strategies are what have been evaluated to be proximal to the determinants of governance deficits in the contexts of population explosion, poverty, escalated crime rates, unemployment and institutionalized corruption. These indices of development in reverse are the internal state manures which have given oxygen to the violence in the country in general and specifically to the plague in the Northeast known as jihadist or Allahic terrorism. Terrorism and insecurity arise directly from a lack of effective leadership, characterized by self-centred motives and the prioritization of personal and specific interests above the well-defined requirements of the population. Over time, this has resulted in leaders who have exploited the public's resources instead of using them for their progress. The aforementioned may be readily elucidated as a component of the ramifications behind an unjust democratic society.

**Inequitable democratic culture.** Umoh, Jaja and Akpan (2019) argued that in a democracy, the democratic culture is the extant democratic processes where the emergence of political leaders and actors is predicated. The author's view of the limits around the conception of democracy suggests that there is no generally agreed-upon definition of the idea, allowing researchers to define it in several ways. Nevertheless, experts have recognized that a crucial aspect of any definition of democracy is the active involvement of individuals,

the unrestricted expression of opinions and the formation of groups, the assurance of citizens' rights, and the safeguarding of private property. The researchers said that the prevalence of the opposite situation in developing democracies like Nigeria is due to the disorganized and unfair procedures of gaining power, authority, and political benefits. The further argued that the persistence of an unfair democratic culture may be attributed to the legacy of some institutions from the colonial era, which has been perpetuated by social inertia and structural inflexibility. The source insists that, any democracy that lacks the essential characteristics of a well-functioning democratic government cannot be considered a true democracy, unless the intention is to render the phrase meaningless. Notwithstanding the variables expected in a democracy, Oyovbaire (2017) critiqued that democracy lacks a fixed definition, which is why it is subject to varying interpretations. However, in support to Umoh, etel (ibid) Deutsch (2014) observed that under a democratic system, the majority of the citizenry, either directly or indirectly, has the authority to create or validate laws and to elect or validate the government, its officials, and its policies. However, it is crucial that the minority be given the freedom to articulate its views, advocate for them, establish structures, and endeavour to pursue others to align with its position. As such when minority perspectives are suppressed, the majority is hindered in its capacity to evaluate concepts, acquire new ones, and maybe modify its behaviour. consequently, leadership deficit is responsible for the failure to modify or alter policies that are seen as unfair, even by a minority.

**Leadership deficit.** The emergence of a new democratic dispensation in 1999 has acted as socio-political fecundity to political leaders in Nigeria to display immanent character deficits incubated in the extant political culture prior to the timeline of this study. The display of character deficit however atomistic, has led to entrenched corruption and misappropriation of public funds. This is a tangent of a flawed political processes where transparency and accountability are indefinable and uncertain. In circumstances such as this, political actors are susceptible to inheriting leadership deficit from their predecessor that often results in a continued embezzlement of public funds and the common wealth. The misappropriation of police pension funds N33b and N1b by John Yusuf in 2013 and Orosaye Maina in 2015, the assault on a lady by a sitting lawmakers and many others shows that to mitigate the problem of character deficit of political actors, a functional check and balances from the arms and institutions of government, a revived culture of transparency and accountability are an indispensable minimum. This will form the basis for a credible electoral system and processes that will ensure a higher degree of legitimacy and prospects for national development. Conversely, leadership deficits can readily act as pull factors accelerating politically inclined insecurity.

**Political insecurity.** A popular Nigerian musician, Abdulkareem once placed the entire scenario of insecurity in the country in satirical perspective when he insisted in the lyrics that ‘Nigeria jagaga, everything scatter scatter, poorman dey suffer suffer, ( gbosa, gbosa), gun short ina the air’. Howbeit, the entire song is expressive of politically induced insecurity linked to leadership challenges and a flawed political process that has characterize Nigeria’s political landscape in recent times. Politically motivated insecurity is violence perpetrated by political actors on behalf of their political party and supported by the party political icons in governments through the use of various strategies to accomplish their political objectives. This phenomenon may also be defined as the use of force by a government against other governments. Instances include direct or proxy wars, the use of force against civilians, police brutality against criminal suspects or protesters, counter-insurgency operations against dissident organizations or state-sanctioned acts of genocide. It may also be defined as politically motivated violence carried out by non-governmental actors against the government, such as insurrection and riots; or against other non-governmental actors. In addition, governmental inaction may also be classified as latent political violence, for instance, when the government withhold relief supplies from internally displaced individuals or withhold resources from economically disadvantaged populations under their authority.

In view of power asymmetry between the state and citizens with discontent, political violence or insecurity can assume the form of inferred bellicism where direct confrontation by either side would mean a major instability in the polity. If the dissents are powerless, confrontation therefore, is made a subject of silent war with tactics such as those deployed by terrorism and guerrilla warfare that usually include attacks on soft targets, military or police formations and the zero combatants perceived as proxy for the opposing side. Indeed, inequitable generation and distribution of resources such as the federal monthly monetary allocation to states, lopsided appointment into government parastatals and ministries, could motivate groups or individuals with perceived marginalization and resource disparity to take to violence as a justifiable and necessary means to correct governance deficits and relative deprivation in order to achieve their political objectives. These objectives in the contexts of a historicized political ambiguity and inequitable resource distribution is what Umoh (2022) meant by ‘the internal and external socioeconomic dynamics accentuating governance deficits, insecurity and ethnic interest in terrorist infested social formations’ This too, can be exacerbated by a corrupt civil society and the media to facilitate political dichotomy and resource redistribution disparity.

**Corrupt civil society.** Another major challenge to leadership is a corrupt civil society, civil organisation and the media. Corrupt civil society can, rather than engaged in political sensitization and education to mobilized voters and the electorates, get involved in tribal inclined public programmes in order to promote certain candidates whether or not they are qualified. Such challenges often raise questions on the legitimacy of the leaders in authority and might result in disloyalty and lack of patriotism on the part of the citizens. As such, the participation of a corrupt civil society in the electioneering processes can inadvertently act as a booster to violence, intimidation, rigging, fraud, hate speech and democratic coup. Such electoral dysfunctions are boosted by corruption.

**Corruption;** corruption is a bane to leadership as it fuels bad governance, erodes public confidence, undermines public service delivery and entrenches incompetent political actors in leadership positions. Indeed, corruption impedes governance and strangle development. Granted, economic factors such as low wage, high cost of living, decaying infrastructures, poverty, and population explosion can be said to be the major factors that agitate corruption. However, corruption is first and foremost linked with moral and character deficits in a sane society. This, regrettably cannot be said of citizens in highly disadvantaged, constrained and fragile economy who depends on foreign aids, importation and rents for development. As stated before, corruption within the timeline of this study in Nigeria became so barefaced and cultural that even teenagers are lacking morale values. It was therefore, not strange when the Transparency International corruption index about Nigeria in 2004, 2005, and 2006 regimes were rated at 4.2; 4.1; and 4.1 respectively out of 5 points. Indeed, there seems to have been little or no decline as the index oscillates between 4.1 and 4.2 out of 5 points till 2013. Evidence from the same reports point to the pervasiveness of corruption within the Nigerian political space as the only springboard that brought these legislators to power. Incidentally, from 2004, 2005, 2006 till 2013, the corruption index within political parties in Nigeria had consistently remained at 4.5 out of 5 points for these periods. An analysis of Ethelbert (2016) shows that in the last quarter of 2013, the corruption index jumped to 4.7 out of 5 points, indicating an increase in the rate of corruption within political parties in Nigeria

As a result, international observers expressed significant worry at the level of corruption in Nigeria, despite the fact that some of them were benefactors, either directly or indirectly. In May 2016, the former British Prime Minister, David Cameron, condemned Nigeria as being very corrupt (Etiakoya, 2016; Waive, 2016). A remark that aligns with Nigeria's enduring position in the rankings published by Transparency International (TI). The Corruption Perception Index (CPI) consistently ranks Nigeria as one of the most corrupt countries globally. The statement above supports Achebe's (1984) argument that Nigeria's achievements in science, sports, and entertainment have been undermined by chaos and corruption, as well as the insensitivity and

inefficiency of governmental figures. According to the source, Nigeria is considered one of the most arduous locations to reside on the planet. The aforementioned perspectives would not have been associated with Nigeria due to its unique geography and geological resources. However, the presence of corruption, political exclusion, and other deficiencies caused by dysfunctional and regressive leadership in the country have revealed the reluctance of Nigerians to adopt ethical standards and norms that could stimulate progress.

**Administrative inefficiency.** Bottled-neck procedures for the administration of justice in the polity is another challenge facing leadership in Nigeria. For instance, the bureaucratic procedures involved in the apprehension of corrupt political actors and the retrieval of established looted funds is a long term hurdle in national development. Administrative inefficiency can be systemic or intentionally induced to stifle bureaucratic fight against corruption and corrupt individuals. The country's Economic and Financial Crime Commission, the EFCC, sometimes is influenced by powerful politicians including states actors to fire on low and weak cylinders against corrupt individuals from certain section of the country. For instance, N33b police pension fund embezzlement by John Yusuf in 2013 was rewarded a N250,000.00 fine by a court of competent jurisdiction, leading to the feeling of desperation and a sense of favouritism towards corrupt individuals by the citizenry. The problem of corruption in Nigeria is endemic, it is supported by administrative inefficiency and bureaucratic bottled-neck which advocates structural unemployment and underdevelopment in the country. Few instances would be enough to adumbrate the point about institutionalized and bureaucratic corruption and administrative inefficiency. Again, in June 2002, the Senate Public Account Committee revealed that N11.7 billion remained unaccounted for out of the N40.7 billion that was recovered from the Abacha plunder, as reported by Ubabukoh (2015). As a result of a disagreement caused by the unauthorized executive withdrawal of over N1 trillion, the Senate rejected President Obasanjo's request to confirm Alhaji Hamman Tukur as chairman of the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) (Ogundele, 2007). In 2009, the Senate mandated the retrieval of N53 billion in defaulted bank loans. These funds were obtained from the impacted banks by 64 notable Nigerians via their different accounts, without requiring any collateral. (Ehikoya, 2009). In 2011, the Senate joint committee on oil & gas and export & import exposed the oil cartel that had caused price variations in the actual sector of the economy from 2006 to 2012 via the deceptive Oil Subsidy Regime. The oil subsidy system had a significant rise in the number of enterprises engaged in gasoline importation into the nation, increasing from 5 in 2006 to 140 in 2011. In 2011, the NNPC found that the increase in the number of petroleum importing businesses resulted in the country losing around N2.6 trillion throughout the investigated years. Several of these enterprises were construction firms that were unrelated to the oil industry (Adesammi, 2011). In February 2012, the Senate successfully identified the transfer of N2.1 billion from the police pension fund to a commercial bank that had no legitimate reason to hold the funds (Ojiabor & Onogu, 2012). Ugah (2012) states that the House committee on electricity, chaired by Elumelu, mishandled its investigation into former President Olusegun Obasanjo's independent power project, which was worth US \$13 billion. Despite allegations of bribery amounting to N5.2 billion, the Senate Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petition remained steadfast in investigating the N1 trillion accusation against the former chairman of the EFCC, Ibrahim Lamorde, in August 2015. The committee resisted attempts by certain members of the general house to politicize the petition filed by whistle-blower Mr. Uboh. The accusation and subsequent inquiry ultimately resulted in the removal of the chairman (Koyi, 2015). In November 2016, the Senate rejected the executive's proposal to get a loan of around US\$ 30 billion from the World Bank. The denial was based on the executive's lack of coherent justification for the allocation of the funds.

**Unemployment;** with a higher demographic percentage of young and able bodied people in Nigeria, unemployment becomes manure for the growth of social ills such as drug abuse, prostitution and election malpractices. The absence of employment prospects leads to the generation of civil liabilities instead of assets. The solution to this complex societal problem lies in the advancement of industries outside of the oil

industry. This is crucial for the enhancement of a stable and efficient economy, as well as the improvement of employment rates. Unemployment hinders leadership by burdening the ruling administration with disgruntled and assertive young people who are capable of engaging in collective protests and aggression. In view of this, Dufka (2009) asserts that leadership should take proactive and imaginative measures to provide feasible alternatives in programs and policies. This evaluation argues that by doing so, it will effectively accommodate the impressionable young population and align with the tendencies of growth.

Considering the aforementioned points, the unemployment crisis may be alleviated by the political will, determination, devotion, commitment, and sincerity of purpose shown by the country's leadership. This can be achieved by implementing a national action plan focused on creating job opportunities, which requires tangible actions rather than mere words. Political analysts in their views feel that such activities have the potential to alleviate poverty.

**Poverty;** poverty is another challenge to leadership and a harbinger of social disequilibrium. It has become a critical socio-economic challenge which reduces the quality of governance in present day Nigeria. The rate of poverty correlates in many instances with the degree of leadership and governance morasses that is giving birth to development constraints. A disturbing observation about poverty is that it causes family sequestration and limited options for education and self-improvement while at the same time, increasing citizen propensity to crime. Poverty as it were, can be categorized into moderate and abject. Scholarly discuss on the subject has witness a further categorization into quantitative and qualitative terms. For the quantitative analyst, poverty is measured in terms of calories intake per day or in terms of a given level of income while the qualitative analyst takes cognizance of certain variables such as economic, cultural, social and other status. Onuoha (1995) observed that the impoverished in Nigeria are present in all social groups, classes, and professions, and their lack of meaningful social position is mostly attributed to their helplessness. It is important to recognize that national development is unlikely to be accomplished as long as the bulk of the rural poor continue to be jobless, unproductive, and undeveloped. Essential elements for national growth, such as transportation networks, water supply, energy, healthcare, housing, education, and food production and distribution, are crucial. The urgent need within the framework of governance deficit is to address and reduce poverty among the population. Failure to recognize these truths and adequately address the ongoing suffering of the population might have disastrous consequences. It may result in leadership challenges that could potentially ignite civil unrest and unforeseen public disruption. Public disorder can be occasioned by a surfeit of factors such as infrastructural disparity between each geopolitical zones and could be interpreted by those that felt cheated in the distribution and placement of these infrastructures as internal colonialism.

Moreover, poverty is associated with reduced life expectancy. According to the UNDP (2010) Human Development Report, as cited in Adeboye (2011), life expectancy in Nigeria is 48.4 years, whereas Indonesia has a life expectancy of 71.5 years and South Korea has 79.8 years. While fewer than 2 percent of South Koreans and Malaysians live on less than \$1.25 per day, a staggering 64.4 percent of Nigerians fall into this economic bracket. Despite the statistical evidence that Nigeria is the 5th biggest producer of crude oil globally, it remains a social truth. From 1999 to 2007, the federation of Nigeria generated a substantial income of 27.7 trillion Naira. The mentioned sum exceeds 80 percent of Nigeria's total income collected by the federal government between 1970 and 2007, as stated by Adeboye (2011:23).

### **Various ways to improve Leadership and Governance for Nigeria's National Development**

The stability of any social system is a function of a balanced interdependence of the elements which make up the system. Indeed, elements such as leadership and governance are directly proportional to the quality of stewardship of political actors link to the sustainability of a balanced input and output relationship between the leaders and the led. That is to say that even when leadership challenges midwife governance deficits, the preponderance of such deficit is a function of the degree of political participation and civil consciousness of

the citizenry. The political class are not to be entirely blamed since their actions largely depends on the active or passive contribution of the civil society. As such, the performance of leadership is contrast by the extent to which it provides and sustains critical aspects of public good.

On the other hand, it is impossible to hide the existence of either effective leadership and its difficulties or the absence of good governance. These issues are evident in every aspect of society and the economy. Leadership issues inevitably lead to crises, preventing progress in a state of dystopia or among instability or an unstable political system. As a result of this, the World Bank stated in Onuha's (1995) study that the absence of development is a direct outcome of a lack of effective governance. The study emphasized that poor governance hinders economic progress. The author also confirmed that bad governance exhibits various characteristics, including the lack of distinction between public and private gain, the absence of a consistent framework for law and government behavior that promotes development, and the arbitrary application of rules and laws. Additionally, it involves an excessive number of rules, regulations, and licensing requirements. According to the source, poor governance hinders market operations and promotes rent-seeking, which are not aligned with development goals. This leads to a misallocation of resources and the pursuit of restricted policy objectives or non-transparent and poor decision-making. As a precursor to the aforementioned, Norris (1999) argued that the presence of these issues allows for little or no opportunity for progress. Leadership issues and governance shortfalls significantly impede the progress of socioeconomic and political growth within a society. This often results in the belief that national growth can only be achieved in the presence of effective leadership and minimal governance deficiencies within a politically stable society. Oke (2005) argued that effective governance, the avoidance of needless leadership problems, and national economic progress are positively correlated. This is relevant to sustainable development since the governance in Nigeria and most of Africa has been alternating between periods without a government and periods with civilian governments.

Onyeoziri (1981) expressed significant concern regarding the impact of leadership challenges and governance deficit on Nigeria's national development. He argued that ineffective political leadership and the failure to organize societal structures hinder the progress of struggling economies worldwide. The author argues that these two factors provide a valuable framework for understanding and examining the internal aspect of the issue of national development in Nigeria and the rest of Africa. Ogbu (2010) said that the responsibility of establishing and achieving national objectives is entrusted to a select group of political leaders who represent a minority of the country's people. Consistently, the consequences of their choices and actions may be extrapolated to represent the actions and decisions of the majority. Given the aforementioned, it is crucial for the intellectual elite to actively participate in national affairs to establish suitable goals and objectives for the political elite. This will aid in addressing leadership challenges and the lack of effective governance by setting a clear path for development.

The concept of governance deficit is closely linked to and inseparable from development deficit. This is manifested, at least in part, through high levels of poverty and unemployment, which are known to be associated with social imbalances such as income inequality, divorce, hunger, armed robbery, cultism, and political instability in any disadvantaged economy. Nigeria is not exempt from these challenges. The data provided by the World Bank (2006) indicates that 70.8% of Nigerians live in poverty, defined as earning less than \$1 per day, and up to 92.4% live below the threshold of \$2 per day. The nation is now experiencing a significant issue with young unemployment, with a rate of 75% among those aged 20 to 35. This high unemployment rate is directly linked to increased insecurity and a rise in crime rates. Umoh (2021) said that leadership issues and governance shortages led to outcomes such as uprisings like ENDSARS and the rise of Islamic Jihadism in the form of ISWAP and the Boko Haram Sects. Believing in luck or divine intervention as a solution to the political and economic challenges of a country is unrealistic and incompatible with the mindset of realists and intellectual individuals, save for those who are monetarily impoverished.

**Improved Leadership, Governance and National Development in Nigeria**

It is a social fact that enhancing the hurries of leadership and addressing governance deficiencies are crucial for achieving sustained national development in Nigeria. This hurdles are significantly necessary in areas that characterizes people-inclined governance such as the improvement in Human Rights challenges, the absence of legal governance, insufficiently inclusive democracy, corruption, weak democratic institutions, and inadequate openness and accountability in the administration of public resources. Although there is no definitive method for developing excellent governance, the above-mentioned characteristics are essential prerequisites for attaining this objective. Some of the key principles that enhance these characteristics include accountability, transparency, anti-corruption measures, participatory governance, and the creation of a legal and judicial system that is protected against corruption and political interference. Indeed, if governance deficits are contrasted with these characteristics, it can be argued that Nigeria's current efforts to address governance shortfalls are, at best, unclear. The lacklustre outcomes seen in this area since 1999 under several administrations have resulted in a complete absence of achievements. As a consequence, both the economic and human development aspects are a negative recurring decimal. In order to rectify this problem, it is crucial to coordinate and prioritize the aims, focus and actions of different government agencies. This will help maximize their effectiveness by establishing autonomous, but efficient state institutions that can assist the functions of the public and private sectors.

It is a political fact that leadership is a serious political business not meant for those who are unpatriotic. It should be bestowed on those individuals who deserve it and have proven the courage to resist the temptation of corruption in whatever area by demonstrating such leadership qualities as selflessness. For instance, the conceptualisation and crafting of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as the AU's Peer Review Mechanism, points scholars' attention to leadership imprimatur of leaders who have revived the economy of their country and lifted the majority of the citizenry out of poverty. However, internal political leadership in Nigeria is still a product of post-colonial themes both in the relationship between the citizens and that of the citizens with the political actors. The dichotomy between the political class and the electorates is not only sinusoidal or that it comes once every four years during the electioneering processes, but the dichotomy has also been made to create a hiatus upon which every socio-political contestation continues to be premised

**Conclusion / Recommendation.**

An examination of leadership challenges and governance deficit in Nigeria has revealed Nigeria as an atomistic society in perpetual conflict with itself. This conflict, scholars believe is occasioned by a potpourri of factors including the system of administration during and immediately after colonialism and the leadership crises that system created in the Nigerian polity. This crisis has eclipse the efforts of few patriotic Nigerians in the country's political landscape. The landscape too, has recorded an admixture of democratization and military interregnum. Consequently, the imperatives of national development and the potentialities of democratic leadership are not only thin but stand the chance of reversal. An additional prognosis in this direction however vague, would highlight, in addition to a mortgaged followership, a troubled polity plagued with ethnocentrism, religious fanaticism, political exclusion, resource conflict and terrorism. These variables of reversed development have become entrenched leading to a situation in which these variables are indistinguishable from those that characterize Nigeria's national image in the contemporary international system. Thus, the country's leadership challenges have become endemic resulting in significant domestic policy vacuity and implementation lacuna. The political culture itself and the aftermath of party politics continues to divide the country along ethnoreligious lines with implications of challenged sovereignty, insecurity and a hindered development. This situation, however bleak, could be remedied if the political class could in the main, respect the law and the detects of the constitution. In addition to a free and fair

electioneering processes and the adoption of politics of inclusiveness, the option of restructuring the economy where each geopolitical zone make use of its resources for the regions development and a fraction for national development is germane to correcting many of these challenges.

Further, governance must support the rule of law and be seen to be capable of reinvigorating a transparent leadership that is responsive to the will of the people. In view of the above, it is appropriate for political actors to be circumspective of the collective good of the citizenry, particularly in the face of the integrated global economy link to digital economy to forestall such experiences as the EndSars protest. Put simply, any assertion of a democratic government by political figures must be seen as fundamentally inclusive of a significant level of public involvement, competitive decision-making, transparency, the exercise of civil and political rights by the population, and responsible leadership observable in tangible ways. In furtherance to the above, it is imperative that the government provides its population with the chance to engage in the process of democratization by allowing them to elect trustworthy representatives via regular elections. Therefore, to ensure effective governance and promote socio-economic growth, it is essential to have a functioning judicial system, as well as guarantee freedom of the press and freedom of expression. These elements are crucial components that should be implemented alongside economic changes.

## Reference

1. Abiodun, J. O. (2009) Environmental poverty and sustainable development in Nigeria Cities. *The Nigerian Social Scientist*. 1 (1), 23-37
2. Achebe, C. (1984). *The trouble with Nigeria*. Essex: Heinemann Educational Books.
3. Adeniyi, O. (2000), *How the probe Got Chuba*, Thisday, Wenesday, August 9.
4. Adesammi, A. (2011). *Senate Committee Exposes Oil Subside cartel*, Tribune. July 4
5. Adeboye, E. A. (2011) You A Leader? Open Heavens. Tie Communications Ltd.
6. Agbo, A. (2012). *The oversight function*. Lagos, Tell Magazine,
7. Agbu, O. (2003) Corruption and human trafficking: The Nigerian case. *West African Review* (4) 1-13.
8. Ajayi, K. (2000) *International Administration and Economic Relations in Changing World*. Ibadan: Dekaal Publisher.
9. Ake, C (2008) *The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa*. Senegal: Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESSRIA)
10. Arowolo, D. and Aluko, F. S. (2010) Globalisation, good governance and democracy: *The Interface*. 2 (8), 32-49
11. Astin, A. W. and Astin, H. S. (2000) Leadership Reconsidered: *Engaging Higher Education in Social Change*. Battle Creek, MI: W. K. Kellogg Foundation.
12. Burns I. T (1989). Democracy and Governance in Nigeria, Challenges and Prospect. *Global Journal of Human, Social Science and Political Science*. 15 (3) 4-10.
13. Cheema, S. G. and Maguire, L. (2004) *Democracy, Governance and Development: A Conceptual Framework*, New York. United Nations Development Programme.
14. Davidson, B. (1998) *West Africa Before Colonial Era: A History to 1850*. London, New York:
15. Deutsch, S. (2014). Failure of Governance and the Phenomenon of Conflict in Africa. In O. J. Obi (Ed.), *Philosophy, Democracy and Responsible Governance in Africa*. New Brunswick and London, Transaction Publishers.

16. Diamond, L. (2005) *Democracy, Development and Good Governance: The Inseparable Links*. A Paper Delivered at the Maiden Annual Democracy and Governance. Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD).
17. Dufka, C. (2009). *Nigeria Police Corruption Duelling Human Rights abuses*. Human Rights Watch.
18. Ethelbert, O.L. (2016a). Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the challenges of managing corruption in Nigeria: A critical analysis, *International Journal of scientific and research Publication* 6(4) 339-349.
19. Ethelbert, O.L. (2016b). Missing links: Towards the effective management and control of corruption in Nigeria, Africa, and the Global South. *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology*. 5.
20. Fukayama, F. (2012). *The origins of Political Order: From Pre-human Times to the French Revolution*. London: Profile Books
21. Held, D. and A. McGrew (2004) *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
22. Hicks, M. and Spagat, M. (2008) The Dirty War Index: A Public Health and Human Rights Tool for Examining and Monitoring Armed Conflict Outcomes. *PLOS Journals* 2 (4), 23-51.
23. Kemp, L.U, Parto T, U and Gibson, T. (2005). Democracy and Governance in Nigeria, Challenges and Prospect. *Global Journal of Human and Social Science of Political Science* 15 (3) 7-10.
24. Koyi, A.F. (2015). *I trillion claim*: Senate walks out EFCC's lawyers, probes Lamorde. Daily Sun. August 27
25. Diamond, L. (1999) *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
26. John Locke (1952) *The second theatre of government*. New York. Liberal Arts Press
27. McGreal, C (2008) "A month ago the hospitals were overflowing. now they lie empty." The Guardian, 6 December.
28. Minogue, M. (1997) *The Principles and Practice of Good Governance Law and Governance* 4th, British Council Briefing.
29. Muzaale, P. (1987) Rural Poverty, Social Development and their Implications for Field Work Practice. *Journal of Social Development in Africa*: (2) 75-85
30. Norris, P. (1999) *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
31. Obi, L. (2016). *Dissolve the National Assembly*. Daily sun, August 4,
32. Ogundele, K. (2007). Olusegun Obasanjo stole 2.4 trillion Naira, CNPP. *The Nation News Paper*: Retrieved 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2019
33. Ogbu, F. (2010). *Nigeria: Time for Leadership in Constitutionalism and Good Governance in Africa*. A paper Presented at a Public Event in Abuja February 24
34. Okonjo-Iweala, N. (2018). Fighting corruption is dangerous: *The story behind the headlines*. United State of America, the MIT Press.
35. Oke, L. (2005) Globalisation, Democracy and Women Empowerment: Issues and Challenges in Nigeria in Olu-Olu (ed): *Perspective on Globalisation and Africa Development*. Lagos: Bolabay Publications.

36. Oke, L. (2010) Democracy and Governance in Nigeria's Fourth Republic in Dare Arowolo, et al eds *Public Administration in Nigeria*. Akure: Alabi-Eyo& Co. Ltd.
37. Okey, M. and Ayo, H. J (2008) *Democracy and Good Governance in Africa*; a Paper Presented at the United Nations Workshop on Promoting Democratic Transitions in Africa. Bamako – Mali, 24-25 November.
38. Okonjo-Iweala, N. (2012). Democracy, Good Governance and Development: Nigeria's dilemma. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 4(7), 22-41
39. Onyeoziri, F. (1981) Operationalising Democratisation. *A Multi-Dimensional and Configurative Approach*. A Paper Presented at the 16th Annual Conference of the Nigerian Political Science Association, Cross River State, University of Calabar June 26-29.
40. Onuoha, J. I. (1995) The Poor and Politics in Nigeria. *Contemporary Issues in Social Sciences* 3 (2), 48-55
41. Oyedele, L. S (2012). Democracy and Good Governance Nigeria Dilemma. *African Journal of Political Science and international Relation* 4 (6), 201- 208.
42. Oyovbaire, O.L (2017). The Effect of Corruption on Development in Nigeria. *Journal of Humanistic and Social Science* 5 (6).
43. Shaman, S. D. (2007) Democracy, Good Governance and Economic Development. Taiwan, *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*. 3 (1), 29-62.
44. Sharma M.P. Sadana B.L and Kaur Harpreet (2013): *Public administration, In theory and practice*. Marg Allahabad. Kitab Mahal.
45. Umoh, U.S and Levi-Okpara (2020) Nigeria-South Africa Post-Apartheid Relations: Implications for
46. Nigeria's National Development. *Journal of Social Sciences, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education*, 16:2228-420X
47. Umoh, U. S., Jaja, I. G., & Akpan, C (2019) Democratic culture and the challenges of good governance in Nigeria. *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies*. 8, (1) 2321 - 9203
48. Umoh, U, S, (2021) Trilemma on governance deficit, the ENDSARS protest and political insecurity in Nigeria: The international dimensions 2015 -2021. *International Journal of Sociology and Political Science*, 8, (1) 20-28
49. World Bank (1997). Helping countries combat corruption: *The role of the World Bank*. WBP
50. Mohammed, H., Aluaigba, M.T., & Kabir, A. (2012) *Corruption, governance and development in Nigeria: perspectives and remedies*. Kano: Beacons Prints and General Enterprises.
51. World Bank. (2006). Governance and Development. Washington: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. VISION 2010, Nigeria. <https://doi.org/10.1596/0-8213-2094-7>
52. Zoufa, M.S. and Ochieng T. I (2014). Promotion of Cultural Values and Political Stability in Nigeria: Exploring Social Studies Education. *Journal of Research in Arts and Social Science Education* 6 (1), 196-202.